Print Production

with Adobe Creative Cloud

INDUSTRIAL-STRENGTH PRODUCTION TECHNIQUES



R E A L 🛶 W O R L D

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with Adobe Creative Cloud

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CLAUDIA McCUE



REAL WORLD PRINT PRODUCTION WITH ADOBE CREATIVE CLOUD

Claudia McCue

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Table of Contents

Introduc	ctionvi
	COne: Life Cycle of α Print Job. 1 The Olden Days 2 Designer 3 Typesetter 3 Photographer 3 Trade Shop 3 Printer 3 Job Submission 6 Scenic Tour of a Typical Printing Plant 6 Glossary of Printing Terms 21
	· Two: Ink on Paper
·	Fundamentals of Black-and-White Printing
	Three: Trimming, Binding, and Finishing 69 One Size Does Not Fit All 69 Folding: High-Speed Origami 74 Imposition 76 Binding Methods. 85 Moving Beyond Two Dimensions 90
	Four: Preparing Raster Images 99 Ancient Times: B.P. (Before Pixels) 100 All About Pixels 100 Imaging Software 102 Resolution and Image Fidelity 103 Scanning Artwork 106 Cropping and Transforming Images 106 Appropriate Image Formats for Print 109 Inappropriate Image Formats for Print 119
Chapter	Five: Vector Graphics 121
•	Vector File Formats

Chapter Six: Fonts	131
Font Flavors	131
Fonts Installed by Creative Cloud 1	138
Activating Fonts in the Operating System	139
Font-Management Programs 1	140
Typekit Desktop Fonts	141
Font Licensing Issues	143
Chapter Seven: Cross-Platform Issues	147
Crossing the Great Divide	
Naming Files	148
Fonts	
Sending Files from Mac to Windows	153
Sending Files from Windows to Mac	
Graphics Formats	
Compressing Files	155
Chapter Eight: Job Submission	157
Preparations During the Design Process	
Talking with the Printer	
Planning for Print	
Sending Job Files	
Preparing for Proofing Cycles	
Attending a Press Check	
Chapter Nine: Creative Cloud	177
Understanding Creative Cloud.	
Version Determination	
Creating Work for Users of Older Versions	
Chapter Ten: Photoshop Production Tips	
Off to a Good Start	
Know the Fate of the Image	
Image Resolution	
Color Space	
Working in Layers	
Transparency 1	
Silhouettes and Masking	
Silhouetting Soft-Edged Subjects	
Silhouetting Soft-Edged Subjects	
Beyond CMYK2	205
Beyond CMYK	205 207
Beyond CMYK2	205 207 208

Chapter Eleven: Illustrator Production Tips	13
Document Profile and Color Mode	13
Artboards21	15
Using Symbols	19
Simplifying Complex Artwork	22
Live Effects	24
Using the Appearance Panel	27
Creating 3D Artwork23	31
Transparency	33
Flattening Transparency	
Linked and Embedded Images	37
Blended Objects	
Spot Colors	ŀO
Type and Fonts	
Why Versions Matter	
Saving for Other Applications	
Creating PDF Files	
Opening PDF Files in Illustrator	60
Chapter Twelve: InDesign Production Tips	61
Graphics	
Using Native Files	
Swatches	30
Alternate Layouts	35
Miscellaneous Document Tips	39
Transparency) 6
Finding and Fixing Problems)7
PDF Creation Methods	14
PDF Creation Settings	15
Chapter Thirteen: Acrobat Production Tips	17
Acrobat Product Line	
Where Do PDFs Come From?	
Creating PDF Files	
Editing PDF Files	
Comment and Review	30
Print Production Tools	39
Using External PDF Editors35	54
Index35	55
Bonus chapters mentioned in this eBook are available after the index	
Chapter Fourteen: Print Production Resources A	\-1

Introduction

Much has changed in the realm of printing since the original edition of this book. Film has been almost totally abandoned in favor of direct-to-plate imaging, and the quality of digital printing processes rivals that of traditional offset. Updating the book has been a bit like time travel, as I deleted sections devoted to processes that have fallen by the wayside and expanded portions that described new-at-the-time techniques that are now commonplace.

I'm not a designer—I'm a printing geek. I spent half my life in prepress, troubleshooting, fixing jobs, and meeting impossible deadlines. I still love printing. I love the heavy rhythm of presses, the smell of the chemicals, the beehive bustle of a pressroom. I love to see paper roll in one end of the press and printed sheets fly out the other end. I hope I can pass some of this printing love on to you.

Who Should Read This Book

If you are a designer or a production artist who would like a better understanding of the pitfalls you encounter when using Adobe Creative Cloud software, you'll find lots of pointers in this book to help you avoid problems. Almost all software provides options that are tempting to choose but are dangerous under some circumstances. It's good to know which buttons *not* to push—and why.

Photoshop, Illustrator, and InDesign form a powerful ecosystem. Consequently, choices you make in Photoshop can limit your options when you place an image in InDesign. Options you choose in InDesign can affect the quality of the PDF you create. And so on. You need an aerial view of the programs' capabilities so you can anticipate the outcome. It would help if you were psychic, too, but that's another book entirely.

I believe that the more designers undertstand about the physical requirements of the printing process, the more easily they can avoid problems. This book can explain why your printer sometimes asks you to modify your designs for print. Better yet, you can beat them to it, and they will compliment you on how well-prepared your jobs always are.

If you are an in-house designer or marketing department member, you may have been thrown into the deep end, suddenly given the responsibility of preparing work for print. This book may help you understand the mysterious new world of print.

If you are a prepress production operator, you'll find many reminders of subtle problems that can lurk in graphics or page layouts. If you're new to printing, you'll find beneficial insights into what's happening on the other side of the pressroom door. And if you're looking for a gentle way to educate clients who keep submitting nightmare jobs, well, a book always makes a nice gift, doesn't it?

For purchasing this book, you are also entitled to bonus Chapter 14, "Print Production Resources." To download, register your book at peachpit.com/register. Create an account if you don't have one (it's free!). Then add this isbn: 0321970322. Look for the content on the "My Registered Products" page and click "Access Bonus Content." If you purchased an ebook, bonus Chapter 14 is already included at the end.

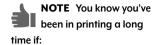
What This Book Is Not

If you're in the market for a hot-tips-and-tricks book, this isn't it. It's not a guide for stunning special effects (unless you consider it a special effect to get your job to print as expected). And, although this book demonstrates how to do some useful things in the Adobe Creative Cloud programs, it isn't strictly a how-to book either. In fact, there's quite a bit of how-not-to.

Are there any prerequisites for using this book? Only two, really. First, you should have basic proficiency with your computer and operating system, as well as the basics of InDesign, Illustrator, and Photoshop. The other requirement is arguably more important: You should have a healthy curiosity about the printing process and a desire to build problem-free files.

About the Author

I was a chemistry major. Really. But I had a knack for illustration, and I took some college art classes for extra credit. One of my instructors (Michael Parkes, who has since become a well-known fine artist in Europe) suggested that I change my career path from chemistry to commercial art. I thought, "Well, I'll try it for a while," and took a job at a printing plant that summer. A funny thing happened: I fell in love with printing and never went back to the lab. (Thanks, Michael.) Printing turned out to be the perfect environment for someone who held the dual titles of Class Clown and Science Student of the Year.



- Your grocery list has hanging indents.
- Your driver's license lists your eye color as PANTONE 5757.
- Your shoe size is 6½ plus ½-inch bleed.
- You refer to painting your house as a two-color job.
- You decide to write a book called Real World Print Production with Adobe Creative Cloud.

As a prepress production person, I always enjoyed troubleshooting, discovering new techniques, and sharing those discoveries with coworkers. I started in conventional paste-up and then moved into film stripping. (It's not what you think. See the glossary in Chapter I, "Life Cycle of a Print Job.") And I was extremely fortunate (or cursed) to be one of the very early operators of color electronic prepress systems in the United States, so I've been pushing pixels around for a *long* time. Then, because it could perform the same magic as a Scitex or Crosfield system (minus the million-dollar price tag), Adobe Photoshop lured me to desktop computers.

I always believed in educating customers so they wouldn't be intimidated by the mysteries of printing. Not surprisingly, that led to my second career as a trainer, consultant, writer, and presenter at industry conferences.

Acknowledgments

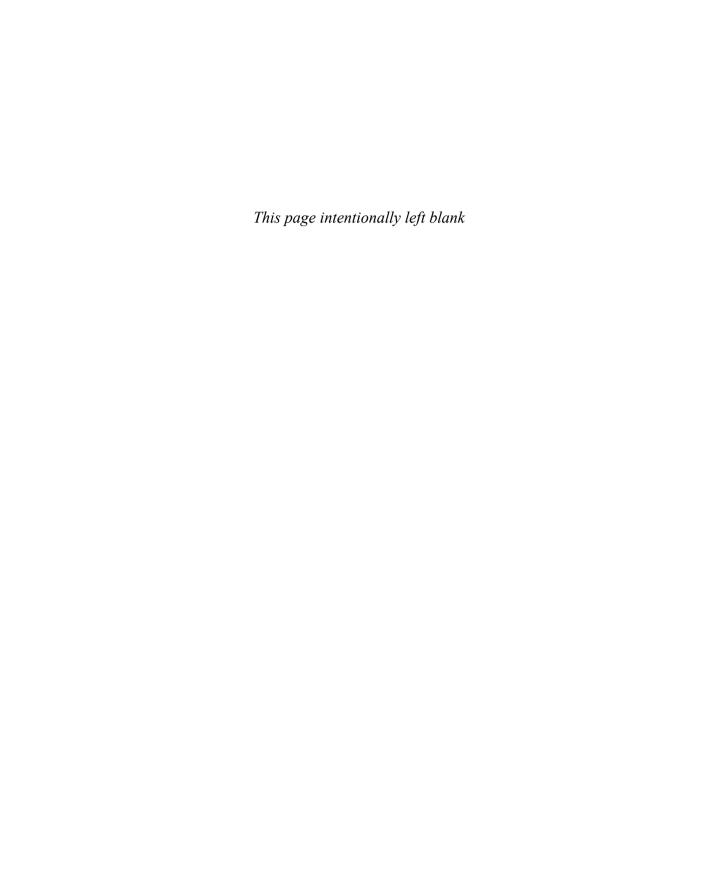
I'm passing on to you some of the Basic Printing Truths imparted to me by a number of fine old printing curmudgeons. Count yourself truly lucky if you're befriended by a craftsman like Rick Duncan, who came up through the ranks, learned how to do everything the old-fashioned way, and was always patient with a kid asking too many questions.

I'm part of an informal fraternity of graphic arts aficionados. While we each have our specialties, our common bond is the love of learning and sharing new tricks. David Blatner, Scott Citron, Sandee "Vector Babe" Cohen, Anne-Marie Concepción, Bob Levine, and Mike Rankin are my InDesign brethren (and sistren), going back to the days when we were considered pagelayout rebels. Mordy Golding's passion for Illustrator is contagious, and he shares my devotion to enlightening designers in the mysteries of print.

It's priceless to have friends on the inside at Adobe Systems: Dov Isaacs and Lonn Lorenz have been generous with their dry humor and no-nonsense advice on PostScript and PDF for years. And Noha Edell has long provided inspirational support and encouragement. PDF Sage Leonard Rosenthol has frequently enlightened me on arcane Acrobat mysteries.

I'm pleased to have the opportunity to update this book for Creative Cloud; it's sort of like reincarnation. It's truly gratifying that the first two editions have been used as textbooks in some schools. Thanks to Kelly Kordes Anton for policing my commas and technical editor Chad Chelius for ensuring that I wasn't spreading any myths. Thanks to Suki Gear, Craig Woods, and Maureen Forys for their proofreading, composition, and production work, and James Minkin for crafting the index.

Now go out there and make me proud!



Preparing Raster Images

Whether you acquire an image from a scanner, a digital camera, a royalty-free CD with 1,000,000 images, or a stock photography vendor, it's made out of pixels. *Pixel* is shorthand for *picture element*, the smallest unit of information in a digitized image. Even though pictures on your monitor look like smooth transitions of color, zoom in sufficiently and you'll see all the little square pixels that actually make up the image (**Figure 4.1**). While pixels make it possible to do much of what we do in the graphic arts, they're also the cause of some important limitations.

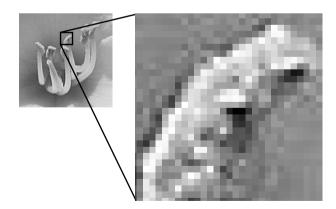


Figure 4.1 Images are made of pixels. Think of them as tiny mosaic tiles.

Ancient Times: B.P. (Before Pixels)

In the olden days of graphic arts, enormous cameras were used to photograph artwork such as drawings, reflective photographic prints, transparencies, and painted illustrations. Highly skilled specialists commandeered these monstrosities, some of which occupied entire rooms (the cameras, not the specialists). The use of colored filters, masking, and exposure methods to produce *color separations* (a separate piece of film for each printing ink) was rather arcane and required years of apprenticeship and study to perfect. And since every step required the use of specialized film, there were a lot of trips to a darkroom to develop the results in chemical baths. It all seemed very high-tech at the time (well, compared to cave paintings), but the process was quite time-consuming.

All About Pixels

Film has given way to pixels, and we have gone from dog-eared color photographic prints and moldy 35mm slides to storing our family photos on piles of CDs, and now into the nebulous world of cloud storage. What was once the province of the darkroom became a daylight venture, and the tools of the craftsmen became available to anyone brave enough to wade in.

Scanners

While early scanners still required highly skilled graphic arts professionals to operate them, they greatly sped up the process of capturing artwork for color separations. Early analog models used photomultiplier tubes and a daunting array of knobs and buttons to perform the same job that had been done by the huge cameras. The first scanners were petite only by comparison to their gigantic camera ancestors: Many could easily dwarf a Volkswagen. It was necessary to mount artwork on a heavy, clear plastic drum and then painstakingly ensure that there was no dust or a trapped air bubble to mar the scan. Scanner operators came from the ranks of color-separation cameramen, and their years of finely honed instincts for camera separations translated well to the newer methods. Thus began the move to digital capture and storage of image information, resulting in our devotion to the pixel and the advent of digital retouching.

In the mid-1990s, improvements in the capabilities and simplicity of flatbed scanners, coupled with the widespread usage of Adobe Photoshop, led to a major change in the way color separations were performed. It was no longer necessary to mount artwork on cylindrical drums, and the numerous knobs were replaced with onscreen buttons and dialog boxes. The digital imaging revolution was underway. Suddenly, people who weren't sure what color separation meant were making color separations.

As flatbed scanners have become more automated and less expensive, it's relatively easy even for novices to make a decent scan. But the more you know about what constitutes a good image, the better the chance you can create a great image from the pixels generated by your scanner.

Digital Cameras

Today's scanners capture transparencies, negative film, paintings, and illustrations and express them as pixels. High-end digital cameras now rival—or exceed—the ability of film-based cameras to capture photographic detail. The image captured by the camera is a digital original, so there's no need to scan a print. Of course, the better the camera and the photographer, the better the image. The rapid evolution of digital image capture is such that today's cellphones take pictures with more inherent information than the earliest digital cameras.

While conventional camera film—such as 35mm transparencies—must be scanned to be used on your computer, digital camera images can be downloaded directly to the computer and used immediately. Digital photography also cuts out the middleman. Unlike film images, digital images don't have any grain, although an image photographed in low lighting conditions may tax the resolving capabilities of a digital camera's sensor, resulting in unwanted digital noise.

Consumer point-and-shoot cameras deliver captured images as JPEG, a compressed format. There are degrees of compression, from gentle to aggressive, and you may never notice any visible artifacts betraying the compression. But higher level "prosumer" cameras and professional digital cameras can deliver images in the Camera Raw format, which is subjected to minimal processing by the camera. While you cannot place a Raw file directly into Illustrator or InDesign, Raw images can be opened directly in Photoshop and saved in another format, such as Photoshop PSD.

place a Camera Raw file directly into Illustrator or InDesign, there is a workaround. In the Camera Raw module within Photoshop, hold down Shift as you click Open (the Open Image button changes to an Open Object button): this will open the image as a Smart Object in Photoshop. Save the image as a PSD, and you can then place it in Illustrator or InDesian while retaining the secret Camera Raw editing ability. Back in Photoshop, just doubleclick the Smart Object to edit in

Camera Raw.

TIP While you can't

Raw files can be color corrected in the Photoshop Camera Raw environment without losing additional information. For example, an image shot under daylight conditions but with the camera's white balance set to fluorescent lighting can be corrected with one click in the Camera Raw environment without the loss of information that would be incurred by using a Levels or Curves correction in Photoshop.

If you are a point-and-shoot photographer who just wants to capture moments from a quick vacation, you may consider Raw files to be overkill. But for professional photographers, Camera Raw is a powerful and flexible format, often enabling the recovery or enhancement of details and tones that would be lost in a JPEG file.

Imaging Software

Once you have captured pixels, it's likely that you'll feel compelled to modify them. The industry standard imaging application is Adobe Photoshop, and for good reason. Photoshop provides controls for color correction that enable a knowledgeable user to achieve results equal to those of a knob-twisting scanner operator. Its tools surpass the capabilities of the original, million-dollar dedicated systems. If you're just beginning to learn Photoshop, you won't lack for educational resources. You could probably build an addition to your house from the books devoted to exploring Photoshop. You can add Chapter 10, "Photoshop Production Tips," to the pile.

Photoshop is arguably the most versatile and widely accepted application for image manipulation, but there are other applications that perform useful imaging functions as well.

Adobe Photoshop Elements® (Mac/PC) might be regarded as "Photoshop Lite," but it still packs a hefty arsenal of retouching and color-correction tools. The product is geared toward enthusiasts and lacks support for CMYK images.

Adobe Lightroom™ (Mac/PC) is engineered for use by photographers and provides sophisticated tools for organizing and color correcting images.

Apple iPhoto[®] (Mac only) is geared toward hobbyists, with organizational tools and limited color-correction capabilities. However, it offers no support for CMYK images.

Aperture (Mac only) is targeted to photographers and includes support for Camera Raw files. It provides organizational tools as well as color-correction controls but provides no support for CMYK images.

These are not the only solutions that exist for manipulating images. There are painting programs, such as PainterTM and Paint Shop Pro® (both from Corel®), which let you easily make images resemble watercolors or oil paintings. Imaging tools for consumer and hobbyist photographers increase on a daily basis. However, most of these programs don't offer support for CMYK images, so they're not the best tools if you're preparing images for print.

Let's face it—if you're designing for print, you can't live without Photoshop. When the name of a product becomes a verb—"Please Photoshop that out"—it's a sure sign that the product has become the industry standard.

Resolution and Image Fidelity

The resolution of an image is generally measured in pixels per inch (ppi) unless you speak metric, in which case it's expressed in pixels per millimeter. Determining the proper resolution for Web images is simple: 72 ppi at final size. But there are strongly held (and hotly debated) beliefs regarding the appropriate image resolution for printing. Some hold that 150 percent of the final screen ruling value is sufficient, and some believe twice the final ruling is preferable, largely because it's easier to calculate the resolution. For example, an image that will be printed at 150 line screen should have a resolution of 300 ppi. In the past, when typical hard drives held 80 MB, networks were glacially slow, and RIPs choked on 15 MB PostScript files, it was important to trim off every little bit of fat, so we agonized over resolution. But now, with hard drives measured in hundreds of gigabytes, and RIPs with much more robust digestive tracts, we can afford the luxury of a few extra pixels. That said, there's rarely an advantage to exceeding 300 ppi, except in some cases for higher line screens such as 175 lpi printing. So put away the calculator. For most circumstances, 300 ppi at final size is adequate and provides a bit of elbow room if you have to slightly reduce or enlarge an image.

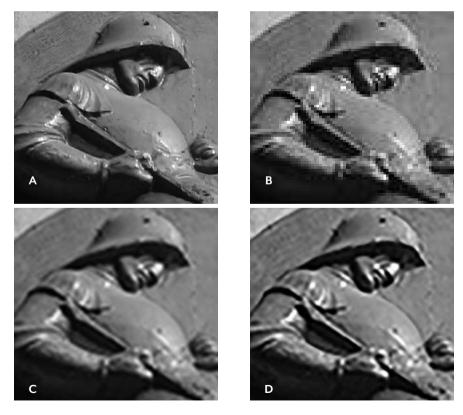
But you do have some leeway, depending on the nature of the image and how it will be used. For example, a gauzy, soft-focus shot of a sunset that will be used as a ghosted background accent in a magazine can be used at 200 ppi with no problem. A highly detailed close-up image of an important

piece of antique jewelry in a 175 lpi art book should be at 300–350 ppi. At the other end of the spectrum, an image for use in an 85 lpi newspaper can be 130–170 ppi, because much of the information in a 300 ppi image would be lost when printed in the coarse newspaper screen ruling. Consider the determination of appropriate resolution to be an equation based on image content and the final printing line screen rather than an absolute number.

Scaling Up

When enlarging or reducing an image, don't be afraid to *slightly* reduce or enlarge an image. But be aware that when an image is scanned or captured by a digital camera, it contains a fixed number of pixels. When you enlarge an image, you're attempting to generate missing information in a process called interpolation; the result is never as good as a proper-sized original scan. And the more drastic the transformation, the less satisfying the outcome (**Figure 4.2**).

Figure 4.2 You can't truly make something from nothing. Notice the loss of detail in the scaled-up version (D) versus the original (A).



Because of the limitations imposed by resolution, it's helpful if you can anticipate how the image will be used and control photography or scanning accordingly. For typical image content, you can probably scale up to 120–125 percent. If the image is background content without much detail, such as a soft-focus landscape, you have more leeway and can probably get away with scaling up to 150–200 percent. Conversely, if you need to maintain very small details, you may be limited to a maximum of 120 percent.

Photoshop CC introduced a new method that does a better job of scaling up images and upsampling them to higher resolutions—Preserve Details. While the results won't be equal to a higher resolution original image, it's a definite improvement over earlier methods (**Figure 4.3**).

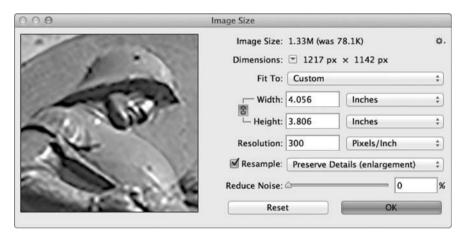


Figure 4.3 If you have to scale up an image, or artificially increase its resolution, be sure to choose the Preserve Details option in the Photoshop CC Image Size dialog box. Tip: If you select "Automatic," Photoshop CC chooses the best method for resampling.

Scaling Down

Scaling down an image also involves interpolation. While the loss of data may not be quite so obvious when you reduce the size of an image, there can be some softening of detail. For best results, choose the Automatic option in the Image Size dialog box in Photoshop CC; it applies some sharpening to camouflage the reduction in detail. While it's acceptable to scale images in InDesign, if you find it necessary to scale an image below 75 percent of its original size in your page layout, consider scaling it down in Photoshop CC instead, because InDesign can't sharpen image content.

Scanning Artwork

If you are incorporating flat artwork such as pen-and-ink drawings or paintings in your design, you have several choices for digitizing the artwork. If you have a good flatbed scanner, you may be able to capture the artwork without any special handling. To provide some flexibility in later usages of the scanned image, consider performing two scans at 100 percent: one at 300 ppi, and one at 600 ppi if your scanner supports it. Then, you have two robust images that can be resized for a wider range of uses.

If your flatbed scanner isn't up to the task, ask if your print service provider performs scanning. Many printers have high-end scanners capable of capturing and enlarging artwork. If you have transparencies or negative film that must be scanned, the printer's professional scanners can capture detail and perform enlargements with higher-quality results than are possible with consumer-level scanners.

Some materials, such as textured paper, dimensional paint (such as heavy acrylic or oil paint), metal, or transparent substrates, don't scan well. The scanner's illumination bounces off metallic components and often appears black in the scanned image. Because of the even, frontal lighting of the scanner, texture is subdued or lost. And you can't very well pin a statue under the lid of your scanner. If you have to capture a challenging art piece, the best solution might be to hire a photographer who specializes in capturing fine art pieces and has experience lighting and photographing such projects.

Cropping and Transforming Images

It would be great if you could anticipate the exact size, crop, and angle at which you'll want to use an image in your page layout. But it may be difficult to see that far down the line at the moment you're pressing the button on your camera, or slipping a print under the lid of your flatbed scanner. Oh, and watch out for that little gust of wind that comes along just as you're putting the scanner lid down...

Cropping

Should you crop your images? Maybe. If you're certain about future image use, feel free to crop. Leave a reasonable rind around the image area you intend to use to provide some elbow room when you place the image in the final page, so you have room to reposition the image, or to provide bleed for the page. However, if you think there's even a remote chance that you'll want to use more of the image in the near future—maybe you're not sure if you might want to show a row of four buildings instead of just the one in the middle—then it's worth keeping the whole shebang. While you may be reluctant to store an entire image just to keep the part with the 2-inch golf ball that you're sure you will silhouette, give yourself a safety net and at least keep an uncropped backup copy of the image. Hard drive space is plentiful and you can always crop it later. It's hard to recover that extra person you lopped off last week who turns out to be the CEO of the company.

Rotating Images

Almost any transformation, whether resizing or rotating, causes interpolation of pixel information. The only safe rotations are 90-degree increments—anything else will result in softening of detail (see **Figure 4.4**). Think of those rows and columns of pixels, much like the grid of a needlepoint pattern. Imagine what a challenge it would be to redraw that pattern at a 42-degree angle. It should give you a little sympathy for the math Photoshop has to do.





Figure 4.4 Repeated rotations of an image can result in cumulative erosion of detail (original image on the left, rotated image on the right). The exaggerated sharpening in the image on the right is a result of Photoshop's attempt to compensate for softening of detail.

All these cautions about transformations such as scaling and rotating are not intended to strike terror in your heart. Don't be afraid to enlarge, reduce, or rotate if you need to. Just be prepared for the slight but unavoidable loss of detail and the degradation of the image's appearance. Try to resize in even increments, and beware of oddball rotations such as 1.25 degrees in the interest of maintaining as much information as possible.

Successive transformations—scaling and then rotating, for example—are particularly destructive. Let your conscience be your guide. How important is the detail in the image? If it's a key product shot, it's worth rescanning (if possible). If it's a less important image, such as a ghosted background or a decorative bit, you needn't feel quite so guilty about the transformation.

Where to Transform: Image Editor vs. Page-Layout Application

If you are going to transform images, does it matter where the transformation takes place? If you use Photoshop to scale an image, is the result superior to the outcome of scaling within your page-layout application?

The answer is an unqualified, "It depends."

If you perform your scaling and rotation in Photoshop or another image-editing application, and then place the resulting image in a page layout at 100 percent with no rotation, you do have a pretty good idea of how the image will look when it's printed.

If, however, you induce the scaling or rotation in a page layout, you've only requested those transformations—you haven't actually performed the transformations. They don't really take place until the job is processed by a RIP. This puts you at the mercy of that RIP's implementation of scaling and rotation algorithms. If you generate and submit PDFs, the rotations or distortions within that PDF are still pending, and they are implemented only when the PDF is processed by a RIP. In other words, the original image information is contained in the PDF, unchanged, but earmarked for its ultimate transformation in the RIP.

Be comforted by the fact that late-model RIPs can chew a lot more information in a shorter time than they used to. Rotating a few images here and there won't prevent the processing of your job. However, despite the improvements in RIP technology, it is still possible (although rare) to build a job that can't be processed by a RIP. (Please don't take that remark as a personal challenge.)

Keep in mind, too, that if you've rotated an image in Photoshop and then subsequently applied additional scaling or rotation in a page layout, you've transformed it twice. It's not the end of the world, but you may see some slight softening of detail in the finished piece.

Appropriate Image Formats for Print

How you should save your raster images is governed largely by how you intend to use them. Often, you will be placing images into InDesign or Illustrator, so you're limited to the formats supported by those applications. The application may be willing to let you place a wide variety of file formats, but that doesn't necessarily serve as an endorsement of file format wonderfulness. In the olden days, the most commonly used image formats were TIFF and EPS. However, native Photoshop files (PSD) and Photoshop PDF files are much more flexible, and both formats are supported by InDesign and Illustrator. So, there's not much reason to use other formats unless you're handing off your images to users of other applications, such as Microsoft PowerPoint or Word.



NOTE When you receive a IPEG image,

it's a good idea to immediately resave it as a PSD or TIFF to avoid further erosion to image content. Repeatedly opening, modifying, and resaving a JPEG can result in compromised quality if aggressive compression is used.

TIFF

If you need to blindly send an image out into the world, TIFF (tagged image file format) is one of the most widely supported image file formats. It's happy being imported into Illustrator, InDesign, Microsoft Word, and even some text editors—almost any application that accepts images. The TIFF image format supports multiple layers as well as RGB and CMYK color spaces, and even allows an image to contain spot-color channels (although some applications, such as Word, do not support such nontraditional contents in a TIFF).

Photoshop EPS

Some equate the acronym EPS (Encapsulated PostScript) with vector artwork, but the *encapsulated* part of the format's name gives a hint about the flexibility of the format. It's a *container* for artwork, and it can transport vector art, raster images, or a combination of raster and vector content. EPS is, as the name implies, PostScript in a bag (see the sidebar, "EPS: Raster or Vector?"). The historic reasons for saving an image as a Photoshop EPS were to preserve

the special function of a PostScript-based vector clipping path used to silhouette an image or to preserve an image set up to image as a duotone. If you're using InDesign and Illustrator, that's no longer necessary.

EPS: Raster or Vector?

It may be a bit confusing that there are raster-based EPSs (saved from an image-editing program such as Photoshop) and vector-based EPSs (saved from a vector drawing program such as Adobe Illustrator or Adobe [formerly Macromedia] FreeHand). The uninitiated sometimes think that saving an image as an EPS magically vectorizes it. Not so. Think of the EPS format as a type of container. The pixels within an EPS are no different from those in their TIFF brethren. They're just contained and presented in a different way.

As applications and RIPs have progressed, you're no longer required to save such images as Photoshop EPS. Pixel for pixel, a Photoshop native PSD is a smaller file than an equivalent EPS and offers support for clipping paths as well as duotone definitions.

This doesn't mean you need to hunt down your legacy Photoshop EPS files and resave them as PSD (unless you're terribly bored). Just know that unless you need to accommodate someone else's requirements, there's no advantage to saving as Photoshop EPS now.

Photoshop Native (PSD)

In ancient times, the native PSD (Photoshop document) format was used solely for working files in Photoshop. Copies of those working files were flattened and saved in TIFF or EPS formats for placement in a page-layout program. While PageMaker allowed placement of native Photoshop files (yes, really—although it did not honor transparency), QuarkXPress required TIFF or EPS instead. Old habits die hard, and TIFF and EPS have long been the standard of the industry. Not that there's anything truly wrong with that.

However, Illustrator and InDesign can take advantage of the layers and transparency in Photoshop native files, eliminating the need to go back through two generations of an image to make corrections to an original file. Today,

TRANSPARENCY TIP:
Although Illustrator and
InDesign accept and correctly
handle opacity settings in a
placed native Photoshop file,
they do not correctly handle
blending modes in a Photoshop file. There are some workarounds for InDesign, detailed
in Chapter 12, "InDesign
Production Tips."

there's no need to maintain two separate images: the working image and the finished file are now the same file.

Photoshop PDF

A Photoshop PDF (Portable Document Format) contains the same pixels as a garden-variety PSD, but those pixels are encased in a PDF wrapper—it's like the chocolate-covered cherry of file formats. A Photoshop PDF comes in handy on special occasions, because it can contain vector and type elements without rasterizing the vector content, and it allows nondestructive round-trip editing in Photoshop.

A Photoshop EPS can contain vectors and text, but the vector content will be converted to pixels if the file is reopened in Photoshop, losing the crisp vector edge—so you lose the ability to edit text or vector content. A native Photoshop PSD can contain vector components, but page-layout programs rasterize the content. However, Photoshop PDFs preserve vector content when placed in other applications (see **Table 4.1** for a feature comparison of common image formats).

Table 4.1 *Image format features*

Supported Feature	TIFF	EPS	PSD	JPEG	PDF
RGB color space	X	Х	X	Х	Х
CMYK color space	X	Х	Х	Х	Х
Grayscale	X	Х	Х	Х	Х
ICC profiles	X	Х	Х	Х	Х
Clipping paths	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х
Layers	Х	_	Х	_	Х
Alpha channels	Х	_	Х	_	Х
Spot color channels	X	1	X	_	X
Duotones	_	Х	Х	_	Х
Bitmap (bi-level content)	Х	Х	Х	_	Х
Vector data	_	2	3	_	Х
Transparency	Х	_	Х	_	Х

¹ If saved as DCS 2.0 (a variant of the EPS format)

²EPSs cannot be reopened in Photoshop with vector content intact

³ Page-layout applications rasterize vector content in PSDs

Moving to Native PSD and PDF

Is there any compelling reason to continue using old-fashioned TIFFs and EPSs? It may seem adventurous to use such new-fangled files, but workflow is changing. The demarcation between photo-compositing and page layout is blurring, and designers demand more power and flexibility from software. RIPs are more robust than ever, networks are faster, and hard drives are huge. It's still important to know the imaging challenges posed by using native files (such as transparency), and it's wise to communicate with your printer before you embark on the all-native path. You're still at the mercy of the equipment and processes used by the printer, and if they're lagging a bit behind the latest software and hardware developments, you may be limited by their capabilities.

Bitmap Images

Also called "line art images," bitmap images contain only black and white pixels, with no intermediate shades of gray. If you need to scan a signature to add to an editorial page or scan a pen and ink sketch, a bitmap scan can provide a sharp, clean image. Because of the compact nature of bitmap scans, they can be very high resolution (usually 600–1200 ppi) but still produce small file sizes (**Figure 4.5**).

Figure 4.5 This 1200 ppi bitmap scan prints nearly as sharply as vector art. It weighs in at less than 1 MB; a grayscale image of this size and resolution would be nearly 10 MB. Magnified to 300 percent, it may look a bit rough, but at 100 percent it's crisp and clean.



Special Case: Screen Captures

If you're creating software documentation for print, or you want to show an image of a Web page in your project, you may need to include screen captures of software interface components such as menus or panels in your page layouts. Screen captures are easy to make using a system utility or dedicated screen-capture software, but they require some special handling to print clearly. When they're part of software documentation or instructional materials, it's important that the details are as sharply rendered as possible.

You should understand this about screen captures: Whether you take them by using your system's built-in screen-capture functionality or a third-party screen-capture application, you are merely intercepting *information* that eventually becomes pixels on your monitor. Regardless of your current monitor resolution, there is a one-to-one relationship between the fixed number of pixels that an application (and your system) uses to render panels and menus and the number of pixels you see on your screen, even if you use a zoom utility. Of course, the size of the overall image you see is a function of your current monitor resolution, but the *pixel dimensions* of panels, menus, and tools will be identical, regardless of resolution. (**Figure 4.6**)

An application panel that measures 244 pixels by 117 pixels appears larger when your screen resolution is set to 800 by 600, and it's almost unreadably small when your monitor is set to 1920 by 1200. However, the panel is made of exactly the same number of pixels in both instances. So it doesn't matter what resolution your monitor is using, or how large the panels may appear onscreen, or whether you use a utility to zoom in. The captured image of a panel or menu will be the same in terms of pixel dimensions, regardless of the monitor resolution setting, and the resulting image will be 72 ppi.

TIP Do an experiment: In the software of your choice, open a panel and position it in the middle of the screen. Take screen shots at two different resolutions. Make a loose selection of the panel in one image, copy it, and place it into the other image. You'll see that they're identical in pixel count. The overall images will be different sizes because of the different monitor resolutions. but the number of pixels used by interface components such as panels, menus, and tools will be identical.

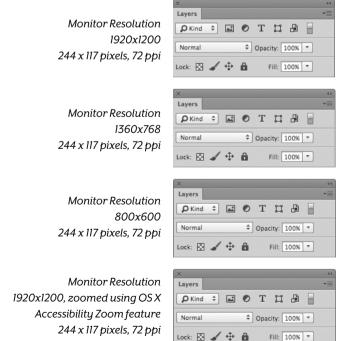


Figure 4.6 The resolution setting of your monitor has no effect on the number of pixels used by panels and menus. Although this panel was captured at three different monitor resolutions, the three captures are identical, each consisting of exactly the same number of pixels.

Since it's been drilled into you that 300 ppi is the Holy Grail of image resolution, it's tempting to try to improve screen captures by increasing the resolution. Unfortunately, this usually makes them look worse by softening small details during interpolation.

If you plan to use a screen capture at 100 percent enlargement, just leave it at 72 ppi (go ahead and freak out). Yes, the print service provider's prepress department will raise a flag, but the examples below show why screen captures are not improved by increasing their resolution.

As you can see in **Figure 4.7**, the original 72 ppi screen capture seems a bit coarse, but it's readable. Increasing the resolution to 300 ppi in Photoshop may sound like a good idea, but the interpolation will soften detail in the image.

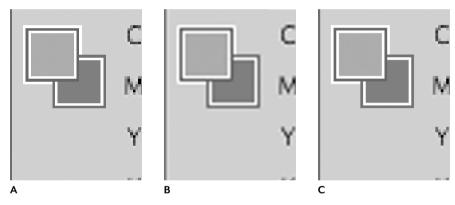


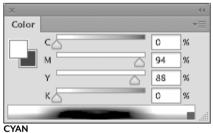
Figure 4.7 Image A is the original 72 ppi screen shot. Image B is the result of increasing the resolution to 300 ppi, using the default Bicubic method: Note blurry text and softened edges. Image C is the result of increasing the resolution to 288 ppi, using Nearest Neighbor.

Image Size:	440.0K (was 27.5K)		
Dimensions:	▼ 880 px × 512 px		
Fit To:	Custom		‡
Width:	3.056	Inches	\$
└─ Height:	1.778	Inches	*
Resolution:	288	Pixels/Inch	\$
✓ Resample: Nearest Neighbor (hard edges)			‡
Cancel		OK	

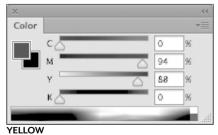
If you do feel compelled to increase the resolution of a screen capture, choose Image > Image Size in Photoshop, and then set the resolution to an even multiple of the original resolution; for example, resample a 72 ppi screen shot to 288 ppi. In that same dialog box, set the Resample Image option to Nearest Neighbor. This avoids interpolation by simply repeating pixels rather than attempting to create pixels. It's not an appropriate approach when scaling images of a photographic nature, but it's a helpful solution for screen captures, because of their special nature.

Converting Screen Captures to CMYK

Because screen captures are generated as RGB images, they must usually be converted to CMYK for print. When performing that conversion, a special approach is recommended to maintain the best rendering of black type. The default conversion of RGB to CMYK in Photoshop will render black as a fourcolor mix (Figure 4.8), with the possibility that slight misregistration on press will turn tiny details to mush.







Color 0 94 88 MAGENTA



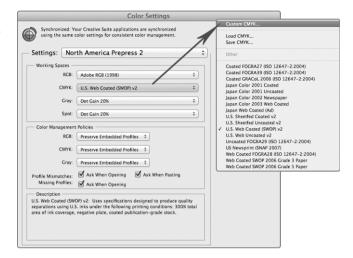
BLACK

To simplify printing of screen captures, use a color-separation recipe that ensures that all neutral black or gray areas of the image will print only in black ink during the RGB-to-CMYK conversion. Neutral areas in an RGB image are those areas in which the RGB values are equal; for example, R128-G128-B128 would constitute a midtone gray.

Figure 4.8 A conventional conversion from RGB to CMYK produces four-color equivalents of the gray and black parts of a screen capture. Press misregistration will turn text and other black or gray elements to an out-offocus rainbow. Festive, but hard to read.

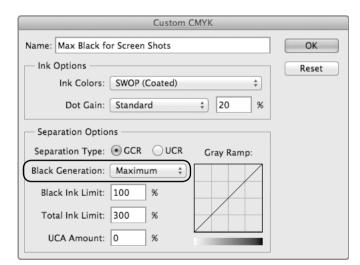
To create this custom screen-capture conversion recipe in Photoshop, choose *Edit > Color Settings* to access the color-separation controls. Under Working Spaces, choose *Custom* for the CMYK setting (**Figure 4.9**).

Figure 4.9 In the Color Settings dialog box, select Custom CMYK from the CMYK menu.



In the Custom CMYK dialog box, select *Maximum Black Generation* (**Figure 4.10**). The curve you see may seem odd, but it merely indicates that all equivalent RGB values are being replaced with black. The appearance of color elements won't be compromised.

Figure 4.10 In the Custom CMYK dialog box, select the Maximum Black Generation setting. This consolidates all gray-equivalent values to the black channel, minimizing issues with registration.



Color elements will be composed of four colors in the final CMYK image. But black and gray elements will be rendered only in black (**Figure 4.11**). While this may look odd, it results in cleaner printing of the screen capture, because there aren't four colors piling up in most of the image.

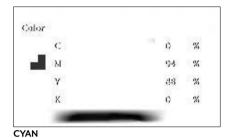
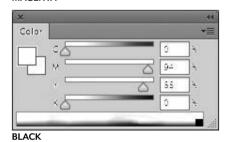


Figure 4.11 All the color components appear on the cyan, magenta, and yellow plates. Black and gray areas appear only on the black plate. This special treatment ensures that screen shots print cleanly.





RGB vs. CMYK

Since the dawn of desktop publishing, it's been unquestioned that Thou Shalt Convert to CMYK. Those who submitted RGB files were considered uninformed, even uncivilized.

The rules are changing, though, because of the increased use of digital printing. Although these devices may use inks or toners named *cyan*, *magenta*, *yellow*, and *black*, those inks and toners have a different pigment makeup than the namesake inks used on offset presses, and they have a wider color gamut than offset inks. Inkjet devices such as large-format printers utilize additional inks such as light cyan, pink, light yellow, orange, and green, further extending the range of colors that they can print.

This seems like a good time to open a can of multicolored worms. After you've been told by printers for years that you should convert your images to CMYK before submitting, I'm now going to tell you that you might not have to do so. That's because many digital devices happily digest RGB and can provide more vibrant output by rendering RGB content.

When you convert to CMYK, ranges of colors outside the CMYK gamut are remapped to fall within the CMYK printable gamut, and some of your most vibrant colors are lost forever.

If you happen to have some very colorful RGB images (tropical birds would do the trick), try this little experiment:

- 1. Open the RGB image in Photoshop, and maybe make it even more vibrant by using Hue/Saturation or Vibrance. Get carried away; this is for science, after all, not for art.
- **2.** Choose *Edit > Color Settings*. At the top of the dialog box, choose *North America Prepress 2* from the menu and click OK.
- **3.** Choose *View > Proof Colors*. The difference in appearance may not be huge, but try toggling Proof Colors on and off quickly by using the keyboard shortcut (PC: Ctrl-Y; Mac: Cmd-Y) and watch for differences in bright blues and greens. Neon greens provide a particularly noticeable difference.
- **4.** Choose *View > Gamut Warning*. The gray areas are areas whose current RGB color will be remapped (and probably become duller) when converted to CMYK, because of the smaller color gamut of CMYK.

This gives you an idea of the color range that you'll lose when you convert to CMYK—and much of that color range can be imaged on many digital devices. Of course, ask the print service provider before you submit your work to ensure that you're sending what they want. Just don't be surprised if they say "RGB is OK."

RGB as a Working Format

Because the RGB gamut is larger than that of CMYK, it's often preferable to perform color corrections and compositing with RGB files, converting to CMYK (if necessary) as late in the process as possible. If you are participating in a fully color-managed workflow, you will keep your images as RGB with ICC profiles. The International Color Consortium (ICC) was formed by a group of graphic arts industry vendors, with the goal of promoting the use and standardization of color management tools. ICC profiles are methods of describing the characteristics of devices such as scanners, presses, and printers for optimal results. Conversion will not take place until the job is imaged. Much of today's software offers sophisticated support of color

management. For example, when exporting a PDF or printing, InDesign will perform the same conversion of RGB to CMYK that Photoshop would (assuming you've synchronized your color settings across all your Creative Cloud applications).

What if the Printer Demands CMYK Images?

Some print service providers and their customers have fully adopted color-managed workflows as part of their regular operation. But many print service providers (especially in North America) expect CMYK when you submit your job, believing that it's what Nature intended, especially when the job will be printed on an offset press (as opposed to a digital printer). Consult with your printer to see what they prefer. If you're using digital photography or scanning your own artwork, they should be able to provide you with their preferred settings, so you can make appropriate conversions to CMYK.

Inappropriate Image Formats for Print

Some image formats are intended primarily for onscreen and Web use. **Portable Network Graphics** (PNG) images can contain RGB and indexed color as well as transparency. While PNG can be high resolution, it has no support for the CMYK color space.

The Windows format **BMP** (an abbreviation for bitmap) supports color depths from one-bit (black and white, with no shades of gray) to 32-bit (millions of colors) but lacks support for CMYK. BMP is not appropriate in projects intended for print.

Graphics Interchange Format (GIF) is appropriate only for Web use because of its inherently low resolution and an indexed color palette limited to a maximum of 256 colors. Don't use GIF for print.

JPEG (Joint Photographic Experts Group), named after the committee that created it, has an unsavory reputation in graphic arts. Just whisper "jay-peg" and watch prepress operators cringe. It is a lossy compression scheme, meaning that it discards information to make a smaller digital file. But some of the fear of JPEGs is out of proportion to the amount of damage that takes place

when a JPEG is created. Assuming an image has adequate resolution, a very slight amount of initial JPEG compression doesn't noticeably impair image quality, but aggressive compression introduces ugly rectangular artifacts, especially in detailed areas (**Figure 4.12**).

Figure 4.12 There's good JPEG, and there's bad JPEG:

- A. Original PSD
- B. JPEG saved with Maximum Quality setting
- C. JPEG saved with lowest quality setting







Each time you open an image, make a change, then resave the image as a JPEG, you recompress it. Prepress paranoids will shriek that you're ruining your image, and there's a little bit of truth to that. While it's true that repeatedly resaving an image with low-quality compression settings would eventually visibly erode detail, the mere fact that an image has been saved as a JPEG does not render it unusable, especially if you use a minimal level of compression. Despite the reputation, JPEGs aren't inherently evil. They can be decent graphic citizens, even capable of containing high-resolution CMYK image data.

That said, when you acquire a JPEG image from your digital camera or a stock photo service, it's still advisable to immediately resave the image as a TIFF or PSD file to prevent further compression. However, JPEGs intended for Web use are low-resolution RGB files, inappropriate for print. If your client provides a low-resolution or aggressively compressed JPEG, there's not much you can do to improve it. Even with the refined Intelligent Upsampling in Photoshop CC, you can only go so far. They'll find that hard to believe, though, because they know there's a tool in Photoshop called the Magic Wand. Good luck explaining it to them.

Index

1C (one-color) jobs, 21	Adobe Photoshop Elements, 102
2/1 (two-over-one) jobs, 21	Adobe PostScript. See PostScript
2C (two-color) jobs, 21	Adobe Reader, 318, 333–334
3D effects in Illustrator, 231–233	AI files, 255–256, 278
4/1 (four-over-one) jobs, 21	Aldus PageMaker, 4
4C (four-color) jobs, 21	alpha channels, 204, 211
	alternate layouts, 285–289
	Aperture program, 103
A	Appearance panel, Illustrator, 227–231
A	Apple desktop computers, 4
AAs (artist alterations), 15, 21	See also Macintosh computers
Acrobat, 317–354	Apple iPhoto, 102
collaborating with, 334–336	Apple LaserWriter, 4
collecting comments in, 336–337	application files
comment and markup features, 331–334	submitting to printers, 167–170
Compare Documents function, 173	version and platform issues with, 169–170
Distiller feature, 315, 318, 323	aqueous coatings, 21, 56, 58
editing PDF files in, 327–330, 354	area type, 246
enabling Reader features from, 334	Arrow tool, Acrobat, 333
font embedding in, 327	Artboard Options dialog box, 216
forensic tools, 340–346	Artboard tool, 216, 217
handling image content in, 324–326	artboards (Illustrator), 215–219
Overprint Preview option, 304	bleed settings, 219
PDF compatibility with, 323	creating, 216–217
preflighting files in, 343–346	deleting, 217, 218
previewing output in, 341–342	hiding, 217
Print Production tools, 339–354	modifying, 218
product line for, 318–319	page layout and, 219
Professional version, 10, 318	saving files with multiple, 256–258
repair tools, 346–354	trim size and, 70, 73
Simulate Overprint option, 306	artist alterations (AAs), 15, 21
summarizing comments in, 337–338	artwork
unclumping text in, 255	InDesign files as, 278–279
activating fonts, 132, 139, 140–141	PDF files as, 279–280
Add Printer Marks tool, Acrobat, 348–349	scanning, 11, 106
adjustment layers, 191–192, 238	Automatic (JPEG) compression, 326
Adjustments panel, Photoshop, 191	Automatic Recovery, InDesign, 290
Adobe Acrobat. See Acrobat	Automatic Recovery, Indesign, 290
Adobe Bridge, 188, 281	
Adobe FreeHand, 123	
Adobe Illustrator. See Illustrator	В
Adobe InDesign. See InDesign	backsaving
Adobe Lightroom, 102	Illustrator files, 179, 181, 254
Adobe PDF Print Engine, 13	InDesign files, 179, 182, 291
Adobe Photoshop. See Photoshop	Photoshop files, 179, 182

baseline, 21	CDs
Bézier shapes, 128	distributing PDF files on, 320
bindery, 21	submitting jobs on, 170
binding, 19, 85–90	CEPS (color electronic prepress system), 3, 22
case, 86	channel masks, 203–204
coil, 23, 89	channels, Photoshop, 203-204
comb, 24, 88–89	characters, 135
custom, 90	chase, 22
perfect, 19, 32, 86–87	choking, 53
post, 90	CID (Character ID) font encoding, 315
saddle stitched, 19, 35, 85–86	Clean Up dialog box, Illustrator, 222
wire, 38, 89	clipping masks, 194–195
bitmap images, 112	clipping paths, 198–199, 200
black	closed path type, 248
duotone, 205	Cloud tool, Acrobat, 333
rich, 55–56, 173	CMYK color
black-and-white printing, 39-42	adding spot color to, 207-208
blanket, 21	color printing and, 42–48
bleed	explanation of acronym for, 48
checking on proofs, 172	Illustrator options for, 214, 240–241
die cutting and, 94–95	limitations of, 47–48, 118
Illustrator settings for, 219, 258	RGB conversions to, 119, 187–188
importance of providing, 72–73, 161	screen captures converted to, 115–117
imposition related to, 77, 78	specifying screen values for, 46
InDesign settings for, 292–293	spot color conversions to, 50–51, 240–241
printer marks indicating, 348–349	coated paper, 50
vector artwork and, 164	coatings, 17, 58–59, 159
Blend tool, Illustrator, 239	coil binding, 23, 89
blended objects, 239	cold foil, 97
blending modes, 110, 195, 196, 234	collaborating over PDF files, 334–336
blind embossing, 26, 96	email-based reviews, 334
bluelines, 14, 15, 22, 173–174	shared reviews, 335–336
BMP file format, 119	color
Bridge, Adobe, 188, 281	checking, 171
bump plates, 22, 207	CMYK, 42–48
r r	naming, 163
	spot, 48–51
	stroke, 228–229
C	viewing, 66–67
Cls paper, 22	color break, 23
C2s paper, 22	color cast, 23
calibrating monitors, 65	color corrections
Callout tool, Acrobat, 332	layers for making, 190–192
Camera Raw, 101–102	performing in RGB color space, 185
cameramen, 22	color electronic prepress system (CEPS), 3, 22
camera-ready art, 22	Color Formula Guides, 48
case binding, 22, 86	Color Key proofs, 2
cast shadow effect, 274	color management, 23, 63–64
	20101 111111111101111111111111111111111

color modes, 214–215	creep, 25
Color panel, InDesign, 280	Cromalin proofs, 2, 25
color printing, 42–51	cropping images, 107
CMYK inks for, 42–48	crossover art, 173, 174
spot colors for, 48–51	cross-platform issues, 147–155
color proofs, 14	file compression, 155
color separations, 23, 100	file naming, 148–151
color settings files, 187–188	fonts, 152–153
color space, 162, 186–187	graphics formats, 155
color temperature, 14, 23–24	Mac-to-Windows, 153–154
colorimeters, 65	progress made in, 147–148
colorizing images, 285	Windows-to-Mac, 154
comb binding, 24, 88–89	CTP (computer-to-plate), 10, 16, 25
commenting tools, 331–333	curing process, 25
comments	Curve Precision setting, 222–223
adding to PDFs, 334	custom binding, 90
collecting and summarizing, 336–338	customer alterations, 15
deleting from PDFs, 333	customer service representative (CSR), 8, 159
Committee for Graphics Arts Technologies	custom-mixed inks, 25, 57, 159
Standards (CGATS), 322	cutting die, 25, 93–95
Compare Documents function, 173	
compatibility, PDF file, 323	
Component Information dialog box, 309–310	D
compressed files, 155, 167, 169–170	DCS files, 207
compression settings, 325–326	debossing, 26, 96
comps, 24	deleting
computer-to-plate (CTP), 10, 16, 25	artboards, 217, 218
Content Grabber, 273	channels, 211
continuous tone, 24	comments, 333
contract proofs, 14–15, 17, 24, 68	layers, 191, 211
conversions	paths, 211
Illustrator text, 252	desktop printers, 65
Postscript to PDF, 315	desktop publishing, 4–5
RGB to CMYK color, 119, 187–188	dfonts, 136
screen capture to CMYK, 115–117	die, 25, 91
spot color to CMYK, 50–51, 240–241	die cutting, 19, 25, 93–95
text to outline, 126–127, 145	die lines, 91, 92, 94
Convert Colors tool, Acrobat, 348	digital cameras, 26, 101–102
converter, 25	Digital Distribution of Advertising for Publications
corrections, 15, 173	(DDAP), 322
Creative Cloud, 177–182	digital photography, 11
Adobe Bridge for, 281	digital press, 26
backsaving files from, 179, 181–182 fonts installed by, 138–139	digital printing, 17, 59–63
·	advantages of, 59–60
hosting information for, 179 persistent myths about, 178–179	limitations of, 60–63
÷ '	dingbats, 133
Typekit desktop fonts, 141–142 version determination, 180	Direct Selection tool
version determination, 100	Illustrator, 248
	InDesign, 272, 273

disclosure triangle, 268	environment controls, 64–65
Distiller, Acrobat, 315, 318, 323	EPS (Encapsulated PostScript), 109–110
document profiles, 213-214, 227	drop shadows and, 278
Document Raster Effects settings, 225–226	raster vs. vector, 110
dot etchers, 26	saving in Illustrator, 256, 258
dot gain, 26, 41	vector graphics and, 122–123
double spaces, 165	Eraser tool, Acrobat, 333
downsampling, 325	estimators, 9, 27
dpi (dots per inch), 42	EULAs (End User License Agreements), 143-144
drag-and-drop into InDesign, 263–265	exporting
drop shadows	comments from PDF files, 336-337
InDesign handling of, 274–275, 276, 278, 301,	InDesign files to PDF, 314
306–307	PDF files from applications, 323–324
Photoshop creation of, 196	preflight profiles, 313
Droplet, Preflight, 346	
drying agents, 56	
duotones, 26, 205–206, 285	F
DVDs	-
distributing PDF files on, 320	fake duotones, 27, 285
submitting jobs on, 170	feathering effects, 301
	file extensions, 148, 151
	File Handing & Clipboard preferences, Illustrator, 264–265
E	File Transfer Protocol (FTP), 169
edge detection, 201–202	files
Edit Original button, InDesign, 270	backsaving, 179, 181-182, 254, 291
Edit Text & Images tool (Acrobat), 328–330	compressing, 167, 169–170
editing graphics using, 329–330	flattening, 195
editing text using, 328–329	naming, 148–151, 163, 212
editing	reducing size of, 291
graphics in Acrobat, 329–330	fills, 229-230
graphics in InDesign, 270	film strippers, 27
PDF files in Acrobat, 327–330, 354	finishing processes, 18-20, 27
text in Acrobat, 328–329	binding, 85–90
text in Illustrator, 253–254	building files for, 69–74, 90–93
effects	custom, 160
Illustrator, 221, 224–226	die cutting, 93–95
Photoshop, 224	embossing, 95–96
emailing PDF files, 320, 334	foil stamping, 97
embedded fonts, 125-126, 144-145, 167, 249-250, 327	folding, 74–76
embedding	imposition, 76–85
graphics in InDesign, 265–266	print specifications for, 74
images in Illustrator, 127, 237–238	trimming, 69–74
embossing, 26, 95–96	Fix Hairlines tool, Acrobat, 352
embossing die, 25, 95, 96	flatbed scanners, 101, 106
EMF file format, 124–125	flatness settings, 199–200
Encapsulated PostScript. See EPS	flats, 15, 27
Enfocus PitStop, 10, 317, 339	Flattener Preview option, InDesign, 308–309

flattening	FTP (File Transfer Protocol), 169
layers, 195	fulfillment, 20
transparency, 235–237, 296–307	
flexography, 16, 27	
FlightCheck software, 10, 165, 166, 168	G
fluorescent inks, 57	ganged content, 18, 28, 78
FM screening, 45–46	GIF file format, 119
foil stamping, 27–28, 56–57, 97	glazed embossing, 96
folding, 18	9
configuring jobs for, 74–76	global swatches, 242–245
templates for, 76	glossary of printing terms, 21–38
folding dummy, 28, 82	glue flap, 93
folio, 28	gluing, 20
Font Book utility, 135, 139	glyphs, 133, 134, 135
Font Explorer X Pro, 140	GRACoL color settings files, 187–188
FontAgent Pro, 132, 140	grain of paper, 28
FontDoctor, 141	graphic arts tasks
FontLab, 143	desktop publishing's redistribution of, 4–5
fonts, 131–146	historical division of, 2–3
activating, 132, 139, 140–141	graphics
conflicts between, 141	Acrobat editing of, 329–330
converting to outline, 126–127, 145	dragging and dropping, 263–265
cross-platform issues, 152–153	embedding/unembedding, 265–266
embedding, 125–126, 144–145, 167, 249–250, 327	extracting from PDF files, 330
identifiers for, 137	finding missing, 269
Illustrator handling of, 249–250	InDesign editing of, 270
installed by Creative Cloud, 138–139	placing in InDesign, 261–263
licensing issues for, 143–146	replacing existing, 270
_	scaling, 273
Macintosh OS X system, 136	updating modified, 269
management programs for, 140–141	See also images; vector graphics
multilingual, 134	graphics formats. See image formats
Multiple Master, 137	gravure printing, 16, 28
OpenType, 133–135	gripper edge, 28
PostScript, 131–132	
screen, 131–132	
sending to service providers, 145–146	н
substituting, 138	
TrueType, 132–133	hairline fix, 352
Typekit desktop, 141–142	halftone dots, 40, 43
vector artwork and, 163	halftones, 28
Windows system, 137	black-and-white, 40–42
See also text	color, 43–46
Fonts control panel, 135	hiding artboards, 217
forensic tools, Acrobat, 340–346	High Quality Print option, 316
FPO images, 28	Highlight Text tool, Acrobat, 332
frames, scaling, 272	hinting, 126, 163, 250
Free Transform tool, InDesign, 272	hot type, 28–29
Freehand program, 123	

	images
ICC profiles, 118	bitmap, 112
IDLK files, 290	colorizing, 285
IDML files, 182, 291	cropping, 107
Illustrator, 213–260	downsampling, 325
3D artwork in, 231–233	editing, 270
AI files in InDesign, 255, 278	embedding, 237–238
Appearance panel, 227–231	finding missing, 269
artboards in, 215–219	linking, 237
backsaving from, 122, 179, 181, 254	retouching, 162
bleed options in, 219, 258	rotating, 107–108, 162
blended objects in, 239	scaling, 104–105, 162, 273
capabilities of, 129–130	unembedding, 238
CMYK conversions in, 240–241	See also graphics; raster images
color modes in, 214–215	imagesetters, 29, 63
document profiles, 213–214, 227	imaging software, 102–103
drag-and-drop into InDesign from, 264–265	importing
editing PDF files in, 354	comments from PDF files, 337
9	Illustrator symbols, 221
embedding fonts in, 249–250	preflight profiles, 313
EPS files in, 123, 256, 258	imposition, 14, 29, 76–85
linked and embedded images in, 237–238	multipage, 80–85
live effects in, 221, 224–226	nested, 78–79
native AI format, 122	simple, 77–78
opening PDF files in, 260	InDesign, 261–316
OpenType font support, 135	alternate layouts in, 285–289
Overprint Preview option, 232–233, 234, 235, 241	Automatic Recovery, 290
Package function, 167–168, 258	backsaving from, 179, 182, 291
PDF file creation, 259–260	bleed settings in, 292–293
PSD files used in, 110	Color panel, 280
saving files from, 255–258, 259–260	colorizing images in, 285
Scoop plug-in, 125, 258	Component Information dialog box, 309–310
Separations Preview panel, 242	drag-and-drop into, 263–265
simplifying complex artwork in, 222–223	editing graphics used in, 270
spot color options, 240–245	
symbols used in, 219–221	embedding/unembedding graphics in, 265–266 files as artwork in, 278–279
templates, 227	
text conversion in, 252	finding and fixing problems in, 307–314
transparency effects in, 233–237	Flattener Preview option, 308–309
trim size in, 70, 73	IDLK files, 290
type features in, 245–251	Illustrator files in, 255, 264–265, 278
version issues, 251–255, 257–258	Ink Manager, 283–284
image formats	libraries used in, 293
appropriate for print, 109–112, 122–124	Links panel, 266–270
cross-platform compatibility of, 155	Liquid Layout tools, 286–287
features comparison chart, 111	locating missing graphics in, 269
inappropriate for print, 119–120, 124–125	managing linked stories in, 288–289
image proofs, 170–171	Object Layer Options dialog box, 275–277
image work, 12	OpenType font support, 135

Overprint Preview option, 308	PDF files for, 166–167
Package function, 167-168, 314	planning process, 160–166
page size setup, 70	preflighting your job, 165
paths used in, 200–201	preparing designs for, 158
PDF creation in, 314–316	press check following, 174-176
PDF files as artwork in, 279–280	proofing cycles following, 170–174
Photoshop files in, 263-264	providing printouts in, 165
placing graphics in, 261–263	raster image check, 161–163
Preflight feature, 165	sending job files, 166–170
Preview mode, 307-308	talking with printers about, 158–160
PSD files used in, 110, 273-277	vector artwork check, 163–164
reducing file size in, 291	job ticket, 8–9, 29
scaling graphics in, 273	JPEG compression, 326
Separations Preview panel, 282–283	JPEG file format, 101, 109, 119–120
Smart Guides, 294–296	
Smart Text Reflow, 296	
Snippets, 265	К
Swatches panel, 280–281	Kelvin temperature scale, 24
tips for using, 289–296	kiss plates, 207
transforming frames in, 272	knock out, 29, 304
transparency effects in, 296–307	KHOCK Out, 23, 30 I
Units & Increments setting, 75	
updating graphics in, 269–270	<u>.</u>
InDesign Markup (IDML) format, 182, 291	L
Ink Aliasing, 283	Lab color, 186
Ink Manager	laminate, 29
Acrobat, 347–348	layer masks, 189–190
InDesign, 283–284	layers, 188–195
inks	adjustment, 191–192
custom-mixed, 57, 159	clipping masks and, 194–195
fluorescent, 57	color corrections with, 190–192
large color areas for, 54	deleting, 191, 211
metallic, 56–57	flattening, 195
problem, 56	InDesign handling of, 275–277
process color, 42, 47, 50–51	job submission with, 168
rich black, 55–56	layer masks and, 189–190
spot color, 48–50	merging, 195
interpolation, 104, 105	Smart Objects and, 192–194
iPhoto program, 102	LCD monitors, 65
	leading, 28, 29
	letterpress printing, 16–17, 29–30
J	libraries, InDesign, 293 licensing issues for fonts, 143–146
JDF job ticketing, 13	lighting considerations, 64, 66–67
job flow diagram, 7	lighting indicator patches, 67
job jacket, 8, 29	Lightroom program, 102
job submission, 6, 157–176	line shots, 30
application files for, 167–170	Line tool, Acrobat, 333
page-layout file check, 164–166	linen tester, 30
	mich tester, 50

linked stories, 288–289	N
linking images, 237	naming files, 148–151, 163, 212
Links panel, InDesign, 266–270	native file formats
Liquid Layout tools, InDesign, 286–287	Illustrator, 122
lithography, 30	Photoshop, 110–111
live effects, 221, 224–226	nested impositions, 78–79
loaded-graphics cursor, 262	New Document Profiles folder, 227
loupe, 30	New Document Fromes folder, 227
lowercase, 30	
lpi (lines per inch), 35–36, 40, 42	
1p. (mes per men), ee ee, 1e, 12	0
	Object Inspector, Acrobat, 342–343
	Object Layer Options dialog box, InDesign, 275–277
M	objects
Macintosh computers	blended, 239
cross-platform issues, 147–155	silhouetted, 197–204
file associations fix, 271	Smart Objects, 192–194
filenaming conventions, 148–151	offset printing, 16, 17, 31
font activation, 135, 139	on-press imaging, 16
OS X system fonts, 136	opacity, 110, 195
Save As PDF option, 315	open path type, 246–247
Magic Wand tool, Photoshop, 197, 198	OpenType fonts, 133–135, 152, 153
makeready, 17, 30	OPI (Open Prepress Interface), 31
markup tools, 331–333	optimizing PDFs, 353–354
masks	OttLite lamps, 67
channel, 203–204	Outline view, Illustrator, 221
clipping, 194–195	outlining text, 126–127, 145, 250
layer, 189–190	Output Preview tool, Acrobat, 340, 341–342
Matchprint proofs, 2, 30	Oval tool, Acrobat, 333
mechanical, 2, 30	overprint, 31, 172, 303–304
mechanical color, 31	Overprint Preview option
merging layers, 195	Acrobat, 304
metallic inks, 56–57	Illustrator, 232–233, 234, 235, 241
metamerism, 66	InDesign, 308
Microsoft Powerpoint, 125	mbesign, 300
Mini Bridge, 263	
missing graphics, 269	
mockups, 24	P
modified graphics, 269	Package function
moiré pattern, 31, 41, 43–44, 171, 173	Illustrator, 127, 167–168, 238, 251, 258
monitor considerations, 63–68	InDesign, 167–168, 314
calibration, 65	Typekit desktop fonts and, 251
color management, 63–64	page creep, 84
environment controls, 64–65	page proofs, 2, 31
viewing environment, 66–67	page size, 70
white point setting, 68	page-layout files
multilingual fonts, 134	checking for job submission, 164–166
multipage imposition, 80–85	packaging elements of, 167–168
Multiple Master fonts, 137	page-layout programs, 4
multiple master forits, 137	

pagination, 32, 174	submitting to printers, 166–167, 320
PANTONE Color Bridge, 49, 51	summarizing comments on, 337-338
PANTONE Color Formula Guides, 48, 49, 51	transformations made in, 108
PANTONE lighting indicators, 67	types of, 320
PANTONE PLUS libraries, 49, 240	vector art saved as, 123–124
paper	PDF Optimizer, Acrobat, 353–354
digital presses and, 62	PDF Print Engine, 13
press check and behavior of, 175	PDF Reference, 319
special orders for, 159	PDF Shrink, 353
path designation, 149	PDF/X-la format, 259, 316, 322, 323
paths	PDF/X-3 format, 316, 323
clipping, 198–199, 200	PDF/X-4 format, 299, 316, 323
creating, 197–199	Pen tool, Photoshop, 197, 198
deleting, 211	Pencil tool, Acrobat, 333
flatness settings, 199–200	perfect binding, 19, 32, 86–87
simplifying, 128–129	personalization, 17, 32
type on open/closed, 246–248	Photoshop, 4, 102, 183–212
PDF Enhancer, 353	adjustment layers, 191–192
PDF files, 32	backsaving from, 179, 182
adding comments to, 334	channel masks, 203–204
artwork from, 279–280	color space issues, 186–187
collaboration using, 334–336	drag-and-drop into InDesign from, 263–264
collecting comments on, 336–337	duotone creation, 205–206
comment and markup features for, 331–334	effects in Illustrator, 224
compression settings, 325–326	EPS file format, 109–110
creation of, 319–327	image use considerations, 184–185
early conception of, 317	layers used in, 188–195
editing, 327–330, 354	native PSD format, 110–111, 112
emailing, 320, 334	OpenType font support, 135
embedding fonts in, 144–145, 327	PDF file format, 111, 210–211
exporting from applications, 323–324	PSD files in InDesign, 273–277
external editors for, 354	Refine Edge feature, 201–202
extracting graphics from, 330	resampling options, 186
forensic tools, 340–346	resolution issues, 185
Illustrator files saved as, 215, 259–260, 354	RGB to CMYK conversions, 115, 187–188
image content and, 324–326	saving files in, 210–212
InDesign files saved as, 314–316	screen capture conversions, 115–117
opening in Illustrator, 260	silhouetting objects in, 197–204
origin of, 319	spot colors added in, 207–208
Photoshop PDF, 111, 210–211	spot varnish plate creation, 208–209
Postscript conversion to, 315	transparency effects in, 195–196
preflight process, 10, 166	vector elements in, 209–211
proofs sent as, 173	Photoshop Elements, 102
repair tools, 346–354	picas, 32, 75
resolution settings, 323–324, 325	picas, 32, 73 pixels, 99, 225
RIP conversion of, 12–13	PlaceMultipagePDF script, 280
security of, 123	planners, 9, 32
settings for, 315–316, 321, 322–323	planicis, 5, 52
55551165 101, 010 010, 021, 022 020	

plates	Print Production tools (Acrobat), 339–354
bump, 22, 207	Add Printer Marks tool, 348-349
computer-to-plate method, 10, 16, 25	Convert Colors tool, 348
created by printers, 15–16	Fix Hairlines tool, 352
spot varnish, 208–209	forensic tools, 340-346
platesetters, 32, 62–63	Ink Manager, 347–348
platform issues, 169	Object Inspector, 342–343
PNG file format, 119, 125	Output Preview tool, 340, 341-342
pocket folder, 90–93	PDF Optimizer, 353-354
point type, 245	Preflight tool, 340, 343-346
points, 32	repair tools, 346–354
post binding, 90	Set Page Boxes dialog box, 350-352
PostScript, 32–33	Transparency Flattening options, 353
conversion to PDF, 315	Trap Presets feature, 354
desktop publishing and, 4	print service providers
encapsulated, 109–110, 122–123	application file submission to, 167–170
RIP processing of, 12–13	discussing print jobs with, 158-160
See also EPS	fonts sent with jobs to, 145-146
PostScript Printer Definition (PPD) files, 315	PDF file submission to, 166-167, 320
PostScript (Type 1) fonts, 131–132, 152	press check with, 174–176
potential pixels, 225	proofing cycles with, 170-174
Powerpoint program, 125	sending job files to, 166–170
PPD files, 315	Print to Adobe PDF option, 315
ppi (pixels per inch), 42	printer alterations, 15, 33
preflight, 10, 33	printer marks, 348–349
Acrobat tool for, 343–346	printer profiles, 65
creating custom profiles for, 311-313	printer's spreads, 33–34, 80, 81, 166
importing/sharing profiles for, 313	printing, 16–17
InDesign feature for, 310–313	black-and-white, 39-42
prior to job submission, 165, 166	coatings used in, 58–59
Preflight Droplet, 346	color, 42–51
Preflight panel, InDesign, 311	digital, 17, 59–63
Preflight tool, Acrobat, 340, 343-346	glossary of terms for, 21–38
prepress, 10-15, 33	image formats for, 109-112, 122-124
Preserve Details option, Photoshop, 105	ink coverage and, 54–57
Preserve Spot Colors option, Illustrator, 232	press check during, 174–176
press check, 17, 33, 174–176	registration issues, 51–52
press issues, 51–59	slang terms in, 70
coatings, 58–59	trapping issues, 52–54
ink coverage, 54–57	Printing Industries of America, 67
registration, 51–52	printing plants
trapping, 52–54	job flow diagram for, 7
press proof, 33	overview of departments in, 6–20
Press Quality option, 316	printouts of job, 165
pressroom, 16–17	problem inks, 56
Preview mode, InDesign, 307–308	process colors, 34, 42
previewing documents	production, 10–11
in Acrobat, 341–342	profiles
in InDesign, 307–309	document, 213-214, 227

monitor, 65	screen captures as, 112–117
preflight, 343–346	Smart Objects as, 192, 193
printer, 65	vector graphics vs., 121
Project Camelot, 317	Raw images, 101–102
Proof Colors feature, 166	Reader, Adobe, 318, 333-334
proofing process, 14–15, 170–174	reader's spreads, 80, 81, 166
correction check, 173	Ready, Set, Go! program, 4
image proof check, 170-171	Real World Color Management (Fraser, Murphy, and
imposed blueline check, 173–174	Bunting), 64
page proof check, 172–173	Rectangle Frame tool, InDesign, 261
signing off on proofs, 174	Rectangle tool
proofs, 34	Acrobat, 333
contract, 14–15, 17, 24, 68	InDesign, 261
image, 170–171	Refine Edge feature, Photoshop, 201–202
page, 31, 172–173	Reflex Blue ink, 56
press, 33	registered embossing, 96
scatter, 35	registration, 34
PSD files, 110–111, 211, 238, 273–277	digital printing and, 61
155 1163, 116 111, 211, 236, 273 277	printing inks and, 51–52
	Relink button
	Illustrator, 237
Q	InDesign, 269, 270
quadtones, 205	remapping spot colors, 283–284
QuarkXPress, 110, 135	repair tools, Acrobat, 346–354
	resampling images, 105, 186
	1 3 3 4 4
R	resizing. See sizing/resizing
random proofs, 14, 170	resolution, 34
raster image processors (RIPs), 12–13, 34	determining for images, 103–104, 162
halftone dots and, 41	digital presses and, 63
PDF Print Engine in, 13	PDF settings for, 323–324, 325
rasterization process by, 300–301	Photoshop considerations, 185
transformations performed by, 108	scaled images and, 105
•	screen captures and, 113–115
raster images, 99–120 cropping, 107	retouching images, 162, 171
digital cameras and, 101–102	RGB color
9	color correction with, 185
file formats for printing, 109–112 imaging software and, 102–103	converting to CMYK, 119, 187–188
5 5	digital output of, 11, 118–119
inappropriate formats for printing, 119–120	screen captures converted from, 115–117
placing into vector graphics, 127	working with, 118–119
pre-job submission check of, 161–163	RHEM lighting indicators, 67
programs for transforming, 108–109	rich black, 55–56, 173
raster effects and, 225–226	RIPs. See raster image processors
resolution of, 103–104, 162	ROOM (RIP once, output many), 34
retouching work on, 162	rosette pattern, 44
RGB vs. CMYK, 117–119	rotation
rotating, 107–108, 162	checking layout files for, 165
scaling, 104–105, 162	of raster images, 107–108, 162, 184–185
scanners and, 100–101, 106	

S	sheetfed presses, 36
saddle stitching, 18, 19, 35, 85–86	shingling, 84–85
salesperson, 6, 8, 158–159	shipping, 20
Save As command, 291	short print runs, 59
Save As PDF option, 315	signatures, 36, 80
saving	signing off on proofs, 174
back to older versions, 179, 181–182	silhouettes, 36, 197-204
files with multiple artboards, 256–258	channel masks for, 203–204
Illustrator files, 255–258, 259–260	checking on proofs, 171
Photoshop files, 210–212	edge detection for, 201–202
symbols in Illustrator, 221	path creation for, 197–200
vector art as PDFs, 123–124	soft-edged subjects and, 201–204
scaling	simple imposition, 77–78
checking layout files for, 165	Simplify dialog box, Illustrator, 222-223
frames and graphics, 272–273	Simulate Overprint option, 305, 306
raster images, 104–105, 162	size considerations
resampling and, 184	for file size, 291
vector graphics, 121	for print planning, 160–161
scanners, 35, 100–101, 106	for trim size, 70–72
scanning artwork, 11, 106	sizing/resizing
scatter proofs, 35, 170	artboards, 218
schedulers, 9, 35	raster images, 104–105
Scoop plug-in, 125, 258	Smallest File Size option, 315–316
scoring, 35, 93	Smart Guides (InDesign), 294–296
screen angle, 35, 44	setting preferences for, 295–296
screen captures, 112–117	Smart Spacing indicators, 295
converting to CMYK, 115–117	Smart Objects, 101, 192–194
resolution of, 113–115	Smart Text Reflow, 296
screen fonts, 131–132	Snippets, InDesign, 265
screen printing, 17, 35	soft proofs, 14
screen ruling, 35–36, 40–41, 63	special effects, 172
screen values, 46	specialty inks, 56–57
Selection tool, InDesign, 272, 273	spiral binding, 23, 89
sending job files, 166–170	spot colors, 36, 48–51
application files, 167–170	3D artwork and, 231-233
PDF files, 166–167	acronyms used for, 50
See also job submission	adding to CMYK images, 207–208
Separations Preview panel	advantages of using, 49
Illustrator, 242	checking on proofs, 173
InDesign, 282–283	choosing for duotones, 206
service bureau licenses, 144	converting to CMYK, 50-51, 240-241
Set Page Boxes dialog box, Acrobat, 350-352	digital presses and, 61–62
shadow effects, 274–275, 276, 278	guides for choosing, 48, 49
See also drop shadows	Illustrator options for, 231–232, 240–245
Shared Review wizard, Acrobat, 335	InDesign options for, 280–284
sharing	remapping with Ink Manager, 283–284
PDF files, 335–336	transparency and, 233, 303-304
preflight profiles, 313	spot varnishes, 58, 59, 208-209

spreading, 53	TouchUp tool, Acrobat, 330
Stamps tool, Acrobat, 332	Toyo Color Finder, 48
stat camera, 36	trade shops, 37
Sticky Notes, 331–332	transforming frames, 272
stitching, 18	transparencies, 37
stochastic screening, 36, 45–46	Transparency Blend Space, 298–299
stories, linked, 288-289	transparency effects
strokes, 228–231	Illustrator, 233–237
subsetting fonts, 327	InDesign, 296–307
substituting fonts, 138	Photoshop, 195–196
Suitcase Fusion, 132, 140	Transparency Flattener Presets, 300, 301–303
summarizing comments on PDFs, 337–338	transparency flattening
SVG filters, Illustrator, 224	Acrobat and, 353
Swatch Options dialog box, Illustrator, 243	drop shadows and, 306–307
swatches	Illustrator and, 235–237
global, 242–245	InDesign and, 296–307
Illustrator, 242–245	layer stacking order and, 298
InDesign, 280–283	spot colors and, 303–304
Swatches panel	Trap Presets feature, Acrobat, 354
Illustrator, 245	trapping, 13, 37, 52–54, 172, 354
InDesign, 280–281	trimming, 18, 69–74
Symbol tools, Illustrator, 220	bleed provided for, 72–73
symbols, Illustrator, 219–221	margin added for, 73
system fonts	printer marks for, 348–349
Macintosh OS X, 136	trim size and, 70–72
Windows OS, 137	tritones, 205
Willdows Ob, 157	TrueType fonts, 132–133, 152
	TRUMATCH Colorfinder, 51
	two-color jobs, 39–40
T	type features (Illustrator), 245–251
TAC (total area coverage), 36	embedded fonts, 249–250
templates	
folding project, 76	open/closed paths, 246–248
Illustrator, 227	outlined type, 250
text	point and area type, 245–246
checking on proofs, 172	Typekit desktop fonts and, 251
converting to outlines, 126–127, 145	version issues and, 252–255
editing in Acrobat, 328–329	See also fonts; text
Illustrator features for, 245–251	Type on a Path Tool, 246
rasterization of, 300–301	Type tool, Illustrator, 245
transparency flattening and, 298	Typekit desktop fonts, 141–142, 180, 251
unclumping in Acrobat Pro, 255	typesetters, 37
vector graphics and, 125–127, 163–164	
version issues related to, 252–255	
See also fonts	U
Text Box tool, Acrobat, 332	uncoated paper, 50
Text Edit tools, Acrobat, 332	unembedding images, 238
TIFF files, 109, 211, 238	Unicode, 133
toner-based printing. See digital printing	UPC (universal product code), 37
touch plates, 207	Update Link button, 269

updating graphics, 269–270 uppercase, 37 UV coatings, 37, 58

٧

variable data printing (VDP), 13, 38, 60, 160 varnishes, 17, 38, 58-59, 159, 208-209 vector graphics, 121-130 color naming for, 163 file formats for printing, 122-124 inappropriate formats for printing, 124-125 incorporating images into, 127 Photoshop images and, 209-211 pre-job submission check of, 163-164 programs for creating, 129 raster images vs., 121 rasterization of, 125, 300-301 simplifying, 128-129 Smart Objects as, 192, 193-194 text handling in, 125-127, 163-164 version issues, 180-181 Illustrator files and, 251-255, 257-258 job submission and, 168-169 viewing booth, 38, 66

W

Warnock, John, 317
web presses, 38
Web-based PDF files, 320
white point setting, 68
Windows computers
cross-platform issues, 147–155
filenaming conventions, 148–151
font activation, 140
system fonts, 137
wire binding, 38, 89
WMF file format, 124
work paths, 200

Υ

Yucky Discolored Box Syndrome (YDBS), 304-306

Z

ZIP compression, 155, 326