

Digital Page and Image Specifications for Variable Imaging

Follow the guidelines below to ensure an efficient prepress workflow.

PREPARING NATIVE PAGE FILE FORMATS

Quad accepts page files created using Macintosh computers with current versions of Adobe InDesign and QuarkXPress. Please adhere to the following guidelines when creating and submitting digital page files.

NATIVE APPLICATION PAGE CONSTRUCTION

We prefer to have pages created as single pages, set up as facing pages, built to actual trim size. When producing pages this way, elements that bleed off the page must be extended 1/8" over the edge of the page on all sides (unless saddle stitching, then only the three outer edges, no bleed required in the center/gutter). If building at final trim is not possible, the other option is to build page files to their actual bleed size. Add 1/8" for bleed to all outer edges (three outer edges for saddle-stitch). All live matter of importance, including all type, must be a minimum of 1/4" inside the final trim in order to guarantee that no essential information is trimmed off.

- Any copy that will monochrome laser or inkjet image should:
 - Have the color changed from black to something contrasting with the static page information (e.g. Magenta or Green).
 - Be built on a separate layer than the static information within the document. Additionally, different imaging versions should be built as separate layers within the same native document.
- If constructing pages that will have versions, contact your Account Manager for specifications for options on how to best build and supply these files.
- All fonts and images must be supplied. Use QuarkXPress' Collect for Output or InDesign's Package features when preparing files for output. This assists in gathering corresponding art, image files, and in some cases, fonts needed for processing. The report file supplies helpful information about the supplied files.

- Supply all linked art as either CMYK or grayscale high-res images. We prefer 4/color images be saved as composite EPS or TIFF files. Avoid using DCS pre-separated 4/color CT files. Black and white line art should be in bitmap TIFF format.

- Maintain a consistent naming convention for your page files that includes the folio(s). Dashes and underscores may be used in names, but avoid using the following special characters:
, ? / * \ ({ | > = : "

PREPARING PDF FILES

If you are submitting final page files as PDF, please adhere to the following guidelines:

- The printing industry standard PDF/X-1a is based on the 1.3 specification. Please supply either Acrobat 4 (1.3 spec) PDFs, or already flattened PDF files if you are using Acrobat Distiller 5 and above or exporting to PDF with InDesign. Please see PDF flattening information at:
<https://www.quad.com/prepress-tools/>
- PDF files should be created as single pages
- PDF files need to be checked by the client to ensure final file is complete prior to sending the files to Quad.
- PDF files should have all fonts and high-resolution images embedded in the page file.
- Embedded high-resolution images should not contain ICC Profiles or PostScript Color Management.
- Final PDF should have any variable content removed from the page.

A separate hard copy or PDF of page(s) should show all page content, including variable data, and contain trim marks and bleeds. Variable text should be marked up with fonts, font sizes and line spacing to be used.

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SPECIFICATIONS FOR VARIABLE IMAGES

Color Print

Timeframes: Should arrive at a predetermined time prior to tapes due to Quad.

Monochrome Print

Timeframes: Should arrive at a predetermined time prior to tapes due to Quad.

Media:	CD, DVD, FTP
Resolution Requirements:	300 dpi minimum
Image Mode:	CMYK (Flattened, untagged)
Image Size:	Scaled to the largest size and resolution it will print at
File Type:	PDF/X-1a, TIFF or EPS
File Name:	The files must be identified with a unique code or name, especially if it is to tie into any data. Avoid using the following special characters: , ? / * \ () { > = : "

Media:	CD, DVD, FTP
Resolution Requirements:	300 dpi minimum
Image Mode:	Grayscale (Flattened, untagged)
Image Size:	Scaled to the largest size and resolution it will print at
File Type:	PDF/X-1a, TIFF or EPS
File Name:	The files must be identified with a unique code or name, especially if it is to tie into any data. Avoid using the following special characters: , ? / * \ () { > = : "

NOTE: Images less than 300 dpi may not reproduce well, but will print. Unflattened PDFs risk incorrect reproduction due to flattening/transparency issues. RGB images may not reproduce well, but will print.

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PERSONALIZATION INSTRUCTIONS

Data Files: Please see QDS Non-Production Ready Media Specs

- Written Variable Imaging instructions are required for each imaging version.
- The variables to be imaged should be referenced on the instructions, calling out the variable field name from the Data Record Layout. For example: Please visit your nearest <Store_Name>!
- Provide a low-res vector PDF sample of the piece to be produced, with each imaging/personalization area identified.

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- Provide Native files (InDesign or Quark) with imaging on a separate layer than the static within the native file. (See p. 1)
- Font detail: Quad can extract this information from your native file. However, details of font type and size for each personalization area should be noted on the sample PDF for verification. (Use Acrobat Commenting or similar tool)
- Provide written business rules for programming, including:
 - Casing (UPPER, lower, or Mixed)
 - How to account for very long names, Ex: If the last name field is over X characters long, do Y.
 - Rules for fields not 100% populated (specify default slug or how to close up sentence) Ex: if no name, use Valued Customer
 - Punctuation and pluralization rules for all variables.
 - Proofing criteria: How many records? Specific variable data requirements? Corresponding input data dumps?
 - Printed Sample requirements for the job: How many samples do you require? Should they be "live" names or "Sample A. Sample"?
- We encourage you to provide test data if available ahead of live data to use for setting up the variable application and creating proofs until the live data is received.

CONTACT US

If you have concerns about any of these guidelines, please contact your Quad Account Manager. This will prevent time delays and additional costs.

These guidelines do not take into account all the special situations that can occur with prepress production. We endeavor to be flexible, so if you require special arrangements or procedures in order to submit your files, please contact your Quad Account Manager.

See how we can help.