

Nexpress File Preparation Guidelines

General File Preparation

Build documents with dimensions that represent the final flat trim size. Do not create oversize pages and float page elements with trim marks, fold marks and other information around the layout. For example, a Letter size document should be 8½" x 11." Extend bleed elements no more than .125" outside the document area. Don't forget to allow for bleeds! For example, your 8½" x 11" document with bleeds should create a PDF that is 8¾" x 11¼."

Advanced Digital Design Considerations (For those who really want to know the details)

Large solid areas of color can sometimes impact both the production and the overall look of the document. Any digital press will exhibit some artifacts in large solid areas. You should break up solid areas with other design elements such as text, texture or other graphics. Gradients, or blends, have a tendency to band on any digital press. Because of this, you should keep blends as small as possible. Limiting blends to 2 to 4 inches is desirable. A large blend may exhibit unwanted banding. You will achieve better quality results when blends use a value change of less than 50%. Applying a Blur or Noise filter in Adobe Photoshop software to gradients will help to eliminate any banding artifacts observed during printing. Large dark tints that use high ink coverage can cause curling and a glossy surface appearance to the overall page. You should make sure that your total ink limit does not exceed 280% for four color printing. Excessive amounts of ink can cause blistering and flaking of the dry ink from the page. Similarly, large tints can sometimes show slight banding artifacts. It is sometimes helpful to add noise or a texture in light tints so that the banding breaks up visually. You could also reduce the size of the tint area.

Working with Fonts

You should always download all fonts into your PostScript file and embed all fonts in your PDF file. This will avoid any mismatch or substitution of fonts. Avoid subseting of fonts. Many fonts, particularly TrueType fonts, have intentional and sometimes unintentional licensing restrictions that do not allow embedding of a font. Adobe Acrobat and Distiller will honor font-embedding restrictions.

Using PANTONE Colors

PANTONE colors will be converted to CMYK during print time. The press uses custom ICC profiles to translate the named PANTONE colors to CMYK during the RIP process. Ensure that PANTONE colors are built identically in both your graphic and layout programs. Do not create some elements with a named PANTONE color and then create other elements with the same PANTONE color's CMYK equivalents. Doing so will result in inconsistent color between the elements. Be consistent in the naming convention for the PANTONE color. Either use the official PANTONE name always, or if you have defined your own color, use the same name for it whenever it is used. It is a good practice to select colors based on PANTONE's Spot color to CMYK equivalent swatch book called Color Bridge.

Working with Images

Images should be set to a maximum resolution of 300 dpi with a scaling of 100%. Images with a resolution larger than 300 dpi will not increase image quality and will increase production times due to the larger file size. (Most images will reproduce with little or no visual image degradation at 200 dpi.) If images are enlarged in size in your layout, you should take care that the final resolution is still in the 200-300 dpi range. For example, a 200 dpi image enlarged 150% will decrease in resolution to 133 dpi resulting in poor image quality. The best image format to use when saving image files is TIFF.

Working with Vector Art

When using type in vector artwork, you should ensure that the fonts are either embedded in the file when saving or convert the type to outlines in order to minimize printing problems with missing fonts.

Send Native and PDF Files

Send us your native file (Quark, InDesign, Illustrator, etc.) in case any final edits or color adjustments are needed, in addition to sending the PDF file. This will also help to expedite the final file preparation process.