A guide for pre-press and printing

that will insure we achieve optimum printing results for you.

Our priority at **Total Label** is to deliver the highest quality product at a competitive price.

Here you will find resources to ensure that you can always count on **Total Label** for quality printing, expert pre-press knowledge, and shared expertise to help guide you along your printing path.

To ensure total success, it is always helpful that our customer have accurate information on how to provide press-ready files. The focus here is to provide you with useful tips and instructions so that the transition from building files, submitting files, right up to the final print process, is a seamless one.

1 SUCCESSFUL ART PREPARATION

A well-prepared file is a file that flows through the shop seamlessly, which means less time spent on the job, which means savings for the customer. Please ensure when preparing art that you keep these things in mind.

~ Build the file to the correct size of your project. If the file requires bleed, add that to your document. You can check in advance for dielines that are also available on our website. Custom dielines may be ordered, if you have special shaped projects.

~ If using a raster image(s) in your file, ensure it is a CMYK, 300 dpi image. Any scaling, rotating, flopping should be done in the original graphic application (Photoshop or Illustrator). Images that have been pulled from websites are not suitable - they are low resolution, RGB, 72 dpi images. When converting from RGB to CMYK a colour shift will occur as you are working with two different colour models. Embed the images in the file, otherwise the originals used will need to be sent along with your file.

~ Files can be built in CMYK, Pantone, or a combination. However, if you are using a gradient in your file, here are a couple of tips to make the pre-press transition effortless. If you start a blend with a CMYK colour, finish it with a CMYK colour. Do not finish it with white or a spot colour. If you want to go from 100% of a PMS colour to white, then make it 100% PMS to 2% of the same PMS colour. This helps eliminate any banding issues with the gradient.

~ When using fonts, convert all text to outlines upon sending the final file - or - send along the fonts that were used in the file. If sending postscript fonts, both the screen and printer fonts should be supplied.

~ If supplying native files, collect for output or package your job, ensuring all fonts and images are included. Be sure to spell-check your file before collecting.

~ We **do not** accept as *final* file formats - Word, Powerpoint, Excel or Publisher. But we do accept only if we are doing the designwork and are using for copy and/or editing purposes.

2 HELPFUL POINTS FOR YOUR FILE PREPARATION

1. PROJECT SCOPE:

To quote on a job, we must know basic facts

What are you printing? What is the finished size? How many labels are being printed? The format provided? Stock required? Number of inks required - CMYK or Pantone. Gloss, Varnish or UV finish? Rewind requirements? Job deadline? Will you be providing art or do you require a design and building of the file?

Proofs

Proofs will be sent to the client and a signed off proof must be returned before any action is done to the job.

Don't let what you see on the monitor or a laser printout lull you into thinking this is what the final printed file will look like. Visually correct and mechanically correct are not one in the same. Process and Pantone colours may look identical on the screen, but they will separate differently. If you need to convert a Pantone colour to process or vice-versa, you may want to ask us for a recommendation so as to ensure your final printed job is what you receive.

2. COMMON MISTAKES WHEN RELEASING FILES:

Missing fonts

Missing fonts can be a real issue. There are many variations of the same typeface and can come from different platforms - PC or Mac. If fonts are not supplied or all text is not converted to outlines, font substitutions may occur causing text to re-flow.

Don't trap

Trapping is the creation of overlaps between adjoining colours to make sure they abut exactly on a press. There is always movement on the press and if colours are not trapped there may be gaps or halos between the colours. We as printers will determine traps as it is dependent on the type of job and colours used, allowing us to adjust for maximum efficiency.

Missing or Unlinked Graphics

Your page file may show the image, but the actual file could be missing. It may have become unlinked when saved in a folder that differs from its original location. Make sure all links are up-to-date and either embedded or supplied, otherwise if not detected, the file may be output as a low-resolution image.

File proof and colour mark-up

A proof of the final art should be sent. It may be digital or a hard copy. In addition, if you are intent on specific final colours, please provide a list of the colours intended for your file.

3. FINAL FILE FORMATS:

Releasing files in PDF (Portable Document Format) has become the norm in printing. It provides a degree of standardization for materials printed at various printers. This print-ready format preserves all the fonts, formatting, graphics and colours of any source document, independent of the application and platform used to create it. It can be easily viewed on multiple platforms without losing quality.

Keep in mind that press-ready PDFs embed data so the printer cannot make last minute colour changes to images that may be contained in the file. If the file is saved as a X1A compliant file, certain revisions can be made, but check with us first.

For best results

~ All PDF files must be X1a compliant when being created and eventually supplied to us.

~ Images must be high resolution -- do not downsample.

~ Include the bleeds and crop marks if the job requires.

~ Embed the fonts or have text converted to outlines before creating the PDF.

~ Create and send a CMYK PDF, **not** RGB.

Native Files

If you are sending in native files - i.e., your original Illustrator file, keep in mind that we work with the most current versions of Adobe Creative Cloud.

Email

If your files are under 10 megabytes, you can email them to our art department: *art@totallabel.ca* OR *totallabel@telus.net*

4. SUMMARY:

We want to help you create files that are problem free, which in turn saves everyone a lot of headaches. More importantly, it will save unnecessary expenses that may go beyond the original quote.

We are committed to providing you with all the information needed to not only save money, but to create a printed project that goes beyond what you may have envisioned.

Please take advantage of our extensive experience and knowledge of the entire printing process. We aim to please and look forward to meeting the needs of your next printing project!

Print Specifications Checklist

Copy this form and use it to check that you have provided everything

Information

- ☐ Contact person/print rep
- ☐ Company
- ☐ Address
- ☐ Telephone
- ☐ Email

General Information

- ☐ Job name
- ☐ Quantity
- ☐ Final trim size
- ☐ Number of colors

Stock

- ☐ Grade name
- ☐ Paper finish(es)
- ☐ Paper weight(s)
- ☐ Paper Colour

Inks

- ☐ Process, match, or special inks
- ☐ Type of varnish
- ☐ Spot or overall coverage

Files Supplied

- ☐ Digital files
- ☐ Software application(s)
- ☐ Fonts

Proofs

- ☐ Number supplied
- ☐ Sign off and approval

Packing/Shipping

- ☐ Quantity per carton
- ☐ Shipping instructions

Schedule

- ☐ Delivery date(s) – partial or full quantities and addresses

File Release Checklist

Copy this form and use it to check that you have provided everything

File Information

- ☐ Colour proofs clearly marked for colour breaks, knockouts, FPOs, bleeds, etc.

Support Files

- ☐ Most current version of all placed files included. Make sure each file has a unique file name. Verify proper placement of any modified files and check links.
- ☐ Resolution of hi-res images should be at least 300 dpi at 100% of final size
- ☐ All sizing, cropping or rotating of images should be done in the original art program (i.e., Photoshop).

Fonts

- ☐ All fonts – placed files included (printer & screen) included
- ☐ Or all Fonts converted to outlines

Colours

- ☐ All colours properly defined (CMYK, Pantone)

PDF Files

- ☐ All fonts embedded
- ☐ Make sure files are PDF X1A compliant format
- ☐ Make sure all images are hi-res
- ☐ CMYK – not RGB colour space

Information to Provide

Copy this form and use it to check that you have provided everything

General Information

Company _____ Contact Person _____

Address _____

Telephone _____ Email _____

PO # _____ Quote # _____

General Job Information

Job Name _____ Trim Size _____ Dieline # _____

_____ Quantity _____ Rewind # _____

Paper Stock _____ Core Size _____

_____

Media for File(s)

☐ Email ☐ FTP ☐ Other _____

Colors

☐ CMYK ☐ PMS ☐ PMS ☐ PMS

☐ PMS ☐ PMS ☐ PMS ☐ PMS

☐ Varnish ☐ Laminate ☐ Matte ☐ Other

Finishing Information

☐ Courier ☐ Other _____

Packing & Delivery Information

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Special Instructions or Notes

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