

ARTWORK SPECIFICATIONS for printing of boardstock sleeves and paper case inserts

IMPORTANT - BEFORE YOU BEGIN DESIGNING:

Other manufacturers may have sizing specifications and artwork requirements that do not match ours. Due to this we require that your design files conform to our specifications and requirements as noted herein. Failure to do so may delay the start date of your order and its completion date.

- Artwork files must be supplied in final form (ready to print without revisions).
- Artwork files must be supplied on our **BIGRUN TEMPLATES** – templates from other manufacturers may not meet our sizing specifications.

PLATFORM/SOFTWARE:

To avoid compatibility issues caused by different computer platforms, software and font types, we require that:

- Your artwork files are to have all text converted to outlines/paths.
- Your artwork files are to be supplied in .EPS or high-resolution PDF format.

We recommend the use of Adobe design programs - FREE 30 day trials can be downloaded from www.adobe.com.

UNDERSTAND THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CMYK AND RGB

Failure to understand the difference between CMYK and RGB can lead to disappointing print results. If you are not experienced in designing for commercial grade printing please make note of the following:

Computer monitors, digital cameras, scanners and many computer-printers use the RGB (Red, Green, Blue) color mode to display images. The RGB colors are combined together in varying amounts to provide a much larger range of colors for viewing purposes.

Commercial full-color printing companies use the CMYK printing process and inks. Most of the colors displayed by your RGB computer monitor (and printer) can be duplicated in the CMYK printing process... but not all. This can cause variations between the colors you view on your screen (in RGB) and what will actually print (in CMYK). Additionally, it is important to note that the images displayed on your RGB computer monitor are displayed through the generation of light, thus, very vibrant colors can be created. Images printed onto the paper and plastics used in manufacturing your order are viewed by the human eye through the reflection of light off the product's surface. The result is that vibrant RGB colours printed onto paper or plastic in the CMYK process appear less vibrant (duller) than the images you view on your computer monitor.

Be aware that the color display on your computer monitor is not likely to be 'true'. Calibrating your monitor for design in CMYK provides a better representation of the true print colors on the screen so that there is less variation between the colors you see on the screen compared to what is printed. Though color calibration improves the accuracy of the color display, the monitor is still not going to be 100% accurate. Additionally, many consumer-level computer printers work in the RGB color mode so there may be a variation in the way some colors are represented on your paper print compared to what will actually print in CMYK.

GENERAL DESIGN RULES:

1. Your design page properties must be set to 300dpi (dots per inch).
 2. Your design page must be set to the CMYK color mode (not RGB).
 3. All bitmaps should be 300dpi and supplied in either CMYK or Grayscale as applicable.
 4. Processing/saving your bitmap images as .TIF files will produce better results than .JPG or .GIF.
 5. Acceptable tonal range for gradients/screens is between 15% and 85% - tones outside that range may not print.
 6. Always allow at least 1/8" (3mm) of bleed past the finished edges of the design.
 7. Don't crowd the finished edge of your design with text and imagery unless it actually bleeds off the edge of the design.
 8. We recommend leaving a minimum gap of 1/4" (6mm) space.
 9. Artwork files for stapled booklets are to be supplied in PRINTER SPREAD FORMAT. Build your spreads with multiples of the 4-page (2-panel) folder jewel case template.
 10. Delete all images, text and/or layers that are not required in the design.
 11. Name your files so they can be easily identified (eg: my_job_title.eps). If you've been provided a job number already by Pip, include it in your file name.
- TEXT:
12. Minimum recommended type size for positive print: 5 points
 13. Minimum recommended type size for reversed print: 6 points
 14. IF USING PHOTOSHOP: Because text tends to be pixelated when included in bitmap images, we highly recommend that Photoshop be used to process images but not for typesetting. For best results it is preferable to export images from Photoshop as .TIF files and then typeset in a program such as Illustrator or InDesign.

WHEN YOUR DESIGN IS FINISHED:

15. Leave the design template in the design for our visual reference but ensure it is on its own layer. **Never flatten the design template into the artwork.**
16. **Convert all text to outlines/paths.** If using Photoshop please rasterize all text layers.
17. Save/export your designs as .EPS or high-resolution .PDF files. If you must use Photoshop as your only design program please supply your files as .PSD.
18. If you are designing using linked images please supply those images in a separate folder.
19. Place all of your relevant design files/folders into one folder. Name the folder with your Job Number and Project Name.
20. MAC Users - Use 'Stuffit' to compress your design folder. Name this file with your Job Number and Project Name.
21. PC Users – Use 'Winzip' to compress your design folder. Name this file with your Job Number and Project Name.
22. Submit your design file on Physical Portable Media or transmit via www.YouSendIt.com.

PRE-PRESS & PROOFS:

23. Your supplied artwork files are expected to be ready-to-print without changes or modifications being required. Real-time provides three proofing options for paper printed materials as noted below.

*PROOF OPTION “A” – Electronic Proofs

- Realtime's default proofing option, and the method chosen by over 95% of our customers.
- Design files are reviewed and electronic proofs (PDF format) are provided.
- For confirmation of the physical layout only – not for color accuracy.
- Written approval required.

*PROOF OPTION “B” – Hard-Copy Printed Proofs

- This proofing option must be specifically requested.
- Additional charges apply.
- Electronic proofs must be approved prior to supply of hard-copy proofs.
- This proofing option is for confirmation of physical layout & color accuracy.
- Up to 5% color variation between hard-copy and finished product may be unavoidable due to tolerances inherent with offset printing processes.
- Written approval required.

PROOF OPTION “C” – Pre-Approved

- This proofing option must be specifically requested.
- Client supplies pre-approved artwork files, by-passing review and proofs.
- No proofs supplied. No layout or color warranty.

24. **IMPORTANT:** View your .PDF proofs with Adobe Acrobat and ensure the “Overprint Preview” function is turned on.
25. **THE PURPOSE OF THE PROOF** is to give you one last chance to review the design for overall accuracy and completeness of the design components before it goes to print. Any errors or omissions that you do not correct in the proofing stage will be present in the finished product.

PROOF APPROVALS:

26. It is the sole responsibility of the client to review all details of the supplied proof, which includes (but is not limited to) layout/design, page sequencing, dimensions, spelling, and punctuation.
27. In order to proceed with production the client must submit written approval of the proofs via fax or e-mail. A specific and clearly worded approval is required (ie: “Proofs are approved for printing”). Verbal approval cannot be accepted.
28. By providing an approval in writing, the client indemnifies and holds the vendor free from responsibility and liability for any errors or omissions in the proofs that are not found and corrected by the client. Furthermore, the client acknowledges that the reworking and/or reprinting of materials due to client error is at the sole expense of the client. Such costs will be formally quoted in writing and must be approved by the client in writing before any additional work can take place.

REVISIONS & CHANGES:

29. **IMPORTANT:** The requirement for revisions or provision of new artwork files may delay your order.
30. As noted herein customer-supplied artwork files must be supplied in final form (ready to print without revisions). If revisions or new artwork files are required after proofs have been generated, the Pre-Press and Proofing process must begin again. Due to the work involved additional charges may be incurred by the client (except in instances where the required change to the proof is due to the vendor's error in generating the proof).

COLOR MATCHING

31. Electronic proofs are never to be used to evaluate color accuracy because computer monitors typically don't represent color values accurately. If color correctness is a concern you must request hard-copy printed proofs for final approval (see Proof Option “B” as noted above). Due to variations inherent with offset printing processes, a color variation of up to 5% between the printed-paper proofs and the final printed product may be unavoidable and this is considered to be within acceptable industry tolerances.
32. For orders that proceed based on Proof Option “A” (electronic proofs only – not to be used for color evaluation) the client-supplied designs will go to print based on the color values as supplied in the imagery.

CLIENT SUPPLIED COLOR SAMPLES

33. For CMYK Disc Printing: A client-supplied sample print (on disc or on paper) can be accepted for CMYK color reference, but an exact CMYK color match cannot be guaranteed. For color warranty you must request Proof Option “B”.
34. For Gang-Run CMYK Print: Client-supplied samples cannot be used for color reference on gang-run CMYK printed materials. For color warranty you must request Proof Option “B”.

READY-BY-DATE:

35. **IMPORTANT:** We strongly recommend that you do not (A) schedule the release of your product, (B) book a product release event, or (C) schedule a trip or tour, prior to receiving your product. Every effort will be made to fill orders within the timeline quoted at the outset of the project, however, quoted ready-by-dates are to be considered estimates only and are not guaranteed. Though uncommon, delays can occur and the vendor assumes no responsibility for any damages growing out of or owing to any delays.

BARCODE:

36. Place your barcode in a 1 1/4" X 1/2" white box, in a spot of your choice on the traycard or back panel of your board-stock product.

O CANADA:

37. Realtime manufactures certain products in Canada. U.S. Customs regulations require that we indicate this on all packaging. We will add a very discreet "Made in Canada" on the backside of certain printed materials (usually in a lower corner, under the barcode).

DISC LABEL SPECIFICATIONS for BIGRUN (manufactured) discs

We offer two different methods for printing artwork directly on the **replicated disc** surface:

SCREENPRINTING

Screenprinting is a process where ink is forced through a stencil image on a finely woven screen. A separate screen is used for every ink color required in the design (to a maximum of six colors) and each color is printed one at a time. Opaque inks are used to print the design onto the disc surface. Because there are thousands of different ink colors that can be mixed, an international standard was developed to aid in referencing them all. This color standard is called the Pantone Matching System and features sequentially numbered colors referenced as 'PMS' numbers. Most good graphic design programs have the ability to cross-reference different color modes including Pantone. When designing with screenprinting in mind, the most accurate color reference is to use a printed Pantone swatch book. If using a Pantone swatch book please make sure you reference PMS colors with the “C” designation (which stands for 'coated' stock).

Screenprinting is well suited for designs that have

- large areas of solid color
- line-art graphics and text
- up to six spot/pantone colors.

It is not a good choice for designs containing

- bitmaps, photographic, or true-to-life images
- multiple colors, transparencies, gradients and screens
- four-color process (CMYK) artwork.

When preparing your artwork for spot color screenprinting, please note:

- The design must be color-separable. It is recommended that each individual color is designed on a separate design layer.
- Anything less than 100% solid color will print as a dot pattern and will not have the consistent and smooth appearance that you see on your computer monitor.

CMYK OFFSET

A process that operates on the Four Color Process printing system which offers higher resolution and tighter registration than screenprinting. Four Color Process Printing (referred to as CMYK) is the standard for most types of commercial printing and uses four primary pigments (C stands for Cyan, M stands for Magenta, Y stands for Yellow, K stands for Black) which can be mixed and combined together in varying amounts to provide a palette of thousands of different colors for printing. Translucent inks are used to print the design onto the disc surface with the four layers of ink (C+M+Y+K) layering one on top of the other to create the finished image. Because the inks are translucent it is generally recommended that a solid white backprint (also called a 'flood') be used to make the offset print stand out and appear more vibrant. Most Pantone color numbers can be translated into CMYK values... but not all. For best results it is recommended that a Pantone-To-Process guide be used.

CMYK OFFSET is well suited for designs containing

- four-color process (CMYK) artwork
- bitmaps, photographic, or true-to-life images
- complex, multiple colors.

It is not a good choice for designs

- containing large areas of solid color
- requiring a match to spot/Pantone colors.

WHEN YOUR DISC LABEL DESIGN IS FINISHED:

1. Leave the design template in the design for our visual reference but ensure it is on its own layer. **Never flatten the design template into the artwork.**
2. **Convert all text to outlines/paths.** If using Photoshop please rasterize all text layers.
3. Save/export your designs as .EPS or high-resolution .PDF files. If you must use Photoshop as your only design program please supply your files as .PSD.
4. If you are designing using linked images please supply those images in a separate folder.
5. Place all of your relevant design files (sleeve + disc label + any links) into one folder. Name the folder with your job number and project name.
6. Use 'Stuffit' or 'Winzip' to compress your design folder.
7. Submit your compressed archive on Physical Portable Media or transmit via www.YouSendIt.com.