

Using Adobe Acrobat

PDF and Adobe Acrobat

Portable Document Format (PDF) is technology from Adobe Systems that has become a standard file delivery format for the graphic arts field. Originally developed as a means of creating and distributing documents that are platform independent, a PDF document may be viewed and manipulated in a variety of computer environments while retaining the richness of the content's design and layout.

PDF documents may be created in a variety of ways ranging from using tools from the Adobe Acrobat software suite, to saving files in PDF format from applications such as Adobe Illustrator and Adobe InDesign. It is possible to create a PDF document from any software application which can output PostScript. The PostScript can be sent to Acrobat Distiller, software that converts PostScript into PDF. Note that PostScript does not support Transparency so all Transparency must be flattened in the application before PostScript is written.

PDF Benefits

PDF has greatly benefited the prepress process. A few of its immediate benefits are:

- PDF pages can be processed independently of one another because PDF packages all the instructions and definitions needed to image a page within each page unit. This simplifies late corrections to multi-page documents, and makes imposition far more flexible. The document is no longer constrained in press forms and can easily be re-imposed and moved to other presses. This will shorten processing schedules.
- PDF documents are already partially preflighted because they are created from the PostScript file. If there is an error in writing the PostScript, PDF distillation will fail. If the distillation is successful, the document creator can look at the pages for any unexpected errors before sending the file to the printer. Another pre-processing benefit of PDF is its ability to clean-up complex PostScript files. When a PostScript file is converted to PDF, it is rewritten into a structure that normalizes the data and helps to eliminate processing surprises. We have found that distilling PostScript to PDF often eliminates some of the problems that cause files to fail.
- PDF files are more reliable as on-screen proofs because each page's imaging resources are selfcontained, and they are representative of the PostScript interpretation of your layout files.
- PDF files are often smaller than PostScript files, so they can save on network resources for processing and archiving.
- The page independence feature of PDF enables document creators to extract, import, and reorganize pages and make new products using their existing intellectual property. Further, PDF supports a variety of interactive features like forms, pop-up windows, content coding, and navigation, making the document far more dynamic for the reader when delivered electronically through the internet or e-books.

Upgrading to Acrobat 5.x, 6.x, or Later

To take advantage of the robust features of Acrobat PDFs, it is desirable to use the most recent version of the technology. However, there are features of PDF 1.4 (the file format of Acrobat 5.x) and PDF 1.5 (the file format of Acrobat 6.x) that cause problems in prepress. Specifically, the transparency feature available from Illustrator and InDesign and supported in PDFs since the 1.4 format is not fully supported by current generation PDF workflows. If this feature is used in submitted files, the resulting transparent elements may cause prepress processing problems that are likely to

affect the schedule and quality of the job. Likewise, the PDF 1.5 format supports the use of layers within a PDF file that may contain different content, as well as a newer compression method called JPEG 2000. These features may be used within a 1.5 format PDF, but they are not fully supported by current PDF workflows and so may impede the successful production of a job.

Acrobat 4.05 and Embedded Fonts

PDF 1.3 and the Acrobat 4.05 tools contain enhancements to font handling that permit the embedding of Base 14 PostScript fonts (Acrobat 3.x did not embed these fonts under any circumstances). Wetmore & Company's manufacturing platform requires that all fonts (including the Base 14) be embedded in PDF files. This embedding of fonts allows us to take advantage of the full range of Acrobat capabilities and enhancements.

Acrobat 3.x

Acrobat 3.x was not capable of embedding the Base 14 PostScript fonts, making the creation of PDF files less accurate. Therefore, we advise an immediate upgrade to the most current version of the Acrobat software, and no longer endorse the use of Acrobat 3.x.

PDF in the Future

Adobe has published specifications for its Portable Job Ticket Format (PJTF), which permits a PDF file to carry information about production and manufacturing specifications in addition to the content. Likewise, the Job Document Format (JDF) is a specific implementation of XML that has been developed to enable the integration and digital control of file processes and equipment from prepress to the pressroom to finishing. Through tools such as these, we expect to be able to improve our service offerings with PDF workflow as optimization is extended upstream. Systems such as Creo's Prinergy enable us to extend this optimization throughout the graphic arts continuum.

PDF workflow offers improvement in speed and reliability. It is a more reliable "raw material" with which to create output. But we must work together to implement the technology so that it produces a real improvement in service and not just another technology nightmare. The information in this document is intended to help ensure that result.

NOTES ABOUT WETMORE & COMPANY AND PDF

As of January 1, 2000, Wetmore & Company has adopted PDF as its internal file format for all prepress processing. This means that all files submitted in any format will be preflighted and then converted to PDF and passed through our Creo Prinergy workflow system. The Prinergy system will allow us to trap, impose, and RIP files in a native PDF format, allowing our customers to realize all of the benefits of the file format.

Changes in File Preparation

We prefer composite PDF files. PDF allows you to view on screen the success (or failure) of the interpretation of your layout files, and the composite workflow will allow you to see your entire file as it will print, rather than just one color at a time. This will facilitate soft-proofing (on-screen, paperless proofs of your files).

Wetmore & Company will take the responsibility for trapping all objects in your files, including embedded objects, using Prinergy's sophisticated and powerful trapping engine.

- If embedded files have properly created traps, you can request that we honor them.

Please be advised that when writing composite PostScript of pages created using QuarkXPress, the traps will not be retained. QuarkXPress only includes trapping information in separated outputs.

- Prinerger's trapping engine will do a far better job in maintaining type widths in overprints and knockouts, and will help avoid the choking and spreading of type in your final output.

We require that files be submitted with high-resolution images embedded. Submitting layout files with low-resolution placeholders instead of the final art will negate the benefit of the pre-test viewing that PDF offers. Bad EPS files and corrupted TIFFs are major causes of PostScript and rendering failures.

If you have any questions about these specifications, PDF, or the Prinerger workflow, please consult your Wetmore & Company Salesperson or your CSR.

RECOMMENDATIONS

General System Recommendations

Wetmore & Company recommends maintaining a "clean" system fonts folder, which means keeping only the required system fonts within this folder. Installing Acrobat will put fonts in the system folder that are not necessary. Please remove the following fonts from your system folder before writing PostScript and PDF files: Adobe Sans Adobe Sans MM, Adobe Serif MM, Arial, Book Antiqua, Bookman Old Style, Century Gothic, Century Schoolbook, Courier New, Letter Gothic MT, Times NR, and MT Extra Bold.

Wetmore & Company recommends the use of a font utility such as Adobe Type Manager to manage other fonts.

Creating font sets for job specific fonts will save time in organization, activation, and deactivation of fonts.

Suggested Plug-Ins, XTensions, PPDs, and Applications to Create Good PDF Files

Wetmore & Company recommends that you avoid some potential file problems by downloading and installing the following helpers (please note that you must restart your applications after installation for changes to take place):

- Creo Color TIFF XT—This is an extension for QuarkXPress versions 4.04 through 5.01 that goes into the XTension folder within the QuarkXPress application folder. It is available for free at www.prinerger.com and helps avoid potential file problems caused by colorized TIFFs, custom-colored backgrounds, and registration and crop marks.
- Prinerger Distiller Plug-in—This is a plug-in for Acrobat Distiller with an automatic installer that will install it directly onto your system. The Distiller plug-in is available for free at www.prinerger.com, and helps avoid potential problems caused by programs that utilize RGB color space (like FrameMaker and MS Word), fixes hairline rules, and deals with compression issues.
- Prinerger (Creo) Refiner PPD—PostScript Printer Description files (PPD files) are text files that provide a uniform approach to using the diverse features of devices that contain PostScript interpreters. The Prinerger Refiner PPD helps avoid potential problems by addressing issues like memory, font availability, TrueType font handling, resolution, paper size, etc. PPDs should not be confused with PostScript drivers or printer drivers like LaserWriter 8.x

that are used to convert the desktop applications' drawing routines into PostScript.

- **Enfocus PitStop**—Customers who preflight files before submission dramatically increase their first time success in preflight. We suggest using Enfocus's PitStop program (www.enfocus.com) for the PitStop settings that Wetmore & Company uses to determine file quality. Please contact Wetmore & Company's PrePress Tech Support for more information.

Please note that Wetmore & Company's PDF guidelines are only nominally different from those of other suppliers using a PDF workflow. However, if you plan to use a different set of instructions for creating PostScript and PDF, we strongly urge you to submit a test file before submitting live job files.

KNOWN ISSUES IN ADOBE DISTILLER

OPI (Open Prepress Interface)

OPI is a means that allows low-resolution graphics to automatically swap with their high-resolution counterpart. We do not support OPI comments within a PDF workflow; therefore, use high-resolution graphics only.

Custom QuarkXPress Frames

Simple algorithmic frames (i.e., QuarkXPress's default frames) output correctly. Custom "bitmap" frames created through QuarkXPress's Frame Editor may not output correctly (i.e., the frame corners may not abut). This will be evident when laser proofs are printed from the PDF.

DISTILLER 6.0.1 SETTINGS and PREFERENCES – DISTILLER 6.0.1





