prisma

message to market

Guidelines for Successful File Preparation

Brochures | Programs | Flyers | Annual Reports | Magazines
Pocket Folders | Mailing & Fulfillment | Grand Format

The following guidelines were compiled
to strengthen the communication and
workflow between Prisma and our clients.

Contents

Introduction

Early Communication

Effective communication is a critical ingredient to successful digital publishing. Communication must begin early in a project and continue throughout the process.

As designers, you currently initiate the print production process at the outset of a digital design. Decisions made here impact the workflow and cost of projects. Involving Prisma at this early stage and establishing who will be responsible for which tasks is very important. Mutual and collective ownership of the project (from design through delivery) should be clearly established.

What to Submit

Discuss what should be submitted when the job is ready for print production — marked-up lasers, properly labeled media, fonts, mock-ups, etc.

File Submission

Discuss with your Account Executive how the project will be submitted, i.e. on disk, removable hard drive, USB flash drive, by FTP, online file transfer website, email or using Prisma Exchange.com. See page 8 for information on Prisma Exchange and page 11 for email and FTP usage.

Software Compatibility

Today, software upgrades are frequent. Please notify us if you plan to submit a job using recently upgraded applications. Software upgrades and updates can sometimes cause problems. Prisma maintains several versions of programs and will be able to assist you if you experience any issues with submission of your files.

Proper Software Selection

Use the right tool for the job. For example, avoid using layout programs to create logos that will be placed in other documents. And, illustration programs, such as Adobe Illustrator, are generally not the best option for layouts. While the software allows for full page-layout, the project may require more time and/or money to produce.

Naming Conventions

Identifying files with meaningful names is helpful for everyone who handles your project. Each file must be given a unique name. Try to avoid using special characters (e.g. / @#^*! etc.). These seemingly minor matters can have a tremendous impact on our mutual workflow efficiencies.

Support: 602 243 2921 or prepress@prismagraphic.com   ©2017 Prisma
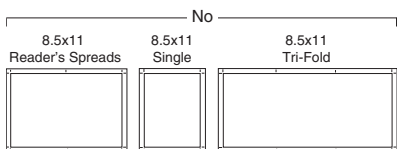
Document setup

Document Size

Create the document to final trim size. Oversized documents are not easily "impositioned" and may incur extra time/costs.

Build pages in reader's spreads using single "facing" pages.

Pages should have a minimum of 1/8" bleed on all outside edges.

No
8.5x11 Reader's Spreads	8.5x11 Single	8.5x11 Tri-Fold
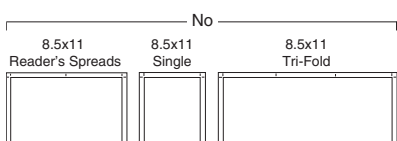
Avoid building pages on oversized documents

No
8.5x11 Reader's Spreads	8.5x11 Single	8.5x11 Tri-Fold

Special Color Treatments

Many projects are printed with colors other than CMYK. Correct usage of spot colors will expedite production. If used incorrectly however, they can create undesired results. As a general rule, spot colors should only be used to represent the actual inks that will be printed and/or elements that are to be handled with separate treatments by Prisma (e.g. foil stamping or die cutting).

Once the number of colors has been determined, please remove all unused colors from the color palette. All colors used in linked images must have the exact swatch names as those built in the page layout document. The Pantone Color Bridge guide is the best tool for selecting and matching spot color swatches or colors that are used for elements to print CMYK.

Design considerations

Suggestions to Minimize Errors and Improve Processing

PostScript is the underlying technology we rely on to process pages. PostScript code is created when graphics are built in an illustration program, when digital color subjects are separated or when electronic pages are composed. All these pieces must be processed through a PostScript Raster Image Processor (RIP) and be rendered on an Imagesetter. The print industry depends on the reliability of PostScript to produce digital pages. Even with today's newer, more powerful processors and RIPs, errors may occur.

Some common issues that derail schedules and increase costs:

Placed Images

Always supply the worker versions of imported graphics files (i.e., the original file that created the graphics). If we have to change a color, type or vignette in an imported graphic and do not have the native original files, it may cost more or impede our ability to even make the change.

Digital White-Out

Avoid using white boxes to cover up unwanted elements as they will still be processed by the RIP. Projects can be designed in drawing/illustration programs that have masking options available to trim excess image. Effective use of these masking functions can eliminate the need for overlaid white shapes.

Print Laser Proofs/PDFs

Always print laser proofs or create PDFs of the final file(s). This will allow you to check your design and supply a proof to Prisma.

If the file crashes on a laser printer or while exporting to PDF, it will more than likely fail to process in a RIP.

Fonts

Missing or corrupt fonts are by far the most common reasons for production workflow interruptions.

When a document is moved to another computer or printer, the same fonts must be on the new system or the document will print incorrectly. There are three different types of fonts available: Type 1, TrueType and OpenType. Know what you are using and send all fonts used in the page layout and support graphics. Version numbers and manufacturers must be identical to avoid errors.

If the incorrect fonts are sent the result can be anything from a font substitution, subtle changes in line endings, possible reflow or missing overset text.

Styles Applied to Fonts

Only use the actual typefaces offered by the font family. Some applications allow for added style attributes (bold, italic, bold italic, outline, shadow, small caps and all caps) to all fonts. Results will vary depending on the RIP, printer drivers and applications used. Selecting style attributes usually creates a pseudo (artificially stylized) version of the type-face, which is a degradation from the original font design. When ripped, the style may be ignored, exaggerated or not output as intended.

An example of this problem might be to select Helvetica Condensed Bold (which has a corresponding printer font) and applying the italic command from a STYLE menu. On screen, the font will display as a condensed bold italic. When printed out, however, you will most likely get the condensed bold version without italics.

This particular point may seem confusing because applying styles from menus sometimes works. Since this practice produces unpredictable results, the best practice should be to only use fonts available from your font menu listing.
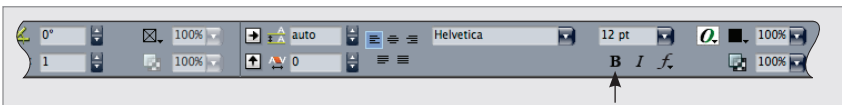
Avoid stylizing fonts this way

Support: 602 243 2921 or prepress@prismagraphic.com   ©2017 Prisma

Graphic treatments

Rules and Frames (Borders)

The words "FRAME" and "BORDER" may be used interchangeably.

When designing with thin rules, please specify a width rather than using predefined "hairline" width rules. Using "hairline" rules can be problematic as they vary between different applications and output devices (some are barely visible and will not hold on press). We recommend that rules be defined as no less than .25 point.

Wherever possible, avoid using individual lines to create frames. It is extremely difficult to align rules to create perfect corners. For example, this is seen in instances where ads bleed off the page. Instead, apply a frame and extend it over the edge rather than using individual rules.

Frames incorrectly built with individual lines

When viewing on the computer screen even up to 175% enlargement, the corners of a frame appear to connect, however they may not actually connect when imaged.

Four-Color, Rich Black

Four-color can be specified by either custom builds, or using professional color palattes created by Pantone®. Prisma suggests that if using Pantone® colors, that you use the Pantone® Color Bridge (coated or uncoated) sets, even if specifying spot ink colors. They are the best for replicating the spot colors in a CMYK format on press and can be switched to a fifth color if required. Large solid black areas require a four-color black. Specifying 100% of each Cyan, Magenta, Yellow and Black ("Registration" Black) should be avoided as printing presses are unable to apply that much coverage.

Prisma defines "RICH BLACK" for our traditional printing process using these process values: 40% Cyan, 30% Magenta, 0% Yellow and 100% Black. Four-color black values may need to differ based on the nature of your printing project and which print process will be used at Prisma. Talk to us about the "look" you are trying to achieve and we can guide you in the right direction.

Images

High resolution files can be saved in many different formats. It's best to supply TIFF or EPS files and without compression when possible. If converting RGB images to CMYK use "NorthAmerican Prepress2" or "GRACoL 2006" color settings in Photoshop. You may get unpredictable results if the conversion is left up to the output device. Photoshop will give you the best raster image conversion. Since our goal is to provide pleasing color, we recommend that you do this conversion and make any additional adjustments. It has been our experience that the best RGB to

CMYK conversion in Photoshop can be achieved by setting the working color space to GRACoL 2006_Coated1v2.

Resolution Issues

As a general rule, the scanned image (used at 100%) should have a minimum sampling of 1.5 to 2.0 times the output line screen. If you scale your image, you are changing the effective resolution. High-quality printing requires 300 PPI for scans placed at 100%.

Try to keep resizing or scaling to a minimum in a layout program. Increasing the size of a placed image will drop its resolution. For example, placing a 2" x 3" (300 dpi) image at 200% will print at only 150 effective PPI; lo-res is 72 PPI. Please know that Prisma's Grand Format division has resolution requirements that differ from this. Please see page 12 for more details.

Theoretically, line art should be scanned at a resolution matching the output device: a 1:1 ratio for the best scanned results. There is little visible improvement however, on most line art subjects scanned above 600 dpi. There will be a noticeable difference if the subject is scaled. For sharper line art, scan at 1200 dpi.

Support: 602 243 2921 or prepress@prismagraphic.com ©2017 Prisma

Print-ready PDF

Welcome to Prisma Exchange!

In order to optimize usage of our system, uploading print-ready PDF files is the best route to save you time in the long run. Use Prisma PDF settings when generating PDF from InDesign or QuarkXpress and you will see the full benefits of using Prisma Exchange.

How to Download Prisma Graphic PDF Settings:

1. Log onto www.prismaexchange.com

2. Enter Username: client

3. Password: 4Download (case sensitive)

4. In Jobs window choose "PDF Settings" link

5. Choose "Downloads" tab (top right)

6. Check the boxes next to each file name and select Download.

Decompress the downloaded ZIP files and follow the instructions in the Readme doc.

When uploading print-ready PDF files please do not Stuff or Zip them in a folder. This will prevent automatic preflight/refining.

Prisma Exchange will support native application files. When sending native application files, please include all support graphics and fonts. Please compress (Stuff or Zip) the folder of items before uploading. This keeps everything in one package and protects the fonts from corruption.

Contact your Account Representative if you need assistance uploading your files to Prisma Exchange.

Tips on Creating a Print-Ready PDF

Elements may be RGB, CMYK, or Spot Ink colors and will be converted to CMYK or Spot for press.

Embed high-res images. Recommended image resolution after scaling is 300 ppi (1200 ppi for bitmapped images).

Embed all fonts.

Set rich black build to C:40 M:30 Y:0 K:100.

Exclude security settings.

Name spot colors consistently in artwork and page layout to eliminate multiple instances of the same color.

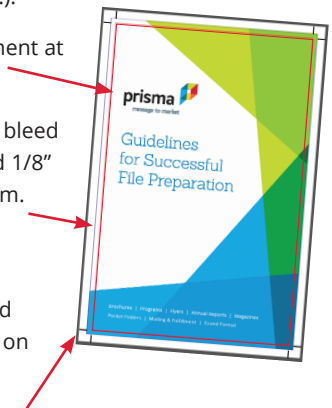PDF Writer must not be used for file creation.

Identify all fold, score, die, foil and emboss elements using spot colors named respectively (i.e., ~Varnish, ~Foil, ~Scores, etc.).

Build document at final size.

Images that bleed must extend 1/8" past final trim.

Work must be centered vertically and horizontally on the PDF file.

Crop marks offset 1/8" from final trim.

Account setup

1) Your Account Manager will e-mail you a username and default password. Go to www.prismaexchange.com and log on using your username and the default password. The password is alpha-numeric and case sensitive.

   Username: Your Username
   Password: CSRtrn09

2) When you arrive at the home page, run system diagnostics located at the lower left corner of the screen. This must be done by all first-time users and on each computer that is used to access the Prisma Exchange site.


   This process checks your operating system, web browser and network connection for compatibility, and makes recommendations if necessary. Give us a call if you have any questions.

3) Next, select the administration link at the top of the page. The administration page is where you manage your account information and settings.
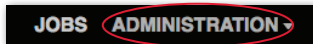
   Choose your name and personalize your password.
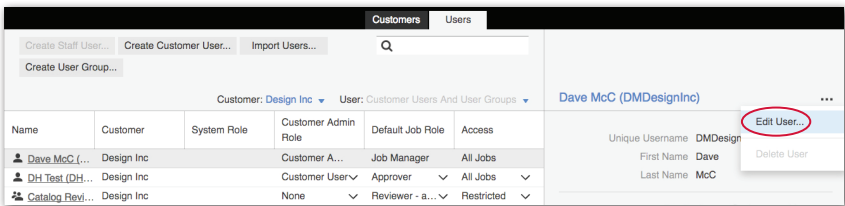
Your new password must be alpha-numeric, contain both lowercase and capital letters and be a minimum of eight characters.

This is also where you designate the email address to receive all communications.

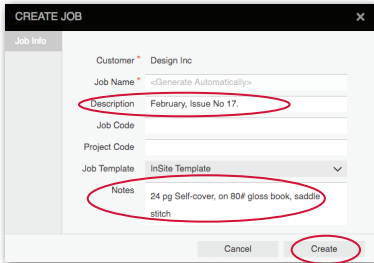Make sure to click on the "update" link to save all the changes you have made.

Support: 602 243 2921 or prepress@prismagraphic.com   ©2017 Prisma
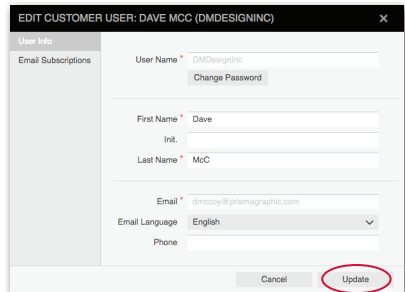
Job upload

1) If not already logged into www.prismaexchange.com, log in using your username and password. Reminder: the password is alpha-numeric and case sensitive.

2) When you arrive at your home page select the create job button.
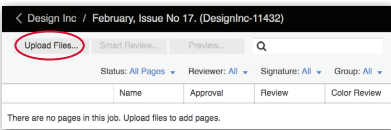
Customer: Design Inc ▾
Create Job...
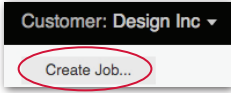
Enter a short description for the job: Ex: February, Issue No 17.

Enter an expanded description of the job in the notes field if desired: Ex: 24 pg Self-cover, on 80# gloss book, etc.
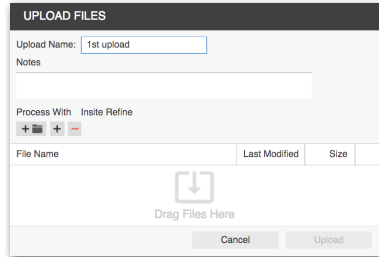
CREATE JOB ✕
Job Info
Customer * Design Inc
Job Name * <Generate Automatically>
Description February, Issue No 17.
Job Code
Project Code
Job Template InSite Template ▾
Notes 24 pg Self-cover, on 80# gloss book, saddle stitch
Cancel   Create

Choose create, and the job page opens.

3) Choose the upload files button to open an upload window.

< Design Inc / February, Issue No 17. (DesignInc-11432)
Upload Files... Smart Review... Preview... Q
Status: All Pages ▾ Reviewer: All ▾ Signature: All ▾ Group: All ▾
Name   Approval   Review   Color Review
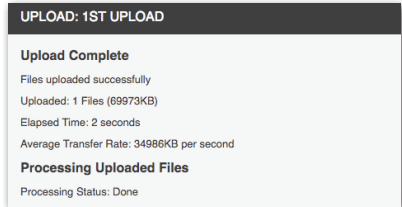There are no pages in this job. Upload files to add pages.

Enter an upload description (1st upload, revisions etc.).

Browse to the files or drag them into the window and select upload.

If uploading native files, make sure to include all support graphics and fonts. Please compress (Stuff or Zip) the folder of items before upload-ing. This keeps everything in one package and protects fonts from corruption.

UPLOAD FILES
Upload Name: 1st upload
Notes

Process With Insite Refine
+▣ + −
File Name   Last Modified   Size

⬇
Drag Files Here
Cancel   Upload

4) Watch the progress window as your job uploads and preflights. Status and results will be shown. Close the upload window after you have reviewed this information.

UPLOAD: 1ST UPLOAD
Upload Complete
Files uploaded successfully
Uploaded: 1 Files (69973KB)
Elapsed Time: 2 seconds
Average Transfer Rate: 34986KB per second
Processing Uploaded Files
Processing Status: Done

5) Log off when you have finished uploading files. Prisma Exchange will automatically notify your Account Manager when the job has been uploaded. They will contact you with any questions and keep you posted on job status. Close the upload window after you have reviewed this information.

HINT: If uploading print-ready PDF files, please do not stuff or zip them in a folder. This prevents automatic preflight/refining.
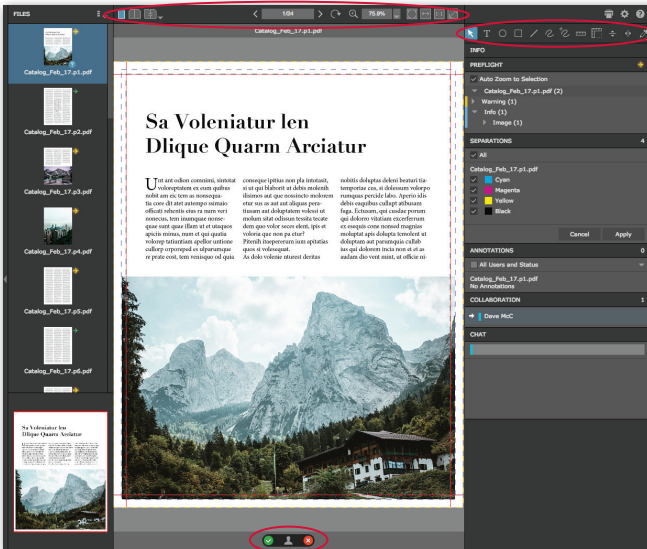
Job review

1) Log into www.prismaexchange.com using your username and password
Reminder: the password is alpha- numeric and case sensitive.

2) When you arrive at your home page, select the job to review.

3) Pages are approved in smart review. Select a page thumbnail to launch smart review.
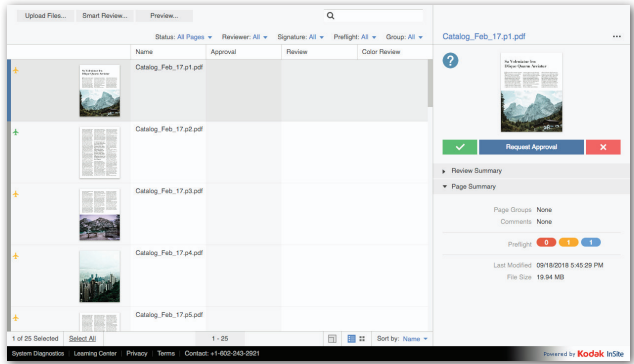
4) The smart review application launches.

The toolbar at the top will open/close menus and change page view.

The toolbar in the right column gives you annotation tools and allows you to take measurements.

Review the page and approve or make comments if corrections are necessary using the annotations tool.

6) Proceed to the next page as needed, and close smart review when finished.

HINT: When you are logged into a job you can approve or reject pages outside of smart review on the pages tab. Select as many or few pages as you want and choose the approve or reject buttons on the right-hand side of that screen.

Support: 602 243 2921 or prepress@prismagraphic.com

Hard copy proofs

Hard copy proofs at 100% original size should match the supplied files. The hard copy is compared to the final proof as a quality control measure.

Please also include an approved PDF file with all digital job submissions.

Handling corrections

If the corrections are light, clearly mark them on the proof and communicate them to your Account Manager.

If the corrections are extensive, it may be more time and cost effective for Prisma to send you our working copy of the file for you to revise. Using Prisma's version of your file will ensure we avoid repeating previously completed work preparing your file for ripping. If so:

- *All changes should be clearly marked only on the Prisma supplied proofs.*

- *A new hard copy proof should be supplied with the revised files, using the guidelines discussed above.*

The items returned to Prisma should include:

- *Prisma's most recent, marked-up proof.*

- *Hard copy proof showing your alterations.*

- *The revised file, correctly formatted.*

- *If you have modified imported live images, please include them when re-submitting the files. In this instance, avoid renaming the imported illustrations or scans, since they have already been imported into your layout document. Open your layout document and update the links to ensure that cropping and placement have not been altered by the file modifications.*

Trapping

Prisma prefers to do all trapping on client files, allowing us to concentrate on preparing files in a consistent manner that conforms to our standard guidelines and press requirements.

Please let us know of special trapping needs: 2-hit colors, overprints, etc.

Email or FTP

Files may be submitted by email depending on your email server's size limitations. Prisma has a 10 MB size limit for emails. FTP (File Transfer Protocol) is faster and more reliable for larger files. Prisma has its own secure FTP site where files can be uploaded or downloaded. All you need is a computer, FTP client software or a Web browser. If you have not used Prisma's FTP site before, contact your Account Executive for access.

We highly recommend using StuffIt or Zip archives to protect files from corruption before posting.

Grand format guidelines

Image and Size

When possible, ensure your effective resolution is no less than 100 dpi (dots per inch) on color or gray-scale images (100 dpi @ 100%); and choose 150 dpi for fine detail or small type. For best quality use 300 dpi. Do not "increase" the resolution by resampling in Photoshop, this will not increase quality of image. Monochrome bitmap images should be no less than 200 dpi. Vector images can be any size.

Scaling

We prefer files built at 100% scale, unless it is necessary to build at scale (1/2, 1/4, etc.) Remember your files must contain sufficient resolution to be scaled up at output:

Example:

- *File built at 25% scale = 400 dpi images*
- *File built at 50% scale = 200 dpi images*
- *File built at 100% scale = 100 dpi images*

Bleeds

- *Small/Medium Size Piece = .125" bleed*
- *Larger Items/Router Jobs = .25" bleed*
- *Hemmed/Welded Banners = 1" bleed*

Quick Tips

- *Design with vector art whenever possible. Vector files are infinitely scalable without sacrificing image quality and have a much smaller file size.*
- *Printing a smaller scaled version on an 11x17 or equivalent helps simulate distance viewing prior to sending us files.*

- *Most large-format pieces are meant to be viewed from a distance. Be sure to use large text sizes that are very easy to read.*
- *Try to avoid elaborate fonts, which may blend into the design. High contrast is important for legibility at greater distances; see chart below for recommendations.*
- *Create large multi-panel graphics on one page, not separate pages. We'll take care of tiling them.*
- *For "Rich Black" please use these values: 25% Cyan, 25% Magenta, 25% Yellow and 100% Black.*
- *Leave Pantone® colors as spot colors so that we can convert them to give you the closest match color.*

Questions?

Contact the Prisma Grand Format Department directly by email at grandformat@prismagraphic.com.

Distance Readability Chart

LETTER HEIGHT (IN.)	DIST. FOR BEST IMPACT (FT.)	MAX READABLE DIST. (FT.)
4"	40'	150'
8"	80'	350'
10"	100'	450'
15"	150'	630'
24"	240'	1000'
36"	360'	1500'
48"	480'	2000'
60"	600'	2500'

Custom Signage

Contact the Grand Format department for file preparation information on custom signage at grandformat@prismagraphic.com.

Dokshop guidelines

Document Setup

Dokshop files should be provided in Adobe InDesign. Quark files can be accepted, but InDesign is the preferred format. Please design the files as a 1-up version of the final size with a 1/8" bleed, if applicable. Package the collected files with all the fonts and images included. Zip the packaged file for delivery to Prisma.

Preparing Dynamic or Variable Text

Please follow these steps when providing dynamic or variable text:

1) Designate all variable text in angle brackets "<" and ">"

   Example: <First Lastname> or <first.lastname@emailaddress.com>

2) Indicate phone numbers or other numerical formats how they should be displayed on the final piece

   Example: <999.999.9999> or <999-999-9999 ext. 999>

3) Take into account for both long and short variable content that may be entered into a field

   Example: <www.reallylongwebsiteaddress.com> as well as <www.web.com>

4) For physical addresses, please accommodate for the following, displaying addresses in the format that should be used on the final piece:

- *Street address*
- *Suite number or second address line, if applicable*
- *City, State Zip*
- *Any international formats, if applicable*

   Example 1: <1234 W. Main Street, Suite 500, City, ST 67890>

   Example 2: <1234 W. Main Street>
         <Suite 500>
         <City, ST 67890>

Advanced Variable Text Options

For drop-down menus or checkbox lists, please indicate all possible options outside of the printable area in the file, or attach with dokshop new product form

   Example: <Longest list option is placed in the file for spacing purposes>

Complete list of options provided separately

Note: Please indicate any limits to variable check box lists

When working with variable content that isn't self-explanatory, try to be descriptive of the information that will go into the field, and provide an example, if needed

   Example: <Additional information may be entered here, line one, limit two lines>

   <Additional information may be entered here, line two, limit two lines>

Please indicate if variable information is optional in the file or on the dokshop new product form; otherwise, we will assume all text is required

For variable text with preceding of appending labels, please indicate all options outside of the printable area in the file, or attach with dokshop new product form

Example: <T: 999.999.9999> (Options are T, C, and F for Telephone, Cell and Fax)

If you would like to use character counts, forced formats (ALL CAPS, no caps, Sentence Case) or any other text audits, please indicate in the file, or attach with dokshop new product form

Example: <Job Title, limit 40 characters>

Example: <JOB TITLE, ALL CAPS>

Example: <+1 99 999 999 999> (Any format, with numeric, spaces and plus signs only)

Limitations on Variable Text Options

Dokshop cannot support the following:

- *Drop shadows*
- *Scaled text*
- *Skewed text (false italics)*
- *All caps (forced with InDesign button; typing directly in all caps is okay)*
- *Small caps (forced with InDesign button; small caps typefaces are okay)*
- *Any advanced modifications to the text that are not controlled by the typeface itself*

Example: If you require italicized type, please use an Italic version of your typeface

Note: Creative work-arounds to these limitations may be available. If your design requires one of the above features, please contact us to discuss prior to sending final artwork.

Variable and Dynamic Images

Designate all variable images by placing a text box over the image that says "VARIABLE" in magenta, and note that there will be a variable image on the dokshop new product form. Variable image options should be sized to fit in the variable image area, taking into account any bleed.

Important Tips for Best Results:

- *Do not "crop" images within InDesign; if the image area is 3" x 3", the variable images for that area should also be 3" x 3"*
- *Size variable image options at least 300 dpi (dots per inch) at 100% scale*
- *Variable image options, as well as all images on the piece, should be in CMYK color mode*
- *Place all variable image options in a folder called "Variable Images" that is zipped along with your packaged InDesign files*

Limitations on Variable Image Options

Dokshop cannot support the following:

- *Drop shadows*
- *Non-rectangular images*

Note: Creative work-arounds to these limitations may be available. If your design requires one of the above features, please contact us to discuss prior to sending final artwork.

Post-production meetings

Post-production meetings are a useful way to learn from a project.

After your project is completed, plan to get together with us to discuss the job. This meeting can include anyone involved in the project — Sales, Designer, Account Executive, Prepress Representative, etc. The goal is to learn something new about each other's processes and work requirements. This is an extremely useful tool that can strengthen communication and create a highly productive relationship.

prisma

message to market