



Leader Printing

TECHNICAL BULLETIN

File Preparation and Transfer

Friday, November 11, 2005

SUPPORTED SOFTWARE

Page layout applications and PDF file formats we currently support are as follows:

- InDesign® 1.5 or newer (Mac and PC)
- QuarkXPress® 4.0 or newer (Mac and PC)
- PageMaker® 6.5 or newer (Mac and PC)
- Acrobat® 4.0 (PDF 1.3), 5.0 (1.4) or PDF/X-1a

Vector graphics applications, such as Illustrator®, Freehand® and CorelDraw®, are accepted, but their files must first be trapped, exported and saved as EPS files and brought into a page layout file or made into a PDF. We also recommend converting fonts to outlines.

Bitmap graphics applications, such as PhotoShop® and PaintShop Pro®, should be used for graphics only and not final files. The resolution required for type to be legible creates huge files which can have marginal quality. Place TIF or EPS files from bitmap graphics applications into a page layout application instead.

If you don't see your application or version in the list, please ask your sales representative, as we are open to expanding our software support.

DOCUMENT AND PAPER SIZE

- **Document Size** in native (page layout) files should be set to the final trim size. The values used in the following formula should be found in your estimate: *Live Area + Margins = Document Size (Final Trim Size)*.
- When making PDFs or saving PostScript® to distill into PDFs, the **Paper Size** should be set to 1" larger in each dimension with pages centered, crop/registration marks on, and bleeds set to 0.25" (1/4"), if necessary.

PRODUCTION NOTES

- **Continuous-tone image resolution** should be twice the linescreen (lpi) at actual size, which is equates to 200 dpi for web jobs, 266 dpi for uncoated sheetfed jobs and 300 dpi for coated sheetfed jobs. *Using 300 dpi as a general rule regardless of the output is acceptable.*
- **Line art resolution** should be 1200 dpi at actual size.
- **Avoid sizing images in page layout applications**, if possible, and size them in their respective applications. If sizing graphics in a page layout application, note that

effective resolution changes as you increase or decrease size (*Actual Resolution x Scaling % = Effective Resolution*). 1.5 times lpi is the minimum acceptable resolution (150, 200 or 225 dpi per previous example).

- **Avoid using Internet graphics for print.** Because web page graphics are usually 72 or 96 dpi, they can only be used if reduced in size dramatically. In addition, they are almost always RGB and must be converted.
- **Use TIF or EPS format** (with Binary and not JPEG encoding) for images and graphics. Avoid the JPEG format for print, as it is a compressed, "lossy" format.
- **Colors must be CMYK or spot and not RGB.** Convert all spot (e.g., Pantone) colors to CMYK unless they are to actually run as spot colors in the job. Remove all unused colors from the color palette. Do not use "auto" or "registration" colors. Make sure black is 100% K only.
- **Trapping your files is your responsibility.** Consult your application's documentation for information. Check that black type is set to overprint where appropriate.
- **Avoid mixing PostScript and TrueType® fonts** in the same file. For the best results, we recommend using high-quality PostScript fonts from major font foundries.
- **Use the actual fonts from the menu** (e.g., Century Schoolbook Bold) rather than applying a style (e.g., bold) from button bar. It is especially important that "Black," "Heavy," "Demi," etc. faces are not made bold, as they will not print correctly.
- **Remove pasteboard elements** in your final file.

PROOFING

Because printing requires files be output to a PostScript imagesetter, platesetter or digital output device, it is important that you print proof pages to a PostScript laser printer. Double- and triple-check your pages.

- **Print color separations of all color pages** so you know everything will color break as you expect.
- **Create a back-to-back mock-up** to check front-to-back orientation.
- **Check placement of images and graphics** to make sure they are correct, and to ensure you do not have gaps from picture box frames to the image itself.

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PROOFING *(continued)*

- **Check text carefully** to make sure copy is not cut off at the end of text blocks (red X squares in QuarkXPress) and that your line breaks and character flow are correct. Review your text wrap as well, and make sure text does not run into images.

PREFLIGHTING

The process of “preflighting” — checking every element of your print job before sending it off — is a *critical* element in the creation of consistently high-quality print publications.

- **Preflighting your files** before transferring them should be part of your regular workflow. We use Markzware’s FlightCheck® Professional and recommend customers use their FlightCheck Designer product. It inspects your documents’ colors, fonts and images and lets you know if there are potential problems that could adversely affect your print job. When you are done, it can collect and compress documents, images and fonts for transfer to us. *Ask your sales representative about a free demo disk and 25%-off coupon, or visit www.markzware.com/fcdesigner for more information.*

- **Upon receipt of your job**, your Customer Service Representative (CSR) will preflight your files. Any problems we find will be brought to your attention, and you will be given the choice of fixing and submitting new files, or having us fix the problem(s), billing you at our system work rate. *Note that in either case, the print schedule may be affected.*

PDF CREATION

- **Create PDFs using a two-step process**, outputting a PostScript file first and then distilling the PostScript to PDF using Acrobat Distiller®.

If you are not using a two-step process for making PDFs, please contact us. It is likely we can work with your files, but will want to test them in advance of the job.

- **Never use Adobe PDFMaker®** for creating PDFs, as they are not reliable enough for commercial printing.
- **Embed all fonts** when creating PostScript and PDFs.
- **Minimum resolution and frequency settings** when creating PostScript are as follows:
 - 1200 dots per inch (dpi) and 100 linescreen (lpi) for web jobs
 - 1800 dpi and 133 lpi for uncoated sheetfed job
 - 2400 dpi and 150 lpi for coated sheetfed jobs

- **Distiller settings** should be set to “Press Quality” or PDF/X-1a settings. If using “Press,” specify Acrobat 5 (PDF 1.4) format and embed and subset all fonts. (If

we may need to modify your PDFs, uncheck subsetting.) *If you prefer the reliability of PDF/X-1a or only have Distiller 4.0, we will work with Acrobat 4 (PDF 1.3) files. Be aware, however, that there are issues related to support for transparency in older PDF formats.*

- **Check that fonts are embedded** by opening the PDF in Acrobat and going to File -> Document Info -> Fonts (depending on the version and platform, this may be in a slightly different place). You should see “Embedded” or “Embedded Subset” and not a blank or a font name.

- **Multi-page PDFs are preferred**; do not split a project into more files than necessary.

WHAT TO SEND

- **If sending PDFs**, you simply need to send us hard copy (assembled into a folded mock-up, if necessary) via overnight, mail or fax depending on your schedule. For color jobs, a color printout is required or one will be created and you will be billed accordingly.

- **If sending native files**, the same rules apply for hard copy, mock-ups and color proofs. In addition, you must send all page layout files, linked images and graphics, and all screen and printer fonts. *Please note that the additional time needed to properly preflight and impose native files is reflected in your estimate. Providing PDFs instead of native files can reduce your cost.*

FILE TRANSFER

- **Stuff or zip multiple files** into a single file for uploading to our FTP site or e-mailing.

- **File Transfer Protocol (FTP)** to our site requires the use of an FTP client and cannot be done with a web browser. *Ask your sales representative for more information about FTP client recommendations if necessary.*

- **Site:** leaderprinting.com
- **User Name:** u36451927lpcftp
- **Password:** lpc4ftp

Once you are connected, you will be in a shared folder (directory). Please create a directory inside of it for your files. When your files are uploaded, send an e-mail to pc@leaderprinting.com or mac@leaderprinting.com, as appropriate, and let us know what has been uploaded. Please make sure your files have uploaded successfully by checking the file size on your machine and on the FTP site. You should not have received errors during the upload. If you did, please delete and reupload the files.

- **E-mailing your print job** is not recommended if the stuffed/zipped files are larger than 10MB. Depending on your operating system, pc@leaderprinting.com or mac@leaderprinting.com should be used for e-mail.