



Elm Street
Printing & Graphics Inc.

FILE CREATION AND SUBMISSION: Information & FAQs

How do I get an estimate from you?

Use our easy online estimate request form. If you have questions you can always give us a call and talk with one of our customer service representatives.

What's the difference between "Camera-Ready" and "Print-Ready?"

In the pre-digital days, a customer might bring in a piece of paper that we would take a picture of. That picture would go on a plate that we would mount on the press to print the job. That piece of paper was referred to as a camera-ready original.

Now in the digital age, all plates are now made from digital files. However, not all digital files are actually "print-ready". Your file must conform to a set of standards that we have developed to insure that it can be printed successfully. If your file does not adhere to these standards, we can tell you how to fix it, or we can fix it for you.

What programs can I use to create a file?

There are many different types of programs out there, but we'll limit this discussion to just four – Page Layout Programs, Graphics Creation Programs, Photo Manipulation Programs and Word Processing Programs (in order of preference for use as a way to create a print-ready file):

Page Layout Programs (Adobe® InDesign®, QuarkXpress®, Microsoft® Publisher)

These programs were designed to create files that would be used by a commercial printer for offset printing purposes. They make use of unlimited page size, correct color space identification, and type and graphic manipulation.

Graphics Creation Programs (Adobe® Illustrator®, Freehand, CorelDraw®)

These programs were designed to illustrate or draw with. Perfect for logo creation! Create your logo in one of these programs, save it as an EPS and import it into a page layout program to create your business card, brochure, sell sheet, etc.

Photo Manipulation Programs (Adobe® Photoshop®, Adobe® Photoshop® Elements)

These programs were designed to manipulate photos. Generally, speaking they do not handle text well, so don't try to use them for design purposes. Use them to change your images to CMYK or grayscale, eliminate red eye, get rid of a background, etc.

Word Processing Programs (Microsoft® Word, Appleworks®)

These programs were designed to type letters or reports, and are not recommended for file design because of the limited ways they handle colors, type and images. We understand that sometimes it's all you have, so call us to discuss your project before submitting your files.

Programs we support

- Adobe® InDesign®
- QuarkXpress®
- Adobe® Pagemaker®
- Adobe® Illustrator®
- Adobe® Photoshop®*
- Microsoft® Word*
- Microsoft® Publisher*
- Microsoft® Excel*

**it's important to know that there are limitations inherent in each of these programs when it comes to printing. Before designing in these programs, please call us to discuss your project.*

Problem programs we know about (and recommended solutions)

- × Broderbund® PrintShop – at this time we do not support this program at all, since even creating a PDF from this program does not result in a high quality print-ready file.
- × Appleworks® – run your file through our SeePrint™ driver
- × CorelDraw® – convert type to outlines and save as EPS

How should I set up my file?

FILE DIMENSIONS: Your document should be sized to the actual size of the printed piece. (i.e., if you are designing a business card, the file should be sized to 3.5" x 2".)

BLEED: if you have color that “bleeds” off the edge of the paper, extend that color 1/8 inch past the edge of the page.

LIVE AREA: with the exception of bleed, all type and images should be kept 1/8" away from the edge of the page.

COLOR SPACE: Print jobs are always either grayscale, spot color (Pantone® Matching System) or Process (CMYK) color. When designing a print project remember that all images, illustrations and text must contain proper color space identification. (RGB may sometimes be used for digital printing.)

HALFTONE IMAGES: ideally these should be 300 dpi *at the size they are going to be printed.*

LINE ART: ideally, these should be 600-1200 dpi *at the size they are going to be printed.*

PREFERRED GRAPHIC FILE FORMATS for halftones and line art: eps, tif, pdf*, jpg*
(*when properly created)

How should I submit my file to you?

FIRST:

SPELL CHECK / PROOF your document! Use the built-in spellchecker in your design program. Print out the file and read it to make sure it says what you want it to say, and that it looks the way you want it to look.

Make sure your file is set up properly (see “How to set up your files”).

THEN:

Use the SeePrint™ driver on our website; *OR*

Create your own properly prepared high resolution PDF; *OR*

Collect native files with all graphics and fonts utilizing the collect/package feature of your program:

Adobe® InDesign® – FILE › Preflight and Package

QuarkXpress – FILE › Collect for Output

Adobe® Pagemaker® – PLUG-INS › Save for Service Bureau

Microsoft® Publisher – FILE › Pack & Go › Take to Commercial Printer

FINALLY:

Use the EZ Send-A-File feature on our website to upload your files to us.

Give us a hard copy proof of your document. This lets us know what you expect your document to look like – especially when there is color involved.

Why do you charge a fee when I submit a file to you?

“Preflight” is the process of checking a document file to be certain it is ready for output to lithographic film, press plate material, digital copier or laser printer. The process verifies that all the elements necessary to accurately reproduce the document are correct and within the demanding specifications of the printing environment.

Not all preflight steps are required for all electronic documents. If any problem with your file arises doing preflight, we will always give you the option of fixing it yourself, or tell you how much we will charge to fix it for you. If you have any questions about any of these steps, we would be glad to discuss them with you.

How long does it take for you to complete my order?

The time it takes to complete a job is dependent on the parameters of each job. We can give you an estimation of completion once we have all the pertinent information on your job, including the files, inhouse. If you have a specific time requirement, please let us know. Additionally, your approval of the proof in a timely fashion will ensure the job is completed on time. If any changes need to be made after seeing a proof, a new schedule may need to be developed.

What is a “proof”?

A proof is a way of ensuring that we have set your type accurately and that everything is positioned according to your requirements. Typically, we will produce a proof which will be sent to you online or provide a hard copy for you to approve.

Why do I need to look at a proof if I've already given you everything I need to have done?

We employ human beings to produce your work and, last time we checked, humans are not perfect. Your approval on the final proof is assurance that you have looked over every aspect of our work and approve it as accurate. It benefits everyone if errors are caught in the proofing process rather than after the job is completed and delivered.

Do I still need to approve a proof if I bring my work in on disk?

It may seem like a proof wouldn't be needed in this case but it really is. Just because it looks good on your computer screen or on your laser printer, doesn't mean it will look good for us. Output devices process digital information using a variety of processing languages. Your approval of the proof we'll provide assures that the output device used has correctly interpreted and processed the information you have provided.

A quick word about fonts

Use the actual Bold, Italic, or BoldItalic version of a font – do not use the style menu.

Just because you find a font resident in your application program doesn't mean we will have it. That's why when you submit your files, we need the fonts too.



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