Guidelines | For Preparing Files

We at Benchemark Printing have learned that a streamlined prepress process ensures quick turnaround, competitive pricing and superior output. The following guidelines will help you construct your files using industry standards to produce high-quality results.

General Recommendations:

LAYOUT:
- Please submit files in a page layout program, such as Quark Xpress or Adobe Indesign; other files created in programs such as Photoshop or Illustrator should be placed in a layout program to ensure proper size and position.

- Always create the document as the exact finished trim size, with a 1/8 inch bleed if necessary. Please do not build files on an oversized sheet with crop marks placed manually.

- Always delete what is not used in your final layout, including any unused colors in the color palette and any extraneous images/objects on the pasteboard.

- It is not necessary to paginate the document into spreads — our workflow utilizes software to facilitate this process. Design the layout in the page order as it is intended to be read.

FONTS:
- Be sure to send all and only the fonts used in the layout. This includes both the screen and printer font (.pfm and .pfb files on the PC) for each font used.

- Any fonts used in an import graphic, such as an Illustrator EPS, should also be included. These can also be converted to outlines in the original program, changing the type from a font to a graphic. However, outlined type cannot be edited, so it is best to save a copy.

- Do not use "style" commands to apply effects such as bold or italics; only the "bold" or "italic" version of the font should be used.

GRAPHICS:
- Be sure to send all and only the graphics used in the document. All graphics should be linked, rather than embedded, in the layout program.

- All imported files should be either TIFF or EPS format, uncompressed.

- Photoshop, or raster, images should be saved with a resolution of 300 dpi, and placed in the layout at 100%. Altering the scale in the layout changes the effective resolution of the image, thus reducing the quality when printed.

- Images should be scanned at 300 dpi (color or grayscale) or 1200 dpi (lineart).

COLORS:
- Full-color images or graphics should use only CMYK definitions. The offset printing process separates all colors into percentages of cyan, magenta, yellow and black. Therefore, an image saved in another mode (i.e. RGB) will not separate properly, resulting in unintended colors when printed.

- Spot colors should be defined with Pantone (PMS) numbers. Please do not create other spot colors, such as "winter blue" or "new color1."

FILES:
Please refer to the list on the right for supported software and file types.

* Microsoft Word and Publisher are commonly used for small projects output with a desktop printer. It is usually best to save these files in PDF format for professional offset printing.

** Adobe Acrobat, or PDF, files make it easy to submit files to be printed. However, for best results it is important that these files be saved with specific settings. Please refer to the PDF details on the next page.

File Formats:

Our workflow supports both Macintosh and Windows (PC) platforms.

Current editions of software packages are compatible with earlier versions.

Supported Programs:
MacIntosh:

Quark Xpress 16

Adobe InDesign CC-2018

Adobe Illustrator CC-2018

Adobe Photoshop CC-2018

Adobe Acrobat 10.0**

Windows (PC):

Quark Xpress 9

Adobe InDesign CC-2018

Adobe Illustrator CC-2018

Adobe Photoshop CC-2018

Adobe Acrobat 10.0**

Microsoft Word*

Supported File Types:
Preferred:

.tif	(TIFF)
.eps	(EPS)
.pdf	(PDF)
.qxp	(QUARK XPRESS)
.indd	(ADOBE INDESIGN)

Accepted:

.jpg	(JPG)
.bmp	(BITMAP)

PDF Details:

For best results, please follow these guidelines for preparing PDF files:

- Always preflight the original layout, to ensure correct usage of colors, fonts and images (see front side), before saving as PDF.

- When saving/exporting, use settings that retain the properties of the original layout. Be sure to create a high-resolution PDF using the following job options:

  - Overall resolution = 2400 dpi

  - Do not compress, downsample or subsample images – use the "keep resolution" setting to make sure images are 300 dpi

  - Embed all fonts; Subset all fonts at 100%

  - Be sure to leave color *unchanged* – converting colors changes the color definitions specified in the original layout

- PDF files should be saved as the final trim size *plus* bleed (1/8").

- It is not necessary to paginate or save as spreads. The PDF should maintain the same page order as the original layout.

- It may be useful to include crop marks to ensure correct trim; however, it is not necessary to use other marks, such as color bars or registration marks.

Benchemark will also provide downloadable "PDF Job Settings" for common layout programs. Please contact us for more information.

File Transfer:

Once your materials have been designed and prepared, Benchemark makes it easy to package and submit all of the files necessary for your project to be printed:

PACKAGE:
- Save a final version of the layout in the native program (i.e. Quark or InDesign).

- Be sure to include all linked images, graphics and fonts used in the final layout. This can be done manually; however, it is best to use the *Package* (InDesign), *Collect for Output* (Quark), or *Save for Service Provider* (Pagemaker) feature available in your layout program. This will identify and collect all of the elements linked to the layout.

- Be sure to send *only* the files necessary for the specific job being printed. Extra files will lead to questions as to which is the correct version to be used.

- Include a hardcopy or PDF proof of the final version of the layout, to be used as reference during our preflight.

- Use the *Checklist For Submitting Files* to confirm all specifications for your project. Include a copy of this list with your files.

SUBMIT:
- Benchemark Printing supports the following media:

  CD's, DVD's, thumb drives/jump drives

- Files may also be submitted via e-mail or through our secure FTP site:

  - It is best to compress/archive as **Stuffit** (Mac) or **Zip** (PC) files, to avoid corruption during the transfer.

  - Files can be e-mailed to *desktop@benchemark.net*

  - Please contact us for instructions regarding the FTP site.

Questions / Concerns:

Our aim at Benchemark Printing is to provide high-quality results, in a timely manner and at a competitive price. We are always available to answer questions and offer support through each stage of your project.

Please contact us for further assistance:

PHONE: 518-393-1361

FAX: 518-372-1336

E-MAIL: desktop@benchemark.net

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printing, inc.