

Flexographic printing (*Flexo*) is a unique and specialized printing process. Artwork requirements are very different from conventional printing. Please read this document carefully before creating artwork. As with any printing process, quality printing starts with artwork. Please use these tips as you begin your project. If your art is already created or in progress, please adjust it to our specifications before submission. This will expedite your design development through the pre-press & proof approval process. If you have any questions, we will be happy to assist you in the early planning of your project.

Program and File Format Preferences:

Software we use: Adobe Creative Cloud. Native files always preferred. We use a .pdf workflow.

- Linework: Adobe Illustrator (.ai, .pdf)
- Scanned Images: Adobe Photoshop (.psd, .tif) If Photoshop artwork was created with layers, send layered files.
- Text: Adobe Illustrator (.ai, .eps, .pdf) or supply copy in a text document (.txt, .doc, .rtf)
- Layout: Adobe Illustrator (.ai, .pdf) (Adobe InDesign also fully supported)
- Color Space: PANTONE Plus, CMYK for process builds, SWOPv2.

If the software you have used is not listed please contact our pre-press department to see what we can do. Many file formats can be opened in another program and saved out as an .eps or Illustrator format. Please keep in mind some file information may become corrupt when converted. Always provide a PDF or printed sample to help us determine if a conversion error has occurred.

File Transfer Preferences:

Please use proper naming conventions. (*i.e. no special characters or symbols including slashes, commas, periods, asterisks, etc.*)

Name files with names relevant to the label design or your order. (*i.e. Company name, logo, purchase order or part number*)

- Native Files: Always provide all the files used to create your artwork. This should include all linked and supporting files and other elements. (*i.e. fonts & images*) Try to “package” your art file to avoid missing parts.
- PDF / Preview: Provide a screen shot or a pdf preview of your file to help make sure that there was no file corruption in the file transfer or that any elements are missing. If you have a printed sample of your label which you wish us to match provide that sample as well.
- Convert Text: If this is not possible please send all fonts along with your art files. Type should be set in a vector based program and converted to outlines or vector when sent to us. If there is a possibility you will need type changes made in our pre-press department please also include a live type (non-outlined) file.
- Overprint Preview: When designing for print, always view your design in Overprint Preview mode. This will ensure you are viewing how the elements will be printed. For example, 0% CMYK text erroneously set to overprint will disappear when professionally printed or in Overprint Preview mode, but will appear falsely correct when not viewing in Overprint Preview mode.
- Email: Art can be sent to your CSR or Sales person. Please limit file sizes to 10mb for e-mail.
- FTP: Art files can be uploaded directly to our FTP site for retrieval. Contact us for our FTP information.
- Other Media: Art files can be uploaded to a file service (such as DropBox or Google Drive) burnt onto a disc (CD, DVD) or transferred to a USB flash drive and then delivered to your Sales person or CSR.

Please review the following page for design considerations and suggestions when preparing artwork for Craftsman Label.

Design Considerations For Flexography:

Our pre-press department reserves the options to adjust artwork to meet your intended finished look when printed. This will include adjustments to minimum dot, color saturation, out of gamut fluctuations, and any other items which we feel are necessary. Here is a simple rundown of things we will be looking at when preparing your files for print.

- **Bleed:** Set up all bleeds to a minimum of .0625" on all edges of your label.
- **Safety:** All text or design elements to be no closer than .0625" from the die line (excluding full bleeds).
- **Trap:** We need a minimum .5 pt of trap. Do Not use trapping software to adjust for trapping. *Our pre-press department will trap the artwork as needed. WE WILL trap your files here so please keep this in mind when designing your artwork.*
- **Dieline:** Supply a die line (or intended cut lines) with your artwork and include your finished label sizes. Ideally make your Illustrator artboard the finished cut size of your label (bleed can be set in Document Setup).
- **Color Tints:** All color tints must be made with Pantone Colors. Do not use combinations of Pantone Colors with CMYK Process Colors within the same swatch. Name spot color swatches with the PMS number that is intended to be printed. Specify the colors used by including color call-outs and swatches within your file. Take the time to remove any colors not used from your color palette.

When deciding on colors or tints, please choose the solid color (100%) of the tint you're wanting whenever possible. When adjusting the lightness of a tint (when needed) do not use "transparency" to lighten a tint of a color instead of simply screening the color back with the % slider. Avoid "Building" a color using transparency and layers of other colors. Doing this can generate unexpected outcomes on the finished product and complicate the prepress work.

- **Minimum Screened Line Width:** .5pt @ 10% tone.
- **Minimum Solid Line Width:** .4pt
- **Minimum Type Size, Positive:** 4pt (Sans Serif)
- **Minimum Type Size, Reversed:** 6pt (Sans Serif)
- **Embossing/Stamping:** If your label requires embossing or foil stamping, these elements must be created as vector. If they are not created as vector elements we will need additional time to recreate these parts of the artwork.
- **UPC/Bar Codes:** All UPC codes should be built to GS1 General Specifications (International standards). If your artwork does not meet GS1 standards we can help you adjust your layout and barcode meet the international GS1 specifications. Please set to a bar width reduction of .001". Please see our GS1 Standards pdf. Basic concerns should be Size, Quiet Zone, & X-Dimension.
- **FDA Info & Box:** Please be sure that your label meets FDA guidelines. Please see our FDA Specifications pdf. Basic concerns should be Nutrition Facts box - rule weights, text size, and contrast.
- **Common Content:** When designing multiple labels around common design elements, be sure these common elements are placed exactly in the same positions to ensure the utilization of common plating.

(This will save time and expense for the project.)