

DESIGNING FOR PRINT

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

When designing for print it is important to follow a few vital steps to make sure that you are producing the best marketing materials possible for your business. Make sure that your materials and designs match the existing company branding guidelines. At Dexterous Designs, we offer a range of paper stocks as well as bespoke finishing options such as foiling, embossing, die-cut and more. If you are going through a website design process, an updated logo could be just what the new site needs to give it a lift. This may mean business cards, letterheads, and even vehicle sign writing needs to be brought up to speed. We help with all business' graphic design and print services and keep the transition to the new business appearance smooth as silk.



Format

Most printers will want you to send the final as vector PDF document. Using a JPG or PNG will make it so that your text is fuzzy and your images less sharp. If you are using a combination of photos and art, then ensure that the photos were 300 dpi when you brought them in. Printers have different requirements for formats – make sure you ask your printer before sending the artwork what they prefer.



Bleed

When you design for print, remember that when finishing the project, the printers will be cutting the edges off whatever you are designing. The standard for the 'bleed,' the edge around the document that will be trimmed, will be 3mm. This means that every side of your document needs an extra 3mm added on to it. The outer edge of the trim serves as the cut line where the product will be trimmed when it comes out of the printer. In theory, anything outside of that trim line will be cut off and anything inside will remain. However, things are not always 100% accurate down to the millimetre, which is why you leave a trim area to account for any small discrepancies. The idea behind the trim area is to ensure that no matter what happens, no important content is ever trimmed from the design by accident.



Colour

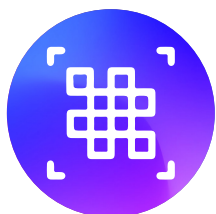
Most printers, except for very new, high spec printers, will print using CMYK. This stands for Cyan, Magenta, Yellow and Black. These are the 4 process colours used in printing that are mixed to create most colours. When you create a document on screen, the colours you see are created using RGB, which is Red, Green and Blue. Some colours, such as neon colours, are achievable using RGB but cannot be recreated using CMYK, so the finished article will not be the same as you see on screen. It is important that you set your document up to have a colour mode of CMYK, as the colours will be as close as possible to what you see. As a note though, colours will not be exactly spot on to what you see on screen but will be very close if the document is set up correctly.



Image quality

When choosing your images make sure you follow these simple steps to ensure maximum quality:

- High-quality
- Eye-catching
- Each image should have a purpose
- Be on-brand
- Aim to engage



DPI and PPI

Dots per inch (DPI) is the measurement referring to the number of dots in a linear inch. Dots per inch is typically used for printing. Up to a point, as the dots per inch increase, the clarity of the printed image improves. When sending something to print, you want to make sure that your dpi is set to 300.

Pixels per inch (PPI) is the measurement that refers to the number of pixels in a linear inch. A higher resolution has more pixels per inch, providing a better-quality image but a larger file size.

The size or dimensions of a computer graphic are referred to with two numbers, such as 720 x 540 or 1024 x 768. The first number always refers to the width and the second always refers to the height. For pictures viewed online, the unit of measurement is the pixel, which is the smallest element of a computer image. A graphic that is 720 x 540 pixels is 720 pixels wide and 540 pixels tall. When the first number of the two is larger, the graphic has a horizontal orientation. When the second number is larger, the graphic has a vertical orientation. If the dimensions are equal, the graphic is a square.

Both image dimensions and resolution affect the file size of an image. Larger dimensions and a higher resolution increase the size of a file. When creating images to display online, you must find a balance between image quality and size of the file so the images will look good yet display quickly.





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