

### Introduction

When a project is to be printed commercially, you must know which colors of ink will be used. This job has a photo so it must be printed with the CMYK process colors. Other jobs may only need one or more specially mixed "spot" colors, usually described with a **Pantone** number.

Since each color is printed on its own run through the press, it must have its own color separation printed onto a negative or a printing plate

### Common Tasks

The final separation negatives are created by the printer. Before delivering the job, the designer should always produce a set of positive laser proof separations to check for mistakes. The color separations are created when you print the job to the computer. The exact steps vary with each software application but most have common tasks:

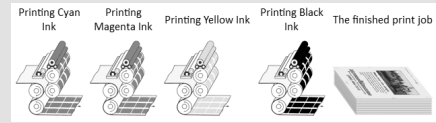
- Select the printer.
- Make sure you have the correct PPD (PostScript Printer Description) selected. It should match the printer you chose.
- Check the page setup and document settings for paper size and orientation.
- Turn on the colors need to print . To be totally safe, you can turn on every color, but you will not be popular at the print desk.
- Turn on the Registration, printer's marks, crop marks...whatever they are called in the application.
- Set the bleed options if needed.
- Choose the Separations or Separate option; not the Composite.
- Print the Job.

### Advantages of using the PDF method:

- View the separations as multiple pages on the computer.
- Turn on every color, even the ones you didn't think you used. This is a cheap and quick way to discover parts that got assigned to a color you did not plan to print. If all the parts are where they are supposed to be, then print only the pages you need for your proof.
- Select the screen or desktop printing compression option and make your file much smaller. You don't need to send a 20-megabyte file through the printer just to check for misplaced parts. When printing to the laser printer the compressed PDF will process very quickly.
- PDFs can be very small, can be sent as an e-mail attachment.
- Check separations when there is no printer available.

View the PDF separations for the job from the top of the page. It is a good thing the designer printed all the colors...some graphics brought in extra colors and will need to be fixed

### Print a Color Document



### Make a PDF Color Separation File

Make a Portable Document Format (PDF) color separation file

You can divert the information you would have sent to the printer in the steps above and save it as a file on the hard drive. You then open that file with Adobe Acrobat's Distiller application which creates the PDF file.

### How to Make a PDF:

Follow the steps for making separations from above with these changes:

- You may need to select the Acrobat Distiller or Make PDF version of the PPD. This is a trial and error process.
- You may need to select the Virtual Printer in the PS Printer area of the Chooser. This is often the case on home computers.
- Find the option to send the job to Printer or File and select File.
- Turn on the "include fonts" option.
- When you hit the Print or Save button, notice where it is saving the file so you can find it later.
- After the file saves (it will have a .ps extension) open the Distiller application.
- Set the job options in Distiller to the compression settings you prefer.
- Open the PostScript file (the .ps file) with Distiller and it will create your PDF. The info box it generates tells you where the PDF is saving if you can't find it.
- Open the PDF with Acrobat Reader.
- If everything worked properly, you can delete the .ps file, as it will be very large and you don't need to save it.

Some applications have automatic "Make PDF" options that bypass the printing to file and Distilling process. If they work, there is no reason not to use them. But, they are notorious for leaving out things, so be careful.



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