

GENERAL INFORMATION TO KNOW

FILE FORMATS AND EXTENSIONS

Make sure to ALWAYS add an extension to your filenames. Most programs do it automatically but must be done in order to avoid problems in opening files.

Common file formats:

- .pdf** - Portable Document Format
- .psd** - Photoshop Document
- .tif** - Tagged Image File
- .jpg** - JPEG image file
- .gif** - Graphical Interchange Format File
- .png** - Portable Network Graphic
- .ai** - Adobe Illustrator file (make sure you are saving down to a comparable version)
- .eps** - Encapsulated Post Script file

FILE NAMING CONVENTIONS

When naming a file, make sure to always follow this convention:

NameofProject_versionnumber_initials.fileextension

ex: FightClub_Movieposter_v3_sn.psd

RASTER FILES

A raster image is composed of pixels with each pixel having a specific value. A raster image has a set resolution and if it is enlarged it becomes blurry. Larger file sizes than needed are always recommended.

VECTOR FILES

A vector image is composed of instructions on how to form shapes with specific values and does not use pixels. Vector is math-based. A vector image can be scaled to any size and will still retain its sharpness since it just following a mathematical formula. Logos should ALWAYS be designed in a vector-based program, NEVER in Photoshop.

RGB

Color mode abbreviation for red, green, and blue, the three colors used in screens. This mode should be used when preparing a file that will be used on the web or television.

CYMK

Color mode abbreviation for cyan, magenta, yellow and key (black), the four process colors. This mode should be used when preparing a file that will be printed.

RESOLUTION

Since Photoshop works on pixels, or dpi. (dots per inc) there are some standard sizes.

72 dpi for web banners or TV
Anything you can see on a screen

300 dpi for standard printing
(brochures, business cards, cards)

dpi sizes can vary for billboards, other larger format printing.

GENERAL PRODUCTION TERMS

LIVE AREA

Another word for “live” is the “safety” in other words, the parameters in which all of your visual elements should be in without being accidentally visually cut off (either through the cutting process or the binding process) when it goes to press. Think of it as your viewable area.

TRIM AREA

Where the page itself will be cut. Because it is cut by a machine, the cut is not absolutely precise every time (but it is very close). Some slight shifting does occur.

BLEED

(Where applicable) the excess image area that must pass the trim dimensions to avoid having the image border accidentally print (a quarter inch is fairly standard).

4 COLOR

The CMYK process is a standardized method of printing color by using four inks—cyan, magenta, yellow and black. The majority of the world’s printed material is produced using the CMYK process and referred to as 4-color jobs

STOCK

A fancy production term for paper. There are certain qualities that are inherent to stock such as weight, and finish. Many paper mills manufacture any number of different types of paper. TEXT WEIGHTS refer to paper that is thinner and is as a whole used for writing. The higher the “# weight” the thicker the paper is. CARD WEIGHTS refer to papers that are thicker and are suitable for printing folders, covers, brochures, boxes etc..

In addition to weights, finishes hold many characteristics of the appearance of the paper. Some include Glossy, Matte, Linen, Vellum, Satin, etc.

The right choice in stock can really add to the personality of a brand or even be the key design element.

SCORING

Making a crease on a piece of paper, particularly useful when working with heavier stocks. Creasing the stock will make for a smooth fold and prevent stock from cracking at the seams.

CROP MARKS

Printed lines showing where to trim a printed sheet.