



press

file preparation best practices and guidelines



THINKING AHEAD!

PREFLIGHT
HEAD OFF PROBLEMS
AT THE PASS BY
CAREFULLY CHECKING
COMPLETED FILES

STYLE SHEETS
STAY ON COURSE
WITH STYLE SHEETS
AND MASTER PAGES

WILLOW PRINTING GROUP LTD.



beyond print

PUTTING YOUR DUCKS IN A ROW...

Take the time to preflight your files as you are preparing to send them. It will save time, money and improve quality!

Communications is full of rushed deadlines and just-on-time delivery. But an important task that

should not be rushed is pre-flighting. The extra time you take at the end of production to preflight your files will help ensure that they flow smoothly through the pre-press process. Taking the steps to make sure fonts are

included, images are collected and the photos are linked will save you time and money. There are several items we tend to check and perform on most files. If you do these, your files will be a step closer to printing.



bleeds

Bleeds are important design elements that are often not created correctly. If your print job has bleeds, they are created by printing past the edge of the page and then trimming the page to its final size. In most cases, you should create your document layout to be the finished trim size. Make sure that any coloured areas, or photos that bleed, extend past the edge of the page at least an eighth of an inch (.125) or 9 points. To do this, just pull the image or picture box past the edge of the page. In Quark, build crossovers using one picture box by dragging it across the gutter (instead of two separate boxes).

colours

Incorrectly specifying colours is another common problem. We often have to go back into customer supplied files and change the specifications of colours in order to get them to print correctly. Arguably, the number one error when submitting digital files is mixing up spot and process colours. Process colour builds should separate into tints of the four process colours, cyan, magenta, yellow and black (CMYK). If you create a process colour and mistakenly specify it as a spot, it will print as a fifth colour, instead of separating to process. The easiest way to check your document colours is to use a preflight utility program that can check colour specifications. Printing with separations on is another way to check. If you get a fifth page in a four-colour job, there is a problem.

resolution

Keep the image resolution (commonly referred to as DPI) at two times the screen frequency (the linescreen). For example, if your print job requires a 150 linescreen, make sure your images are 300 DPI for best results. Use 6x to 9x if you are scanning line art, rather than a continuous tone. If you plan to scale an image, you will get better results if you scale in Photoshop and place it at 100 percent in Quark or another page layout program.

colour space and file formats

Use Adobe's defaults for sheetfed or web printing to convert from RGB to CMYK. If you feel you need special settings, call us. Use only TIFF or EPS for your high-res files. Saving PICT, BMP and GIF are just a few examples of the file formats that do not process effectively with PostScript RIPs and high-end output devices.

preflight software

Two popular preflighting programs are FlightCheck from Markzware (www.markzware.com) and Preflight Pro from Extensis (www.extensis.com). Markzware also makes a stripped-down version for use only with QuarkXPress files called Collect. Both companies programs search your layout files for potential problems and report what they find. They also collect files for output, including all linked image files and all fonts.

laser or ink jet proofs

Laser (or ink jet) proofs are essential for quality control. If our lasers match yours, then we know the text is flowing correctly, that we are working on the correct version of the file and that the various colour elements you created are stripped correctly (whether digitally or manually).

font issues

Always be sure to send all the fonts used with your digital files. While different font manufacturers have different licensing agreements—most, if not all—allow you to send the fonts along with your files. Be sure to send the same fonts used in your document because type manufactures may tweak fonts between versions, which may cause text reflow.



toolbox

From the **WILLOW** tree

Please...Keep telling us how we're doing!

As most of you are now aware, we are sending out a brief on-line survey after each order to give you the opportunity to provide us with feedback on our performance. We greatly appreciate the response-**26.8% have replied to our survey**, which is great! The whole point of this is to improve to the point where we continuously exceed your expectations in all aspects that are important to you. Thanks to those who have responded more than once, as this helps us to establish a pattern of consistency.

We promised to share our results to date with you:

We asked how you would rate the overall Willow experience-94.6% said fantastic or good. In rating the quality of service, 94.6% said it was fantastic or good. As far as our responsiveness to queries, 89.1% said we were fantastic or good. 82.8% said their delivery was on time. 67.9% said we made suggestions to improve their piece or save cost (this isn't always applicable on repeat jobs, but it is our goal to add value to dealing with Willow). 81% said we were fantastic or good in our responsiveness during the proposal process.

And finally, 100% said they would recommend Willow to others! Thank you for that, we are most successful in growing our business through referrals. We will be doing a **"Spread the Word"** mailer over the next little while to give you the opportunity to provide us with referrals, and you can be rewarded too!

It is our goal for 2004 to be at 90% or above in the fantastic/good category, with a higher percentage in "fantastic" than "good". Seems like we are there from an overall experience and service perspective. As a priority, Willow's "Customer Satisfaction Committee" has chosen to focus on making recommendations to streamline the internal quotation process, based on your feedback. We will keep you posted.

And...the winner of our quarterly draw for dinner for two at Wildfire Steakhouse and Wine Bar was Mary Pepe of McGraw-Hill Ryerson. Congratulations Mary!

Is Press OK OK?

We recently issued an on-line survey to get your thoughts and feedback on PressOK. Although our response rates were low on this survey, we were able to obtain some feedback on topics our readers would like to see covered-i.e. more info about the workings of printing presses and how to work most effectively to take advantage of a printing company's expertise, to name a few. Thanks to those who responded, and the three winners of our movie prize pack were **Darlene Marino of National Car Rental, Pre Naranjo of Phantom Industries and Edward Bennett of Aboriginal Healing and Wellness Strategy.** Thanks for your input!

We thought you might enjoy an article about Willow (on the next page), published in Second Impressions magazine following our 50th celebration last year. Sections of this article appear here, with permission of Second Impressions magazine, a Western Canadian publication serving the graphic industry.

Willow's Winners at Work!

We have to take this opportunity to congratulate Raquel Barcia and Rosmary Gallo, this quarter's winners of the "Employee of the Quarter" contest. The winner is nominated and elected by their peers. Raquel and Rosmary won because of their hard-working dedication to getting the job done as an effective team.



Willow has implemented a program to reward our Associates whenever they "catch" a problem before it happens. The "good catcher" gets rewarded on the spot and is entered into a grand prize quarterly draw.

Last quarter's winners:

Roco Castillo
Fernando Silva
Brian McGee



Emulate....

If you want to learn how to improve your company and its image – look at the leaders



If you want to be excellent and desire a roadmap to achieve your goal one of the best ways is to look at what industry leaders are doing. Two companies that are well worth your while are Willow Printing Group in Concord, Ontario and Hemlock Printers in Burnaby, British Columbia. Each has taken a different approach in their companies and is celebrating different achievements but there are similarities as well as differences.

The Willow Printing Group, currently run by Jeff Ekstein, is celebrating their 50th anniversary as well as the fact that they are in their third generation in this family-owned business. The fact that three generations have owned the same company puts them in a very select group. Very few companies in the print industry make that milestone. The level of co-operation is exemplified by the fact that Jeff's father, Lew Ekstein, is Chairman of the Board and keeps in touch with the business without taking control away from his son. One only needs to see them interact at industry events to appreciate the support they give each other.

Jeff has taken a very political stance with his company and is active at the national level as Chair of the CPIA Government Affairs Committee. He has contributed many hours (days and weeks) to helping the industry through lobbying efforts (capital cost depreciation and industry training credits are two of the current issues). Jeff's involvement is exemplified by the presentation of a letter of congratulations, very evidently not a form letter, from the Prime Minister and presented by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance.

You can see the tone and presentation of the company on the web site. On the opening page is the logo - a large 'W' and the word "beyond print." There is no doubt in your mind that this company is prepared to assist you with any communication needs. That belief is upheld as you continue on through the site. The home page celebrates the opinions of Willow's clients – it is not championing their equipment. The current requisite of

on-site ordering is an integrated feature. To draw people back to the site on a regular basis Willow has a section that gives clients some basic information about file preparation, design and general print production. In one example (left) the viewer is shown how to take a crowded, unappealing (but common) photo page and turn it into something that creates a big and positive impact. With the current studies revealing how much file creators want more education this is right on target!

From start to finish you know you are dealing with a company that not only wants your business but knows what to do with it having the expertise to transform your file into a piece that will create profit for you...

...Not every printer can be a Willow or Hemlock but every printer can learn from these examples. Both of these companies make teamwork more than a word. From the clients, through the production and management staff and completing the circle with suppliers and support companies, the teamwork is evident in every facet of how these companies present themselves internally and externally.

Both sets of owners have a long history of contributing both to their industry and the community at large. The recognition that this has given them is something that cannot be purchased or achieved in any other manner.

There is a recognition of the printer's obligation and opportunity to help educate any person who is responsible for file creation. Rather than keeping the 'trade secrets' hidden in the hope that correction of files will create more revenue, Willow and Hemlock are open and supportive in their efforts to train and assist both customers and new prospects.

Direct duplication of these efforts won't make you stand out from the crowd but taking the examples and customizing them to reflect your company's culture and clientele can make you a more profitable and better recognized firm.



Style Sheets & Master Pages

The Building Blocks of a Well-Built Document

Nothing diminishes design like inconsistent production. The body type looks the same, column widths are often the same and the headlines use the same one or two typefaces. The longer the document, the more important consistency becomes. With a well-structured document, your reader will move through your design with little effort. Mess up the headline typefaces or body copy, and your reader will remember. There are many tools within most layout programs that can help you design and maintain document structure. These tools include style sheets, master pages and grids. Each will help you speed-up the work while improving consistency and flexibility.

my boss says to use style sheets. should I learn them? why bother?

I'll skip the obvious answer and go straight for tech cover. A Style sheet is a collection of type and paragraph formatting instructions. Apply them to each piece of text to be formatted. Once a style sheet is associated with a block of text, changes to the style sheet will automatically update to that text.

In QuarkXPress, there are two ways to create style sheets. The first approach: Select EDIT > STYLE SHEETS > NEW, name the style sheet and specify typeface, type size, paragraph indents, leading, etc. The other way is to style a particular paragraph of text, leave your cursor in that paragraph, and select EDIT > STYLE SHEETS > NEW. Quark will place the formatting of that paragraph into the new style sheet you created.

There are two kinds of style sheets: character and paragraph. Character styles only format the characters you select. Paragraph styles format a whole paragraph. To incorporate a paragraph style, simply highlight a section to be formatted and the style will apply to the entire paragraph.

Once you have created your style sheets in Quark, you can apply them. To do so, select the characters you want to format then click on the name of the style sheet in the Style Sheets palette. The slickest way to apply a style sheet is to give it a keyboard shortcut. The best ones to use are the numbers from the calculator section of an extended keyboard because Quark does not use those for its internal keyboard shortcuts. For instance, set your body text as number 1, your hanging indent style as number 2, and your headline as number 3. All you have to do to apply styles is select the text and hit 1, 2 or 3 on the keypad.

what about master pages?

Master pages are style sheets for page elements. They are blank pages that you format and use as templates. They can contain items such as images, lines, headers or footers, page numbers and empty text or picture boxes. Master pages can simply contain automatic page numbers, or they can contain complex layouts if you are building a document that contains many different kinds of pages.

If you are creating a structured document, such as a manual or brochure, you should use master pages. You might create master pages for your standard pages, the first page of every chapter or your table of contents. To create a master page in Quark,

desktop doc



open the DOCUMENT LAYOUT palette. Then, either click on the two existing master pages (A-MASTER A OR B-MASTER B), or create your own master page by dragging a blank page from the top of the DOCUMENT LAYOUT palette to the master pages area of the DOCUMENT LAYOUT palette (where A-MASTER A is). Then, double click on the master page. To place automatic page numbers on the master page, place a text box where you want the page number. Then click COMMAND-3 (Mac) or CONTROL-3 (Windows). The page-number placeholder symbol <#> will appear. Format the symbol and add text (such as "Page"). When you create an actual text page, it will have a page number on it with the same formatting as the master page.

To apply a master page to an existing page, select it in the DOCUMENT LAYOUT palette and drag it over the page you want reformatted. To create a new page based on a master page, drag it from the master page area into the regular page area of the DOCUMENT LAYOUT palette.

any final recommendations?

Another document structure tool is called a grid. It consists of the basic columns and spaces between columns that you use throughout your document. Your reader will not see the grid, but they may notice if the columns and spaces vary. For instance, a typical broadsheet newspaper uses a grid with many columns (7, 9, 11, etc.). The actual text may be the width of one of these columns, or it may be the width of two or three. However, the underlying grid makes the page look orderly and guides the proper placement of each page element.

To create a grid in Quark, open a master page and select PAGES > MASTER GUIDES. Then set the basic structure of your grid. If you have different widths of columns in the same grid, use the Master Guides to lay down the ones that are the same width. Then pull out individual page guides to draw the shape of the odd-widths. When you use this Master Page, both sets of guides will appear.

If you have a question for Desktop Doc, please e-mail it to desktopdoc@willowprint.com

WILLOW PRINTING GROUP: BEYOND PRINT

From our state-of-the-art facility just north of Toronto, we at Willow Printing Group have been proudly providing communications excellence for half a century.

We have grown from a storefront printshop, to a multi-shift pre-press, press room and finishing operation. From a 1,200 square foot facility employing three, to a modern 22,000 square foot building with over 30 print professionals to service your needs.

Ink on paper has been our livelihood and passion for fifty years, but we've always kept a close eye on our clients' needs and developed our services accordingly. We proudly offer a full range of business solutions to take you Beyond Print.

WHAT CAN WE DO FOR YOU?

Committed to innovation in both client service and technology, we offer a full spectrum of communication solutions. We have the technical expertise, business acumen and creative muscle to deliver results at every step in the process. Leave it to us to manage the following:

Strategic and Creative

Communications design
Copywriting
Strategic consulting

e-Solutions

Online procurement services
Website development

Pre-Press and Press

Complete ROOM digital workflow and traditional pre-press services
Computer-to-plate technology
Colour scanning and image/colour correction
Electronic assembly
Digital proofing
Digital print solutions for short-run
and variable data requirements

Post-Press

Finishing (bindery)
Inventory management programs
Distribution
Mailing and Fulfillment

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