STAR Art Guidelines
for large format printing

To help you prepare artwork for your project, we have created the following Art Preparation Guidelines. Adhering to these guidelines ensures that your project will progress smoothly, without delays, and with exceptional results.

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Section 1 - **Preferred File Formats for Large Format Printing**

Designing graphic files for large format printing can be intimidating for those who normally work on small sized layouts such as brochures, catalogs, magazines and so on. However, what you will find is that working on large format graphics for trade shows, events, retail and corporate interior spaces can be simple. One of the tricks to preparing large format graphic layouts is to use **Adobe Illustrator** as your layout program whenever possible. Creating as many objects in vector will provide scalability to output at any size, and a smaller file size. The artboard can in most cases be created for 100% scaled size, half size, or quarter size for easy output.

Accepted File Formats
- **PREFERRED: Adobe Illustrator (.ai) is preferred for large format printing**
- ACCEPTED: Adobe Photoshop (.psd, .tif, or .eps)
- ACCEPTED: Adobe InDesign (include supporting links/fonts)

Important Notes:
- Submitting artwork in InDesign may be subject to additional preparation charges.
- High resolution print ready PDF files are accepted, but we prefer native file formats.
- Alternate file formats may result in printing difficulties and undesired results.
- Artwork that exceeds the pasteboard dimension in Illustrator can be scaled down.
- Star is not responsible for proofreading customer supplied copy.

Section 2 - Art Preparation Guidelines and Tips

Art Templates

Templates for portable solutions (banner stands, tableskirts, portable backwalls) will be provided by your Star Project Manager. For custom booth graphics, please request Control (CAD) drawings from your Star Project Manager. These drawings will provide graphic dimensions and if utilized, will reduce additional fees in preflight.

- Please note that we do not create templates for all custom booth graphics. Please reference the project Control Drawings, or request additional graphic elevations if required.
- Please include all provided templates in a layer (labeled "Template") and create your art on another layer (or more as desired).

Determining Art Size, Scale, & Resolution
Art Size & Scale

Always work at 100% scale in Illustrator when possible. Only work at a smaller size if the artboard in Illustrator does not support your finished size. If that is the case, use 50% scale as your first option. If that is not possible, use 25% scale.

Resolution

Create the resolution of your image at final output size and 100ppi (pixels per inch). For example, if the final print file is being output at 4'x4', then create the final linked image as 48"x48"@100ppi in Photoshop and place into your artboard. You can also determine the ppi by visual distance. The farther away the final art is viewed, the lower the ppi can be, especially if your artwork needs to be scaled up in size. The lowest you want to create a file's ppi would be 75ppi. Star's graphic production team can help you determine if the artwork is ok to print.

- If you have rasterized type in your artwork, you may want to increase the resolution slightly, unless you are already at 75 ppi.
- We do not print at a resolution higher than 100ppi. Anything higher will increase your file size, which is not needed.
- Star will flag any images that we feel are questionable and will typically show you a screenshot for your review.
- In preparing your art, please keep in mind the final size of your graphic. How something appears on your screen may scale up to something you do not intend.
- Clean your scans, look for scratches, dust or spots and airbrush them out. At 10' in size, this makes a big difference and it will look like a mistake.

| Viewing Distance Guide	
between 5'-15'	50-75 ppi
under 5'	100 ppi

Linked Files vs Embedded Files

When placing raster images into your Illustrator document, never embed the files. Rather, you should always "link" the images at time of placement.

- Raster images should be 100ppi at 100% scale
- NEVER link raster EPS files. Rather, those items should be saved as Level 12 JPG images (first option) and linked. OR, if Illustrator will not import that format due to large working dimensions, please link the file as a flat PSD.
- Please preserve your links and make sure to include them when submitting your final art files.

Vector Art vs Raster Art

Vector art is calculated and drawn using mathematical objects called vectors. The vectors form a map of lines and curves similar to "connecting the dots." Adobe Illustrator is a popular vector art program. If you view your art in preview mode, you can see the points or vectors connecting your lines and curves. Vector art is ideal for type and drawn shapes because the lines stay crisp at any scale. Certain methods of producing art including cutting graphics on a plotter, such as vinyl, require vector mapped art.

- Zoom in on your line art. Check all points/intersections. Keep points to a minimum.
- Avoid using converted CAD or DXF files. Line art from converted files tend to have an excessive number of points, lines that are segmented (not joined) and curves that are not smooth but faceted. We recommend recreating the art in Illustrator.

Vector maps or points
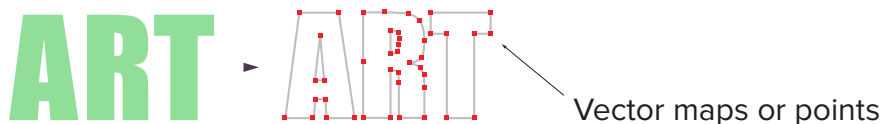
Rastor images (also known as bitmap) are made up of small squares of color called pixels. Photographs are made up of pixels. If you view a rastor image at 300% or more you can see the individual pixels that blend together to create that image. Adobe Photoshop is a popular rastor program. If an image is scaled larger without enough pixels to represent the data, that image will appear jagged or "pixelized." Increasing the resolution will not solve this problem as there are simply not enough pixels (or data) to begin with.

- When checking images, zoom into the artwork and view it at 100%. Pixels should appear smooth. There are some programs you may be able to size the image up which will "fill in" pixels. On1 Resize is a popular program and Star uses this for some cases.
- Avoid using auto trace options or clipping paths from magic wand selections. Often these options are not clean and smooth, or will require extra cleanup work.

RASTER

Document Color and Color Matching
Please create and supply all Illustrator files in **CMYK mode**.

RGB vs CMYK
RGB stands for "Red Green Blue." CMYK stands for "Cyan (Blue) Magenta Yellow Key (Black)." When you are working with digital artwork it is being represented on your screen in RGB mode. When you are preparing for large format print, file size is a big factor that will affect your efficiency. Also, many programs have image filters that are only available in RGB color space. The number of colors that are available inside of a "color profile" is called gamut. RGB has a much larger color gamut than CMYK.

- Most stock images are native RGB. Converting these to CMYK before editing can cause some loss of color fidelity and there is a potential they could end up looking dull.
- **Black usage:** In CMYK and or spot color work, please ensure text and fine lines are 100k as multiple ink blacks on these and small areas will lose definition. Rich blacks can be achieved by (50/50/50/100 or 60/50/40/100). AVOID (100/100/100/100) which can cause ink saturation that is undesirable.

Color Matching
It is important that you provide color-matching information for your art files. Please provide PMS colors to ensure a correct match when possible. Include the Pantone colors in the print files when prepping for production. All unspecified colors will be printed as is.

- Please do no specify metallic or fluorescent colors - as these are not compatible with most large format printers.
- Please do not override Pantone callouts with custom names.
- Please delete all unused color swatches in your Illustrator palette.
- If possible, please provide your Star Account Manager with your company's logo or brand guidelines.

You may request a custom printed sample (color strike) for an additional charge. Please specify if you would like the sample produced as an overall, reduced representation of your art, or if there is a particular area of the art you would like to see printed at final size. Please keep in mind that these requests add to the overall production time required.

Bleeds & Dielines
All files should include at least 1/4" bleed around all edges. For fabric graphics, please increase the bleed to at least 1" around all edges (2" for fabric graphics that exceed 20ft).

- Do not add registration or crop marks to your final files.
- Please utilize 1 pt die lines in magenta as a separate layer to define print spaces.

Outline Fonts
Convert all text to outlines in Illustrator final print files. This creates vector points so you do not need to include fonts (which can cause licensing issues).

- Go under the Type menu and select "Create Outlines."

Saving Final Files

When saving your Illustrator document, follow these steps to keep the file at a small, manageable size.

A. Be sure that the "Create PDF Compatible File" option is NOT checked as active.

B. Be sure that the "Include Linked Files" option is NOT checked as active.

C. Be sure that the "Embed ICC Profiles" option is NOT checked as active.

D. Always activate the "Use Compression" check box.

E. Never save your file as EPS or PDF. Supply us with the AI original that is created after following the steps above. NOTE: convert your fonts to outlines.

F. Package the AI file, which will include linked images and fonts (if not outlined)

Section 3 - How to Submit Art Files

Guidelines for Art Submission

• Please name your files so they are easily identified to the job.

• Please provide PDF proofs with file names and callouts as a reference to the files being supplied.

• Files up to 5mb in size can be emailed to your Star Account Manager. When emailing your files, please zip your files to prevent them from becoming corrupt.

• Files up to 2 GB should be uploaded to the Star's Sharefile site. Please request a link from your Star Account Manager.

• We do accept upload links from other ftp or file management sites.