

TIPS on DESIGNING COMPS & PRODUCING PRE-PRESS

PREPARING A COMP (Comprehensive Dummy that looks like the printed final)

Comps are produced to sell the idea to the client and show the printer what is wanted

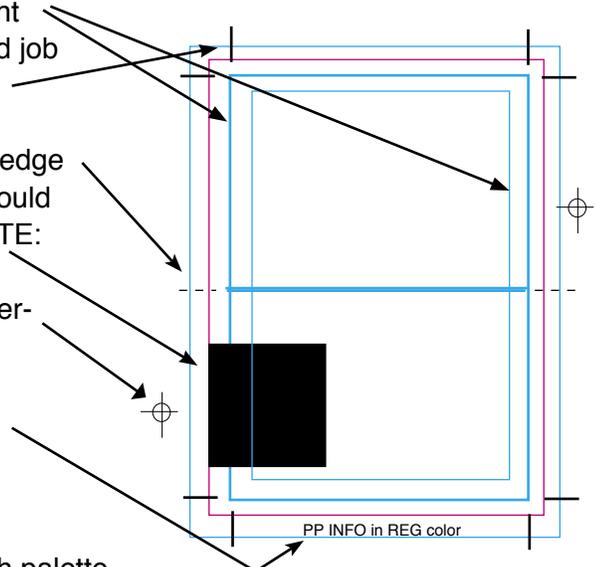
- 1. USE THE RIGHT SOFTWARE - Always layout the comp in a page layout program
Work on images in Photoshop and illustrate in Illustrator. Then PLACE into InDesign
Most copy is placed into page layout from word
- 2. ALWAYS LAYOUT OUT IN THE SIZE YOU WANT (whether its a postage stamp or poster)
- 3. Layout multiple page jobs in READERS SPREADS - facing pages - in size of each page
Use master pages for grids, auto page numbers and elements that run throughout.
- 4. SETUP MARGINS in setup or masters - 1/4" is the CLOSEST to place elements when not bleeding.
- 5. BLEEDS - If elements touch the edge of the paper or are within 1/4" to the edge, know that you will need to extend the element 3/16 to 1/4" BEYOND THE EDGE OF THE PAPER.
- 6. COLORS
FLAT COLORS - Assign spot/PMS colors in the swatch palette in InDesign using swatch>dialog box>New color>Mode>Pantone solid .
You can pick a CYMK color from the color slider and drag swatch into the swatch palette.
When creating illustrations in flat spot PMS colors in Illustrator or producing spot PMS colors as duotones in Photoshop software, PLACE THE IMAGES IN InD AT THE BEGINNING of your design. The spots colors will automatically be placed in the InDesign Swatch palatte. Then use those spot colors for all other elements developed in InDesign.
TINTS - Use 5% to 95% tints FOR SPOT PMS COLORS ONLY. If you want to tint a CYMK color swatch, choose another color that simulates the tint rather than apply a percentage.
GRADIENTS OR BLENDS - Create large areas of gradients in Photoshop for a smoother surface.
TRANSPARENICES - Transparencies are overprints of tints. They are very cool but hard to print for some printers. Use with caution and ask your printer how to set them up in prepress.
OVERPRINTS - All colors that overlap each other automatically knock out the color underneath. To overprint one color over the other to make a 3rd color without knocking out, select the color element that is on top. Then choose Window>Attributes>overprint fill. View overprint in Menu>View>overprint Preview. TO PRINT OUT THE OVERPRINT, be sure to check print>output>simulate overprint.
FULLCOLOR IMAGES - When preparing and printing a comp, it is OK TO PLACE IMAGES IN RGB, as most of our ink-jet printers will convert them to CYMK when printing out.
- 7. TYPOGRAPHY
Use only postscript (PS), Truetype (TT) or Type1 fonts (T1) to assure clean edges when printing.
Change the family (bold, reg, medium) in the family box, not just with key strokes.
- 8. PRESENTING THE COMP
PRINT your comp in full size or tile using crop marks so you can cut it correctly
If not printing two sided, print both sides separately, cut and paste together.
If printing a booklet, you can print in spreads OR file>Inbooklet SE which will print printers' spreads.
Fold, diecut, punch, etc. according to your design to best simulate the finished piece.
DO NOT MOUNT your comp. Let the reader view it and open it as they would when printed.

PRE-PRESS (What you need to do BEFORE sending your job to a printer)

The comp has been approved and a printer selected. Now you have to prepare the job for print.

BE SURE TO WORK WITH THE PRINTER TO THEIR PRE-PRESS SPECIFICATIONS

1. SETUP - Setup the job in "Printers Spreads" - size of unfolded job,
not "Readers Spreads" - size of individual folded page.
BLEEDS: Set up a bleed margin of 1/4 to 1/2" beyond the trim size to allow for printing bleeds.
SLUGS: Set up a margin outside of the trim side to typeset information in REGISTRATION color.
2. IMPOSITIONING - Should you set up an imposition? There are three kinds:
GANG-UP - set-up 2,4,6, or 8 on a page (esp. for business cards or postcards)
WORKnTURN - set up to print two sides on one side.
SIGNATURES - set up two or more pages of a multiple page booklet that is to be collated
3. PREPRESS - Besides indicating the type and images that need printing, there are other elements and marks that the printers need to help them print and align the colors. Many of these options can be specified under "print" in InDesign, Illustrator and PDF.
This is what is needed on the job for printers to know what to print:
PAGE SETUP/MARGINS/GRIDS - in blue so it won't print
CROP MARKS - show the trim (paper) size of the printed job
Usually 1/2" long 1pt. rule, 1/4" outside of trim edge
FOLD MARKS - shows the printer where the fold
Usually 3pt long/.6pt. DASH rule, 1/4" outside of trim edge
BLEEDS - elements that touch the edge of the paper should extend 3/16 to 1/4" beyond the edge of the paper. NOTE:
YOU DO NOT need to put in bleed marks
REGISTRATION MARKS - used on outside of trim to over-print on each plate to help the printer align each color
COLOR BARS - shows screens and values of each ink
PAGE INFORMATION - prints the document name and indicates what ink each plate is in separation.
4. COLORS
FLAT COLORS
Make sure spot/PMS colors are assigned in the swatch palette
If printing only in CMYK, be sure YOUR PMS SPOT COLORS ARE CONVERTED TO CMYK
convert in Swatches>✓✓ edit>colortype= process, mode-CMYK; or convert in Print>Output> InkManager✓convert all process to spot
TINTS - Ask your printer what value range the press will print (usually 10% to 85%)
GRADIENTS OR BLENDS - Create large areas of gradients in Photoshop for a smoother surface.
TRANSPARENCIES - Ask your printer how to set them up in prepress. (Put in low-res? layers?)
OVERPRINTS - TO PRINT OUT THE OVERPRINT, check print>output>simulate overprint.
RICH BLACKS & OTHER SOLIDS - When printing in digital DON'T USE SOLIDS - add undercolors - ie rich black = 100%, plus 60% M, C, & Y
CHECK SEPARATIONS - To assure that there are no extra colors when separating, click off the colors in the separation box (windows>output preview>separations) to assure proper knock outs and overs.
GET RID OF ALL UNUSED COLORS - swatch dialog box>select all unused colors>trash
5. IMAGES -
All images should be saved in TIFF (Photoshop - 300 dpi) and EPS (Illustrator) or as PDFs
SIZING, RESAMPLING, SHARPENING and COLOR CONVERSIONS to be done in Photoshop
Images should PLACED as LINKS into InDesign



5. SAVING FOR PRINT - The printer needs more than just your disc in order to print

WHAT TO GIVE THE PRINTER: Depending on the job, printers can ask you to send several items in a package to help them print the job:

- A computer package containing:
 - the job in the “native file” (InDesign)
 - folder with all the fonts - screen and printer
 - folder with all the links
 - a printout of the (or write it out) package report on what the disc contains
- The job in high resolution PDF
- A Printout of the comp and/or composite with notes on special inks and layers
- A list of client, due dates, contact information and printing order
- Sample of stock (paper) and swatch of special ink, if needed

PREFLIGHT: Before packaging for your job, check for fonts, links, images, color and print settings in InD - File>preflight. This program will allow you to correct some minor problems, but often you have to relink and go back into the native file to correct

PACKAGE: Before you package all your fonts, links and raw file, BE SURE TO SAVE

- Print Instructions - all the info you want the printer to have - names, comments
 - Name of folder where package will be placed - including viewing the report
 - Font alert>OK - remember, you must have legitimate registered fonts, not ones you’ve taken off the web or from other people without their permission.
 - Package - InD will gather all your links, fonts and files and place them in the folder
- BE SURE TO OPEN UP YOUR LINKS AND FONT FOLDERS AND DOUBLE CHECK that what you think should be in there is.

SAVING PDF - InDesign has a PDF export program that is similar to Acrobat Distiller

- Export the native file in PDF in file>Export>PDF
- Save with a name no longer than 8 characters/lc/.pdf
- Format: Adobe PDF
- Where: save in your final jobs folder
- Preset - pick the highest resolution for printing / the lowest for screen proofs/web
- General - Similar to the print options - you can save in range or spreads. Most printers would prefer PDFs in individual pages, NOT spreads (although save as a spread for printing or for low-resolution links for the web)
- Compression - check resolution for print - highest you can get
- Marks and Bleeds - similar to the print options. Check you marks and bleeds you desire as well as if you want the bleed and slug areas to print
- Advanced -
 - Color>you can change all RGB to CMYK!
 - If you have transparencies or shadows, check “simulate overs”
 - Ink Manager>all spots to process for a quick way to convert colors
 - Transparency flattener: pick resolution preferred by the printer to soften banding