

# Guidelines for provided artwork

## Introduction

These Guidelines have been developed for the benefit of print buyers who provide ready to print electronic documents. The goal is to ensure that such documents are fully validated and are of sufficient quality that the print service provider can deliver the job at a suitable quality and in an efficient way. These Guidelines can be used both for so called Native documents, such as those produced with InDesign, Illustrator or Quark Xpress software, and Locked Files. These are typically PDF files, preferably formatted in a version of PDF/X. These Guidelines complement the General Delivery Conditions as described in the document ALG 10 (of 2010).

## ALG 10 states (among other things):

- » The print service provider shall specify the characteristics and quality level of the electronic documents which the customer will provide for the contracted job.
- » The customer shall provide electronic documents according to those specifications.
- » The print service provider is responsible for errors in the documents that are introduced during the processing of the job.
- » The print service provider shall notify the Customer if any errors are found when during validation of incoming documents.

## Check- and validation points for the Customer

### For Native documents

1. Provide information about what software and operation system have been used when creating the documents.
2. Ensure that all image files, including logotypes, are attached or embedded in the document. If available please use the “Package” function (or similar) in the layout software to make sure both image files and fonts are enclosed with the document.
3. Enclose all of the fonts used, but avoid TrueType fonts if possible (see also point 9 below)!
4. Notify clearly if low resolution Thumbnails have been used (also called OPI).

### For PDF/X-4

5. In some cases the now quite old file format PDF/X-1a is still suitable to use, especially if older Raster Image Processing (RIP) systems are used. But later version RIP systems support PDF/X-4 and the use of embedded RGB-images, layers and transparency. The benefit of using PDF/X-4 is that the document will be validated in the preflight checking process.

There are several software applications on the market to provide this functionality, and there are presets for how the validation and preflight checking are done. The Ghent PDF Workgroup (GWG) publishes internationally accepted preflight settings on their web site [www.gwg.org](http://www.gwg.org). Your software vendor

might create preflight settings for your type of work, and if so you can use this. The PDF/X –format is explained in more detail further on in the text.

### General issues to consider

6. Provide printed proofs for the supplied documents. If colour accurate proofs are expected they should be created according to the ISO 12647-7 standard, which defines proofing processes working directly from digital data.
7. Check the actual rendered resolution of the images, after possible re-scaling on the page has been done in the layout software. A good rule of thumb is to have twice the screen ruling used, typically at least 300 ppi. Lineart/bitmap images should have at least 600 ppi, but around 1200 ppi is to prefer. (Note: ppi, pixels per inch, is sometimes erroneously referred to as dpi, dots per inch).
8. Check with the print service provider what file formats for the images they prefer, for pixel-based images/photos and vector based images for logotypes and lineart. Generally you should avoid using a very high degree of compression on images saved as JPEGs.
9. Use legally acquired fonts and enclose those with the documents (useful also for PDF-files since some fonts won't embed in a PDF). Ensure that the italic, bold or other versions of the font used is the actual font version, and not just a manipulation from within the font menu system in the layout software.

Avoid using TrueType fonts as much as possible, since they are more prone to cause problems in the RIP systems.

**10.** If spot colours are used we recommend sending physical samples to the print service provider. If printing is to be in CMYK only, spot colours should not be used in the artwork.

**11.** Use the appropriate ICC profile for the paper type and printing method used when printing. Check with the supplier if general ICC profiles from for example Adobe, ECI or VIGC can be used. Or use the ones suggested by the supplier, optimised for the actual print production.

**12.** Check that no text, intended to be printed as black only, is marked with the colour swatch called “Registration marks”, or as a combination of CMYK.

**13.** Only registration marks should use the colour swatch “Registration marks”.

**14.** Check that the settings for overprint and trapping are correct. If you are not sure what is correct for your job, don't hesitate to ask the print service provider.

### Document format

**15.** The page format for the document should be the final cut size.

### Spread

**16.** Spreads should be defined as two separate pages (but don't create a separate PDF-file for a spread).

### Cover and protective cover

**17.** A cover without a spine is two pages.

**18.** A cover with a spine is one page; front page, spine and back page is included in the artwork.

**19.** A protective cover is one page; folded flaps, the front page, spine, back and possible spread is included in the artwork.

**20.** For hard covered books a spread of at least 15 mm should be added on all four sides.

→ Nb spread and bleed are two different things!

### Page content

**21.** Make sure to calculate at least 3mm bleed for images and/or tinted boxes that continue outside the page on any side, inwards, up- or sideways.

### Check- and validation points for the Print Service Supplier:

**22.** If during validation of the artwork, the print service provider finds errors in the text or images, the Customer should be promptly notified of this according to ALG 10 clause 27.2.

### Additional info about the PDF/X file format

There are many ways to generate PDF-files, but not all of them are suitable for print production. The PDF/X (ISO 15930) file format describes variations of PDF that are more suitable for print production. Typically interactive links (URLs, video clips, audio, forms) are not allowed to be embedded in the PDF. For most types of print production the PDF/X-4 format is recommended, since it supports what is sometimes referred to as an RGB workflow. Images can be in the RGB colour space, and layers and transparency can be used. Check with your print service provider how best to prepare your PDF/X-files, if you have any doubts or questions about this at all.