

# GETTING THE PRINT YOU WANT



## A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR CUSTOMERS

### SETTING UP YOUR FILES FOR SMALL FORMAT & LARGE FORMAT DIGITAL PRINT

These guidelines are provided to ensure that the print you get from us is the best it can be. We realise that many people, students in particular, are trained and educated in a wide variety of skills but, quite frequently, the design skills specific to print are not part of this process. This document is designed to help our customers understand some of the more rudimentary aspects of 'Design for Print' and provides the information necessary to produce a highly desirable outcome.

### WHAT WE DO

We specialise in fast turnaround, high quality digital print but we can only achieve this if your files are set up correctly. Anything that is incorrect or not to our specifications can always be fixed but this will take extra time meaning that any deadlines agreed could be missed and you may incur extra costs.

If you are unclear on any of the points made within this document or have any other queries then please contact your local office for further details. If you are uncertain about preparing artwork to comply with our guidelines, please contact us for an artwork preparation or design quote. This will ensure the best possible print quality and you'll be more likely to meet any deadlines you may have.

## COLOUR PROOFS

We always recommend a colour proof (at cost shown or included free with some orders). A proof will demonstrate exactly what the colour and content of your final printed artwork will look like. Proof production can take one or two full working days plus postage/collection time and your approval time.

If a colour proof is not possible due to a short deadline, then you must accept any prints we produce unchecked and agree that we accept no responsibility for any content or colour accuracy variations to what you may have expected.

## PROOF READING

Content of all documents, posters, leaflets, menus etc. is your responsibility. We do not offer a proof reading service unless it is intended for litho printing, which is a chargeable service. Even some of the biggest organisations make errors in their work and this can be costly when you have to pay the price of a reprint. It is always a good idea to ask someone else to check your work as a fresh pair of eyes will often see something that you have missed.



## ARTWORK FILE TYPES

The type of document that you supply will very often determine the reliability of the finished product. We appreciate that not everyone has access to the latest version of the Adobe CS Suite and we will always work with a document you have. The advice below is 'best case' and should be seen as such. If in doubt, ask in advance or send us the file you are working on to check.

## ADOBE ACROBAT PDF FORMAT

PDF files are our preferred choice for fast turnaround of work. Fully 'Portable Document Format' this file retains all of the intended information in a stable layout format. However, it is imperative that you create PDF's as 'High Quality' or preferably PDF/X-1a, with bleed, crop marks and fonts embedded (more information below) and follow our imported photos guidelines, as faults in PDF's cannot easily be 'fixed' later in production if you get it wrong.

## QUARK XPRESS OR ADOBE INDESIGN FILES

These are accepted if 'collected for output' or 'packaged' so that all the related files and fonts are included. Pages must be set up to the correct size and with bleed. Any missing fonts or linked images will render the file un-printable.

## PHOTOSHOP FILES

These should be supplied as 300dpi (400dpi if they contain text) CMYK .TIF files with LZW compression off. Layered Photoshop files with text still rely on fonts and as such should be saved as Photoshop PDF files. Documents should also be created with bleed.

## MICROSOFT WORD, EXCEL, PUBLISHER AND POWERPOINT FILES

Microsoft Office applications are by far the most readily available to most customers but are in many ways problematic for printing as they rely on system information that does not embed in the document and are non-indexed RGB colourspace. This means that page styles, layouts, fonts, tables etc. can reformat when opened on other computers. Where possible, possible these files need to be converted to PDF format to ensure they print correctly. Please note that these programs do not conform to modern pre-press standards and onscreen colour reproduction and layout is not guaranteed. We can also accept other files and formats, but please ring and check first if timescales are critical as they may take longer.

## PRINTCafé PREPRESS

We have set up our PRINTCafé branches expressly to enable our customers to be involved in the pre-press process and therefore speed up the jobs and ensure a good outcome. All of the branches have a workstation where customer files can be opened and checked before going to print. In the event that your document opens incorrectly you have the facility to amend it as you require (our staff can help with this) and once checked we will export the file to a PDF format and send it through for production. Our PRINTCafés get very busy when courses have deadlines so always try to be ahead of the game. If you come to us before the job is live we can help you in advance so that your job goes as planned and you achieve your deadline.

PRINTCafé computers have the latest versions of Adobe CS and MS Office plus a number of other helpful design applications. We do not charge you to use these systems as we want your print job to be right first time and on time. Use of these is first come, first served. You can make appointments with our professional bureau staff but their time may be chargeable depending on your requirements.

## PAGE SETUP

There are some very basic rules that make jobs go well. Whilst you may not be familiar with the terminology, the principles are simple. All files supplied must be on the correct size page for the print process required - This is quarter of the final size for large format poster prints and final/actual size (i.e. 100%) for small format digital printing. You may be charged artwork time if we have to correct your files for you.

Unless previously advised **DO NOT** impose (putting four on a page for example) your files in any way, this applies especially to business cards. Digital print workflows operate in totally different ways to normal litho print so we always setup and impose your documents within the price quoted.

We work on metric 'A' sizes for pricing even if the final size is bespoke. These are;

- **A0 - 1188 x 841mm**
- **A1 - 841 x 594mm**
- **A2 - 594 x 420mm**
- **A3 - 420 x 297mm**
- **A4 - 297 x 210mm**
- **A5 - 210 x 148.5mm**

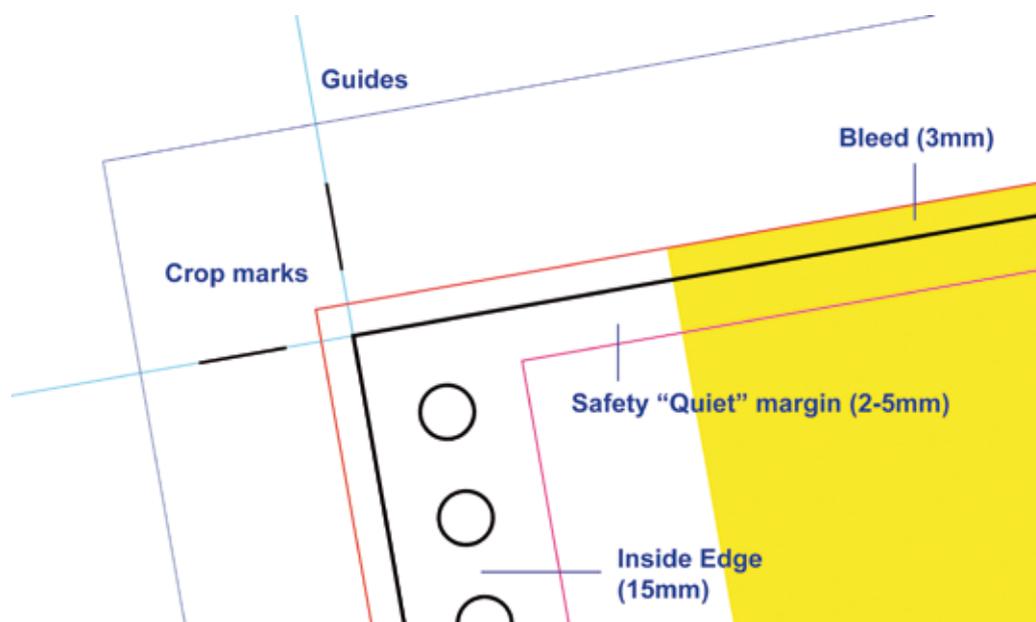
Each size is achieved by 'folding' the previous in half. For small format print we use oversize A3 sheets, for posters we use roll media. We can therefore produce full bleed (edge to edge) print on all of these sizes. The largest that we can print double sided is A3.

Printers use a whole range of different terms, many of which have a long history. Some of the ones we use the most are;

- **Bleed:** An area of the document outside of the final printed page that allows us to trim accurately to the finished page size.
- **pp:** For example 4pp, this refers to 'printed pages' in a booklet or leaflet
- **4/4 (or 4/0, 4/1, 1/1 etc):** This indicates the number of colours per side. We use four colour process so 4/4 means 'four or full' colour both sides. 4/1 would be colour on the front and one colour (assumed to be black) on the reverse.

If a printer tells you something you don't understand, always ask for clarification. When we provide quotes we do so in such a way that the defined product is clear and understood by both parties.

The following illustration shows some terminology as it applies to a page.



## BOOKS & BOOKLETS

When creating PDF files please note that books or booklets that have over 4 pages must not be supplied as 'spreads'. Always create a PDF containing individual pages. This does not affect your original Quark or InDesign file which may have been set up as spreads.

There are different types of 'spreads' and spreads to view are not in the order required to print your document. We use an 'imposition' application to correctly order the pages in your document to print successfully. Whilst it sounds simplistic, always remember that a folded sheet of paper yields four pages (4pp). Two folded sheets yield eight pages (8pp). Folded stapled booklets must therefore always have pages in multiples of four unless you want us to add blank pages.

Documents comprising more than one page must always be supplied in one file with no unintentionally blank pages - for instance front and back of cards and flyers, covers and inners of books. All your pages must be together in one file, ideally a multi-page PDF with correctly ordered sequential pages at the correct finished size.

If your artwork requires 'bleed' (i.e. if it extends off the edge of your page) you must allow at least 3mm. We also recommend that any text is kept at least 5mm away from the edge of the page (this is referred to as 'quiet border or margin').

Finally, if your document is to be wire 'o' bound make sure 'bleed' is allowed on all four edges and you have allowed a suitable 'binding margin' on the binding edge.

## PHOTOGRAPHS

Photographic images should be supplied as 300dpi CMYK .TIF files with LZW off, and placed into your document at 100%. If emailing files, particularly JPEG files, ensure you do not let your mail client compress the file when sending.

We always advise that you send us your files via our website. This allows larger files to be sent without any compression and gives us a good audit trail of the job. A small number of systems experience limitations on the facility which are often outside of our control. If you need to send very large files we suggest using one of the many free third party upload applications.

## DIGITAL CAMERA IMAGES

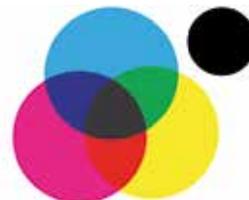
Unless your images conform to our 'photos' standards above (i.e. they can be placed in a quarter size document at 300dpi) then they will not be good enough quality for large format prints. Never enlarge image resolutions beyond their original size - you cannot put in what was not there in the first place. If in any doubt please request a 'colour proof'. This will show expected output resolution. New digital cameras are providing better and better output sizes. A 12 Mega Pixel camera will produce an image at 72dpi of approximately 900 x 1300mm. We would not suggest you try to print the image to this size but this gives an idea of what in theory is achievable.

*Resolution*  
**@ 300dpi**

*Resolution*  
**@ 72dpi**



RGB

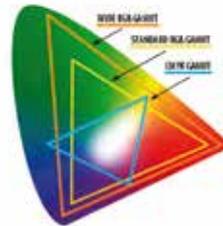


CMYK (also CcMmYK)



PANTONE (PMS)

- Coated
- Uncoated
- Metallic
- Fluorescent
- Process



The rule of thumb is that an image at 300dpi will enlarge at 400% of its lateral dimensions. This means that an A4 (210 x 297mm, approx 24MB as an uncompressed .TIF) would print at A0 (841 x 1188mm). This is at the outside limit of the process and some loss of quality is possible. However you should also consider the difference in the viewing distance of an A4 page and an A0 poster/ print.

**Imported Graphics** - Should be in .EPS format with fonts converted to paths or curves. NEVER copy and paste graphics from other programs especially PowerPoint, Excel, Word or Clipart. Please note that Word art is a low resolution format and almost never prints well.

## DIGITAL PRINT LIMITATIONS

Due to the print processes used in digital technology we recommend you avoid using flat tints of 10% or less, as these can sometimes print with a marbled or mottled effect. Also, as with traditional litho printing, try to limit large expanses of any flat colour. Textured areas or Photoshop effects will always print much better. In fact we suggest being as adventurous as possible for the most dramatic results. Graduations must always have a suitable range such as 10% to 100% not 10% to 25%.

Avoid Quark Xpress, Indesign & Illustrator blends as they are known to cause 'banding' - instead create blends in Photoshop and save as CMYK TIF. For a 'Rich' black use 50%C 100%K.

# COLOUR AND COLOUR MATCHING

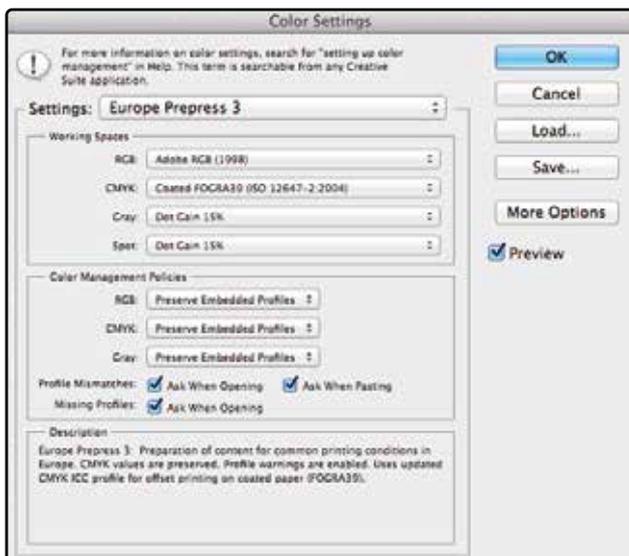
Colour is the key element to any print job and understanding colour will help you get a good print and enable you to manage your expectation of print. Make sure all colours in your document are specified as CMYK for digital small format and poster prints (only fine art Giclee prints can be in RGB). If you have used RGB or spot colours in your design process you must convert them to CMYK. This includes imported .EPS graphics from Illustrator and Freehand and duotone photos. Please remember that Pantone colours cannot be accurately reproduced in CMYK, so if it is important that you try and match a Pantone colour then request a colour proof. Also, if in doubt refer to a Pantone Solid to Process colour swatch).

It is impossible to guarantee that the colours of large format prints will match previously printed work due to changes in materials and processes. If your requirements include future updates of single panels (in case of exhibition stands) within a set we suggest you create a design which does not rely on a panel to panel colour match e.g. use a contrasting colour. If in any doubt always order a colour accurate proof first to check.

Most applications install to US colour management standards by default. Prior to using your applications ensure that the colour management is changed to UK standards:

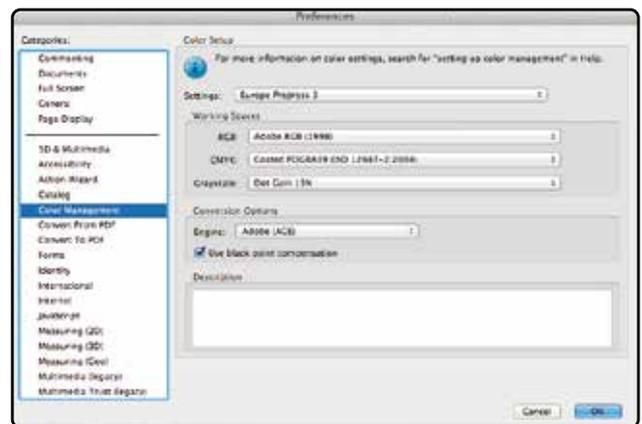
## Adobe Creative Suite (AI, PS, ID)

Edit > Colour Settings > Europe Prepress 3 (see below)



## Adobe Acrobat

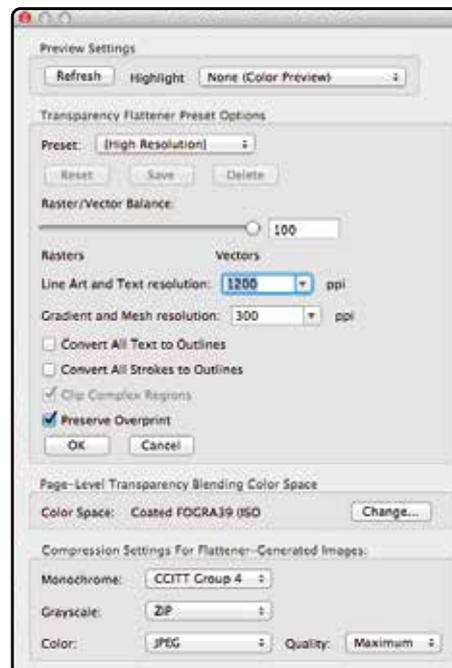
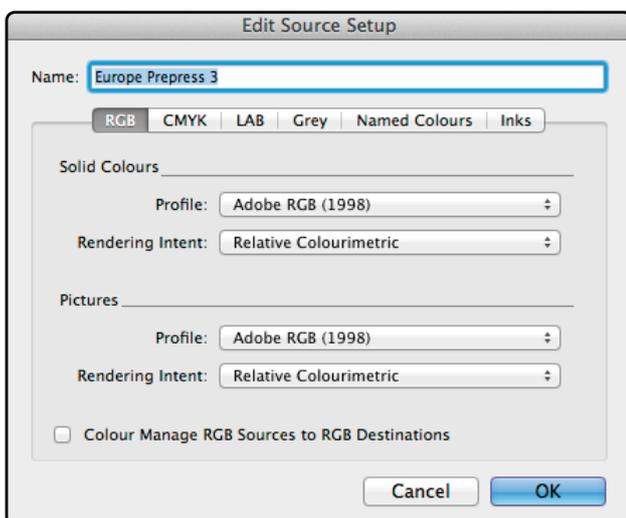
Preferences > Colour Management > Europe Prepress 3 (see below)



Also when flattening transparency in Acrobat ensure your page-level transparency blending colour space is the same as your document:

## Quark Xpress

Preferences > Default Print Layout > Colour Manager



## FONTS

Please convert any fonts in raw vector artwork to outlines. For DTP documents please check with your font license agreement and supply copies if permitted. If there is any doubt then please ensure you supply PDF files with the font embedded. We will not generally have access to bespoke corporate fonts which will be copyright protected. In this instance PDF files would be essential.

## AMENDMENTS

Any amendments requested will be charged at our standard hourly rates unless agreed otherwise in writing. If after ordering a proof you wish to send a replacement amended file you will be charged a 'reprocessing' fee based on our standard hourly rates with a minimum charge of £7.50 + VAT. You will be charged standard proof prices if another proof is requested.

## STORAGE & ARCHIVING

Always ensure you backup your work before handing it to us. When possible we will copy your work from your memory stick so that you can take it away with you. However, if we are very busy this may not always be possible. When saving your files, please put them in one folder with a suitable file name (ie 'PRINTCafe to Print'). When possible write out your full print requirements and file names in advance and include it as a text document along with the work you submit.

Whilst the above is not an exhaustive guide to Design for Print we hope that it is helpful to you. All of our branches have knowledgeable and experienced staff that would be happy to answer any other specific questions that you might have.

Finally, please remember that our workflow varies from day to day. Whilst we will do everything possible to meet your deadline, you will help us achieve this by allowing suitable time. Our staff will always assist you with information to help you prepare your project so please call us if you need technical information before coming in.

### GOOD PRACTICE



### BAD PRACTICE



Please call us if you require any further help or advice  
PRINTCafé at John E Wright  
Nottingham | Derby | Leicester | Coventry

