

THE WARWICK PRINTING CO LTD

QUICK GUIDE FOR DIGITAL FILES FOR OFFSET PRINTING.

Doing your own artwork and layout for your printed brochure or product gives you creative control and can definitely save you money. Unfortunately it can mean the opposite as well. No one likes to get handed a bill and suddenly find “extra charges” on it that aren’t in the budget. That can often happen if files are incorrectly prepared for offset printing.

When designing your product yourself, it’s a good idea to discuss your project with our sales staff before you start. Find out what we require for files, what resolutions, margins, etc we would need. Find out what you need to do to add colour or pictures to your product.

Tell us what software you’re planning to use. Incompatible software for print can result in extra charges. Using a word processor for example (WordPerfect or Word) will undoubtedly cause problems with fonts, colours not separating properly, pages shifting, etc that have to be fixed before production. It’s best to find out before you start to avoid costly repairs and time delays.

If you decide to hire a third-party graphic designer ask if they design for print. Many designers specialize in web or digital print but not offset printing. (Warwick Printing also offers a design service as well.) A common misconception is that once it’s a digital file that’s all you’ll need for whatever you decide to do with it. In reality, designing for the web or for digital printing (colour copiers) is quite different from designing for offset print. If you ask a printer to use the same file for your business card that was used on your webpage, you may be disappointed with the end result.

Quick tips:

Page layout programs preferred: Quark Express, Adobe InDesign, Adobe Pagemaker, Coreldraw
All graphics and fonts used in the creation of these documents should be included.

Programs that may result in additional charges due to fixing, or resetting: WordPerfect, Microsoft Word, Microsoft Publisher, Excel, Powerpoint files. ** Most word processors are device dependant programs (meaning they are specific to one computer and printer) so that as soon as you put the file on a different computer everything changes.*

PDF’s are acceptable provided the original files are correctly made.

Always provide a hard copy of your finished design for comparison.

When setting up a layout for print certain things need to be taken into account before you start:

Does your document bleed?

Have you allowed enough margin for trim? For gripper on the press?

Are your panels spaced correctly for folding?

Are all your colours spot or process?

Are your graphics saved in the right format?

Check with our qualified staff before you start. Make sure your digital files will give you the results you deserve for the price you want!

THE WARWICK PRINTING CO LTD

QUICK GUIDE FOR DIGITAL PICTURES FOR OFFSET PRINTING.

Digital files are great! They can also lead to major disappointment in your finished printing. We all have favourite photos we've taken or may have sent to our friends on email. Then we decide that it would look great on our brochure or poster. We'll just email it to the printer and voila! Unfortunately just because it's digital and looks fabulous on the computer screen doesn't mean it will print well.

The secret is to know what you may want to use your file for at the time that you take it or scan it. Like anything else, you can remove info if necessary, but if the info isn't there to start with you can't get it back. Sometimes you just have to start over.

A digital photo is made up of "pixels". There is also a "physical" size to it as well, just like a printed photo. This is established when the picture is taken (or scanned). Together these equal resolution for output of the file. The quality of the output depends on the resolution of the digital file.

A picture can generally be adjusted to a smaller size without losing resolution. Making it larger is a different story. There are only so many pixels in each file. They can be removed or made closer together but it's difficult to add more. When a picture is made smaller, the pixels get closer together and quality almost "gets better". When a picture is enlarged however, it still has the same number of pixels, only now they will be farther apart. This can drastically affect the quality especially for output.

JPEG's: Most cameras (and a lot of scanners) default to saving files as jpeg's. A jpeg is a compressed file. So as soon as a picture is saved as a jpeg, it compresses the file for data size, and what that really does is trash what it considers unnecessary information, which cannot be retrieved after that. They are designed to keep files small and easy to store or email and to be seen on screens or sent to small laser or inkjet printers. You might want to check out the jpeg settings on your camera or scanner.

When the file is a certain resolution (we prefer 300 pixels per inch [ppi] for full colour offset printing) and then saved with file compression (which is what a jpeg is), it still keeps 300 ppi but the file may be physically smaller, so even if the settings are right when the picture is taken by saving it as a jpeg this may change. Some systems are the reverse, where the physical size will stay the same but the resolution (ppi) will change. (Every time you save a jpeg it compresses. Resaving it to a tiff or eps doesn't change the size or quality of the original file.) Sometimes the only way to know is to check or have our Graphics department check them for you.

If you're using a digital camera there are different settings you can try. As a guideline, the bigger the file the better chance we have of a good print quality. (Print quality means bigger files). A lot of cameras don't give technical settings. As a guide, if you're not sure of your settings, less pictures on the disk usually means larger file sizes and presumably higher resolutions.

Quick settings for best results:

Full color offset printing:

300 ppi 100% or more of Physical size of finished printed job CMYK

Black and White printing:

300 ppi 100% or more of Physical size of finished printed job Greyscale

Quick tips:

If your picture is to be printed right to the edge of the page (this is what we call bleeds) your file's physical size has to be just a little larger than the page size; a minimum of 1/8" over.

Always provide a hard copy of your finished design for comparison.

Digital pictures designed for web or digital printing require much lower resolutions. They don't work well for offset printing.

Glossary

JPEG– Joint Photographic Experts Group

TIFF – Tagged Image File format

EPS – Encapsulated PostScript

Check with our qualified staff before you start. Make sure your digital files will give you the results you want!

THE WARWICK PRINTING CO LTD

QUICK GUIDE FOR COLOUR FOR OFFSET PRINTING.

Colour can make your printed product stand out from the rest but sometimes what we end up with may not be what we're expecting. Proper preparation for colour can be the key to an attractive final printed product you can be proud of.

In offset printing, colour is produced in 2 ways. **Spot colour** is the application of a specific ink at the press. This ink can be pre-mixed from the factory or mixed according to formulas at production time. However, just like wallpaper and paint, colours can fluctuate somewhat depending on the mixture.

The second method of colour in offset printing is **Process colour**. This method uses 4 base inks to create any colour in the spectrum: Cyan, Magenta, Yellow and Black (CMYK). Again, colours can fluctuate somewhat.

In order to print colour on a press your document must be able to create what is called "colour separations". This means that each colour to be printed has to have its own "plate" on the press. So if your document is to be printed in Red and Black then there needs to be a red plate and a black plate. If the document is in process colour there will be 4 plates. (cyan, magenta, yellow and black).

If your colours are not correct in your digital file then they may not separate properly. This will probably incur delays and extra charges to fix and/or you will not get the results you are expecting.

Colour design for the web or for digital printing (colour copiers) is quite different from designing for print. Small laser or inkjet printers or digital copiers don't necessarily need to convert colours to CMYK and taking a file you previously used for digital printing will probably require some fixing for it to reproduce well in offset printing.

Quick tips for colour offset printing:

Programs that **can** easily create and output colour separations: Quark Express, Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Illustrator, Adobe InDesign, Adobe Pagemaker, Coreldraw

Programs that **cannot** create and output colour separations: WordPerfect, Microsoft Word, Excel, Powerpoint

Always provide a hard copy of your finished design for comparison.

PDF's are acceptable provided the original files are correctly made. If the original program cannot handle colour separations then neither will the pdf.

Computer programs recognize names for colour. They don't actually "see" the colours. For example if the blue in your document is supposed to be Pantone Blue 280 and you use "Pantone Blue 280" and "Pantone 280 CVC" even though these are the same blue, the computer will recognize them as 2 separate colours simply because the name is different.

Appearances can be deceiving. Imported graphics may appear to be in certain colours but they may not be. Even a black and white photo may unintentionally be in colour. In this case your image will come out on 4 plates instead of just 1 and the cost to print your project will be higher. *PREFLIGHT* programs can check for things like this.

Be sure black type is actually made in "black". Black can be made using all or some of the 4 primary colours at various strengths. Depending on the "mix" and size of the type, registration at the press can be extremely difficult, if not impossible.

RGB stands for Red Green Blue and is the standard for monitors and TV's. You cannot print using this formula. RGB images in a document will not always colour separate and may end up being printed in black.

Check with our qualified staff before you start. Make sure your digital files will give you the results you want!

THE WARWICK PRINTING CO LTD

QUICK GUIDE FOR PDF FILES FOR OFFSET PRINTING.

The term PDF stands for “Portable Document Format” as it is designed to share files over the web and from computer to computer.

PDF's have greatly changed our ability to share files without having to worry about having the same programs, fonts, pictures, etc. They are more and more common in the offset printing industry and are fast becoming the preferred method for providing digital files.

As with anything else, a good pdf for printing starts with the original file makeup. You still need to be aware of all the fundamentals of a good print layout, including margins, bleeds, colour separations etc. The pdf must be made with these things in place for us to use it effectively, since making changes to a pdf is extremely limited.

Quick tips:

Properly made pdf's can save you time and money.

Improperly made pdf's can cost you time and money.

Provide a hard copy of your pdf for comparison.

Make sure your colour settings are correct. Are you using spot colour or process? Make sure all your colours are the same.

Pull all your bleeds and make your pdf oversize. Most page layout programs handle bleeds.

Embed your fonts when you create the pdf.

Check with our qualified staff before you start. Make sure your digital files will give you the results you want!