

# Preparing your artwork for print

There are many different applications to design and prepare artwork, but only one way to make a press-ready PDF. It's not difficult and, done properly, will ensure that your hard work will look as you expect it to when printed.

**WE'RE HERE TO HELP.**

**1 Create your artwork** in your chosen software package. Be certain that any photography you use in your design is of **high resolution\*** and in **CMYK format**. Be careful to keep critical elements of the design a safe distance from trim edges or the binding. Artwork for booklets or brochures should always be set up as individual pages; our pre-press software will take care of the imposition. Make sure there is a **3 mm bleed** (areas of colour or images which will print off the edge of the paper) on your document if necessary. Please do not use RGB colours in your artwork. If you want to use spot colours in your design, call us so we can help you set up your document correctly before making your PDF.

**2 Don't forget quality control.** When your design is finished and spell-checked, create a Postscript file of the artwork, ensuring that you add **3 mm bleed** and **crop marks** (Crossed lines placed at the corners of the page to indicate where to trim it). This is very important. Don't worry about other printer's marks, we take care of that once we have your file.

**3 Create your PDF.** Ideally, you have a full version of Adobe Acrobat Pro, which includes Acrobat Distiller, from which you create your PDF. If not, there is probably a means of exporting your artwork as a PDF from your software package. Please check your software User Guide for instructions. In either event, please use the Distiller setting **PDF/X-1a:2001** when creating your PDF. This automatically sets all of the options correctly for making a press-ready PDF.

**4 Send us the PDF.** You can upload your press-ready PDF using file transfer services such as **YouSendIt** or **WeTransfer** (WeTransfer is free), or send it to us on a CD or DVD. Please also provide us with a **laser or inkjet print** of your artwork so we know exactly what you expect your printed PDF to look like. We also need to have any spot or corporate colours specified by a **Pantone number** or **CMYK breakdown**, so that we can be sure to match colours as you expect to see them. If you have a previously printed copy, please send it along as well. Properly prepared, press-ready PDFs don't usually corrupt or go awry, but we want to be sure to get it right the first time.

**5 Not feeling confident?** If you are unsure how to create a Postscript file or press-ready PDF from your software, please visit the Adobe website **www.adobe.com** and download the guide entitled *How to Create Adobe PDF Files for Print and Press*. This excellent guide will give you easy step-by-step directions on setting up your software to deliver perfect press-ready PDFs every time.

If you're still unsure, our studio can create a PDF from your original artwork for a small charge. If there are any issues with your files that would require further action, we will contact you to discuss any corrections.

For further information, including a detailed explanation of working with bitmapped and vector images, please visit the **Printing** section of our website: **www.michaelburbridge.com**

\*Download our PDF guide: *Understanding Print Resolution*