

PressLines

Prepress Extra
Spring 2006

RIPON
PRINTERS

News & tips for designers, production artists and desktop publishers. Please pass this sheet along to those involved in creating your electronic files or camera ready copy. Additional copies of this sheet or PressLines back issues are available on request!

Software we support at Ripon Printers*

Macintosh

Adobe Illustrator 10.x, CS, CS2

Adobe InDesign 1.5, 2.x, CS, CS2

Adobe PageMaker 6.x, 7.x

Adobe Photoshop 7.x, CS, CS2

Macromedia FreeHand 8.0, 9.0, 10

QuarkXPress 4.x, 5.x, 6.x

Windows '98 SE & XP PROFESSIONAL

Adobe InDesign 1.5, 2.x, CS, CS2

Adobe PageMaker 6.5, 7.0

QuarkXPress 4.x, 5.x, 6.x

If a program you use is not on this list, please call.

*Current as of June 1, 2006

You're not just creating a page, you're also preparing it for printing!

Back in the old days of printing — about three years ago — customer-supplied electronic files were output to film or camera-ready art was shot to film or in some cases film was supplied. Our prepress department was charged with reviewing the film to assure its ready for print — manually extending bleeds if needed, hand-cutting color, creating master bleed bar flats. In other words, “stripping” the film as needed.

Now, in the days of computer-to-plate, there is no film. The customer (or designer) has assumed many tasks that were once done by the strippers. Instead of this process getting easier, the multitude of software available can further complicate things.

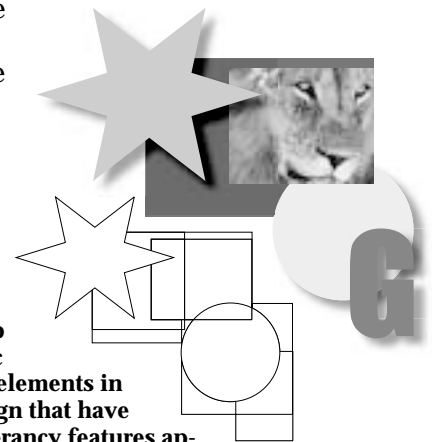
The most recent revelation in this new age is the ability to create “ready to go” PDFs — a portable document file of your page layout file with all the bits and pieces the file requires, all locked down. As marvelous as a PDF is, it is very easy to encounter pitfalls which could be software driven or not understanding all the things your printer — and the strippers — did for you. In this issue of *PrepressExtra*, we would like to guide you over the pitfalls to properly prepared PDFs.

Transparency

With the newer releases of Adobe® InDesign, Photoshop and Illustrator transparency related problems have been more prevalent when processing customer supplied files. For the purposes of this article we will use InDesign as an example, yet these features can also be found in other Adobe applications.

PostScript language devices-like raster image processors (RIP) — don't know how to handle transparency. When transparency is interpreted by a postscript device it first has to be “flattened.” During the flattening process

The top graphic shows elements in InDesign that have transparency features applied to them. The bottom graphic shows the different atomic regions that were created during flattening. When elements are flattened incorrectly, you may end up with many more atomic regions which could cause more trapping/RIPing problems. The graphic above was flattened using InDesign's High Resolution setting.

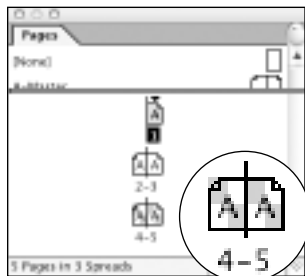


the elements in the file that use transparency are broken up into smaller pieces (known as atomic regions) that the device reading the PostScript code (Acrobat Distiller, RIPs, laser printers, etc.) can understand. These atomic regions that once may have contained vector elements in the page layout file (text, Illustrator files, etc.) can now be either vector data or raster data depending on the way the file is flattened. After doing many test files and processing thousands of pages that contain transparency, we have found that when customers create a PDF version 1.4 file in Acrobat 5 or higher and leave the PDF file un-flattened, the files process much cleaner through our Rampage RIP.

So where does transparency come from?

When using InDesign, transparency can be introduced into your files in these different ways:

- ◆ Place a native Illustrator file that has live transparency into InDesign.
- ◆ Place an un-flattened Photoshop document directly into InDesign.
- ◆ Apply the drop shadow feature (Object/Drop Shadow).
- ◆ Apply the feather feature (Object/Feather).
- ◆ Apply a blend with an opacity level other than 100% using InDesign's transparency palette.



- ◆ To easily see which pages have transparency open up InDesign's pages dialogue box (Windows/Pages). Any page thumbnail that has a checkerboard pattern on it has transparency somewhere on the page. If the page thumbnail is white there is no transparency on that particular page.

Keeping things from going wrong...

When we process your files with objects using transparency that need to trap in our Rampage RIP, it is possible to get trap lines between the different parts of the atomic regions. Many of these elements can be fixed in TrapIt (our Rampage RIP trapping software) but this becomes harder to fix when the page hasn't been flattened properly. To ensure that we are able to process your files efficiently and you receive a nice looking project, please follow these tips.

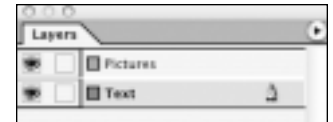
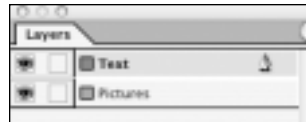
- ◆ We have found that PDF files that contain live transparency process much cleaner when we allow Rampage to flatten them during the ripping process. See our latest Technical Sheets on creating PDF files on our Web site: www.riponprinters.com.
- ◆ To keep text from becoming rasterized during the flattening process, create a new layer in your document and put all of the type on that layer. Make sure that the type layer is the top most layer. By doing this — when the



This is an example of text set to the top InDesign layer.



This is an example of text set to the bottom InDesign layer.



document is flattened — your text will come out looking sharp and crisp.

- ◆ Proof your PDF files before supplying them. When viewing the PDF files in Acrobat, make sure you have Overprint Preview turned on because transparency relies heavily on overprinting to work. When Overprint Preview is turned on in, you should still be able to see all of the page elements if the page was flattened properly. When supplying proofs, be sure to print them to a laser printer from the PDF file you are going to submit, not from the original page layout application. Check for any missing page elements or white lines that are caused by different elements of the atomic regions.

For more information on transparency, please see the *Adobe Transparency Guide* that is located on our Web site for downloading at www.riponprinters.com

Total Ink Limits in 4/color printing

Before sending your project, you need to verify your project doesn't have any color areas that exceed our Total Ink Limits. This is also referred to as Total Area Coverage in some literature.

When the ink percentages of Cyan, Magenta, Yellow and Black (CMYK) in a screen or an area of a 4/color image are added together, this number should not be over the ink limits for the press and the type of stock the project is going to print on.

Through testing, we have established the following total ink limits for each of our presses.

Sheet Press Requirements

Coated Stocks: 300%
Coated Stocks to be UV Coated: 280%
Uncoated Stocks: 270%

Heatset Web Requirements

#1, #2 & #3 Coated: 310%
#4 & #5 Coated: 300%
Super Calendered: 270%
Offset and Groundwood Stocks: 260%
Groundwood Stocks: 245%

Coldset Web Requirements

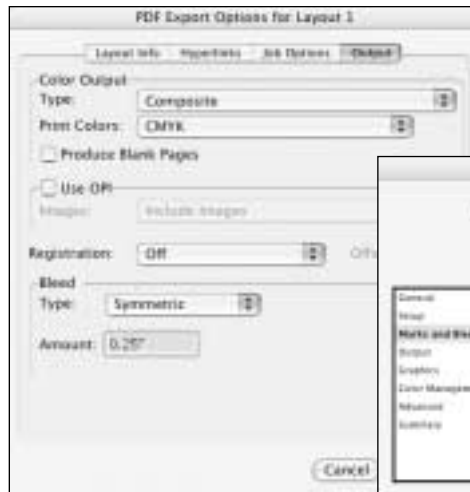
Offset Stocks: 260%

Groundwood Stocks: 245%

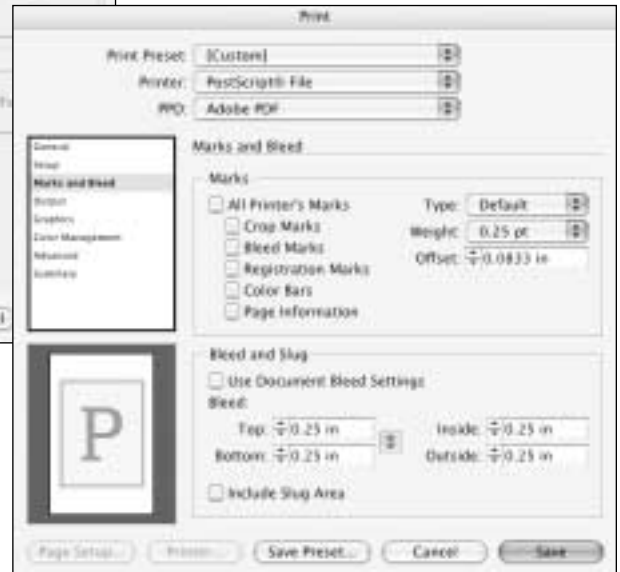
Newsprint & Directory Stocks: 235%

With the release of Acrobat 7, it is possible to check total ink coverages right inside of the PDF file. To do this, choose Tools/Print Production/Output Preview. Near the bottom of the Output Preview window you can put in an ink percentage for the press that the project will be printing on. Any areas in the file that are over ink limits will be highlighted. (See illustration below.)

Any images that are found to be over our ink limits should be adjusted before production of your project begins. If ink coverages are too high ink may not dry properly and offsetting/ smearing may occur.



The screen shot above shows Quark's Output tab where you need to specify bleed. The screen shot to the right shows InDesign's Marks and Bleed tab where bleed is specified.



Bleed

When your pages have elements that are to bleed, you need to create the PDF file as an oversized page with the copy being centered to the page. The easiest way to do this is to select Tabloid for the paper size when creating your PostScript file or exporting the PDF file directly from your page layout application. When creating your document we prefer that you have at least 1/4" of bleed built into your page layout files. Remember, if you don't

put an amount in the bleed allowance dialogue box, there won't be any bleed present in the PDF.

OPI

One of the primary advantages to supplying a PDF file is PDF files are completely self-contained documents. All the necessary fonts and images are (or should be) included within the document. There are no extraneous files to gather for the file to output properly.

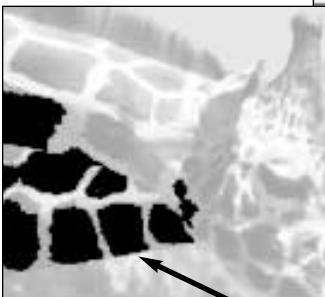
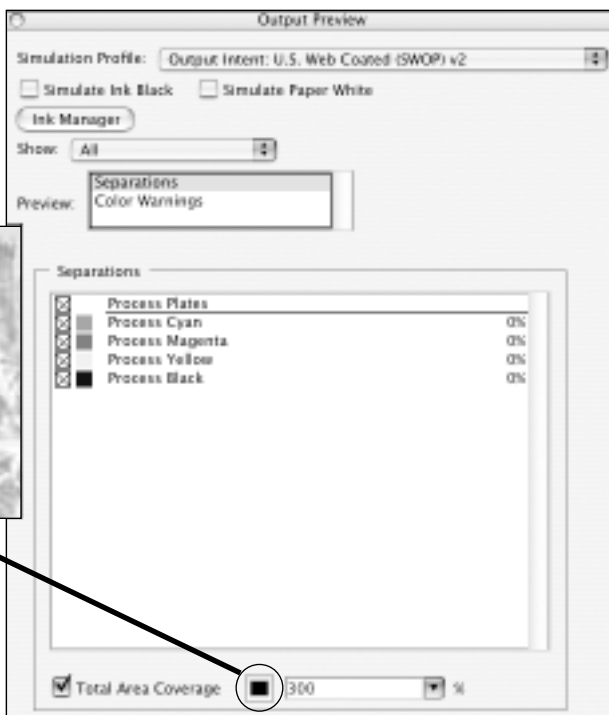
OPI (Open Prepress Interface) is used to replace high resolution graphics with low resolution placeholders in a page layout document. The idea is that the low resolution graphics will be swapped out during the outputting process. This would require all of the images to be supplied in addition to the OPI-laden PDF file and defeats the reason to supply PDF files. Embedding high resolution graphics and OPI comments in a PDF file can result in image shifting during output.

To avoid these problems make sure that "Preserve OPI Comments" is unchecked in Acrobat Distiller. When the PDF file is created, there won't be any OPI comments in the file.

Resolution of Graphics

When creating your project, make sure that any raster images have a resolution of at least 1.5 to 2 times the line screen that will be used on press. When distilling your

Highlighted areas show places that contain color that is over the ink limits.



PostScript file or exporting your PDF file from the page layout application, make sure that you don't downsample any images below 300dpi. When distilling your files make sure to use the correct set of job options.

If you accidentally use Acrobat's eBook or Screen joboption settings, the images will be downsampled below print quality. Go to www.riponprinters.com to download a set of our Acrobat Distiller job options for your version of Acrobat.

Fonts

Missing fonts are still an issue with PDF files. When creating your PostScript file for later distilling or exporting your PDF file, be sure that you are embedding ALL your fonts. Please see the Technical Information sheets found on our Web site for instructions on how to create a PDF file from the layout application you are using or give Jason Hauman, our Customer Education Specialist, a phone call at 800-321-3136 x 312 for help.

PDF Tools

Many frequent problems that exist in PDF files can be found and fixed early when we inspect customer supplied PDF files for potential problems. Ripon Printers has invested in PDF preflighting and editing tools from OneVision and PitStop to do this.

We are currently using OneVision to preflight and process our customer-supplied PDF files. This is a hot folder-based system that sits at the very front of our PDF workflow. During the preflight inspection the file is checked for potential printing problems. If problems are found, we will try to correct the file if we can without cost or we will contact the customer to alert them of the problem and to supply a new PDF file. Even though we can correct many different problems with these tools, it is still best to provide a clean, print-ready PDF file. RIPON

A sure way to keep your job on track

Customers ask us to consider quick turn-arounds for their project. We do the best we can to honor each request. But it makes it much easier to make this happen if the customer is a willing partner in this challenge.

One sure way to cruise right through digital file prep is to submit a "clean file." Our house definition of a clean file is getting everything needed to successfully process the job... whether that be native software files with all fonts and graphics or properly constructed PDF files. Nothing puts the brakes on faster than having to call the customer/designer about a missing/corrupt font or a missing graphic... and then having to wait until it arrives.

We encourage you to take some time to sit back and take one last look — or ask someone who knows nothing about the project to take a look. You might find some obvious or not so obvious errors that can be attended to before you send the job. This is a great way to minimize our handling time and eliminate the cost of our doing alterations — whether they are done before the job is processed or after the proof returns to Ripon (which includes the additional cost of reprocessing the files).

Besides moving your own job right along, all the other jobs in production benefit. Jobs without alterations do not require administrative efforts, re-processing or additional proofing — they are ready to be plated for printing. Prepress technicians can then focus on new jobs — maybe even another one from you!

What's in a name? *Plenty!*

Each file system has specific rules about the formation of individual components in a directory or file name. There are certain device names that are reserved and should not be used in the name of a file or followed by an extension.

CON	COM2	COM7	LPT3
PRN	COM3	COM8	LPT4
AUX	COM4	COM9	LPT5
NUL	COM5	LPT1	LPT6
COM1	COM6	LPT2	LPT7
			LPT8
			LPT9

In **WINDOWS NT**, **CLOCK\$** is also a reserved device name.