

# Graphic Design Specifications

**To accurately print your files, the information on this page should be read and understood before any file is sent to Acutrack.**

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## Artwork Guidelines

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- **Design your artwork on an Acutrack template.**

Submitting art on other templates may require us to adjust the file to fit our templates and will incur additional charges.

Our templates can be found at: <http://www.acutrack.com/> Select the "Tools" tab, then click on "Templates".

- **Save your artwork in a program we support.**

*Adobe Illustrator, Adobe InDesign, QuarkXpress, Photoshop\*, Corel Draw & Freehand.* \*Photoshop is a photo manipulation program, not a layout/design program. We do not recommend designing your layout in Photoshop because of certain printing restrictions. Mainly, you will not get the text clarity that is possible with other design programs such as Quark, Illustrator or InDesign. It's best to import Photoshop images into one of these programs, then create the text.

- **Supply all linked images & fonts used in your design.**

If we don't have your linked images and fonts, they won't print. Some programs include a **Package/Collect for Output** option that will gather all of these components for you. This can usually be found under the **File** menu.

- **Save all images and files as CMYK colorspace.**

If we receive an RGB file we can convert it to CMYK on our end, but this may significantly change the overall color of your art.

- **Make sure you include a 1/8" bleed.**

If your graphics run to very edge of the template, you will want to include a bleed beyond the template as a buffer zone. Files on press tend to move slightly and this bleed will ensure that no gaps will appear between the artwork and the edge of the media.

- **Minimum, legible font size.**

Suggested minimum font size is 5pt. Smaller type may not be legible.

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## Common Design Issues

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- **Images look pixelated/low resolution**

You want to print the best image possible, so we recommend designing your artwork at 300ppi, for best quality. Anything less than 300ppi will still print, it just won't look as good. Images grabbed from the web will be 72ppi no matter how much upsampling is done in Photoshop. Web images are not recommended for print.

- **Rich Black prints better than just Black**

Rich Black is a blend of CMYK (instead of just K) to achieve a much deeper black. Using only 100% K (Black) will result in a somewhat lighter black, or very dark gray. A good combination for Rich Black is: 40% Cyan, 30% Magenta, 30% Yellow, 100% Black.

- **Final printed product will not match what you see on your monitor**

Computer monitors display colors in the RGB colorspace, while printed material is processed in the CMYK colorspace. Likewise, two separate monitors will display the same image differently, therefore you should not expect to get a printed product that will look just like what you see on your monitor.

- **Our final printed product will not match a printed product from another printer.**

Because of all the variables involved in the printing process, you will not get a finished product that looks exactly like a printed piece you have had printed elsewhere.

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## Proofing Process

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- **A free PDF proof of your artwork**

After we receive your artwork, our Prepress department will preflight the art to make sure it will print problem free. A PDF proof will be created from the artwork and uploaded to our proofing website. An email with a link to the proof will be sent out notifying you of your artwork and it's pending approval. This PDF will only be used to verify text and graphics placement, but will not represent the exact color of the finished piece. If you need to see a color rendition of the artwork we recommend a 1st article proof.

- **A First Article Proof (if requested)**

If a PDF proof just won't cut it, we recommend ordering a First Article Proof (for an additional charge). A First Article Proof will give you a much closer reproduction of the finished product than a PDF can. We recommend this process if you need to make absolutely sure everything comes out the way you expect it to, especially if you are worried about the color.

**Failure to meet our guidelines may delay your project and result in additional artwork setup charge.**