

Design and produce creative colour artwork for print

Overview

This standard covers the design and production of artwork for print using graphic software packages.

The standard is intended for designers working in a production environment whose role involves working with and advising customers on appropriate specifications for artwork for print and producing finished artwork to agreed or amended specifications.

This is what the standard covers:

Creative colour artwork for print is required for a vast range of products that may be printed using various printing methods. For example, printed textiles, ceramics, packaging, books, magazines, display and point-of-sale material, may involve lithography, flexography, gravure or screen process, depending on the substrate and other factors.

Each product and printing method require artwork to be designed and produced, in a format that will meet the product specification and the customer's requirements.

It is critically important at the outset of a printing project that the product design requirements, as they relate to print, are correctly specified. For example, the size of the print area, the number of colours to be used and any post-print processes that may impact on the design must be determined. There will be many different factors to be considered, depending on the type of product. For screen printing and finishing elements like foiling minimum text sizes and minimum area tolerances will need to be applied.

The designer must be able to assess technical printing issues and product requirements when the artwork design is being specified, and to offer correct advice to the customer to prevent subsequent problems during printing and post-printing operations. In addition, the designer must be capable of understanding and interpreting the customer's creative requirements, so that the artwork fulfils its practical, aesthetic and design objectives.

Once a design specification has been agreed, artwork must be produced, often incorporating several different kinds of source material. For example, photography and copy-writing may need to be commissioned. Depending on the size of the project, work colleagues and outworkers may need to be co-ordinated so that all the elements required for the creation of the artwork are available in time to meet the production schedule.

It's not uncommon for "dummies" to be made. This a mock-up of a book with the

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correct binding, paper grammage and even some finishes applied. The same exists for packaging where "blanks" are done for testing adherence to bottle shapes or small production runs are done for line and transit trials. **

After the first proof has been submitted to the customer, there are likely to be changes required. These may range from simple typographical corrections to major re-working of the artwork. The designer must be able to deal with the customer professionally and helpfully whilst making sure that the project remains on time, within budget, and meets the product technical specification and print requirements. Where any of these are at risk of being missed, the designer must give appropriate and timely advice.

On completion of the artwork and approval by the customer, the designer must make sure that all the files are properly archived and the files required for print are forwarded in the required format.

N.B. For packaging – Line Trials and Transit tests are vital. The product may not be useable unless it passes those tests.

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Performance criteria

You must be able to:

* *Agree a design specification for print ready artwork**

1. establish the proposed specification for artwork, including any technical requirements relating to application or use of printed product
2. establish the printing method, substrate and finishing method likely to be used for printing artwork, together with any enhancements which will be needed during or after printing to meet the specification
3. establish the creative or stylistic needs for artwork in order to satisfy its intended audience, use or application
4. propose to customers design specifications that meet requirements relating to creative or stylistic needs, product use and printing method
5. amend your proposals to comply with any comments from customers and re-submit proposed design specifications until customers are satisfied
6. agree timescales with customers for the production of artwork that both meets the needs of customers and the capability of yourself and your team
7. keep adequate records of agreed designs and product specifications, the scope of the work agreed, and any other relevant contractual issues

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Produce *artwork suitable for proofing

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- 8. identify the range and sequence of tasks required to produce artwork***
- 9. check you have the correct files needed for production of artwork, including any text, database, spreadsheet or image files***
- 10. identify and obtain other appropriate source material***
- 11. delegate and co-ordinate tasks to colleagues or external sources when required in order to meet agreed production timescales***
- 12. confirm that files for use in artwork are in a suitable format***
- 13. convert or use appropriate import filters to bring files into artwork layout software, retaining original formatting where required***
- 14. produce creative colour artwork that meets agreed design specification as far as possible***
- 15. check that any typographical elements are formatted to a high standard of accuracy***
- 16. check that any charts or tables are in the appropriate format***

- 17. check that any line-art or bitmap images are of sufficient quality for the document use and have the correct resolution and colour space**
- 18. check that all the colours used in documents are consistent with the intended printing method**
- 19. save files in a secure way, using an adequate archiving system**
- 20. produce proofs in a format that is appropriate for the customer**
- 21. submit colour proofs to customers in the appropriate manner for them to evaluate**

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**Amend artwork as required to meet customer and product specification

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- 22. carry out a realistic assessment of the extent of any corrections, amendments and stylistic changes required to proofs by customers
- 23. interpret and apply accurate typographic corrections indicated by readers and copy preparation marks
- 24. seek clarification or advice from customers where requirements are unclear or unable to be realised
- 25. bring issues relating to likely additional costs caused by unexpected re-working to the attention of customers or an appropriate colleague in line with organisational procedures
- 26. seek agreement for additional work to be done, when necessary, in line with the policy of your organisation
- 27. make corrections and amendments which meet customer requirements and submit subsequent proofs after each round of amendments until artwork is approved
- 28. archive files in a secure way
- 29. submit finished artwork for printing in the format required by printers
- 30. liaise with printers or pre-press specialists to resolve any difficulties with the artwork
- 31. assess printed work against requirements to evaluate how design and artwork have worked in practice

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Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

1. the law as it affects printing: defamation, copyright and ownership of images, obscenity, incitement, forgery, data protection
2. ethical issues relevant to printing: confidentiality, personal issues important to others, including ethnic origin, gender, religion, sexuality
3. hazards and risks in your own job, their assessment and the action to take to deal with them
4. the relevant health and safety regulations on the safe handling of equipment and materials, and the safe use of computer equipment
5. how to safely handle customer material
6. security and storage: computer system security and virus protection, the print with time-sensitive or restricted release dates, the high value products or print with a high risk of theft
7. how to securely archive artwork
8. how to communicate with colleagues, customers, suppliers and visitors
9. workplace objectives, priorities, standards and procedures
10. the range of work carried out in the workplace
11. the key job roles within the printing and graphic communications industry and their main purposes
12. the identification and assessment of printing options
13. the reasons for selecting one process over another
14. the choice of processes for any particular product
15. the role of images in graphic communication
16. changing image styles, fashions and demands in printed products
17. the stages in the printing process from pre-press to printed product
18. the different types of resource, including labour, materials, and machinery
19. the relationship between resource usage and profitability
20. the operation of software and hardware used in a creative artwork environment
21. typefaces and fonts, **their uses and default errors
22. the procedures for document checking and proofing
23. document layout
24. the principles of design and how it is affected by different substrates
25. the finishing method used and how this will affect the creation of colour artwork
26. ways to obtain sources of material including photography or copy-writing
27. sources of original material, including photographers and graphic artists
28. how to find and use archive and on-line sources of digital images

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- 29. colour theory
- 30. the importance of visual compatibility in images
- 31. the relationship between image size, file size and resolution file formats for images
- 32. the assessment of material for scanning and potential problems and solutions
- 33. dealing with embedded information
- 34. file management procedures
- 35. file conversion techniques
- 36. how to transmit files
- 37. administrative procedures: planning and scheduling, recording and reporting
- 38. product labelling
- 39. the main features of quality assurance and quality control systems
- 40. the light standards for viewing and assessing colour print
- 41. the types and characteristics of paper, board and other commonly used substrates
- 42. the types and characteristics of inks and coatings
- 43. the principal types of proof and their role in the printing process
- 44. the printers imprint

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