



*a guide to
preparing
files for
digital printing*



digital **print** guide

digital output

= High Quality

Mail Boxes Etc., along with our strategic partner, Xerox - The Document Company have developed a wide range of digital products, and solutions to help you access, produce, distribute and publish the highest quality documents, and always in your choice of format - Black & White, Colour and Oversize.

As your business partner, MBE is equipped with the proper software, platforms, equipment, and staff to receive, transmit, and print your text and graphic files digitally. The Digital Guide was created to provide you with all the information you need regarding our digital printing services. In this guide, you will find step-by-step instructions for preparing your files for digital printing at MBE as well as other information about this new and exciting technology.

Digital printing is no more difficult than sending a file to print right on your own printer, so MBE wants to make sure you take advantage of this technology through our services - and make your documents look the best they can.

MBE is equipped with the proper software platforms, equipment, and staff to receive, transmit, and print your text and graphic files digitally.



taik thetalk

= Digital Terms

Technical jargon can be confusing if you are not familiar with it. However, now you can be "in the know" instead of "in the dark" with this simple-to-use layperson's glossary of digital terms.

- Address:** The physical designation of a home page, file, or other location on the internet - known as a Uniform Resource Locator (URL) i.e. [http://www.\(name\).com](http://www.(name).com)
- Bitmap:** A grid of individual dots or pixels that defines an image
- Compression:** The compacting of a data file to allow quicker transmission.
- Cookie:** A file on a website that gathers info from users forms or via tracking which parts of a website users visit.
- Download:** The transfer of a file from the Internet to your computer.
- DPI:** A value that describes in dots per inch a screen or printer resolution.
- EPS:** Encapsulated PostScript - file format standard that may contain raster data, vector data, or complete page layouts.
- GIF:** Graphics Interchange Format - computer file format for graphics or pictures.
- HTML:** Hypertext Transfer Protocol - basic language that most web pages utilize to format the text, images, and layout of what is viewed in the browser.
- JPEG:** Format for computer graphics - preferred over its counterpart, GIF, when high image quality is important.
- Raster Data:** A grid or grids of pixels used to describe a graphic file format, such as TIFF and JPEG.
- RIP:** Raster Image Processor - software package or hardware device that translates (or rasterizes) languages such as PostScript for use by output devices like imagesetters and printers.
- TIFF:** Tag Image File Format - standard file format for bitmap or raster graphics, such as scanned images.
- True Type Fonts:** Font which is only one file that contains information for both the screen and the printer. These fonts are not described in Post Script language.
- WAV:** Type of audio file.

= Original Application Files Continued...

Storing Digital Files Safely:

- Your computer disks are fragile and should be treated with care.
- Don't put disks near magnets or magnetic fields as they may be erased or damaged. On top of a television, speaker or computer monitor is a terrible place for a disk.
- Disks are temperature-sensitive. Store them in a cool, dry place. Don't leave them in the car.
- For safety, request a second copy of your disk and store in a separate place.

= Fast & High Quality

Files with Graphics:

- After you have placed your graphic into a document, leave the name of the graphic the same. If you change the name after it has been imported into a document, the graphic will show as "missing" when we try to output your file, and print a jagged screen-only image.
- Do not make "OLE Links" within the document.
- When creating files, please create one item per document type. If you have an order with business cards, letterheads and envelopes, each of those items should be placed in its own document. This will eliminate the chance of any parts of an order being missed.
- Conversely, if you have a multiple-part longer document, be sure to combine the parts or link them together as a publication (PageMaker has a Book... command, which will connect the files you select into a single print job).
- If you are bringing us an original application file, be sure to save files with proper 3-letter extension codes -PM6 for PageMaker, .doc for Word etc. Of course, if you're printing to PostScript be sure to include the ".ps" extension in the file name. (Most programs will add these for you.).
- Double-check that your text and graphics are coloured correctly.

= Save Time

Document Format	Advantages	Considerations
PDF Portable Document Format	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The single best way to keep all your margins, formatting, fonts and graphics intact. • PDF files are compact and cross platform. • PDF files can be created directly from Adobe's software programs without additional software. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adobe Acrobat software must be purchased to create PDF documents.
Original Application Format	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No additional software required. • Files can be edited easily. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May not print properly. • May lose fonts and formatting. • Dependant on software.
PostScript Files	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Files can be created directly from all leading software applications. • Ready-to-print file, self-contained and formatted. • Files are compatible with PostScript print. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Files can be significantly larger than the original file. • Cannot be edited or easily previewed before printing. • PostScript files may be printer-specific, depending on the printer driver used to create them.

preparing your files

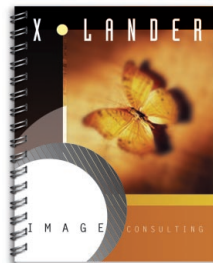
= *Compatibility*

What kind of files can I send?

- Most MBE centres accept Adobe Acrobat PDF files. Many centres also accept Postscript and original application files (i.e. Microsoft Word). If Adobe Acrobat PDF format is not available to you, please contact your MBE centre to confirm our ability to accept non-PDF files. For PDF or PostScript files, all graphics and fonts must be embedded. For original application files, all fonts and graphics must be attached or embedded properly and included with the file submission.
- Some Internet Service Providers (ISPs) limit files sent through them to three megabytes (3 MB) or less. Please contact your ISP for file size limitations prior to sending.

How do I send files to MBE via E-mail?

- First, obtain the E-mail address of your local MBE Centre.
- Compose a message to the MBE Centre detailing your requirements.
- In the message window, position the insertion point in the message text, and then choose Insert, File from the menu or click the Insert File toolbar button. The Insert File dialog box appears.
- From the Look In drop-down list, choose the drive and folder that contains the file you want to attach.
- Using the Files of Type drop-down list, choose the All File Types - this will accommodate files such as PostScript as well as Word, Excel etc.
- Select the file you want to attach.
- Click OK to insert the file into the message. Your file will appear as an icon in the message.
- Click Send. Please note that file transfer is not instantaneous. The larger the file, the longer the transmission time. Factors that may also greatly affect or delay file transfer time include Internet traffic and modem speed.
- Notify MBE that you have sent your file by telephone. Once the file is received, we will call you to confirm specifics about your order, such as due date and time.



preparing your files

= *Original Application Files*

What are Original Application Files?

- Files created in the format of the program in which they were originally created, such as Microsoft Word or Adobe PageMaker.

Tips for Successful Transmission:

Fonts:

- To ensure your file will be output correctly, please include all of the fonts (typefaces) used in your document. Your fonts will likely be TrueType format.
- To find your fonts, look in your Control Panel>Fonts. From your Start menu, select Settings then Control Panel. Open the Fonts folder. Inside you will see all of the fonts that are installed on your computer. The extension of a TrueType font is *.ttf or *.fot.
- Each TrueType font requires only one file to print correctly. For every typeface that you have used in your document, a font file will be required to output your document correctly. Submit the fonts that you have used in your document along with your other digital files.
- Inexpensive font packages offered at very low prices are not quality typefaces and will cause problems on sophisticated output devices. We recommend using type created by reputable type vendors.

Graphics:

- To ensure your file will meet your expectations, include all graphic files placed in your document. Graphics include clip art, art files you have drawn and scans.
- The most reliable file formats for scans are .eps and .tiff. When unsure, use the .eps file format. This format provides a more consistent tonal reproduction than the .tiff format. The .tiff format yields a smaller file, but can be more prone to data corruption.
- All margins must be 1/4" or greater.



*Provide MBE Centre
with all images,
graphics, and fonts
used in the document.*

=PDF Files Continued...

Whenever you create a PDF, there are several key options you must consider:

- Under the General tab, set the Compatibility at Acrobat 3.0 or 4.0 and leave ASCII Format unchecked. These two settings will keep your file smaller.
- Set your Default Resolution to 600 dpi (dots per inch). The default page size is not relevant as we are Distilling PostScript files, not EPS files.
- Under the Compression tab, check the "Compress text and line art" check box. Distiller will automatically compress the images in your PostScript document to the optimal settings for your output devices. This saves a great deal of disk space without sacrificing quality.
- Under the Fonts tab, check the "Embed All Fonts" check box. Distiller will make your fonts a part of the Acrobat PDF file. To save space, check mark the Subset Fonts Below Box and set it at 99%. This will allow Distiller to make a smaller PDF file by including only the characters of the fonts which you have used in your document, not every character in the font set.
- Under the Colour tab, check "Leave Colour Unchanged".
- Pull down File>Open and select your PostScript file. Distiller will ask where to save the PDF file and what you would like to name it. Name it a name that fits the project but the leave the suffix (end) of the file name ".pdf".
- Distiller will then convert it to a print-ready Acrobat PDF file.

*PDF stands
for Portable
Document
Format*

=PostScript Files

What is PostScript?

• PostScript is a page description language, developed by Adobe Systems. When a computer program sends information to a printer, it uses a page description language to tell the output device how to draw the page. This language describes text and graphics as a series of lines and arcs that can be filled with various backgrounds.

Why Use PostScript?

- A properly created PostScript file can be sent to any MBE Centre to be printed and the output will always be correct and consistent.
- PostScript files are easy to create and require little technical knowledge on the part of the end-user.
- PostScript files include all the print information - fonts, graphics, page format - so your document will print perfectly every time.
- PostScript printing is digital printing, so every copy made from a PostScript file is a first generation print - not a copy imaged from a previous print.
- No Software Limitations - PostScript files are the print information only, and although a PostScript file can't be opened and revised, the generic print information format allows you to print files without the software.

PostScript Limitations:

- There is no way to correct typing errors and misplaced graphics or to add page numbers, etc.
- There is no way to selectively print pages from a Post Script file. Once you have printed pages to a PostScript file, we cannot select only certain pages to print.
- Because a PostScript file includes all of the elements of your document, the Post Script file can be very large.
- A printer driver for the particular device on which the file will be output must be installed on your computer.

before
your print

= PostScript Files Continued...

How Do I Make a PostScript file?

- Creating a PostScript file is simple. It is necessary to install and configure a PostScript printer driver before a print file can be created.
- After the printer driver has been installed, creating a PostScript file is no different from printing your document on your own printer.
- Select Print from the File Menu.
- In the Print Window, select the Printer tab, and select the PostScript printer under the Current Printer Name: drop menu.
- Make sure the Where: is set to Port: FILE
- Click on Properties to set your Orientation and Paper Size. Click on the Graphics tab and verify the Scaling. When they are set, click OK.
- Back in the Print Window, return to the Print tab, and click the Print button.
- In the Print to File window, give the file a new name - with the .ps extension, and choose a disk or drive to save it to.
- Bring the disk to MBE or E-mail the file.

= Install PostScript

To create PostScript files for MBE, you must have the following loaded on your system:

- a PostScript printer driver such as Adobe PS4.1 for Windows. The printer driver will allow you to make a PostScript file that can be printed on any printer at MBE.
- A PostScript Printer Description (PPD) file specific to a particular printer. The PPD is a small file that describes characteristics of a particular printer such as the Xerox DocuColour 12, Xerox Docutech etc..

These printer drivers will print TO FILE and generate proper PostScript files for use with Xerox print devices. To obtain PostScript printer drivers - Windows - Free Download:

- Go to www.adobe.com site on the Internet. Click on "Support" at top of the screen. Click on "Downloads". Cursor down to "Printer Drivers" for Windows. Choose the Printer Driver for your particular set up - if single user (not network) you will probably choose PostScript Printer Driver Adobe PS 4.3.1 for Windows 95 or 98 - English.
- Download to either your Desktop or My Files (you will be downloading a self-extracting file which when double clicked will add a Generic PostScript Printer Driver to your Printer folder.)
- Double click on File created from download and follow set up steps.

preparing
your files

= PDF Files

What is a PDF file?

- PDF stands for Portable Document Format. It is a platform-independent file format that allows documents created in any authoring application to be shared, reviewed, and printed by others on any computer platform, even if they do not have the application software or fonts with which the file was originally created.
- PDF is the new standard for electronic distribution of documents because it is the best way to maintain the look and feel of a document when you are sharing it with someone else. PDF files are compact, cross-platform and can be viewed by anyone on a Macintosh, Windows, or UNIX environment using the free Adobe Acrobat Reader software.
- Unlike PostScript files, PDF files are much smaller and we can selectively print any or all of the pages.

Creating a PDF File:

- To create a "print-ready" PDF file (prepared to print quality output) you need to have Adobe Acrobat Distiller (part of commercial package Adobe Acrobat).
- PDF file creation can be simple. The basic steps are 1) Create a PostScript file, and 2) Distill the PostScript file to convert it to a PDF File. Please read the section of this guide for instructions on creating a PostScript file. When selecting your PPD, select "Acrobat Distiller (PPD)". This will enable your file to have the greatest output quality.
- If using a page layout or illustration software such as Adobe PageMaker or PhotoShop, Distiller is packaged free with these programs. Use any fonts you want. Use any images you want. When you are all done, you will simply create a "print-ready" PDF file. Use the Save-To-PDF or Export PDF options in these programs.
- By saving a document as a PDF, you end up with ONE FILE that contains ALL graphics, ALL fonts, and text needed to reproduce the document, rather than several file of various formats which must be accounted for and linked.

*The printer driver will allow
you to make a PostScript file
that can be printed on
any printer at MBE.*