

APPLICATIONS & FORMATS

To produce documents of distinction, it helps to understand the primary purpose for each software suite. The difference between private and public distribution software can best be explained by describing what each type of software does. The critical component is that most private distribution software does not separate to CMYK (Cyan, Magenta, Yellow and Black). CMYK separations are required when the piece you have created must go to press – rather than color copies or digital color prints.

You will find that many of the files you wish to create cannot be produced in a single software program. They may look great on screen, but not all software programs are created equal. The software itself may cause a variety of problems when trying to get the document to output correctly and achieve the desired results. Using the right software tools for the job will save you time, money and frustration.

When does my work need to go to press?

Once you decide that Public Distribution is desired (more than 1,000 sheets), the press becomes your better option. So working with the right “software tool” helps us produce whatever quantity you desire in a timely and cost effective manner.

Private distribution

- Word Processing
- Spreadsheet
- Presentation

Small quantities that will be produced on a laser ink jet printer or sent digitally to a color copier.

Word Processing Software

Word Processing software should be used to input and revise text that will eventually be typeset and formatted in a page layout program. You can save some money by typing your own text for output. This is one of the best methods; however, this type of software has limitations such as: 1. it does not support color separations.

2. Graphics placed in this software will not only print out in low resolution, but become embedded and cannot be altered at a later time. Embedded graphics that need high-resolution output and/or color Separations will need to be placed in a page layout application, increasing the cost of the project. Word processing software is good for creating documents for office use and small quantity distribution. The color capabilities are meant to be printed on desktop color printers. Examples include: Microsoft Word, WordPerfect.

Spreadsheet Software

Occasionally, you will want the charts and graphs you created in a spreadsheet program to be included in your brochures and other documents. Spreadsheet software may allow you to save the chart or graph as an EPS graphic so that it can be placed in a page layout program. However, this type of software does not color separate and is intended for printing on desktop printers or color copiers. This type of software is best for creating documents for office use and small quantity distribution. Examples include: Microsoft Excel and Lotus.

Presentation Software

This software is designed to produce color transparencies or 35mm slides for presentations. The software is limited to producing output for presentations only. It will print to a digitally connected color copier to produce transparencies and small quantities of digital color prints. It can also be used for handouts and booklets in color or in black and white. As with page

layout programs, the additional elements, such as graphics and fonts, need to be included in order to produce the needed output. Example: PowerPoint.

Public Distribution

- Page Layout
- Drawing/Illustration
- Image Manipulation/Scanning

Quantities over 1,000 impressions should have CMYK separations.

Page Layout Software

Page Layout software allows you to use a variety of elements, such as graphics, type, illustrations, etc., to create a document. However, it does require that all the necessary elements be included with the file in order for it to print properly. Ask for a file preparation checklist to be sure you include all the elements and information needed. Examples include: PageMaker and QuarkXpress.

Drawing/Illustration Software

These programs are used to create graphic files and are designed to be used in conjunction with other programs. Keep in mind that if you need your original graphics modified, your printer must also have the software you used to create the graphic. One problem that occurs frequently with graphic files is the inclusion of fonts as part of the graphic. It is recommended that the fonts be changed into curves or outlines, which turns the font into a graphic and can no longer be modified. If you have Freehand or Illustrator, it is fairly simple to convert the font:

1. Choose "Convert to Paths" (Freehand) or...
2. "Create Outlines" (Illustrator)

If you don't have either of these software applications, your printer will need to convert the fonts for you. This will eliminate problems with the file later in the production process. Examples include: Illustrator, CorelDraw!, Freehand.

Image Manipulation/Scanning Software

Image Manipulation Software is used to scan and/or modify scanned images such as photographs or other artwork. It can then be saved into a format which can be used in a page layout program. Based on your knowledge and expertise, this type of software can perform a variety of operations, from simple color editing to special effects. It is an invaluable tool in converting graphics to the proper file format and changing color models for printing. Check out our other Resource Ideas: Color, Graphics, Photos, and Other Artwork and File Formats. Example: Photoshop.

Note: Many scanners come with simple image manipulation software. This software is not professional quality and may not be suitable for mass distribution purposes.