

# FILE FORMATS

**There are many types of file formats available. However, the file formats for optimum printing results are EPS and TIFF. Here are some typical file formats and their definitions.**

**EPS**—This stands for Encapsulated PostScript. This is the most versatile and the preferred file format for composite film separations. As a vector file format, it offers smooth, clean lines. Saving files as an EPS is recommended when the file is being RIPPed to a PostScript device such as an image setter or digital press.

**TIFF**—This stands for Tagged Image File Format and is typically used of paint-type A (bitmapped) images. TIFFs can also be used for composite film separations, however, this file format does not offer as many options as an EPS file. These files take up less disk space but may not be recommended for process color work. TIFFs require more space as the color parameters of the job.

**GIF**—This stands for Graphic Interchange Format. A graphic format compression scheme created for online service transferring of photographs. Because GIF images are limited to 256 colors, their file sizes are very small. With the popularity of the Web, this format has become the standard for online display images.

**PICT**—Pict (short for “pict”ure) files are useful for previewing high-resolution art accurately in page layout programs and for creating templates used as guides in drawing programs. The quality, however, is not adequate for final output.

**BMP**—Bitmap format native to Windows Paint. It can accommodate a 24-bit image of various dimensions and resolutions. BMP is a low-resolution image not suitable for printed output.

**WMF**—Windows Metafile is the standard of object-oriented files under Windows. It is designed predominantly to print to non-PostScript printers and can only be edited in its native file change.

**JPEG**—This stands for Joint Photographers Experimental Group. This file format has built-in compression software that allows you to choose how much to compress the file. This is referred to as a “lossy” file and at low resolution is not acceptable for printing. Be aware that as the file compresses, it randomly throws out pixels resulting in a loss of information. Over time the image will degrade, eventually becoming unrecognizable.

## **Tips for Saving Your Graphics Files:**

1. All graphics files should be saved in an EPS or a TIFF format. This will provide optimum results for printing.
2. In Photoshop, EPS files should be saved with DCS (Desktop Color Separation) turned off and an 8-bit preview.
3. Fonts used in EPS graphic files should be converted to curves or outlines. Check your software manual for instructions.