

We have prepared the following guide to assist you with your Design OnLine submission. If you have a specific question that is not covered in this guide, or have other questions, please feel free to contact us or visit our FAQ page. **Improperly prepared files can cause delays in production.**

### Quick Checklist for submitting DESIGN ONLINE files -

- Create / Sign in to your Account
- Template selected is the size and style you want.
- Template selected has options you want - Band-It, Stick, Perforation, etc.
- All images **you upload** are hi-res (300 dpi). (If you only have lo-res images, a similar high resolution image may be available in our **Image Gallery\***, which has both free images and images for purchase.) **Use no lo-res images from the web.**
- Logo uploaded is highest quality format available to you. Typically the best is .eps or .pdf. Other formats such as .jpg and .tif should be the highest resolution possible. Read below for more information on image quality.
- No RGB elements in the file. Convert RGB images to CMYK before uploading if possible to avoid any unexpected color shift. See the complete guide for more info on color.
- Logos and critical text placed **only** within Safe Zone
- All areas proofread and spelling/grammar checked
- Any artwork or color that touches the trim line extends out to bleed edge.
- Final Proof Preview has been reviewed carefully for possible errors and you are approving it for print.
- When ordering, the chosen “color options” on your order match your design. If you order one sided printing as the “color option” for your order, you have left back side blank. If you order black only printing, anything you added to the back side in color will print black/grayscale.

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Our easy to use Design OnLine tool has a built in Help section but some general guidelines follow:

#### **Our Design OnLine tool generates a High Resolution PDF (.pdf), which is our preferred format.**

Any A'Deas supplied components available through the design tool such as images, backgrounds, fonts, graphics etc. meet our requirements but user uploaded elements still need to fit certain criteria to ensure a quality printed piece. To make sure your final PDF has the correct components to make a press ready file, we have included a detailed list for you to follow:

- **Create an Account:** An account will be required for placing an order, so the first step is to create/sign in to your account.
- **Page Size:** When you choose a size in the designer, you are choosing the trim size of the final piece. The trim is just as it sounds, it is where we will trim your document once it has been printed. Since trimming is a mechanical process, it may vary slightly due to equipment tolerances. Files for commercial printing include an extra area all around the document called bleed, which is the term referring to the area of your digital file that extends past the trim line to the bleed edge. Any color, images, etc that touch the trim line must extend past that to the bleed edge, not just end at the trim line. This ensures that when your piece is trimmed, no white edge will show where it should not. Our design tool automatically adds the required area for bleed and the bleed area and trim lines are clearly marked on the design template. Make sure you position your elements properly depending on whether you want them to bleed or not. Make sure you choose the correct size if more than one size is available for the product you are designing. If you discover that you want to change the size once you are in the designer, a drop-down list will show you what sizes for that product are available. Simply choose the size you want.

**Safe Zone:** This is the area that is generally set back 1/4” inside the trim line that you should use as a guide for keeping your text, logo and other critical information safe. Staying within the safe zone ensures that when the piece is trimmed, critical information will not come too close to the finished edge. It also gives your final piece a more professional appearance because you don't have important information crowding out to the trim line. The Safe Zone is clearly marked on the design template.

#### **Two areas that tend to need clarification for our clients are image resolution and color.**

Becoming familiar with the best formats for what you upload will help ensure that your finished piece is of high quality.

- **Image Gallery:** \*If you utilize one of the images for purchase in the Image Gallery, it will remain in your account to utilize for no additional charge on future orders.

- **About Image Resolution...**

**Raster:** There are two types of images, *raster* and *vector*. Raster Images such as those from your digital camera are made of a grid of pixels and are manipulated in image editing programs such as Photoshop. Those images are resolution dependent meaning they should not be scaled up beyond 100% in a layout program since they will begin to lose visual quality. The higher they are scaled, the more quality lost because each pixel in the image is being stretched and enlarged. This can cause a jaggy, pixelated look to the image. If scaling is needed, it should be done in an image editing program before you upload. We recommend you use your uploaded images at 100% or less to avoid any loss in quality. Raster images are also defined as hi-res or low-res depending on the number of pixels per inch {commonly referred to as dpi}. The proper resolutions for hi-res raster elements are:

**Photos/pictures - 300 dpi. Rasterized text/logos/line art - 1200 dpi.**

**Images from the web are typically lo-res and also may be © WE RECOMMEND AGAINST using them.**

**Why the difference in resolutions?** It is due to the visual differences in images like photos and logos/line art. Photos, etc. are

continuous tone images that have slightly different hued color pixels throughout the entire image without sharp transitions. Even in very high resolution images with areas of contrasting color, the transition between the colors will be created by a mix of colors between the two contrasting colors. A logo or line art generally has very well defined edges with color or black butting up directly to other colors or white. The different visual nature of this file makes it more suited to being created in an illustration program. That is why if a logo is created in or scanned into a raster format, the resolution should be extremely high to prevent a jagged looking transition between the contrasting colors. The very high resolution simulates the look that would be achieved if the file was actually a vector format. Crisp, clean lines.

**Vector:** Vector art are images that are created in illustration programs such as Adobe Illustrator or CorelDraw. Vector images are not resolution dependent, may be scaled to any size in a layout program without losing visual quality, and is always the recommended format for logos & line art. Text is vector by nature. Always send the vector version of the file if you have it. If you do not have a vector (.eps) logo, and only have an image file of your logo such as a .jpeg, make sure it is hi-res and keep the compression at a minimum.

#### ● **About Color: RGB vs CMYK**

**RGB:** This is the color space of your digital camera, scanner and monitor. The colors you see on your monitor are generated by a different process than the CMYK equivalent color printed on paper. Color on your monitor will be brighter because monitors use a light based projected spectrum of color (RGB) and while you can see millions of colors on your monitor, a much smaller range of colors can actually be achieved when printing (CMYK). Even if you have a high end, professionally calibrated monitor, because of the difference in mediums, what you see on screen may not match what can print on paper. Certain bright, vibrant RGB colors simply can't be replicated with CMYK inks because they are out of the CMYK "color gamut."

**CMYK (4-color process printing):** This is the standard color space of commercial printing. Whether offset or digital, printing is still essentially adding color to paper - colors on printed pieces are viewed as light reflects off of ink. All RGB colors must be converted to the 4 colors of CMYK (cyan, magenta, yellow, black) to be printed, either before printing in the design process (where the designer has control to correct any color shift that results from the conversion) or they will be converted "on the fly" which means the conversion will take place as the file is processed and printed and correcting color shifts may not be possible. Although our system will process both RGB and CMYK color formats, we design with CMYK so the problem of color shift from conversion is eliminated.

**But conversion is not the only variable.** You are still viewing those CMYK colors on an RGB monitor, so you are never actually seeing the exact *printed* color - you are seeing the RGB representation of that CMYK color. And since color is different from monitor to monitor, you might view an image you send us on one monitor and then the proof we send you on another monitor and the colors could look slightly different - all based on just the particular monitor's calibration. And both could vary slightly from the final printed piece.

#### **So how do you strive for good results with color?**

- a) Work with a CMYK color palette for any images, graphics, logos you are uploading.
- b) If you acquire an image, make sure it is CMYK and if not, convert it with your image editing software so you can adjust the color if need be before you upload.
- c) If color is critical, talk to customer service about Pantone colored inks which are not available in Design OnLine.

#### ● **PDF PROOF PREVIEW**

You can view a digital proof during any time of the design process by clicking the Preview Tab in the design tool. This action will download a pdf for you to view. The proof will show the trim line and non-printing items such as the position of Stick, the Band-It hole and/or perf lines so you may see where they fall within the design. Also, the Stick Banner telling the end user how to use it **DOES** print and it will show on your proof as well. Your proof will also have a watermark indicating it is a proof. That, of course, will not print on your final piece. **A final note:** Because your job will print in high resolution, if you provide any art, your result will be as clear and sharp as the quality of the particular provided art allows. Because the proof is digital, poor art will not necessarily show on the proof to the degree it will on the printed piece. Another reason to upload the best quality you have and understand our recommendations.

**PLEASE REVIEW YOUR PROOF CAREFULLY. THIS IS YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO ENSURE ALL SPELLING, GRAMMAR, COLORS (see below), CONTENT, ETC. ARE AS YOU WANT THEM.** This is the time to make edits - once you place the order, edits are not possible. A'DEAS is not responsible for the quality of your uploads or your design.

**Regarding color and digital proofs** - The discussion earlier of RGB vs CMYK applies to digital proofs as well. A'DEAS Printing cannot be held responsible for slight differences in color between digital proofs and the final printed piece. That being said, we will always strive to meet your expectations. Hard proofs are not available through the Design OnLine tool.

#### ● **Placing Your Order**

Once you have completed and reviewed your design, you will "Save & Continue" where you will enter a reference name for your project. This name is for your use and will display in your Cart & Portfolio for future reference. If you have not done so earlier, you will need to create your account to continue with the order process. After creating your account or signing in, you will be re-directed back to the order page, where you can complete the order process or save the design into your Portfolio and continue with another project. Your saved design may be edited or used to create a new version. **REMINDER:** Make sure the chosen "color options" on your order match your design. If you order one sided printing as the "color option" for your order, you have left the back side blank. If you order black only printing, anything you added to the back side in color will print black/grayscale.