


We have prepared the following guide to assist you with your electronic file preparation and submission. If you have a specific problem 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 READY TO PRINT files -**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Page size is correct and includes 1/8" bleed             | <input type="checkbox"/> Artwork/color that touches trim extends to bleed.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Artwork is hi-res - 300dpi images/1200dpi line art/logos | <input type="checkbox"/> NO LO-RES IMAGES FROM THE WEB                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ALL Colors in CMYK mode                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> No RGB elements in the file                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Type is legible and crisp with fonts embedded            | <input type="checkbox"/> All areas proofread and spelling/grammar checked    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Logos and critical text within Safe Zone                 | <input type="checkbox"/> File submitted as High Resolution Press Quality PDF |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> File submitted Through Design OnLine / Online Cart  |

**Easy Step-by-Step Guide for Uploading Your Ready to Print Final PDF**

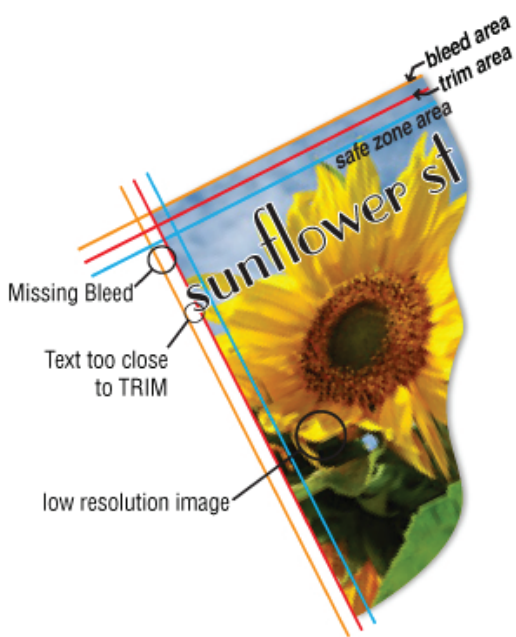
- Create Your Account or **Sign In**.
- Go to the product page on the website and click on the green **Upload Design** button.
- Choose the **Product Size** that matches your finished trim size from the dropdown menu. The template allows for the bleed.
- Click the **Upload Images or Ready to Print Files** button. 
- Select the top tab **Upload Your Images**. The upload window will appear. (Upload back and front as separate files.) **Browse** for your file(s) and click **Upload**. Your uploaded file(s) will show in your **Image Gallery** with a .png suffix.
- Click the file for the front to load it into the front page of the template. Your file will place into the template slightly off center and reduced in size. To ensure proper positioning, click the file in the template and the **Image Properties** tool will open. Put "0" in both the X and Y coordinates boxes and then use the bottom right blue handle on the file to resize it back to it's full size. As long as you keep the Width/Height locked (default) the file will resize properly with no stretching. Note: your file is not being enlarged, just re-sized back to it's original size. Repeat the process for the back, if applicable.
- Click on the **PDF Preview** tab to download a proof to review. The proof will show the trim lines 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 your 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. If corrections to your file are needed, simply make them and upload the corrected version. Uploaded files do not overwrite - instead a number is added to the name. If you upload a number of revisions, renaming the files before uploading may be helpful.
- Click "Save & Continue" and enter a reference name for your project. This name is for your use and will display in your Cart & Portfolio for future reference. From this page you can download the proof, edit the positioning of your file in the template, choose order options and checkout. **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 should 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.

**Note:** Because your job will print in high resolution, your result will be as clear and sharp as the quality of your provided file 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 be aware of our recommendations.

If you require more in-depth information, read on...

**Final File Format: Our Recommended Format is High Resolution PDF (.pdf)**

Not all PDF files are intended for commercial printing. Some are meant only for viewing on screen. It is important to ensure your PDF is a "press ready" file. (See "Creating a Press Ready Pdf") First though, your final PDF will be only as good as the individual components, i.e: layout, images/logos/graphics, color, text that make up the PDF - we cannot stress this enough. 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:



● **Layout:**

Regardless of which application you use, certain guidelines must be followed to ensure you end up with a print ready PDF that meets our criteria.

**Page Size:** We can refer to page size in two ways, *TRIM* size and *BLEED* size. 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. If you want color or image out to the trim line, it 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. **It is important to note that bleed is added to the file even if no color or art extends to the trim line.** This would mean that a piece intended to trim at 4.25" x 11" would have a bleed size of 4.5" x 11.25". Do not build your layout on an oversized page such as a letter size. Set the page size to the trim size and add bleed. If your layout program has no feature for adding bleed, set the page size to the bleed size and mark the trim and safe zones with guides only for reference in designing. **DO NOT** include printer's marks (trim, registration, etc.)

**Safe Zone:** SAFE ZONE 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. Although we will accept a 1/8" safe zone, we recommend against it.

● **Images & 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 programs such as Photoshop. Those images are resolution dependent meaning they cannot be scaled up beyond 100% in a layout program without losing visual quality. They are also what are referred to as hi-res or low-res images depending on the number of pixels per inch {commonly referred to as dpi}. The resolutions for hi-res raster elements are:

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

Because of the difference in the resolution recommendations for these different types of elements, we do not recommend you flatten a composite layout file into an image - Flattening a file into a 300 dpi image, even though *technically* hi-res, can make your text, logo, line art, etc. fuzzy because those elements require a higher resolution to keep their crisp edges. We recommend instead that you create a press ready pdf which will keep the individual elements at their highest respective resolutions and result in a better outcome. A word about JPEGS: The .jpg format is a very good image format but care must be taken when choosing a compression level. Use 12 (maximum image quality) unless you are familiar with jpeg compression.

**Vector:** Vector images are those 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 the recommended format for logos & line art. Text is vector by nature. Always use the vector version of the file if you have it.

**Most layout files contain both raster (pictures) and vector (logos, text) elements.** 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 compression at a minimum.

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

● **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, **it is strongly recommended that you use only CMYK colors in your elements and layout file** so the problem of color shift from conversion is eliminated.

**But conversion is not the only variable.** Even if you are choosing colors from a CMYK library, 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 the file 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 ensure good results with color?**

- a) Choose from a CMYK color palette in all software you are using.
- 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.
- c) If a particular color is critical, talk to customer service about Pantone colors, which are colored inks. Your project will then require a bid and processing through customer service. Pantone and spot colors are not available through Design OnLine.

#### ● **Text & Fonts**

Stay within the safe zone with all text. Keep your text readable - stay 5pt or above for small print and keep that to a minimum. Print a copy to ensure it is readable. If you are reversing out the type (white type on dark background) small size becomes more critical. Check all spelling and grammar - don’t just depend on the software. Yes, you will receive a proof, but the cleaner your file is, the less chance of incurring additional charges for things you can catch before you submit your file. **Use only reliable fonts** such as PostScript, TrueType or OpenType. Free fonts may work but some are not reliable for commercial printing and may not embed when generating the PDF. Also, avoid fonts created with Font Maker type programs. Apply font styles such as italic or bold, etc. only if you actually have that italic or bold font loaded when the PDF is generated or the style may drop off.

#### ● **Creating a Press Ready PDF**

**Photoshop:** Save As...choose [Photoshop PDF] and make sure there is a check in the Layers Box. Click SAVE. Choose [Press Quality] from the Adobe PDF Preset drop down menu. The default settings in this preset will include type and vector information in the PDF and fonts used will be embedded if the font manufacturer allows. Do not change any of the preset settings. Do not include printer’s trim / registration marks. Save the front and back as separate file.

**NOTE: If you get an error message, do not disregard it. Solve the problem, then generate the PDF.**

**Illustrator:** Save As...choose [Adobe PDF] and Click SAVE. Choose [Press Quality] from the Adobe PDF Preset drop down menu. The default settings in this preset will include type and vector information in the PDF and fonts used will be embedded if the font manufacturer allows. Do not change any of the preset settings with one exception - if you set bleed when you created your document, make sure the bleed is included in the final pdf by checking the “Use Document Bleed Settings” box. Do not include printer’s trim / registration marks. Save the front and back as separate file.

**NOTE: If you get an error message, do not disregard it. Solve the problem, then generate the PDF.**

#### ● **Programs other than Photoshop/Illustrator**

Not all programs generate PDF files suitable for commercial printing. **If you are using a program like Word or if you do not have the application program** (for example you were given a final file in any of the following formats: .eps, .psd, .tif, .png, or .jpg,) email our prepress department: customerservice@adeasprinting.com and let us know the file format so we may advise you. **If you are using Publisher, see the step by step guide on pages 3-4. We cannot guarantee results from non-design programs.**

● **Digital Proofs** CMYK applies to digital proofs as well. A'DEAS Printing cannot be held responsible for slight difference. You will receive a digital proof (soft proof) to review as part of the approval process. **PLEASE REVIEW YOUR PROOF CAREFULLY FOR ACCURACY. THIS IS YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO ENSURE ALL SPELLING, GRAMMAR, COLORS (see below), CONTENT, ETC. ARE CORRECT. A'DEAS is not responsible after you approve your proof.**

**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. If color is critical, please ask for a hard copy proof. This will of course, add both cost and time to your job.

● **Uploading your Final PDF** - See Step by Step instructions for uploading your file are on the first page.