

Production Guidelines: General

Have a question or need further explanation? Email your inquiry to prepress@ketmoy.com for a prompt reply. If time is short, call 513.867.8800 or 800.251.8801 to speak immediately with a prepress technician.

- Use a suitable application and provide native files** Current versions of Adobe Creative Suite applications produce the best and most predictable results. Use InDesign to compose your layout, combining text and graphics on the same page. Avoid using Illustrator and Photoshop for this purpose, instead reserving them to create vector graphics and to manipulate photos and raster images, respectively.
- Submit your native files, rather than a PDF, to allow the greatest flexibility for preparation and production. Use the Package feature to automatically collect all necessary files for your service provider. Package is available from the File Menu using InDesign CS5 or later and Illustrator CC.
- Supply a current proof** Proofs serve to verify content both preceding and following prepress preparation. Submit a current proof at actual size for each document to print, in color whenever possible. Missing or obsolete proofs can introduce delays if artwork is questionable. Creating a mock-up to indicate proper pagination, backup, and folding is also very helpful.
- Delete extra resources from your documents** Artwork outside the trim area, hidden artwork, and unnecessary hidden layers contribute to larger files that can adversely affect the production process. Consider removing unused color swatches, intermediate design material, and extraneous artwork elements to create cleaner, more efficient files.
- Avoid faux text styles** Some fonts simply do not have styled variants. Avoid applying styles to text—bold, italic, bold-italic—when no font is directly available for that style. Artificial styles typically do not print as expected.
- Remember fonts used in linked graphics** When opening a document, applications can report the fonts required for the document itself but not those fonts used within placed EPS and AI graphics. Remember to supply the necessary font files for all linked graphics in addition to those for layouts. Converting fonts to outlines before saving an EPS or AI file helps to minimize font problems. Note, though, that once text has been outlined, it cannot be later edited.
- Know your fonts** Both TrueType and OpenType format fonts only require one file per font. The older PostScript format font, however, comprises two files: a screen font (bitmap) file and a printer font (outline) file. Both must be supplied for that format font to output correctly.

Production Guidelines: Graphics and Images

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Observe appropriate image resolution For output at 100% scale, the resolution of grayscale and color images should be 300–400 PPI; the resolution of line art (bitmap) should be 800–1200 PPI. Failure to consider the appropriate resolution can result in poor image quality (pixelization or jagged edges), or unnecessarily large files.

When scaling an image, remember that enlarging effectively decreases resolution; conversely, reducing effectively increases resolution. Avoid excessively enlarging or reducing existing images.

If scanning artwork, prior planning for output size can help to ensure that images are captured in the appropriate resolution.

Crop images to eliminate extraneous background Each pixel in an image, whether colored and clearly visible or white and potentially invisible, adds to the image dimensions and, consequently, to the file size. Although undesirable areas of an image can be masked or cropped when placed in a layout, those areas remain stored and must be processed when printed.

Use the Crop tool in Photoshop to permanently eliminate unwanted or extraneous background before placing in layouts to reduce file size and processing time.

Convert color images to CMYK Since the offset printing process requires CMYK to represent color, using RGB images can prevent correct color reproduction. Use Photoshop to convert images from RGB to CMYK before placing them in layouts to improve color consistency.

Save raster images as TIF or PSD Both TIF and PSD are proven formats which help to minimize output problems. For JPG images, minimal compression is preferable for quality print production. Avoid web formats, such as GIF and PNG.

Choose to link graphics and images Avoid *copy-and-paste* and *drag-and-drop* to transfer graphics and images from one program to another. These methods often embed troublesome forms of the artwork that suffer degraded quality and limited editability. Save each graphic or image as a separate file and choose to Place and link it, instead.

Place PDFs cautiously Beware placing a PDF as a graphic when its source is unknown; it might use the RGB color space, contain low-resolution images, or prevent fonts from rendering properly. Verify the PDF and place only if it conforms to the project's specifications.

Production Guidelines: Color

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- Know the difference between opacity and tint** Avoid using opacity as a means to set a color screen percentage, where tint value is more appropriate. Opacity values less than 100% introduce transparency, which can affect page compositing. When a transparent effect is not necessary, set the tint percentage to properly achieve a screen value for color.
- Define colors consistently** Many layouts combine artwork elements created by different applications. Because each application offers a versatile method for defining a color, discrepancies in color names or definitions can cause problems, especially regarding correct color reproduction. Ensure consistency when defining identical colors among artwork elements using different applications: specify color formulas using CMYK, observe color designations as process or spot, and avoid abbreviating color names.
- Color objects using the Swatches palette** Apply color to objects from the Swatches palette when working in layout and illustration programs to ensure versatile color editing and consistency. Create desired swatches as global colors using CMYK values.
- Use a “rich black” fill where appropriate** A rich black formula is defined as 100K plus one or more additional lesser percentages of C, M, and Y. It is often better than flat black for covering a large area of solid black in appearance. A formula of 60C 40M 20Y 100K works well but can vary depending on preference or artwork. Consider black image backgrounds, as well, especially when placing such images with other artwork where a seamless transition is required.
- Use Overprint cautiously** Do not select the Overprint option for a stroke or fill when its color is White or Paper. While artwork can appear correct on screen in its composite form, overprinting white elements will “disappear” when processed as separations. An intentional Overprint attribute often mistakenly remains checked when changing artwork from another color to White.
- Observe gradation limitations** The appearance of a gradation is affected by its length, number of colors, starting and ending percentages, and the output resolution and LPI. Inherent to electronic blends, banding occurs when these factors combine: long length, single color, limited percentage range, low resolution output, high line screen output. The manifestation of banding can be reduced by creating shorter blends comprising more than one color and having a broad percentage range.

Production Guidelines: Pages

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- Recognize the need for bleed** Bleed is the extension artwork beyond the trim dimensions. Any artwork elements positioned *at the edge* of a page require bleed to allow for trimming inaccuracy. Incorporating bleed during the design and creation stages of artwork is often faster and simpler than altering a finished document. Bleed artwork .125 inch where applicable.
- Additionally, while items positioned *near the edge* do not require bleed, they might also be affected by trimming inaccuracy. Maintain a .125 inch margin along the perimeter for non-bleed artwork and text.
- Note, too, that crop marks should be offset by .125 inch to avoid interfering with the bleed.
- Consider proper panel sizes** For documents that fold into panels, create single pages of width equal to the sum of all adjusted panel widths. Roll folds demand that panel widths are progressively narrower, typically by .0625 inch. Avoid defining panels as a spread of three or more facing pages, where their widths are equal.
- Leave the imposition to us** Stepping or ganging multiple items on a printing form is common, but these are the tasks of your service provider, governed by factors you might not know or expect. Avoid duplicating or arranging artwork as it might appear on a larger press sheet. We will determine how to print each job and impose pages appropriately; therefore, create documents in single pages at actual size to simplify imposition.