

General Information

The following notes outline the specifications, settings and procedures for you to use in order to supply files best suited to output to large format and digital brochure printing.

It is not possible to be specific in regards to individual camera or scanner settings as each manufacturer uses differing software. You should check with the manufacturer's instruction booklets on how to best use their hardware and software.

If we receive unsuitable artwork or image files, we do endeavour to make contact with the client and advise of the quality issue and how to fix the problem if possible. However, the onus is on the client to supply images and artwork to our specifications so that there are no quality issues.

We also have two standard emails we send regarding problems with files where contact by phone cannot be made due to the person not being contactable or where our workload does not permit.

ARTROOM - EMAIL 1: This is where the files supplied cannot be used, a reason/solution will be given, and we will put the order on hold waiting on new files or further instructions.

ARTROOM - EMAIL 2: This is where the files supplied can be used but we are not confident of the printing quality, a reason/solution will be given, we will lay up and proof the job out, and then the client can decide whether to use the existing files, or supply new ones, or give other instructions.

Colour Matching

Our printing is 4-color process (not spot colour), on a variety of machines depending on the required output. We use the Pantone Matching System (PMS) as the basic guide to match spot colours to our process printing.

If you are not sure of the colours being used on your printing, your general printer who does your business cards or letterheads should be able to give you the PMS colours they used. We will then use this information to print as closely as possible to those colours.

While we cannot guarantee exact PMS color matches, we will match them as closely as possible to produce a pleasing representation if not an exact match. PMS Metallic and solid luminous colours are not available.

If using Pantone colour matching to produce your own artwork, colours should be matched to the coated 4 colour process chart, not solid colour. If you are using your monitor to choose colours that you want printed, you may be disappointed with the results. This is because your monitor is using the RGB colour space, of which many of the colours produced on screen cannot be replicated in the CMYK printing process.

As we use a number of different types of printing machines and associated media, there will always be some variance from one to the next. This is not unlike commercial printers printing letterheads on bond paper, and business cards on 300gsm gloss board, the colours WILL vary.

Our printing rips are set up in such a way that if the document contains PMS colours they will use the PMS look up table which defines how the colours will be printed. Whereas, if the document contains CMYK colour the rip goes to a different look up table and defines the colours in a different way

For more information on the subject of colour matching please visit this page:
<http://www.pantone.com/pages/pantone/Pantone.aspx?pg=19890&ca=1>

There is an enormous amount of information on this subject available on the internet, a search reveals millions of pages.

If you look at how the same colours have printed differently on varying materials, you will find that you already have good examples in your office. Have a look at your letterheads, business cards, envelopes, brochures, shop front, internal fittings etc. Each of these items would have been specified with the same colours but the results are sometimes very different.

Sending Files To ABC Photosigns

- **Upload Via ABC Web Site:** Our web site provides an order entry area where all the details can be input by the client and files uploaded accordingly. This is the fastest and most efficient way of placing an order with us. The web site also provides an area for “one off” orders to be placed into our system, and the uploading of files accordingly. This is suitable for non standard account and commercial clients. There is an upload limit of 8mb per file.
- **By email:** We can receive your emails directly through our central system on abc@photosigns.co.nz. Please put the job number or a property address in the subject so we can trace the job easily in our database. It is also good practice to include your contact details in all emails in case there is something wrong and we need to make contact with you.
We do not have an email size limit as such, therefore your transmission to us will basically be governed by the limits set by your Internet Service Provider.
- **FTP:** FTP is generally not needed these days as PDF files, which are our preferred format where fully supplied artwork files are concerned, are mostly emailable.
- **By Mail:** When sending orders/artwork by post, please ensure that cds, dvds, hard copies, etc. are well protected against the handling procedures in the postal system. It is best to supply a hard copy of the finished art, and/or a low res PDF file as a visual reference. It is best to make copies of your cds or dvds and send us the copy. We cannot guarantee their safe arrival or return.

Very Important:

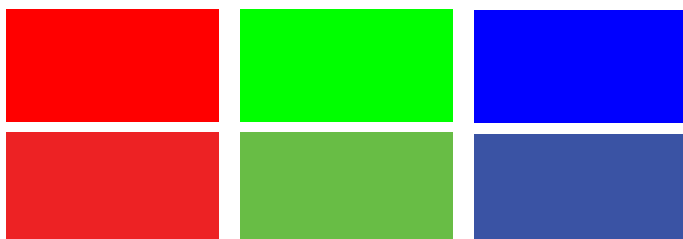
Where finished art is supplied to us in whatever format, we will assume that this art has been approved and signed off by the client prior to us receiving it, and hence we will go straight to print WITHOUT proofing to the client first. In general terms we will only make contact with the artist or client if we see a problem or the file won't print. We also take no responsibility for any files supplied that do not conform to our required specifications.

Logos

All text and line art components of logos should be vector based art. If there is a raster based component, out of say PhotoShop, this should be placed in Illustrator and the text and line art added, then file saved in Illustrator format.

If the logo has been designed for use on a web page, then the artwork may not be suitable for a board as the size will generally be too small and quite often they are too hard to recognise on a board.

Logos should be easy to recognise and remember, as demonstrated by some of the largest companies in the world.



Colour Simulation - Monitor vs Print

This is to demonstrate what you can see on screen and how those colours will print.

The top row is RGB Red Green and Blue values.

The bottom row are the same colours converted to CMYK Cyan Magenta Yellow Black values.

Fonts

We are PC based and therefore it is of no use to supply us with Mac fonts.

As a general rule we do not use any fonts supplied by clients unless for ongoing use on templates and layouts.

All fonts in artwork should be converted to outlines, or if need be, must be embedded in the PDF file supplied.

There are potential font issues with embedding proprietary fonts, as they cannot be embedded as such for conversion to eps. In some instances, Distiller may not be permitted to embed fonts in a PDF file. Each font has a licensing flag that Acrobat Distiller (version 4 or later) will honour. Fonts that may not be embedded are listed in the Job Options menu.

Font Matching:

There are millions of fonts available from all sorts of sources, from well known manufacturers like Bitstream and Adobe, to the many unknown varieties available from various web sites. Each time you install software like Word or Publisher more fonts are installed on your machine. No printer can be expected to have all these fonts available for their customers.

Printers like ourselves build a large library over the years so we are able to cover most situations. However with the increase of online artists, web designers, general graphic artists, and the home grown 'experts' it is becoming increasingly difficult to match font designs.

Fonts of the same name from different manufacturers, or even from the same manufacturer but with a different file date are not necessarily the same, mostly they aren't. Some differences are subtle, others are obvious.

Font substitution is a common practice where the original font is not available and where the job can't wait for processing to print. Substitution is sometimes done by the software automatically (Word, Publisher or PowerPoint are good examples of this where the program substitutes the font and doesn't necessarily tell you that it has done it), or in our case we will manually do by visually checking that the font is as close a match as possible.

How we handle your files/materials

Our company processes an enormous amount of files/artwork on a daily basis, in many different formats, and from varying sources. It is therefore important for the customer to understand our priorities in handling this material.

Our intention is to process each order as quickly as possible, and therefore we use the materials supplied in the format which is easiest and fastest to process first. Our priorities are as follows:

- Online orders and associated uploaded files
- Online orders and associated picking slip files from our photography
- Email or online orders and associated emailed files
- Orders with finished art

Orders can be delayed for various reasons including:

- Supplied files/images not to specification or supplied art not usable (faxed plans/elevations/logos etc.)
- Oversize materials, plans, elevations etc., which need to be scanned
- Images which need stitching, airbrushing or other manual processing
- Artwork that needs additional work at additional cost (client will be quoted by email)
- Missing artwork, text, photos etc.
- Where contact with the customer is needed and we are waiting on a return call
- Where we have emailed the customer to inform of unsuitable materials supplied and are waiting on new files or instructions (i.e. emailed images poor quality)

Digital Images

We recommend using a minimum 3 megapixel camera. We don't recommend using mobile phone cameras.

Always send us the largest file you have without resizing.

Digital cameras normally have a number of settings which can be changed to allow for photos to be taken in low or high quality. The higher settings will allow less photos to be stored on the memory media, however the quality will be much better, hence additional or larger memory media is a must.

It is important that the camera is set to the 'highest quality' or the 'finest' setting available, and at worst at a 'medium' setting, never as low as 'web' settings (800x600 pixels normally).

If the options for transferring files from the camera are "for email, or "for printing" etc., use the "for printing" option, as this will be the final purpose of the image. After transferring images from the camera to your computer, email the required files to us without making any alterations or corrections to the image or file size - let us do any correctional work or resizing. If your email software asks if you want to compress the files for quicker transmission by email, enter "no" otherwise this will compress the files to a size which we will not be able to use.

DO NOT APPLY ANY FILTERS, (descreen, lighten/darken or contrast etc.), let us do any correctional work to the images. Also, **DO NOT RESIZE** the files to compensate for large file sizes.

If you need to resize the images for your web page (for example), do this after you have sent us the ones we need, or use duplicates from the originals. Once an image has been resized down it cannot be resized up again as the information in the file to do this is permanently lost.

If you have received an email from us saying the files are too small and/or low quality - send us the originals off the camera. If the originals are not available or they have been taken at the wrong setting, they will need to be taken again.

All digital images received (unless they are obvious professional files which are already adjusted) are processed through our system to make general colour corrections, and adjust contrast, brightness, sharpness etc.



Image at 300dpi

Same Image downsampled
to 72dpi

Same Image downsampled
to 72dpi and then
upsized to 300dpi again

To get a fair idea of the differences you will need to zoom into the photos (around 250-300%). You will notice the first photo is very clear and well defined with good detail, whereas the second photo shows the jagged edges and lack of detail indicative of when there are not enough pixels and the resolution is too low. The third image is where a file is reduced to low resolution and then upsized again to high resolution. As the information in the file was deleted when the file was reduced in size, there is not enough information to rebuild to the same quality, hence the jagged edges remain and there is a definite lack of detail. The results here are only depicted on small photos on an A4. Printing quality to signboards is considerably worse at the lower when the images are poor quality or the files are too small.

Scanning Images

You may need to access your scanner software to change settings - please refer to the manual that came with the scanner/multifunctional printer.

Scanning Settings for normal photographs:

Scan Mode: True Colour
 Scaling: 100%
 Resolution: 300 dpi
 Save as: jpg file

Scanning Settings for A4 mono plans/elevations:

Scan Mode: Greyscale
 Scaling: 100%
 Resolution: 300 dpi
 Save as: jpg file

DO NOT APPLY ANY FILTERS, (descreen, lighten/darken or contrast etc.), let us do any correctional work to the images.

Faxing Images

Faxing of any materials is not a suitable way of sending us artwork unless it is purely used as a layout guide or something that needs an artwork quote generated from.

Inkjet Prints

Inkjet prints come from digital images - please send us the file you are printing from.

Colour Laser Prints (& Colour Photo Copies)

Unless at least A4 size, and preferably A3, these prints are generally of a poor quality for scanning/reproduction. Often, colour laser prints come from digital images - we much prefer to get the original file.

Wherever possible, send us the original file, photographs or artwork.

Slides & Transparencies

We recommend the use of digital images over transparencies as often the transparencies or slides are damaged or marked by fingerprints. If you do need to scan from a slide or transparency use the highest resolution possible as the media is very small.

Magazine & Other Printed Images

All photographs printed in magazines, similar publications, brochures or postcards are made up of a coloured dot pattern. When enlarged for use on billboards and posters, these dots become enlarged. The resulting image will therefore look 'grainy' or 'dotty' and is not suitable for use. Wherever possible, always supply the original files or artwork.

Also please note that most printed material from magazines etc. is subject to copyright, and without permission use or reproduction is a violation of copyright laws.

File Types

In general terms if you are sending digital images or photos use jpg, if you are supplying finished art send a press ready pdf.

Our layout and printing systems are Adobe PC based.

Digital Images:

- jpg (most common format - use low compression, hi res settings when saving)
- tif or tiff (from imaging software like Photoshop - OK to save as jpg from this format)
- raw (raw data from digital camera - large files but good detail, we may not be able to convert all formats - for general purpose save as jpg)
- psd (from Photoshop - flatten any layers and save as jpg unless using transparency)
- bmp (not preferred as these files tend to be very small - use jpg instead saving from camera)
- gif (generally only used for web based images - usually not good enough)

Finished Art:

- pdf (use press ready settings, ensure all fonts are embedded)
- eps (large file - create press ready pdf from the eps)
- tif (large file - create press ready pdf from the tif)
- ai (from Illustrator - save as pdf - use press ready settings, ensure all fonts are embedded)
- indd (from InDesign - save as pdf - use press ready settings, ensure all fonts are embedded)
- Quark (save as pdf - use press ready settings, ensure all fonts are embedded)
- cdr (from CorelDraw - save as pdf - use press ready settings, ensure all fonts are embedded)

Other

- Zip/rar etc - do not use any software to compress files - if you are sending us a jpg or pdf the file is already compressed.
- If you are using a colour profile in your images, then embed it, sRGB is fine.
- You can use Word, Publisher, PowerPoint or similar programs to send us layout guides - please bear in mind that these programs won't embed fonts so we won't necessarily see exactly what you intend unless we have exactly the same font installed on our machines which is unlikely - therefore the fonts are substituted when we open your document.
- Google Earth files are OK to use and don't need permission unless printing multi thousands.
- RP Data site plan files - generally very low quality and normally need redrawing.
- Various company logos i.e. Melways - should only be used with permission from the company.

Unacceptable formats

Microsoft Publisher or any word processing software (Word or WordPerfect); any presentation software such as PowerPoint - any images contained in these files have to be extracted which can take time and may not be reliable - send the original image files instead. If you want to create finished art in one of these packages, save as a press ready pdf with fonts embedded, however we do not guarantee the output quality.

Tips

- If you are not sure of your image quality, a quick test is to zoom in to 400 or 500% and see what it looks like, although not accurate this will give you some idea as to how the image will reproduce in large format.
- Try and have your job number reference handy when emailing or calling.
- Always double check the image versions you are sending to us, a very common mistake is to send web page versions which are not good enough to use, we then need to make contact with you to let you know, and this slows the process down.
- If your job is needed urgent 'for the weekend', please try and have the order and all relevant files etc. to us as early as possible in the week to save everybody the pressure related to last minute requirements.
- Approve your jobs for printing as early as possible in the day - our print queue is much busier as the day progresses, jobs are printed in the order they are approved.

Sending emails to ABC

When placing your orders or sending us files always send your emails to abc@photosigns.co.nz. This is our central inbox that is constantly monitored and cleared.

If you are making changes to or approving a proof you have received the email should be addressed to proof@photosigns.co.nz. This inbox is also constantly monitored and cleared.

Please always make reference to the job number in the subject - if unknown, use the property address as this is very useful in identifying the job in our database.

Our system automatically generates a return email saying that your email will be acted upon - if you don't receive this email we haven't received yours or it has been caught in our anti virus or spam filters at the gateway.

NOTE: It is always better to upload your files or make any changes via our web site as the preferred option to emailing. This way the information is in our system directly and doesn't require manual input from clearing emails.

Stock Photography and Clipart

We have a large range of photographs and cliparts available to our customers for use in their layouts. Once logged in, go to 'Browse Image Library' on the home page www.photosigns.co.nz for the link to view them.

Approving Jobs

Our preferred means of approving a job is via our web site. This directly updates the database and puts the files into our print queue automatically, and doesn't require manual input from clearing emails.

You can also approve your job by replying to the proof email or by emailing your approval in a separate email. We do not accept phone approvals. We have an automated system that sends the file into the print queue after the approval is entered in the database. Once in the print queue, it is not possible for the file to be deleted out as this causes potential errors in the queue and can affect the print runs.

Please be certain when approving jobs that everything is right to go. It is the responsibility of the person approving the job to ensure that there are no errors prior to approving as we will not accept responsibility at that stage. We do check all jobs prior to proofing but the final onus is on the customer.

Where full finished artwork is supplied to us we deem the artwork to be approved by the customer and it will be put straight into the print queue without a proof being sent.