

IMAGO top tips for producing InDesign files for printed books

- 1) **Document creation:** the page size must be accurate from the start (set document pages to the exact final trim size of a single page).
- 2) **For insides of books:** files to be set up with facing pages 'ON' (to create proper reading spreads). Use the Numbering and Section options to assign the correct pagination to the pages as appropriate for the book/chapter/section.
- 3) **Creating cover or jacket artwork:** Use InDesign's ability to specify different width pages in the same document. Facing pages should be 'OFF', with the front, spine, back (and flaps) being created as separate pages butted-up to each other. (In order to get the InDesign pages to butt-up to each other, you must turn OFF the command 'Allow document pages to shuffle' in the pop-up menu of the pages panel.
- 4) **Bleeds:** If the colour runs to the edge of a page, then use 'bleed' (extra colour that extends beyond the trim page size) for at least 3mm. Many people set bleed to 5-6mm. Position any full-page images so that they are beyond the trim page size up to the bleed guides. Bleed can be set up in 'Document settings'.
- 5) **Folios:** Position folios at least 5mm from the trim edges and use auto pagination.
- 6) **Overprint:** Text to be set up as black and to overprint. 100% K will automatically overprint, but text below 100% needs to be individually forced/set to overprint. Place all text elements on a separate layer above the colour elements.

NB. Black only illustrator files (or EPS's) placed in InDesign should also be set to overprint (from within Illustrator).
- 7) **Layers:** Use layers in your InDesign files. Images on the bottom layer and type/text elements on the top layer. If you have complicated layouts then put background tints on the bottom layer, images and other colour elements on the layers above that and text on the top layer.
- 8) **Cover/jacket finishes:** In your InDesign file set up each of your different finishes as a different pantone (spot colour) set to overprint, ie, for different finishes such as foil blocking, special varnishes, die-lines etc use a different spot colour for each one.
- 9) **PDF Creation:** It is important in the creation of your PDF to always use the output setting that says '...preserve numbers'. Otherwise type you have set up as 100% black can change into 4-colour black in your PDF. This setting will prevent any of your tint percentages changing.

- 10) **PDF layers:** Ideally your PDFs should be flattened PDFs as per our PDF instructions. If there are layers in your PDF, all the layers should be printing layers. There should NOT be elements on layers in your PDF that you expect the printer to turn off. Everything in the PDF will be printed unless it is set as a separate spot colour/non-printing plate that the printer can output independently from the colour (CMYK) without altering anything else in the PDF.
- 11) **White or reversed out type:** White/reversed out type will not look as sharp when printed as it does on your screen because of the printing process. If it reverses out of an image or out of more than 1-colour the type needs to be larger and heavier, or it will not be legible when it prints. This is due to movement on press. Suggested minimum sizes are shown below (but it does depend as well on the weight of the font and how thin the serifs are too):
- White type reversing out of 1-colour: 6pt minimum
 - White type reversing out of 3 or 4 colours (or a colour image):
 - 10-12 pt minimum for serif type
 - 9pt minimum for sans serif
- 12) **Lines, rules and frames:** Presses cannot print very thin rules. Never use hairline settings. Minimum weights:
- Single black or coloured rule – 0.3pt
 - Rules reversed out of 4 colours – 1pt
 - 4-colour rules – 0.7pt
- 13) **Image resolution:** This needs to be close to 300ppi at the final size it will print. Images can look sharp on the screen at much lower resolutions but unless you view them at 400% you will not get an idea of how they will look when printed. Using a Photoshop interpolation to create extra resolution should not be done for more than approx. 20% increase. It will create more colour but will not make your images sharp. You cannot increase an image from 150ppi to give you good print quality.
- 14) **1-bit resolution (line drawings etc):** 1200-2400ppi. This resolution needs to be much higher for a 4-colour image if you want a sharp result.
- 15) **Maximum ink percentage (TIC/TAC etc):** Too much ink won't print properly.
- For coated papers the maximum should be 320% for small areas. If you have large areas keep them below 300%.
 - For uncoated papers the maximum should be 300% for small areas and below 280% for larger areas.
- This is partly controlled by the colour profile you use when converting from RGB to CMYK.
- 16) **Rich blacks:** Do not create rich, warm blacks with more than 260% of colour. You can use 100K and 60C or even 80K, 60C, 60M, 60Y, but keep it well below 260% total.
- 17) **Colour settings and colour profiles:** These are important to get right. See our separate instructions on 'Colour settings'.

18) **PDF instructions:** Follow our PDF instructions for creating your print ready PDFs.

19) And.....if you are trying anything unusual it is best to do a trial PDF with us first.