

PREFLIGHT:

Make your document ready to fly from the computer to the press

Definition: Preflight is the process of checking a document before it goes to film. The process makes sure that all the elements are correct and within the demanding specifications of the printing environment.

Just about everything that is checked in preflighting a document is contained on the individual help pages on this site. With that in mind, we will not rehash every detail of every help topic, but will rather list the process which a preflight technician must go through to check a document's suitability for the printing press. Following each preflight item are links to the help pages that expand on that topic.

HOW TECHCOLOR PREFLIGHTS YOUR DOCUMENT

- 1.** Confirm that all fonts and graphics are included with the document, and that no images are "imbedded" in PageMaker or Illustrator.
- 2.** Check to see if the size of the document, as quoted, is the same as the size of the document in the electronic file. Also check if bleeds are required and/or quoted.
- 3.** Check that the ink colors quoted are the same as the ink colors in the document. Also check for inappropriate color spaces (spot colors, RGB, etc.) or screen angles, and confirm that paper quality is sufficient for full-color printing.
- 4.** In a multi-page document, check for page ordering (reader spreads vs. printer spreads) and page creep.
- 5.** Confirm that trapping is active in the document, and check each color item for trapping exception errors.
- 6.** Check panel sizes in folded documents.
- 7.** Open all raster images and check for appropriate color space.
- 8.** Identify ink densities in photos, and evaluate effects of expected dot gain.

- 9.** Check resolution of raster images, both before and after scaling in layout program.
- 10.** Check for presence and quality of clipping paths in raster images.
- 11.** Check photos for color castes, dust & scratches, and evaluate overall quality of the image.
- 12.** Check for trapping requirements in raster images.
- 13.** Open all Bezier or vector artwork and check for missing fonts or images.
- 14.** Check Bezier images for appropriate color space.
- 15.** Check ink densities in Bezier images, and evaluate effects of expected dot gain.
- 16.** Check for trapping in Bezier images.
- 17.** Print laser copies and laser separations, and compare to proofs supplied by customer.
- 18.** Fax lasers to customer for approval to proceed to film.