This guide contains general artwork guidelines for supplying print ready artwork for standard CMYK jobs. Please ensure that you read and follow them carefully. Compliance with these guidelines will assist your job in passing through to print production smoothly, avoiding any additional costs or delays. Should you have any queries, including those on other job types, please don't hesitate to contact us to ask for assistance

Process Overview

File Flight Check

Once we receive your files one of our experienced Pre Press department will check them for print readiness. This is called a File Flight Check. If a problem arises we will notify you. From here you have two choices:

1. You (or designer) can amend and resubmit your artwork

2. Ask us to amend the artwork and our Design Studio, for an additional fee. We then submit a proof for your approval.

Sign-off

After flight checking your file, we provide a hard-copy proof for your approval (sign-off). Once the final proof has been approved we cannot be held responsible for any errors please pay particular attention to names, places, contact details, dates, times as well as general grammar and spelling.

Production

Following sign-off, the artwork is sent to production. Normal turnaround is within 5-7 working days depending on the material to be produced. If your job is urgent, please state this when placing your order. We will then establish if this date is achievable.

Once your job is complete we will contact you for collection. Jobs for account customers or projects that have been paid for in advance may be sent directly to a nominated delivery address. Ask our sales staff should you require this option.

All printed artwork is kept on file in PDF format for future orders. Editing or re-supplying artwork may incur an additional fee to re-check or manipulate the files. Please speak with our sales staff for further clarification.

Some Important Things to Remember

Bleed

All artwork should include at least 3mm bleed on each side. Bleed is where artwork elements extend off the edge of the printed page. This allows images and colours to print to the edge of a page with no border - bleed is trimmed off during production.

E.g. The finished (trimmed) size of an A4 document is 210 x 297mm
An A4 Page including 3mm bleed would be 216 x 303mm When setting up your document you need to include this area.

Safe Zone

Critical elements (text, logos, graphics etc.) must be placed within the 'Safe Zone' to avoid them being cut off during the trimming process. This means that they are at least 3mm in from where the document will be trimmed.

Colour

Offset and digital printing uses a colour format of CMYK (Cyan, Magenta, Yellow and Black). The colours you see on your computer screen are made from a colour format of RGB (Red, Green and Blue). Software programs such as Adobe Photoshop, InDesign and Illustrator can convert all colours to CMYK. Make sure this is done before exporting your print ready PDF. RGB is unacceptable.

Our graphic designers may be able to convert your RGB PDF through colour mapping but the colours may shift when converted to CMYK and will incur additional charges. *It is also important to mention that CMYK colours on your screen will almost never match those printed*.

Be aware that all printing devices interpret colour differently. Perfection in colour matching is rarely achieved with CMYK printing. Pantone or 'Spot colour' printing is the best way to achieve colour matching but is a more expensive process.

Let us know if your job is colour critical and we can work out the best, most cost effective way of printing for you. Often our clients find it useful to talk to one of our Account Consultants, call to arrange a meeting.

Resolution

All images or graphics contained within the artwork should be 300dpi or more at size to avoid pixelated printing. (Fuzzy & Unclear) Images sourced from the web are usually low resolution (72dpi) and are generally unsuitable for printing.

If you are unsure if your image is the correct resolution, feel free to email your file to our designers and we will be able to tell you.

Fonts

In general most fonts can be embedded but some fonts, usually those downloaded from the internet might have some usage restrictions. Check the PDF settings you are using to see if they have font options, if they do, select "embed all fonts" or "embed subset fonts".

File Format

Our preferred format for receiving all artwork is a high resolution PDF. This is to ensure that all fonts, images and logos are embedded in your artwork. We do not accept Word or Publisher files, as they are unstable document formats and rely on the operating system of a computer for things like fonts. Not all operating systems are the same; therefore a PDF is the best way to avoid any issues.

We prefer print-ready PDF – select Press Quality settings when creating your PDF if working in Adobe Acrobat, InDesign, Photoshop or Quark Xpress. Supply artwork one up (do not multi or export as spreads).

If you are not able to provide us with PDF files, then we can accept high resolution .jpg, .tif or .eps files (.eps files must have the text converted to outlines).