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Wide Format & Laser Printing & File Preparation

Inks: We use eco-solvent inks, pigment inks, & dye inks. Just some of the materials we can print on: Banner Material, Photo Paper, Poster Paper, Adhesive Low Tack Clear, Permanent Outdoor Vinyl, Floor Vinyl/Laminate & other products upon request.

Maximum single sheet size 59" wide & 150 feet long. For Larger Prints, images can be tiled onto multiple sheets.

Let us create something for you, or print your files.

If we use your files, for the best results, please follow these important guidelines. We do not open your file, in the program it was created in, & then "print" it. Windows printer spooler can only handle a certain amount of information before it fails. For this reason, Wide Format Print Houses use special & expensive RIP software, specifically designed for the task of sending colour & object information to the printer in a reliable data stream it specifically understands. All color images & files should contain only **CMYK colors**, if you are unable to save the image in CMYK leave it in RGB. All **grayscale** images & files should be first grayscale, & then converted to CMYK. You can use spot colours & other, but CMYK will turn out the closest to what you expect.

- 1) **Wide Format:** For A Rich Black: solvent inks 42%C 42%M 42%Y 100%K . Dye & pigment set to 70%C 35%M 0%Y 100%K . Typically, most of our printing is done with the solvent inks. **Laser Inks 100%K for text.** For Black fills, RGB 0,0,0.
- 2) Do NOT set colours to "Overprint".
- 3) **Illustrator, Macromedia Freehand & Corel users** in addition to all items in steps 1, & 2: Ensure files from Illustrator are CMYK and not RGB as unexpected results can occur. Set output resolution to 2540 dpi., set gradient mesh to 300, see step #14 to prepare your file if you have used transparency or other effects.
- 4) **Bleed, Crop Marks & Edging: Wide Format:** all elements running to the edge of the print area should bleed 1/4" past the document edge. Large multi-panel graphics require a minimum of 1/2" bleed on all sides. Long banners & headers of 8 feet or more require 1 to 2 inches of additional bleed on either side & 1/2" bleed on top & bottom. Please use crop marks to indicate document edge. **Laser:** for no bleed & full bleed you need a 1/8" safe margin INSIDE the cut size. For full bleed, you also need the colour or background image to be 1/8" OUTSIDE the cut size. Do not include crop marks inside the bleed area. Laser; do NOT include crop marks at all, we will add them, simply include in your instructions what the finished size is.
- 5) **Foam Board & Edging:** make sure all of your critical design elements such as text & logos are at least 1/2" in from the edge of your file, because the edging will need to cover the first 1/4" of the print.
- 6) **Fonts:** Turn *all* fonts to "vectors", "curves" or "outlines".
- 7) **File Types:** Generally, save all files as .eps or Adobe Acrobat pdf, version 5 or 6. For image only tiff works very well.
- 8) **Name The File:** "yourcompanyname.eps" & **send it with a small jpeg** so we can use it for reference. Under 250 megs use our ftp site, over 250 megs send on CD. If you are uploading to your ftp site, please remember to indicate where on your site it is. Uploading to our site, remember to send us an email once it has completed uploading, we do not check the site for new files, unless instructed to.
- 9) **Gradients:** Oh, how we love gradients... gradients should be rasterized, & noise added. Failing this, the gradient must be exported as a gradient; to test this, import back in the file after it has been exported & see if it has been converted to bands of colour (poor result) or is still a gradient with all of it's control handles. A gray gradient should never be an rgb grey but instead a cmyk grey. Failure to do so will often create bands of light blue & green.
- 10) **Exporting Check:** After you have exported, import back in your file to make sure it has exported properly. A hard drive with errors, corrupt export dlls, corrupt program files, can all cause Export errors & oddities of a perfect original file. So always import back in & check.

- 11) **Common Mistakes:** Files we receive often has these errors; stray vector bits on top of image or fonts, not all objects included, text & objects not exactly centered, spelling, capitalization, grammar, justification & objects in images that should not be there. Is that a cell phone growing out of the baby's head because the second image of a father has a cell phone & you forgot to airbrush it out? Tiling images that are not exactly lined up, may not be noticeable on your screen or 8.5" X 11" print, but once we have printed it 8 feet high, gee... it is not matching up by 2 inches!
- 12) **Indemnification:** The customer will indemnify and hold harmless the printer, CR Signs, from any and all loss, cost expense, and damages on any and all manner of claims, demands, actions and proceedings that may be instituted against the printer on the grounds alleging that said printing violates any copyright or any proprietary right of any person. CR Signs is not responsible for any errors or omissions.
- 13) **Transparencies:** New versions of Illustrator, InDesign & Freehand offer raster effects & transparency. While these features greatly enhance designers' options, they can often cause problems with final output of high-resolution printers. Problems that often occur are: unexpected results, colors not matching, unexpected artifacts, & missing objects. To fix problems, additional computer charges may be incurred. We highly recommend that you use Photoshop in creating special effects like drop shadows & transparent objects, then simply "place" the image traditionally in the layout program.
- 14) **To Properly Flatten Transparency:** If you love using effects & transparencies and want your file to print the way it looks on screen: If using Illustrator, duplicate the file and remove all text and vectors so what is left are the background effects (leave drop shadows, transparencies, photos, gradients and all other effects). Next export the file as a tiff. Place this tiff back in your original file and remove all duplicate objects and effects. Save and send this version of the file, if done properly what you see is what you get, no more guessing about how your transparency will print.
- 15) **Adobe InDesign;** we have noted that this program seems to export dull colours, and murky resolution. Often it will create hairlines that appear for no reason, not visible on screen but will print only at large final size. It does not seem to export gradients properly. You must import back in your export or pdf and zoom in very close and check for oddities. And yes we do know it works very well for multi-page documents and print house work, however wide format printing requirements and size of final output are completely different. For transparencies, which do not export properly, it is safer to create a clipping mask and mask the image instead of using a transparency. When you export, choose pdf as the file type, and choose Acrobat pdf version 6, this will yield better colour results and less random white hairlines.
- 16) **Color Space:** in most cases set this to none. We RIP in relative colorimetric and perceptual for images. US Pre-Press tends to be dull, as compared to relative colorimetric or spot colours. What your software defaults to may be fine for a book or brochure, but in the case of signs and most large prints you will tend to want colours that "pop".
- 17) **Microsoft Publisher and Creating a pdf:** Using Publisher, if you have installed Adobe Acrobat Professional, you can simply "print" to Acrobat and choose your settings and save the resulting pdf. In most cases this will produce good images, and convert your text to curves, not bitmaps which is exactly what you want. We cannot RIP a Publisher file. It must be converted to a pdf or Post Script file first.
- 18) **Adobe Photoshop:** Great for producing gradients and images. If you want crisp text, then you export your images and use something vector based to place the text, because Photoshop is going to rasterize the fonts, and fonts need to be crisp. Since Corel Draw & Illustrator does both of these things at the same time, it is one of the reasons many design studios use this program.
- 19) **Small To Large // Zoom In:** What looks acceptable on your 72 dpi monitor and may print out okay on an office colour printer, is often not acceptable for large printing if the viewing public can get close to the final product. Make sure you have acceptable original resolutions, and have airbrushed imperfections out of the images. Zoom in very close and move around your design inspecting it, because once the public can get close to it, and it is printed large, they will be seeing what you see, zoomed in real close.
- 20) **Minimum dpi:** Working at 150 dpi in Photoshop at ½ or ¼ scale is just fine. It will still print at the resolution we RIP at, most often this is 720 dpi. 300 dpi at 100% is in nearly all cases overkill, and results in bloated files.
- 21) **Creating Logo Files For Your Customer:** Remember, if your customer is on a budget, they may not want the logo printed or if they want it to last a long time out doors, then we use cut vinyl. In this case, remember, that a bitmap cannot be cut, only vector can be cut. For Example a gradient shadow cannot be cut. You will need to create a vector based version, which can be used by your customer for other things such as faxing, and newspaper printing. Also remember that the logo should have several layout styles, such as stacked and horizontal, suitable for things like shirts, caps and so on.

- 22) **Real White:** Lately, we have noticed some designers have been choosing an off-white when they intended to use white. Please choose the correct colours. If Colour is a major concern please indicate the PMS numbers (Pantone colors), or include a printed hard copy colour sample.
- 23) **Scaling:** Please note that something designed at 8.5" X 11" does not scale out perfectly to a 4' X 8' print, or even close. You need to work in the proper reduced scale for your final required size to fit properly.
- 24) **Contour Cutting:** If we cannot "open" your file and create a contour cut line/s but we can RIP it only, then please find instructions for your software here: (Freehand, Illustrator, InDesign, PageMaker 6.5, QuarkExpress) www.fusilligrill.baremetal.com/bench/cut .
- 25) **Files with Errors:** There is an extra charge for fixing files with errors, and if you are busy and want us to do this, we are happy to accommodate you.

Pictures only, we can scan pictures, slides or 35mm negatives for you. If you are sending the image picture files only, it should be saved as a tiff or bmp. It must be 300 dpi or higher. Sending a **JPEG**. JPEG is a compressed file format for images. Its strengths are small file sizes and speed. The trade-off for these advantages, though, is reduced image quality. Because each time an image is compressed with JPEG it loses a little of the image data, avoid compressing a file with JPEG more than once. If an image was pulled from the internet or was already scanned at a low resolution (100 ppi and lower), the image will not print clearly. If you sample the image up to a higher resolution, it will print blurry. It is very important to scan or create the image at the proper resolution for printing. Do not copy photos or logos from a website. The images will be 72 ppi and look fine on the monitor, but will print pixelated. **You are 100% responsible for your digital file:** If your file is not submitted properly CR SIGNS cannot be held responsible. We will not double check your files!

Color Accuracy: We will reproduce color from submitted images, transparencies, slides, photos, or digital layouts as closely as possible, but cannot exactly match color and density because of limitations in the printing process, as well as neighboring image ink requirements. We accept no responsibility for color variations between submitted images and the actual artwork or product they represent.