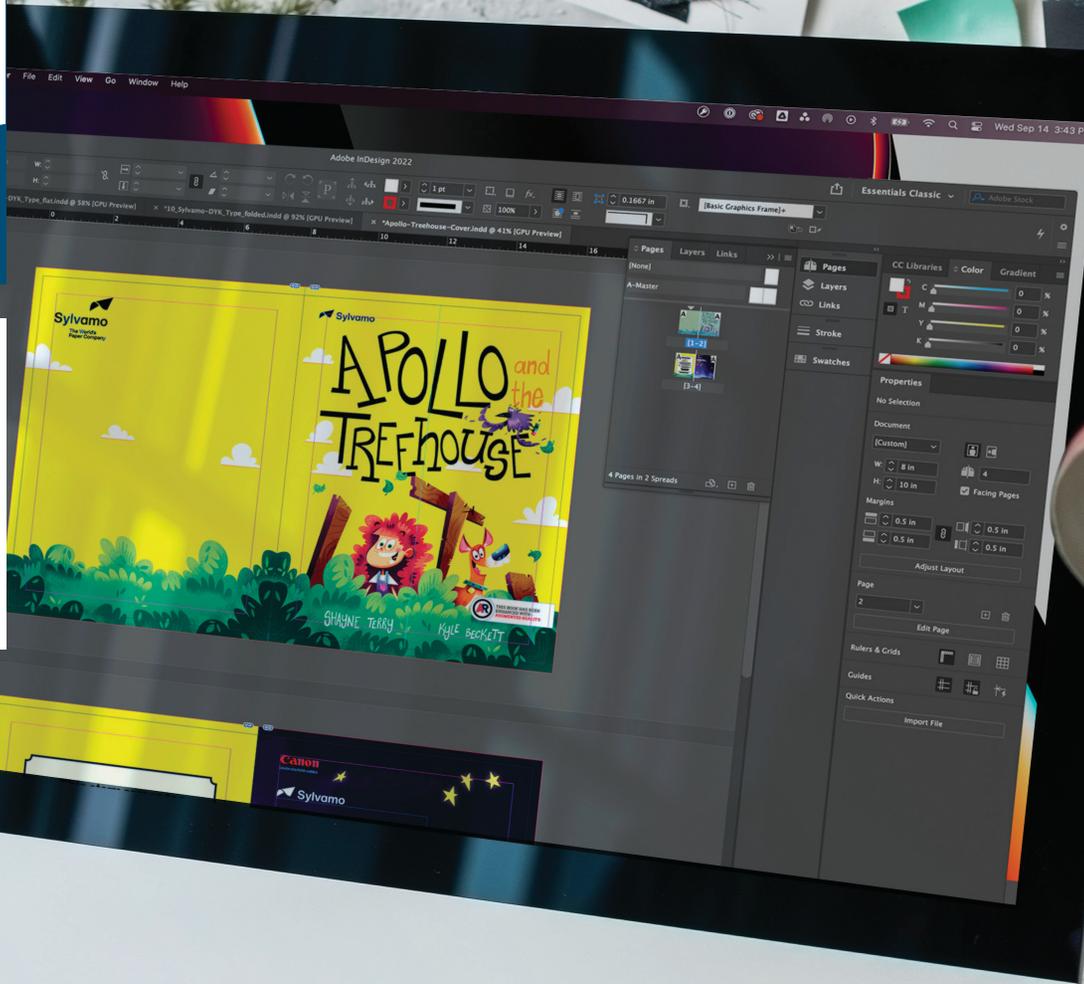


DYK

DID YOU KNOW SERIES

HOW TO BEST PREPARE YOUR FILES FOR PRINT

IS YOUR PROJECT
PRESS-READY?



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Printed on Accent® Opaque 100 lb.
Cover Super Smooth.

DID YOU KNOW?

WHAT TO LOOK FOR TO ENSURE YOUR FILES ARE PRINT-READY

A recent survey indicated B2B companies allocate 18% of their overall marketing budget to print projects.¹ This signals that companies see great potential value in print media, but it also means marketers can ill afford costly setbacks or missteps in the design or print process. One of the biggest time and cost-saving measures is to ensure your design files are press-ready before they go to print to help avoid reprinting costs or delays in delivering a final product.

WHY IT STILL MAKES SENSE TO GO WITH PRINT IN 2022

Choosing something like email over print means marketers would be missing out on capturing key demographics that place a great importance on print. More than 60% of millennials say they pay more attention to direct mail pieces compared with email,² and 73% of consumers prefer to be engaged by brands via direct

mail in part due to the high volume of emails they receive.³ High-quality print pieces are an important tool for marketers, and taking the extra time to ensure your files are press-ready will go a long way toward putting the best possible product in the hands of your customers while also saving time and money.

You've put your creativity to work and designed a print piece that will engage, delight and inform, and now you're ready to go to print. But are you *really* ready to print? Here's a couple of important considerations to help ensure a streamlined print process and high-quality end product.

FIRST, CHOOSE THE RIGHT PROGRAM FOR THE JOB



Adobe InDesign, Illustrator and Photoshop do have some overlap in what they do, but understanding where each one is different is important for ensuring press-ready files. Illustrator uses vector graphics, which are ideal for computer images, and Photoshop uses pixels that are better suited for photos. Using the right platform is key in ensuring files are press-ready and also eliminating time-consuming and costly revisions.

MAKE SURE YOU'RE USING HIGH-RESOLUTION PHOTOS



Speaking of photos, it's important to use high-resolution images with at least 300 DPI (dots per inch). This will ensure any photos used in your print piece are crisp and clean, not blurry and out of focus. It's also important to keep in mind the size and scale of your print project as the appropriate DPI can vary when designing a postcard compared to a poster. It's also important to remember that images for the web run about 72 DPI, so images culled from websites will take some editing for print use.

DESIGN WITH A BLEED ALLOWANCE IN MIND



With images that are intended to run to the very edge of the paper, it's important to include a bleed allowance so these images do not get cut off during printing. Best practice for the size of the bleed is 0.125" (1/8"). With a standard 4" x 6" postcard, you would want to design the piece to 4.25" x 6.25" to account for the bleed.

CLEARLY MARK YOUR VARIABLE FIELDS



Using variable data printing technology is key to adding a personal touch to your project, but it's only effective insofar as it's actually implemented correctly. This is why it's important to clearly mark your variable data fields in such a way that the printer can use personalized data. The most common and simplest way to identify a variable field is to use caret marks as a placeholder: (<First Name>, <Last Name>, <Company>, etc.)

RESOURCES

For marketing materials from brochures to postcards, we suggest Accent® Opaque. Check out all the basis weights and finishes at [accentopaque.com](https://www.accentopaque.com).

SOURCES

¹ <https://www.smallbizgenius.net/by-the-numbers/direct-mail-statistics>

² <https://www.uspsdelivers.com/still-relevant-a-look-at-how-millennials-respond-to-direct-mail>

³ <https://www.smallbizgenius.net/by-the-numbers/direct-mail-statistics>