



HOWARD PRINTING NEWSLETTER



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OH PUH-LEEZE! NOT ANOTHER PROOF

BY PATTY SMETANA

WE KNOW HOW TIRED YOU ARE OF LOOKING AT proofs. You've been proofing your project all along. (We hope you have asked someone unfamiliar with the content to look at your work, too. It's amazing how many errors can be found by a fresh pair of proofing eyes.) But don't stop now. The most important proof is yet to come. After that, we roll the presses!

Printer's proofs come in many forms. Commercial printing companies may routinely provide one or two proofs before an order is printed. Why? Because disk-to-print processing has many pitfalls. Printers want to be confident that they are meeting client expectations *BEFORE* getting the job on press.

Careful review of early proofs can also avoid expensive alteration charges later on. Remember this: 10-100-1000. (No, that is not a long distance calling prefix.) That is the print shop's rule of thumb for alteration charges. What costs \$10 to fix on a digital proof becomes \$100 at the blue-line stage, and \$1000 for a reprint. Hence, early and accurate proofing saves you time, money and a lot of frustration.

Origin of the Proof

Print shops may use up to three computers to process your electronic files—one to inspect the files, a second to trap or impose pages, and a third to output the film used to make a final proof. The first step is copying your document, fonts and graphics onto our computer system. We then print a digital proof to make sure we have received all the necessary elements. This activity is called "pre-flighting." If something is missing during pre-flighting, you will get a call from your sales rep or our customer service department.

If everything seems to be in order and there are no questions, we will not bring you a digital proof. We will

simply output film, make a final proof and bring that to you for review and approval.

Occasions for Receiving Digital Proofs

There are many kinds of digital proofs. A few popular ones are laser prints, color copies, wax prints, ink-jet, and dye-sublimation. If you had problems with your files, couldn't get something to print or asked us to make some changes to your files that were beyond your capabilities, expect to see a digital proof before film output. Other reasons for digital proofs:

- If you need help with complicated color adjustments or retouching work, expect to come to our prepress department to view the changes on a color-calibrated monitor and to see a digital proof before film output.
- If you gave us a completed document and a dozen color slides to be sized, scanned, cropped and placed with critical positioning requirements, expect to see a digital color proof before film output.
- If you gave us a text-only disk and a pile of photographs and asked us to set up the document from scratch, expect to see a digital proof before film output.

Final Film Proofs

After digital proofs have been approved, printer's film is output and final proofs are made. These are called "film proofs." Howard Printing uses two kinds of film proofing systems. When an order prints four-color process, a "Pressmatch" color proof is made for review of color quality. Pressmatch proofs are comparable to (or even better than) older film-proofing systems such as Matchprints, Chromalins, or Waterproofs. Pressmatch proofs should be reviewed carefully for color accuracy, scan placement, resolution, color breaks and blends.

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PRODUCTION
NOTES:

This newsletter
is printed on a 40-inch
Man Roland lithographic
four-color press
using process inks
and Eloquence Gloss Cover
Basis 80.

Digital photographs
courtesy of
Lou Cynda Putnam
and her friend
“Puddles.”

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PIXELS FOR PRINT

AS NEW AND MORE AFFORDABLE DIGITAL CAMERAS flood the marketplace, printing companies are seeing an increase in the number of photo scans furnished for use in printed materials. There are now no less than 200 models of digital cameras. If you are considering such a purchase or have recently made the leap, and want to use digital photography in your printed materials, here are a few things you must know.

Resolution Is All-Important

Images destined for use only on monitors require (a very low) 72 dpi resolution. Most people start out placing digital images on a computer screen or e-mailing images to clients or friends. This is a good way to become familiar with the handling and placement of digital images. Digital photography is also great for company Web sites and intranets.

But as soon as plans for an image go beyond the monitor, new camera settings must be used. Print requires a very high number of pixels to produce acceptable resolution — especially if you plan to print the image in full color. Rule of thumb: 300 dpi resolution (at 100 percent of the original image’s photo size) is the minimum requirement for good quality.

Camera Settings

Digital cameras usually have several resolution options. If you are going to use the photo image for print, always select the highest resolution setting. If you are not sure you will use the image for print, you may want to select the highest setting anyway. You

can always resample the image’s resolution later, should you change your mind or need to save disk space.

Higher resolution image storage quickly becomes an issue for digital camera users. If you don’t already own a Zip, Jaz, or SuperDisk drive, you will want to buy one for image transfer and storage. Having one of these drives will be necessary, too, if you plan to create documents for print that have digital photos in position.



72 dpi resolution



300 dpi resolution

Checking Resolution

Not sure your image has enough resolution for print? You can check it by using any image-editing software such as Photoshop. Open your image, hold down the “option” key and click in the lower left window of the image. This will tell you the size and number of pixels in the image. If the image has a minimum of 300 pixels at 100 percent of its placement size, it has enough resolution to reproduce adequately on a printing press.

Remember: The number of pixels captured in the original image is all you have to work with. Enlargement simply spreads the same number of pixels over a larger area — resulting in fuzzy or jagged images.

For Those Really LARGE Images

If your digital camera cannot provide the resolution required for

those larger printed items, you may have to out-source the photography. Professional studio or freelance digital photographers employ large-format camera backs to successfully capture the number of pixels needed for print. ■

ANOTHER PROOF Continued from page 1

Pressmatch proofs are created using a paper that has a surface lamination. This thick, laminated sheet does not allow for accurate folding, trimming or back-up of images for two-sided printing. To overcome this dilemma, we provide an additional “blueline” film proof on all four-color process orders.

Bluelines are so named because they appear as blue-colored images on paper. Bluelines are made of a thin paper that can be precisely backed-up, folded and even die-cut or drilled to resemble the final product. Blueline proofs should be reviewed carefully for page imposition, margins, gutters, and back-up. All proofs should include final review for typos, photo placement and captions, type re-flows, background blemishes, and accurate trims and bleeds.

When an order is less than four-color process, or prints in one or two PMS colors, you will receive only a blueline proof. You will still be able to verify color breaks, because there will be a distinct difference in blue-image intensity where different ink colors appear.

It's OK to Write on the Proofs

Proofs are a communication tool. They are provided to show you what your job will look like *before* we print it. We *want* you to point out areas of concern or error. The best way to do this is to WRITE ON THE PROOF. Be bold and obvious when marking up proofs. A permanent marker or grease pencil in a contrasting color is the best

way to mark up laminated proofs. A No. 2 pencil works well on bluelines.

Howard Printing supplies a helpful proofing guide with every blueline that is sent to clients. Look for the yellow approval slip, read through it as you review your proof, and then select the approval option that best fits your needs: 1) OK to proceed, 2) OK to proceed with noted changes, or 3) Make noted changes and provide an additional proof for approval.

Should you ever want to visit your job before it goes into production, we invite you to schedule a press check. A press check is the best way to be 100 percent sure that your order is printed to your satisfaction, because an actual printed sheet is pulled while the press is running. ■

Always, Always, Always

ALWAYS send a set of laser prints with your disk. The reason: If you don't give the print shop something to look at, they have no way of knowing if what they output is correct. Also, if you make minor changes and don't have time to reprint fresh lasers, indicate what those last-minute changes were on the last set of lasers so there is no confusion. If you e-mail art files, fax a set of lasers to the print shop.

ALWAYS send your fonts with the order. The reason: Yes, everyone has Helvetica — but my Helvetica may be wider than your Helvetica, which could result in text re-flow, incorrect word-wraps and disappearing lines of type. Using furnished fonts avoids this potential pitfall.

ALWAYS convert RGB color files to CMYK color if you are printing in four-color process. The reason: Printers cannot print in RGB color.

ALWAYS send “live art” or native files with the order. The reason: Printers need the original TIFFs, EPS files, photo scans, etc. for proper file linking.

ALWAYS tell your printing company rep if you had problems with a graphic file, color blend, font or anything else. The reason: If you had problems, the print shop will have problems. Cluing them in helps them fix your file faster and get it right the first time.

Never, Never, Never

NEVER assume that something on a proof will be OK when it gets on press. If it doesn't look like what you expected, mark it up on the proof or discuss it with your sales rep.

NEVER be offended if your print shop offers feedback on how you set up a file. Electronic files can be built through several methods. If you happened to select a method that takes longer to process than normal, or that won't allow the imagesetter to process a file at all, we will tell you about it. We regard your electronic art file preparation procedures and our file-processing procedures as a team effort.

NEVER feel that you cannot call us before you turn over the disk. We don't expect every client to be able to create every special effect. If duotones, color blends or layers have you baffled, call us. We have reference materials and highly trained staff available to help you through the process. Often, one phone call will clear the fog.

NEVER feel that your electronic file is the only one with problems. Eighty-five percent of the files we receive have some sort of problem. We may be able to do a quick fix that you never know about. If the needed repairs are more time-consuming than your quoted price will allow, we will call to give you the option of fixing it yourself or having us fix it for a fee.

RECENT AWARDS

Howard Printing produced several printed pieces that won awards during 1999.

Kalamazoo Institute of Arts and **Tom Krol Typography** received two awards for graphic excellence. A gold award was garnered for the July/August issue of *Sightlines* newsletter, and a silver award was received for an exhibition catalog produced for the KIA's "Art and the American Experience" exhibit. The awards were presented by the Michigan Museum Association at its annual meeting in Ann Arbor in September.

Kalamazoo Public Schools captured a "distinguished" award in November from the Michigan School Public Relations Association (MSPRA) for its 1998/1999 school-year calendar. KPS "broke all previous records" when it scored 1400 points (on a scale of 1000) for the calendar. The MSPRA judges' comment: "This score is NOT a mistake!"

Hannah Gold & Associates and **Kenowa Hills Public Schools** shared a "commendable" award, also from MSPRA, for the Kenowa Hills Public Schools' general information brochure. The brochure was part of a "new birth" recruitment package developed for the Walker, Mich., school district and mailed to new mothers.

Hospital Purchasing Services received an Apollo "Award of Recognition" from the Michigan Health Care Communicators' Association (MHCCA) for its 1998 annual report, *A Year of Change — A Year of Transition*. Each summer MHCCA presents Apollo Awards to its membership "in recognition of extra achievement in the profession of health care public relations and communications."

WWW.WE WELCOME WILLA.SALES

Howard Printing is pleased to welcome Willa Richard to our sales staff as Lakeshore/Michiana account executive. A centrally located sales office in St. Joseph keeps her close to clients from Grand Haven, Mich., south to LaPorte and South Bend, Ind.

Willa has more than 10 years of experience in the commercial sheet-fed printing industry, with a strong emphasis on customer service. She can be reached at (800) 968-4726, ext. 305, or on her mobile phone at (616) 207-0671.

Top 10 Reasons to be a

CLIENT OF HOWARD PRINTING

- Same-day price estimates, and written quotations are guaranteed
- Our well-connected sales staff offer related graphic service referrals
- Free informational newsletters: *NEWSLETTER* is printed and *INK LINK* is electronic
- More than two million dollars worth of equipment keeps your project "in-house"
- A graphic arts resource "library loan" program keeps you in the know
- Internet activation allows for fast transfer of digital art files
- Established quality control procedures are followed at each step of a project
- Our sales staff are employees. They don't "broker" work to unknown sources
- A technology-savvy project management team is always working to your advantage
- Two shifts of production personnel keep your projects moving along

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