

GENERAL GUIDE TO FILE TYPES AND FILE USES FOR TWIN CITY PRINTING

NOTE:

THIS GUIDE IS INTENDED FOR GENERAL PURPOSE INFORMATION AND IS NOT MEANT TO COVER THE BROAD SPECTRUM OF FILE TYPES OR USES.
THIS INFORMATION WILL HELP TO DEVELOP VERY GENERAL KNOWLEDGE OF FILE TYPES AND THEIR USES.
THIS IS NOT AN ALL-INCLUSIVE GUIDE AND HAS OMITTED INFORMATION FOR THE SAKE OF BREVITY.



IMPORTANT TERMS

VECTOR

An image or graphic that uses mathematical points to create lines. These images can be made into any color needed and enlarged to any size. These are the preferred file types for logos and spot color jobs. These are not measured in DPI.

File types:

.ai
.eps (in most cases)
.pdf (in some cases)

RASTERIZED (OR FLAT IMAGE)

An image that stores data inside of pixels. A rasterized image is measured in DPI. These are limited in the amount they can be enlarged. If enlarged too much, blurring will take effect. A rasterized image can be 4 color, grayscale, or spot color if properly applied. The color of the image can not be changed drastically. The text in a rasterized or flattened file can't be edited.

File types:

.tiff
.jpeg
.png
.gif
.psd
.eps (in few cases)
.pdf (in some cases)

DPI

Dots Per Inch. This is used to measure rasterized images. The minimum for print use is 300dpi. Lower than 300 pi can be printed, but quality loss will be noticeable in many cases. Pulling images or logos from websites will NOT work. These images are 72dpi and will not be print quality.

CS3

Adobe Creative Suite 3. This refers to the software we use in prepress. This is the latest fully released version.

Programs:

InDesign CS3
Illustrator CS3
Photoshop CS3

PDF

Portable Document Format. This is the most widely used print format. This is the type that we use in prepress for preparing files for print.

CMYK

Cyan/Magenta/Yellow/Black. This is the most commonly used color combination for printing. All four-color graphics sent in to Twin City need to be set as CMYK.

RGB

Red/Green/Blue. This is the color mode used for web design and typical computer monitor viewing. This is not used for print.

SPOT COLOR

This is a specific color named in the particular file. The most commonly used naming convention for spot colors is written by PANTONE®. These will not be using a four-color mix such as CMYK, but instead use a specially mixed color to achieve a solid look instead of a mixture of CMYK.

GRAYSCALE

This is the color mode used when there will only be black ink used in the printing.

FILE TYPES

IMAGES

.TIFF

Highest quality.
Largest file size.
Usually can't be emailed.
Usually a 4 color image.
Usually NOT a spot color.
A 'rasterized' image.
Color and type can SOMETIMES be manipulated.

.JPEG

Lower quality.
Smaller file size.
Usually can be emailed.
4 color image.
NOT a spot color.
A 'rasterized' image.
Color and type can't be manipulated.

.PNG/GIF

Very low quality.
Tiny file size.
Can be emailed.
4 color image.
NOT a spot color.
A 'rasterized' image.
Generally used for web viewing, not print.
Color and type can't be manipulated.

.PDF

High quality.
Large file size.
Usually can be emailed.
4 color or SPOT color image.
Can be 'rasterized' or 'vector'.
Color and type can SOMETIMES be manipulated.

.EPS

if rasterized:

High quality.
Large file size.
Usually can't be emailed.
Color and type can SOMETIMES be manipulated.
4 color or SPOT color image.

if vector:

Best quality.
Small file size.
Can be emailed.
4 color or SPOT color image.
Colors can be manipulated.

.AI

Best quality.
Small file size.
Usually can be emailed.
4 color or SPOT color image.
Colors can be manipulated.

.PSD

High quality.
Large file size.
Usually can't be emailed.
4 color or SPOT color image.
Color and type can SOMETIMES be manipulated.

PRINT LAYOUT

.INDD

InDesign file.
Layout only.
Will not include images. Images are 'linked' to the file.

.QXD

Quark file.
Layout only.
Will not include images. Images are 'linked' to the file.

.PUB

Publisher file.
Not optimal for print use.
Used mainly for monitor-based presentations or interoffice productivity.
Will include low quality images.
Will most likely be 4 color, not SPOT color.

.DOC

Microsoft Word document.
Not optimal for print use.
Used mainly for text printouts or interoffice productivity.
Will include low quality images.
Will be 4 color, not SPOT color.

ARCHIVED

.ZIP

Windows or Mac archived file.
It will contain multiple files all 'packaged' within one.

.SIT or .SITX

Mac archived file.
It will contain multiple files all 'packaged' within one.

.RAR

Windows or Mac archived file.
It will contain multiple files all 'packaged' within one.
Not as widely used as the previous 2.