

10 COMMON ERRORS IN PRINT-READY FILES



HATTERAS

PRINT HAPPENS HERE.

1. SPOT COLORS

It's important to be consistent with spot/custom colors. A color should not be represented as a spot color and as a CMYK (or RGB) mix in the same document. One or the other is fine, but be consistent.





2. RICH BLACK

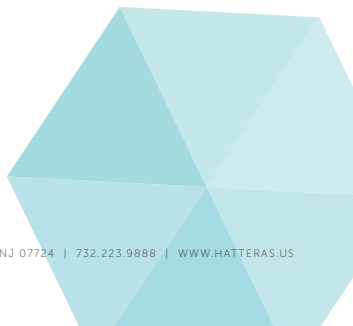
Solid black boxes or panels should be tinted using these CMYK values:

65c 55m 53y 100k

3. FONTS

NOT EMBEDDED

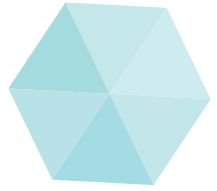
Embed all fonts. If you are absolutely sure that no editing will ever be necessary, outline them.





4. COMPRESSED IMAGES

Never compress images when exporting to PDF.



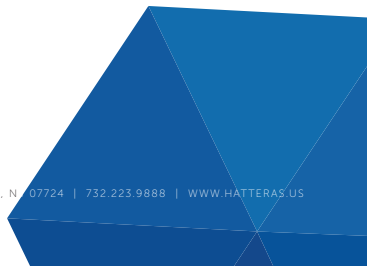
5. BLEED/ BLEED BOX/ TRIM BOX CONSISTENCY

The rule of thumb is that all documents should have 1/8" bleed all-around, but with automation becoming more commonplace, be aware of the actual trim box and bleed box sizes when we output to PDF.



6. TRANSPARENCY & LAYERS

Transparency can cause files to print in very unpredictable ways.
Always try to flatten your document before sending it to the printer.



7. RULES BORDERS MARKS

Rules, borders and marks should never be less than .2 pt, and should be built out of a single color if you are approaching that level of fineness. Also make sure that all rules and marks that print as black are 100% black only – not CMYK mixes.



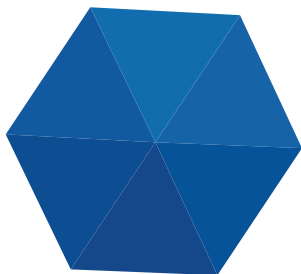
8. IMAGE RESOLUTION

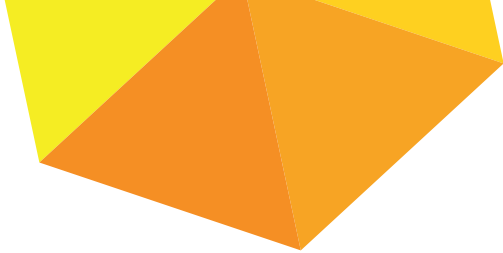
Images should be very close to 300 dpi at the size they are printing. Low-resolution images that are upsampled to 300 dpi will get through the pre-flight process, but could reproduce poorly.

Extremely large, high resolution images should be re-sized before embedding into the page layout program. For instance, if the front cover for a 8.5" x 11" book is created using an image that originally was used for a 36" x 48" poster, that image would ideally be re-sized or downsampled before inserting into the document.

9. IMAGE FORMAT

Images should be converted to CMYK before embedding into the page layout program. RGB images that are converted to CMYK values at the press usually produce as expected, but it's always better to know ahead of time what your file is going to look like in CMYK before it leaves your desktop. GIF and PNG images should be avoided when preparing your document.





10. FONTS

SIZE/COLOR MIX

Any serif font printing smaller than 6pt should neither be knocked out of a solid color, nor should it be created with a process mix if printing on a white background. Knock-out type smaller than 6pt may fill in.