



Verifying Files Provided By The Client

Matthew Boulton College

VERIFYING FILES PROVIDED BY THE CLIENT

The following steps will help avoid confusion and problems during output when files are supplied by the customer:

Remove Pages Which Are Not Required For Output

Remove blank pages which can appear at the end of the document. If certain pages or images are required from a document, create a new document that includes only those pages or images.

Remove Stray Fonts

If fonts have been changed during production there maybe spaces or 'carriage returns' that will hold the extra fonts. They will not be visible on a laser proof and can cause problems during output.

QuarkXPress and PageMaker have features that list all fonts used in the document, and shows where they are used. Use this feature to remove stray fonts.

Check and Update Links to Graphic Files

Popular page layout programs also have features that list graphic files used in a document and show whether any files have been changed since they have been imported. If any linked graphics have been changed the links will need to be updated.

All graphic files need to be in the correct format for the imagesetter (TIFF or EPS). If the files are in the wrong format they will need to be re-saved in the graphics program (Adobe Illustrator, Freehand, Corel Draw or Photoshop). Then update the link by importing the files into the page layout program (QuarkXPress or PageMaker, etc.).

Check Scale of Graphic Files

All graphics files should be imported into page layout program at 100% or same size. If graphic files dimensions have been adjusted in QuarkXPress or PageMaker, it will slow-down the time to output the files.

Convert Type in Graphic Images to Outline Fonts

When a graphic includes type that is altered with fills, rotations or other complex manipulations, converting the type to outlines, will simplify the RIPing process and avoid problems of missing fonts when output by imagesetter.

Check Thickness of Rules

Hairline rules may not appear on film output. Amend rules to be 1pt in thickness.

Delete Any Scrap Text or Graphics From The Pasteboard

Many page layout programs allow extra material onto a 'pasteboard' area, outside the page limits. It is easy to forget about these elements, but they may appear on the film output. Make sure to delete material from the 'pasteboard' area.

Check Colours Are Specified Correctly

Most page layout programs define colours in 2 ways:

- Spot Colours
Printed by custom inks
- Process Colours (CMYK)
convert all RGB files to CMYK

If spot colours are being used, check list of defined colours and make sure that each is defined under just one name. Each named colour will separate on a different plate.

The best way to find out whether colours will separate correctly is to check them with a separated laser proof.

Check Bleeds and Traps

Check any bleed allowances for artwork or colour that runs to the edge of the paper. If vector-drawn illustrations are being used, traps must be created in the original drawing program, before the graphic is imported into the page layout program.

Proof Files on a Postscript Laser Printer

The best way to find out how a file will react on an imagesetter is to proof files on a postscript laser printer. If the file is in colour, it is best to print 2 sets of laser proofs:

- Separated
- Composite

Separated proofs show if files are defined correctly for 4-colour or spot-colour separation.

Unseparated or composite proofs can be used to check for typographical and literal errors.

Preflighting Files

Using preflight software performs a series of checks before output to an imagesetter. The results can be rectified before film or plates are wasted.

Preflight procedures search for the most common errors in files. Missing fonts and graphics are the most common problems. The second most common is incorrect colour specification (usually RGB rather than CMYK).

Examples of software that can be used:

- Extensis Preflight Pro
- Markzware Flight-Check

CONTRACT PROOF

If there are doubts about any files supplied by the client, it is a good idea to output the files onto film and produce a contract proof.

For jobs that include process colours, and have images which fit together by trapping techniques, printers usually require an approved contract proof, which shows the colours which are expected on the press. The client is sometimes asked to check the proof and agree to the quality of the colour. The signing of the contract proof by the client is 'contract' between client and printer. The machine printer uses this proof to check the colour during printing.

This proof is the nearest in quality to press proofs. But does not involve the expense of producing plates and printing on a press. Sometimes referred to as 'lamine proofs'. They are created by exposing the film separations for a job in contact with cyan, magenta, yellow and black proofing film and laminating the resulting colour sheets onto a single sheet of substrate. Examples of contract proof products are:

- Imation: Matchprint.
- Agfa: Pressmatch Dry Analog

The proofs can be produced on a range of papers from superwhite, newsprint and matt finishes.

Also Hexachrome colour (which was developed by Pantone) can be proofed which uses 6 colours, CMYK plus a green and orange.

SOFT PROOFS

This involves looking at the print job on the monitor. Though soft proofs were once deemed unreliable for previewing colour, rapidly evolving technologies have made it increasingly possible to rely on soft proofing.

The colour management system (CMS) will transform the image and display on the screen a reasonably faithful simulation of the final image as it will appear on the press. The CMS will then analyse the job and see if there are any colours that are outside the colour space of the output device.

QUESTIONS ON VERIFYING FILES PROVIDED BY THE CLIENT

- (1) List 6 steps to help avoid confusion and problems when outputting files supplied by the customer?

- (2) When proofing pages on a postscript laser printer, why is it best to produce a composite and separated proofs?

- (3) How does your department check files which use CMYK colour that are supplied by the client?

- (4) What happens in your department if the client views the contract proof and rejects the quality?

- (5) What are 'soft proofs'?