

# Digital Output Specifications for Special Interest Publications

Quad/Graphics' prices for handling client-supplied final PDF files are based on receiving color proofs as well as PDF/X-1a files that comply with our specifications, which can be found at <http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/pdfs/pdfx.pdf>. We request clients to submit test files to their designated Customer Service Representatives in advance of live production. Jobs will be subject to additional charges if submitted files and proofs are not in accordance with specifications, or if test files are not submitted.

## Accepted File Formats for Offset Print

### PDF/X-1a:2001

Our all-digital workflows are based on printing industry-standard PDF/X-1a files. For maximum efficiency and reliable reproduction, submitted PDF/X-1a files must have:

- All fonts and images embedded
- All elements encoded as CMYK or spot (No RGB)
- The file must be identified as trapped or not trapped
- CMYK, DeviceN CMYK or Grayscale
- Downsample images to 300 ppi
- No 100% four-color text

### Submitting PDF/X-1a files

It is important to follow the guidelines to properly create PDF/X-1a files to ensure that they will reproduce correctly on press. Although distilling PostScript to PDF/X-1a greatly increases the chances of producing an error-free file, it does not guarantee it. The resulting PDF/X-1a is only as good as the files used to create it.

Before submitting PDF/X-1a files to Quad, we recommend the files be tested to check for possible errors. Errors will eventually be caught when preflighting the PDF/X-1a file in Acrobat Professional, however, it is preferable that the native application and PostScript files be properly prepared from the outset. Because the most efficient workflow is one in which a process is never repeated, a solid foundation must be built to support the final outcome. It all starts with a properly constructed native application file.

### Acrobat, Quark and InDesign

Newer versions of Adobe Acrobat need to be set up carefully to ensure PDF 1.3 or PDF/X-1a files are produced. Using QuarkXPress to export (i.e. "print to") a file to PDF produces a flattened PDF 1.3 file.

Adobe InDesign CS, CS2 and CS3, however, allow users to choose PDF versions. If a PDF 1.4 and above is created, InDesign will "turnoff" the flattener, so the PDF must be flattened by the RIP or

proofer during prepress. This is problematic for printers because every RIP device and proofer handles transparency flattening differently. Flatteners in RIP software vary, so different RIPs and proofers will deliver different results (some RIP devices do not support any transparency flattening).

If you supply a flattened proof but an unflattened PDF file of the page or ad, then the flattener that created the proof must perfectly match our flattener or there will be different output results. Complicating the issue is the fact that the different Acrobat versions have slightly different flatteners. Different flattener settings can also be used within the same Acrobat version.

### Other Accepted File Formats

The following file formats require testing before production begins and will incur additional costs.

#### PDF

PDF (4/color composite) Version 1.3 (Acrobat 4) is preferred. The printing industry standard PDF/X-1a is based on the 1.3 specification. Please supply either PDF version 1.3 files or already flattened PDFs if you are using Acrobat 5 and above or exporting to PDF with InDesign.

#### Native applications

Quad/Graphics accepts current versions of QuarkXPress up to version 8 and Adobe InDesign up to CS4. Native QuarkXPress and InDesign pages are processed in a traditional prepress workflow. Proofs are then forwarded to the client for approval. Avoid supplying vector art programs such as Adobe Illustrator or Macromedia Freehand as final page files. Instead, save the art file as .ai or .eps and import it into InDesign or Quark. If you must supply vector art application files, please discuss it first with your Quad ISR; additional charges may apply.

For more information about preparing QuarkXPress and InDesign files for prepress production, please refer to "Guidelines for Preparing Digital Files" at: [www.QG.com](http://www.QG.com) > Products & Services > Imaging > Imaging Specifications.

## Digital Output Specifications for SIPs (continued)

### Naming Conventions

Please name files using a maximum of 14 characters, excluding the file extension. Name your files to clearly identify client name and folio number. Please name files with these points in mind:

- Uppercase characters are preferred
- Use only alpha numeric characters within file names. No “special characters” (i.e. -, ./\*\({}>=#:”) should be used.

If you desire a naming convention that does not conform to the following example, please contact your Imaging Service Representative to discuss.

Naming Convention Example: LP001\_\_42288.job

LP 001 \_ \_ 42288 .job  
1 2 3 4 5 6

1 = First two letters of job name

2 = Three-digit folio (up to 4 digits for books over 999 pages)

3 & 4= Reserved for version numbers (no versions in example)

5 = Last 5 digits of job #

6 = Suffix such as .job, .eps, .pdf

### Network Options and File Transfer

Quad/Graphics maintains a wide variety of network and connectivity options for our clients. Transmitting digital page files to Imaging via the Internet or a Wide Area Network connection saves time and supports late content changes. (NOTE: Internet-based client Smarttools require clients to have an Internet connection of at least 768K.)

#### Quad/Disk

Our Quad/Disk file transfer Smartool enables you to send and receive low-res or high-res files with ease on either a Mac or PC. Using Quad/Disk, there is no need to compress files prior to sending them. In order that file transfer methods are completely understood, please discuss file transfers with your Customer Service Representative or Salesperson before production begins. We want to be clear on the file transfer method to be used, which Imaging facility will receive data, etc.

### Network Options

- Internet: Quad/Graphics maintains multiple DS3 lines to the Internet for Internet-based FTP or Quad/Disk transfers, and client Smartool access. Quad/Net is an AFP share accessible through the Internet.
- Custom T1 or DS3 (scalable to volume): Connect directly to the Quad/Net or have a connection established between your network and ours. Please note that connections of this nature require lead times ranging from 30 to 90 days, depending on design and availability.

### Non-Network File Transfer

If you do not use one of the network file transfer options described above, Quad/Graphics accepts files on CD-ROM and DVD.

### Total Area Coverage Based on Paper Stock

The basis weight and type of paper stock to be used in the final printed piece will directly affect the amount of UCR at the separation stage. UCR is expressed and checked in the final file as total area coverage, which is the sum of the four dot percentages measured in the same spot of the densest part of the separation and larger than the size of a quarter.

- Uncoated and newsprint stocks:
  - 240% total area coverage maximum.
- Supercalendered stock: 260% maximum.
- Lightweight coated stock: 280-300% maximum.
- Heavier coated stock (50 lb. and above): SWOP requires a maximum of 300% and 325% for small image areas carrying no significant detail.

NOTE: If images will be reproduced by both Offset and Gravure, then they should adhere to SWOP, which is 300%.

### Contact Us

These guidelines do not take into account special situations that can occur with prepress production. Quad/Graphics endeavors to be flexible so if you require special arrangements or procedures in order to submit your files, please contact your Imaging Service Representative. For more information about Quad/Graphics, please visit [www.QG.com](http://www.QG.com).