Design File Submission Requirements

Overview
It is very important that you thoroughly read the files submission requirements listed below and submit your file(s) in accordance with these requirements. Files that are submitted incorrectly can delay your project and can result in additional fees.
If you have any questions regarding the file submission requirements – please do not hesitate to call us!
For you convenience templates can be found at: https://www.cactusmailing.com/postcard-templates-and-forms/
Please submit your files at: http://www.cactusmailing.com/send-us-files/

File Requirements
All file names must contain your company name.

Accepted File Types – PDF or JPG

Color – Mode should be set to CMYK

Black – Rich Black is recommended. Color Make-up: Cyan = 40%, Magenta = 40%, Yellow = 40%, Black = 100%

Blues – A 30% color separation is recommended between Cyan and Magenta to avoid Blues looking more Purple

Resolution – Should be at least 300dpi

Bleeds – Must have .125 inch bleed on all sides

Borders – Should be at least .25 inches wide (.375 inches from the bleed edge)

Safe Zone – All text must be at least .125 inches from finished size of the piece (without bleed)

Flatten Your Images – Layered or linked files are not accepted

Printer's Marks – Turn off all crop marks, registration, and titles before exporting your PDF file

Detailed Explanation of Requirements
Accepted File Types – We accept a wide variety of PC graphic design programs such as Adobe InDesign, Adobe Photoshop, and Adobe Illustrator, as long as they are submitted as one of the following formats: **PDF or JPG**. We accept MAC files only in PDF format. We do not accept files submitted in the following formats: MS Word, MS Publisher, MS Excel, MS PowerPoint, or Printshop. However if your artwork is one of these formats we can often re-construct the files into a format that is suitable for the printing presses — ask your sales rep for details and associated costs.

Color – Design files should be created and submitted in CMYK color mode. Most software programs offer the choice of working in RGB color or CMYK color. RGB color mode utilizes Red, Green, and Blue to create the palette of colors. RGB is used for web graphics and is how computer monitors display colors. CMYK use Cyan, Magenta, Yellow, and Black to create the palette of colors. CMYK is often referred to "Full Color" or "4 Color" and is used by printing equipment and presses. You should create your design files in CMYK as design files that are created in RGB must be converted to CMYK before printing. The conversion process can result in an undesirable color shift.

Black – A Rich Black color make-up is recommended over using 100% (K) or Black in artwork.
Our recommended color make-up is: Cyan = 40%, Magenta = 40%, Yellow = 40%, Black = 100%
This is recommended because no black ink is truly black. The combination of the four inks will result in a denser black.

Blues – When Cyan and Magenta are close together in the color make-up, the result on the printed piece will tend to print on the purple side versus on the blue. To avoid purple, a 30% color separation is recommended between Cyan and Magenta.

Resolution – We strongly recommend that you use only images of 300 DPI resolution or higher. Using images that are lower than 300 DPI will result in reduced print quality. If you elect to use low resolution images –you will be required to sign a waiver. *Note:* DPI stands for Dots – Per – Inch and represents how many dots of color are used to construct the image. The higher the DPI (more tiny dots of color) – the higher the quality of the image. The lower the DPI (less dots of color) – the lower the quality of the image.

Bleeds – All design files must have a .125 inch bleed on all four sides. This ensures that even with the inherent tolerances in the cutting process your design will still cover completely to the edge of the piece without any of the white paper stock showing on the edges.

Borders – We strongly recommend that all borders on the edge of your piece are at least .25 inches thick from your finished size. Although we make every effort to cut your pieces as precise as possible – due to tolerances in the cutting process we cannot guarantee perfect cuts every time. As a result borders that are less than .25 inches thick will often have an uneven look to them.

Safe Zone – All text and important design elements should be at least .125 inches from the finished edge of the piece. Although we make every effort to cut your pieces as precise as possible – due to tolerances in the cutting process we cannot guarantee perfect cuts every time. Therefore text and other content should be kept at least .125 inches from the finished edge to prevent the possibility of being cut off.

Flatten Your Images – Before you send your design file you must flatten your images and convert text to outlines. We do not accept layered or linked images. This prevents font defaults and other issues.

Printer's Marks – Turn off all crop marks, registration, and titles before exporting your PDF file so they do not interfere with the final printed piece.

Files Submissions

Clients that submit design files that are incorrectly formatted will receive a design file Discrepancy Notification via e-mail. This notification will identify the issues that need to be corrected prior to resubmitting the files.
The Discrepancy Notification form will also indicate the cost to have us fix the file in the event you would prefer we fix the issues rather than you having to correct and resubmit your files.
Each project is allotted a maximum of **three** design file submissions. Each additional file submission will result in a $19 fee to cover the additional prepress costs.