

Some Digital Artwork Basics...

Digital images come in two formats, Vector and Raster. Artwork can be set up using either of these types, or a combination of both in one document.



Vector
Images

Vector images are created using geometric shapes, paths or type - giving clean and sharp edges to all elements in the design. They can be scaled up or down without affecting the quality of the final printed image. Programs used to create or manipulate vector artwork include Adobe Illustrator, Corel Draw and Freehand. File Formats for vector artwork include: .ai .eps .svg .pdf



Raster
Images

Raster images are created using an array of different coloured dots or pixels which when viewed as a whole at distance, make up an image. The quality of an image depends on the number of pixels within a given area (resolution) and the size the finished print needs to be. As the number of dots making up an image will not change, the quality of these types of images will decrease as the print size is enlarged. It is important to note that the quality of an image saved at a low resolution cannot subsequently be improved just by re-saving it at higher resolution. Programs used to create or manipulate raster artwork include Adobe Photoshop and PaintShop Pro. File Formats for raster artwork include: .jpg .tif .png .psd .eps .pdf



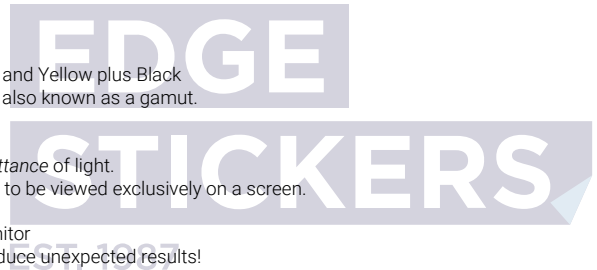
CMYK

There are two colour formats used in digital artwork, CMYK and RGB. The first colour format, and the one used in digital printing is CMYK. These letters refer to the light *absorbing* primary colours Blue (Cyan), Red (Magenta) and Yellow plus Black. When combined, these process colours can produce a wide range of printed colours also known as a gamut.



RGB

The alternative colour format is RGB. These letters refer to the primary colours (Red, Green and Blue) produced by the *emittance* of light. This format has a different colour range or gamut and is suited to producing artwork to be viewed exclusively on a screen. Colours within the RGB gamut may not be achievable in the CMYK gamut. RGB colours, tend to look brighter and more vibrant when viewed on a screen or monitor - but when those colours have to be converted to CMYK for digital printing it can produce unexpected results!



Guidelines for supplying Print Ready Artwork



Colours

Artwork should be supplied in CMYK format. RGB artwork which is automatically converted to CMYK in our software, may give unexpected print results. Artwork set up in Spot colours such as Pantone or RAL are also converted to CMYK for digital printing - so we cannot guarantee colour matching. (Pantone colours can be matched with our traditional Screenprinting process but costs may differ - Please ask)



File
Format

Wherever possible, artwork should be sent in PDF format (For multiple designs, please keep each design as a separate page or file) We can accept files in other formats such as AI, INDD, EPS, PSD, JPG and TIFF but additional artwork charges may apply (Please ensure that any linked images used in your file are embedded) Word, Powerpoint or Excel files are not accepted as artwork and these must always be exported or saved in PDF format - but please be aware that the quality of these file types are not usually of good enough quality for larger prints. To avoid confusion if sending multiple files, please try to use filenames that are short but as descriptive as possible.



Type/Fonts

Artwork supplied in the preferred PDF format will have any fonts used in the file embedded - so type shouldn't be an issue in many cases. However if we need to amend a file in any way, we may need to be able to open the file in one of our editing programs. To avoid problems and delays where fonts are missing from the file, it is always best to convert any type used in the file to paths or outlines. (Please remember to save an original version of your file in case you need to make amendments to the type at a later date!)



Overprinting

Please do not use overprints in your artwork. We cannot always check for print issues when colours are set to overprint and any proofs sent may not highlight these problems. We are unable to take responsibility for unexpected results due to overprinting - so it is best to avoid using them in your file.



Black

Black elements of a design, wherever possible, should be set using 100% for the K value - and not just a mix of lower CMYK values. (For digital prints where Black is set up in only 100% K, we will sometimes make the colour 'richer' by using 20% C, 20% M and 20% Y with the 100% K)



Shaped
Cuts

Jobs requiring a shaped cut should be supplied with the cut lines in vector format (as simple as is possible and with as few nodes as is necessary) Ideally, the artwork for printed elements and the cut contours should be supplied as separate files - but details or instructions of where the cuts need to be made in relation to the print should also be provided. Additional artwork charges may apply if we have to create, modify or clean up cut lines prior to production.



Shaped
White

Jobs requiring a specific shaped area of white print should be supplied in an editable vector format. This is due to the specific processes involved with printing digitally with white ink. Additional artwork charges may apply if we have to create or manipulate custom shaped areas for printing with white ink.



Metallic
Printing

Jobs requiring a special metallic colour print should be supplied in an editable vector format. This is due to the specific processes involved with printing metallic inks. Additional artwork charges may apply if we have to create or manipulate vector format artwork for metallic printing. Please note that due to the processes involved in this type of printing, very fine or detailed designs may not be achievable.



Screenprinting

We are specialists in screenprinting and this method of printing may offer significant benefits for certain jobs when compared to digital printing. In this case however, there may be additional artwork requirements to consider or limitations to what is achievable. Please ask and we can advise further.



Bleed

On jobs where any printed elements are at or beyond the edges of the finished job, artwork must be supplied with bleed. For most printed jobs we would ask for this to be set at 3mm, but for small jobs 2mm may be sufficient. (With large format printing we would ask for a minimum of 5mm at actual printed size)



Scale

Wherever possible, please supply all artwork at actual size. If for practical reasons the artwork cannot be supplied at 100%, please try to use a workable scale (eg 10%, 25%, 50%) Where artwork is to be supplied at a reduced scale, please check that the artwork is proportional to the required finished job size. (If supplying raster images in your artwork, please also refer to the guidelines regarding resolution)



Finishing

Please try to keep any critical elements of the design away from areas that could be affected by specific finishing requirements. These could include drill holes or fixings, hems and eyelets on banners or joins between adjacent sections on larger panelled prints etc. If you have any queries in this regard, please ask prior to setting up your design.



Resolution

Our recommended resolution for supplied raster artwork is at least 150dpi at the actual printed size. For smaller print jobs (up to A4 size) this recommended resolution would be at least 300dpi at the printed size. Anything below this resolution can be printed but it may mean that the dots or pixels making up the image, are visible when viewed close up. For larger prints with artwork sent to us at a reduced scale, please remember that the resolution will need to be increased accordingly. eg. artwork scaled at 50% must be twice the resolution to compensate (25% must be x4, 10% must be x10...etc) A lower resolution than 150dpi may be acceptable for large format jobs - but this depends on the viewing distance of the finished item. We are happy to print any files sent but are unable to take responsibility for unexpected results due to poor resolution.

**These guidelines should address most issues that could delay, or affect the cost and quality of your job
...but if you have any further queries before sending us artwork, please ask and we will do our best to help.**