

PREPARE PDF FILES FOR FINAL OUTPUT

Preparing files for printing requires specific settings to ensure the final product looks exactly like your digital design. To get your PDF ready, you should follow these standard requirements:

Color Mode: CMYK

Convert your document color mode to CMYK. Why? If you send an RGB file, colors may appear “muddy” or shifted when printed.

Resolution (dpi)

For a crisp print, your images and document must be high resolution. Image Requirement: 300 dpi at the actual size of the print.

Warning: Images pulled from websites are usually 72 dpi and will look blurry or pixelated on paper.

Bleed & Crop Marks

If your design has colors or images that go all the way to the edge of the paper, you must include a Bleed.

Standard Bleed: 0.125 inches on all sides.

Safe Zone: Keep all important text at least 0.125 inches inside the trim line to avoid it being cut off.

Font Handling

To prevent “missing font” errors please make sure to:

Embed Fonts: Ensure all fonts are embedded in the PDF export settings or

Outline Text: In programs like Illustrator or InDesign, you can “Create Outlines” to turn text into vector shapes, though this makes the text unable to edit the copy later.

PDF Export Settings

When saving your file, look for the **PDF/X-1a:2001** or **PDF/X-4** preset. These are the standards for print-ready files because they will automatically:

- Flatten transparency and
- Embed fonts



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PROPER BLEEDS & CROP MARKS

Bleed Area: If your image extends to the edge of the page, add a .125" bleed on all four sides of your artwork. This ensures a clean edge after trimming.

Artwork Size/Live Area: If there's no bleed, leave a .25" safe margin around your artwork to prevent important elements from being cut off.

Finish Size: This is the final size of your printed piece.

Crop Marks/Trim Line: These marks indicate where the printed piece should be trimmed.



Document with Bleed: Add .125" to each side of the finish size for your file dimensions.

Document without Bleed: Ensure a .25" margin around your artwork and match the finish size for your file dimensions.

Use our downloadable templates to easily understand and implement bleeds in your designs marketingtechonline.com/templates.

We offer a variety of templates to suit your needs. If you can't find the perfect template, don't hesitate to contact us at info@marketingtechonline.com



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