

Indesign CS4 and PDF

**Questions and
Answers
from a
Commercial Printing
Prepress Perspective**

Can AJ Printing compete with lulu or blurb?

This isn't a sales pitch for my company...tonight I'm trying to provide information that should be fairly universal with printing companies. On the other hand, I will make a brief sales pitch for buying locally, with any local printer.

We may not have the absolute lowest price. We provide our employees with local jobs, good pay and health insurance. We believe that it is important to shop locally! Your own jobs rely on local dollars being spent in the local community!

We are extremely competitive! The prices are budget friendly. If you work with any local printer and the price is beyond your budget, ask them to make suggestions to help you adjust your specifications!

SERVICE is extremely important! You'll have fewer problems working with someone you establish a relationship with! We routinely hear from print buyers who have had jobs go wrong with an "online printer".

Common Errors in customer files

PDFs:

- *Fonts not embedded*
- *Low resolution images*
- *Spot colors built as CMYK*
- *Bleeds not included - 1/8" bleed*
- *RGB colorspace (never a reason for RGB in print production)*
- *Page Size incorrect: set page size to the final trim size. A business card is 3.5"x2". Don't just let it float in the middle of an 8.5"x11" Indesign page.*

Native documents:

*All of the above potential trouble spots, plus:
Missing Fonts / Missing Linked Files
...or...someone trying to build a complex
document using Illy or Photoshop when it
belongs in Indesign!*

Types of Printing Companies

- *Copy Shops:*
 - FedEx (Kinko's)*
 - Office Depot*
 - Clone (5th Street)*
- *Quick Printers*
 - Sir Speedy*
 - Minuteman*
 - Allegra Print & Imaging*
- *Small Commercial Printers*
 - AJ Printing & Graphics, Inc.*
- *Medium & Large Commercial Printers*
 - Chromagraphics*
 - O'dell Printing*
- *Web Printing*
 - Barlow Printing*

Types of Digital Printing

- *Toner Based:*
 - “Color Copiers”*
 - Konica, Canon, Xerox, others*
 - Some Digital “Presses” (Xeikon are you out there?)*
- *Ink Based digital:*
 - HP Indigo*
- *Ink Based traditional printing:*
 - Heidelberg DI Press*
 - Ryobi DI Press, and others*
- *Traditional Commercial Printing:*
 - Plates are made prior to the press phase*
 - Tried and true method*
 - Most cost effective for long runs*

Digital Printing vs. Traditional

The questions:

What quantity do I want?

- *Smaller Quantities are better for digital*
- *Larger Quantities are better for offset*
- *The “breaking point” on price/quantity will depend on the specifics of the job*

What quality level do I want?

- *Traditional offset will almost always have better quality. It allows you to:*
 - *Can use Spot colors matched precisely*
 - *Have the ink interact with the paper better for a smoother, flatter, more “even” appearance*
 - *Toner sits on top of the sheet*

How much time do I have?

- *Digital is usually faster than traditional*

Variable Data? Go Digital

Pricing Digital Printing vs. Traditional

HYPOTHETICAL example:

Flier: 4/4 (double sided), 100# gloss book (paper), CMYK

<i>Quantity:</i>	<u>50</u>	<u>500</u>	<u>1,000</u>	<u>2,000</u>
<i>Digital</i>	\$60	\$250	\$500	\$900
<i>Traditional</i>	\$450	\$500	\$600	\$700

These are not real prices, but they represent the relationship between the two methods of printing

Once you pass the point that the press setup costs are covered, offset becomes less expensive. The gap becomes more pronounced as the quantity increases.

Large Format Posters, Displays and Banners

Pigmented Inks vs. Solvent Based

Resolution of placed images: 72-150 dpi

CMYK is still your colorspace!

Go ahead and convert your spot colors to CMYK: will sometimes yield a more accurate color. Reds remain red instead of becoming pink.

*Foamcore, Gator, Vinyl Banner, Paper Posters
Vehicle Wraps, Backlight Displays, Fabric*

Turnaround on large format: 2 days

Which type of media to use to submit job files?

First, a question: Do you need to visit the printer to look at paper samples, past printed samples, or handle a mock-up for a job that will require unique folding or binding? Don't skip the personal visit if it can improve communication.

If you do not need to visit in person (especially useful for reorders of jobs run in the past), you may email or use a website to transmit the job to the printer.

A CD or USB Flash Drive are also perfectly ok.

Shouldn't a CMYK value print the same on all laser printers?

Sorry, but, no. :-)

Printer manufacturers all take great liberty with their color profiles. They have found, through market research, that if they push up their colors to be more vibrant, they will sell more printers! So, they do not print accurately!

It's like when you view a wall full of TV's at Best Buy...they all have different color appearances when they're tuned to the same channel!

Rich Black?

\$\$\$ Rich Black \$\$\$

First, it doesn't cost any more to use Rich Black in your printing project.

When printing CMYK, if you have a large area of black, you can utilize more than just 100% black ink, and it will give it a very deep black appearance. I only recommend this if you're printing on a coated stock.

Rich Black = 40c 30m 30y 100k

Cautions:

- If you stray on the percentages for building rich black, you could end up with a brown or blue tone to the final appearance. It can work well, or it can bite you if you are unsure.*
- Ask your printer if they have a recommendation*
- If you have small text or artwork reversed out of the large black area, you may not want to use rich black, or you may want to make a modification to keep the rich black away from the text.*
- Total ink limit: 270% (Caution about Auto Black)*

Gradient: Add noise?

*Cyndi says someone published
this, I just haven't seen it
myself.*

*Offset Printing:
4096 shades of gray, banding in
gradients is no longer a concern!*

Isn't it true that, with today's technology, a PDF is all you need to submit?

...because I submitted a job to a printer who didn't seem to know how to handle it (font problem), and they re-set the type for job.

First:

It's never acceptable for a printer to re-set something without talking to you and showing a proof.

Second:

A PDF should be adequate! If you didn't embed the font, you should be fixing that, not the printer.

What is my opinion of using effects, such as drop shadows, in Indesign?

My opinion is to use them, enjoy them, and don't go overboard. It's mostly an aesthetic question. More is not necessarily better.

There is potential that if you stack up effects on effects, that could generate problems. Check these areas on proofs very carefully.

Spot color interacting with transparency....

Should the designer “gang up” items onto standard size paper?

*Please, please, please
do NOT do this!*

*As a printer, we have many options for
sheet sizes: you wouldn't know for sure
what size sheet we're going to run!*

*Also, imposition is automated for us,
and adds other printers marks that we
need to run the job.
So just let us do it!*

Bleeds and sheet sizes: Do I need to stick to standard sheet sizes for printing?

No need to stick with standard sheet sizes. We can print anything from a business card (or smaller) up to a poster, and it gets custom trimmed to your size!

There may be cost-effective reasons for choosing a particular sheet size... discuss this with your printer!

Having a relationship with a shop that will discuss this with you is important!

What makes a job successful at a print shop?

Communicate! Ask questions early. Ask all the questions you need to assure yourself that the printer understands what you expect the final product to look like!

If they won't take the time to answer your questions, you may be in the wrong place!

Avoid arbitrary descriptions, especially with color (be specific, use pantone numbers, etc.)

Look at samples. Ask the printer for samples of past work that they've done that involves similar processes to what you're looking for (foiling, embossing, booklets, postcards, CMYK, whatever)

Build clean files following all of the BEST PRACTICES discussed in Cyndi's classes!

What recommendations do you have for those of us who want to prepare artwork that will have special die cuts, metallic inks and/or foil stamping?

First, follow the guidelines set forth in the next few slides.

Second, be mindful of your budget.

Remember that producing a job in Indesign needs to be done with an eye toward final production. Will the cost be within budget? Will the appearance be what the client wants? Are there elements being applied which cannot be produced, such as hairline embossing, text below 10 point with more than one color?

Metallic Inks

Gold 872

PMS 8343

Die Cuts



- **1 point stroke**
- **unique spot color**
- **Separate Layer**

Build a clean path for cutting, either in Indesign or Illustrator. If you do it in Illustrator, place it as an EPS in Indesign on another layer

Foil Stamping

Company
Name

- **unique spot color**
- **Separate Layer**
- **1 point minimum thickness for any object or stroke**

Build a logo, text or line art on a separate layer in Indesign. Apply a unique spot color. If you do it in Illustrator, place it as an EPS in Indesign on another layer.

**How do I
get samples
of different
papers?**

Bleeds...

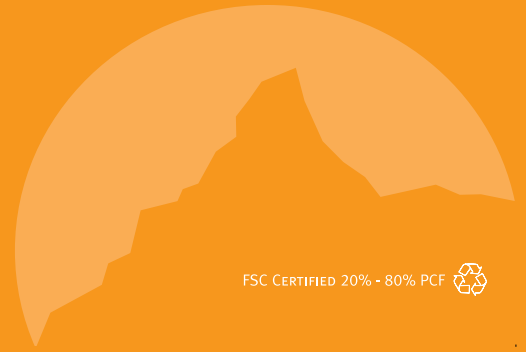
How are they accomplished?

www.lowepro.com



FSC CERTIFIED 20% - 80% PCF 

www.lowepro.com



FSC CERTIFIED 20% - 80% PCF 

www.lowepro.com



FSC CERTIFIED 20% - 80% PCF 

www.lowepro.com



FSC CERTIFIED 20% - 80% PCF 

Different Papers

So many kinds of paper! We could take up a whole evening discussing paper and perhaps still not cover the whole topic.

Coated

Gloss

Matte

Dull

Silk

them)

Uncoated

Copy Paper

Letterhead Paper

Newsprint

Forms (to write on

Don't be fooled by paper weights. Different types of papers are weighed in different sizes.

For example: 32# bond = 80# book

....because....

Some genius decided we would measure the weight of bond paper as a 17x22" parent sheet, but we would measure the weight of book paper as a 25x38" parent sheet

Common Turnaround on offset printing jobs?

**20 years ago,
“2 weeks”
was a typical
answer**

**Final
appearance:
how will the
ink look?
Gloss? Matte?**

**Also, what Eco
Friendly options
are available?**

**Recommendations
for premium quality
archival prints:**

www.awardscanning.com

Tri tones and Quad tones

These are possible but not used much. In fact, I don't remember seeing one. Current trends in the design community point toward CMYK builds.

Printing CMYK would be less expensive than printing 3 or 4 spot colors.

Duotones are still a viable option, but designers don't choose to do it very often. If you're printing black and a spot color, it can add something to the photo by using a duotone, without adding to the cost!

Is 2 color printing still a useful option given the advances in digital printing?

Yes!

- *2 color is less expensive than 4 color*
- *Spot colors print accurately*
- *Small type can be razor sharp with spot color*
- *Envelopes!*
- *Precise color matching for future reorders*

Do I do design work in house or subcontract?

Yes, and yes.

How do you print a metallic PMS?

See me for the metallic PMS swatch book.

We simply begin with a base of either gold or silver ink, we add appropriate mixing colors to give it an appropriate tint and then we load that mixed ink into our printing press.

This requires extra work and craftsmanship at every step!

**Can you print a
letterhead with a solid
ink on the back side?**

Yes, see me for a sample!

How can I make sure my photos are reproduced without being too dark?

*Check your color values in
Photoshop.*

Ask to see a proof.

*You'll gain confidence and experience
with this as you send more and more
jobs to print!*

How can printers and designers work together to minimize waste?

Can a designer give a printer several test pieces to be printed on excess paper space on other jobs?

Printers already work to minimize waste, there is unlikely to be much, if any, excess paper space.

You're referring to a "gang run" which often yields less-than-ideal results.

A "gang run" is what you get when you buy from an online printer. They combine your job with jobs from many other customers, and print them all at once. You get what you get, and no particular attention is paid to your job. Future reprints are unlikely to be consistent with the earlier run.

Can vector images end up printing out with bitmapped looking edges?

I haven't seen this since Illustrator v9.

Illustrator v9 wasn't around very long. :-)

**If I want a Pantone ink
and then want to use it
again in the future, how
long will it last before the
printer has to discard it?**

*We try to mix just what we need
for each individual job.*

Ink doesn't "keep" well.

What are the preferred printers marks you need for a job?

None! If you don't have bleeds, just send the PDF sized to the final output.

If you have bleeds, your Indesign document should still be sized to the final output size, but when you export to PDF, add 1/8" bleed.

My Contact Information:

Dan Johnston
dan@ajprinting.com