



**VitalSigns**  
DISPLAY GRAPHICS

**BRINGING  
YOUR  
COLOR  
IMAGES TO  
LIFE**



**A Guide to Color Printing**

# SENDING FILES

**Vital Signs accepts digital files created in the following applications.**

## Applications

## Format to save it in



**PDF**

High resolution using PDF/X-1a or PRESS setting



**Adobe Illustrator**

EPS, PDF, AI



**Adobe Photoshop**

EPS, PDF, TIFF, PSD, JPG (remove layers)



**Adobe InDesign**

PDF, Native Indesign

If your files have been created in a file not listed above, please contact us to see if we are able to accept your files.

If your file is smaller than 2MB, please email the file to [INFO@VITALSIGNSDG.COM](mailto:INFO@VITALSIGNSDG.COM).

Files larger than 2MB should be uploaded to our website at [WWW.VITALSIGNSDG.COM](http://WWW.VITALSIGNSDG.COM). If you have questions about uploading files, please give us a call.

# FILE SETUP TIPS

**Below we have prepared General Guidelines to help you in preparing files for printing. If you need additional assistance, please contact our office.**

## FONTS

For best results, it is recommended to convert fonts to outlines/paths when possible. If you are unable to convert your fonts to outlines/paths, then you must supply all fonts used in your files when submitting them. Supply both printer and screen fonts when submitting postscript fonts. We suggest using postscript fonts whenever possible and be careful of stylizing type in the different applications.

## SCANS & GRAPHICS

All scans should be scanned at 300 dpi (or greater) or for 175 dpi printing. Black and white bitmaps should be scanned at 1200dpi. All color files must be CMYK and not RGB. Files requiring conversions will be subject to extra charges and we will not be responsible for unexpected color shifts. For best results place scanned images in files at 100% sizing. Do not save files with transfer functions. Save images as TIFF, PDF or EPS. Do not save images as JPEG.

## CMYK COLOR PRINTING

Print jobs printed as full color, or 4 color, are printed out of CMYK colors. Please note that Pantone (PMS) and RGB colors do not always convert accurately to CMYK. If printing in full color, then it is best to design your job in CMYK mode from the beginning. As well, make sure all graphical elements are CMYK colors and not RGB.

# Don't Forget...

**Our on-site graphic designer is here to help or design it for you!**

## **RICH BLACK**

When printing large areas of solid black on the fronts of full color cards and brochures, we recommend you create a "Rich Black". Printing only 100% black may cause the black ink to look light or washed out. By printing with a rich black, the black will look much richer. Your "Rich Black" color should be made up of : 60% Cyan, 60% Magenta, 60% Yellow & 100% Black.

Only use this rich black for large areas - do not use rich black for small type.

## **PANTONE COLOR PRINTING**

When designing for single or multicolor pantone color printing, make sure all graphical elements use only the required pantone colors. As well, make sure you do not have multiple definitions for the same pantone color. For example, 123 CVU is not the same as 123CV.

## **BLEEDS**

A "Bleed" occurs when photos, graphics or colours print to the edge of the paper. Part of that image (1/8") must be trimmed off to create the bleeds. Please allow for 1/8" bleed on all sides. For example, a 4" x 6" postcard would have an image area of 4 1/4" x 6 1/4".

Read more about BLEEDS on the next page.

# BLEEDS

## What are Bleeds?

"Bleed" is the term for printing that goes right to the edge of the paper. Printed pieces that have a white border or white around the edges, DO NOT bleed. If you have images or backgrounds that you want to print (bleed) off the edge of the paper, then you must design your job larger than the final CUT SIZE. We create bleeds by actually cutting through the enlarged image/background.

Card that "Bleeds"



Card does not "Bleed"



## How to Create Bleeds

To create bleeds, make your document larger than the final CUT SIZE. We require that you make your document 0.125" larger on all four sides, therefore, the size with bleeds will be 0.25" larger than the final cut size in both dimensions. For example, if you are printing a postcard with a final cut size of 4" x 6", then the size with bleeds (BLEED SIZE) will be 4.25" x 6.25".

The best way to design keeping bleeds in mind is to make use of visual guides found in most graphics programs. Start by making your document size equal to the BLEED SIZE (for a 4" x 6" postcard, make it 4.25" x 6.25"). Now place guides 0.125" in from these edges, all the way around. These guides are where the document/card will be cut (CUT EDGE). Anything you want to bleed off the edge of the card must extend past your guides out to the BLEED EDGE. If photos and backgrounds do not extend past these guides, (if they do not bleed), white may show around the edges when we cut the cards, due to slight movement during the cutting process.

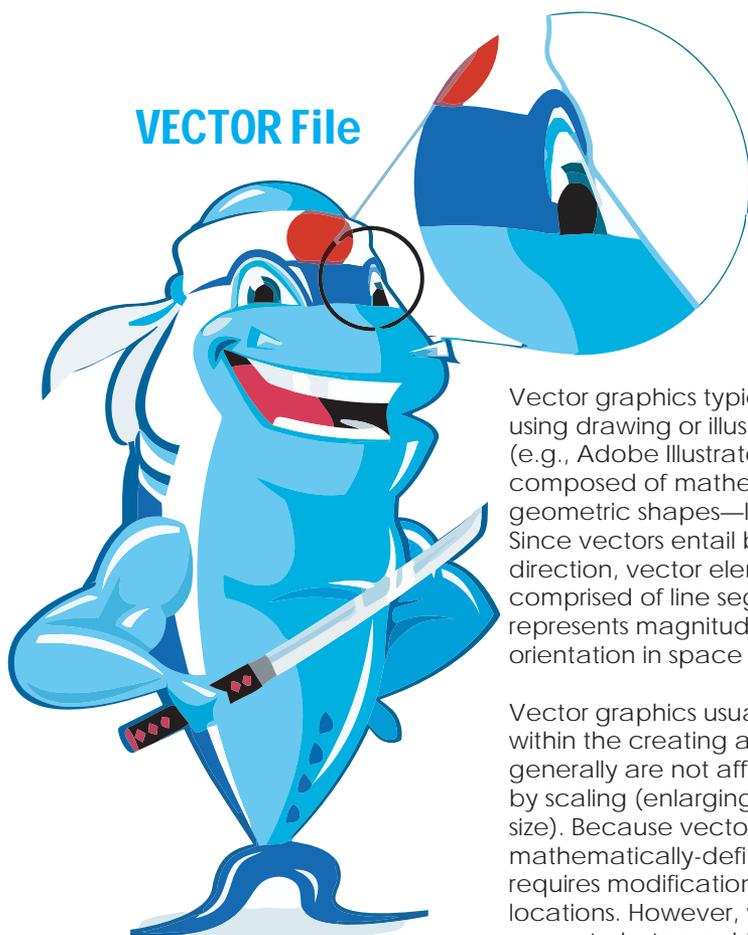


Card being cut creating "Bleeds"

# VECTOR vs. RASTOR

Word processors and spreadsheet or presentation applications, although suitable for creating files for office or Internet use, are not recommended for creating digital art for print. Microsoft Office applications are included in this group. In some cases, however, such files may be converted so as to enable use.

Here are 2 examples of an image when magnified or scaled up. You will notice the difference in clarity.



Vector graphics typically are generated using drawing or illustration programs (e.g., Adobe Illustrator) and are composed of mathematically-defined geometric shapes—lines, objects and fills. Since vectors entail both magnitude and direction, vector elements thus are comprised of line segments whose length represents magnitude and whose orientation in space represents direction.

Vector graphics usually are easily modified within the creating application and generally are not affected detrimentally by scaling (enlarging or reducing their size). Because vector elements are mathematically-defined, scaling simply requires modification of their mathematical locations. However, vector files do not support photographic imagery well and often can be problematic for cross-platform exchange. Vector graphics typically are saved as EPS format.

Raster Images are produced by digital image capture devices: digital scanners or digital cameras, or by pixel editing programs (e.g., Adobe Photoshop). Raster images are composed of a matrix (grid) or bitmap of digital picture elements (pixels). Pixels are squares or rectangles described as black, white, gray or color. Raster images typically are saved as TIFF format, but can be saved as EPS as well.

Whereas conversion from vector to raster is easily accomplished, raster conversion to vector is much more difficult (and often is not possible). Raster images typically are easily shared across various platforms, but can be more difficult than vector graphics to modify. As well, raster graphics are impacted by scaling.



## RASTER File

**When sending logos,  
or any other  
text to be blown up -  
PLEASE send a vector File  
(EPS, AI, PDF)**

# DESIGN TIPS

## Elements of Effective Sign Design

- **VISIBILITY**

The sign should be sized appropriately for the viewing distance. Generally, you will need an inch of letter height for every 10 feet of viewing distance. The sign should also be placed in a location with maximum exposure to the target audience.

- **READABILITY**

The sign should be organized in a manner that readily conveys its intended message. Key words and phrases should be emphasized with larger letters, bolder typestyles and additional colors. Ideas should be grouped logically and separated by layout and spacing. Graphic elements, especially digital color graphics, can greatly enhance the speed and thoroughness of communications.

- **NOTICEABILITY**

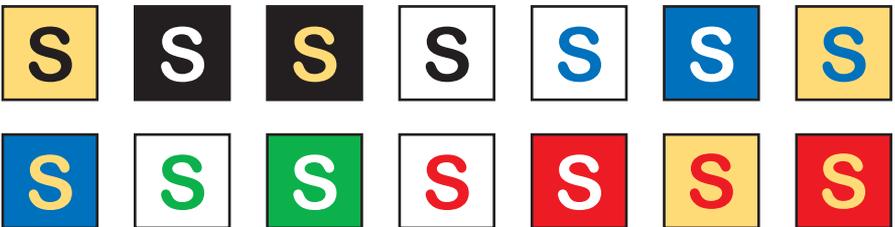
The sign should incorporate some design elements that will help it stand out conspicuously in the landscape. Color contrast, changeable components, motion, uniqueness of design and/or subconscious attraction can serve to make a sign more noticeable.

- **LEGIBILITY**

Typestyle selection is critical to the effectiveness of a sign. The proper font should convey the desired image without sacrificing the ability to distinguish individual letters. Many script and specialty typestyles are difficult to read, especially over greater viewing distances.

## Color & Contrast

A high color contrast factor will improve legibility. Here are the best combinations, ranked in order of legibility from a distance.



# Typestyle Solutions

- **Sans Serif**

Sans Serif fonts project a strong durable image. They also effectively communicate quick bursts of information.

Arial  
Franklin Gothic  
Lucida Sans  
Myriad

- **Script**

Script fonts project an elegant image. Unfortunately they are often characterized by poor legibility. They should only be used for short viewing distances and only in combinations of upper and lower case letters.

*Brush*  
*Commercial*  
*Monotype Corsiva*  
*Edwardian*

- **Display**

Display fonts project distinctive images for special situations. Legibility is also a concern especially over greater viewing distances.

**Broadway**  
**Bauhaus**  
**Impact**  
**Jokerman**

- **Serif**

Serif fonts project a more sophisticated upscale image. They also make it easier to read large bodies of text.

Times  
Goudy Old Style  
Century Schoolbook  
**Cooper**

# Distance & Visibility

Letter Height (Inches)	Distance For Best Impact	Maximum Readable Distance
3"	30'	100'
4"	40'	150'
6"	60'	200'
8"	80'	350'
9"	90'	400'
10"	100'	450'
12"	120'	525'
15"	150'	630'
18"	180'	750'
24"	240'	1000'
30"	300'	1250'
36"	360'	1500'
42"	420'	1750'
48"	480'	2000'
54"	540'	2250'



**BANNERS**  
**TRADESHOW**  
**SIGNS**  
**POINT OF PURCHASE**  
**RETAIL**  
**WINDOW GRAPHICS**  
**BACK-LIT**  
**REAL ESTATE**  
**FINE ART**  
**CORPORATE**  
**VINYL**  
**FLOOR GRAPHICS**



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