Best Printing Practices

General Tips
- Try to keep file sizes as small as possible. Smaller files generally mean faster prints, which in turn mean shorter print queues at deadlines and fewer computer and printer crashes. See the Creating an Optimized PDF card for instructions on generating smaller print jobs.
- Do not work on files from your USB drive. Copy your file to the local drive, work on it there, and then save it back to your personal drive.
- Definitely never try to print from your personal drive, it will most likely cause you a lot of frustration.
- Always send a test print first, well in advance of your deadline to make sure you know how to set it up.
- Give yourself plenty of time to print. Everyone else is going to be printing right up to the deadline, so get it done early. Remember that something will always go wrong and it will take longer than you think.
- We recommend printing all Adobe files through Adobe Acrobat to ensure optimum file size and print quality. Adobe products are made to work seamlessly with Acrobat.

InDesign
- InDesign is built to work in unison with Photoshop, but there are some things to remember when inserting Photoshop images into InDesign.
- The quality of .PSDs will be best maintained if you do not convert them to .jpg before you export the InDesign file to PDF for printing. This will allow you to continue editing the originals without reducing the quality.
- Try to keep all images at the same resolution.
- If you insert a 36”x48” 300ppi drawing into InDesign and then scale it to a 6”x8” image the linked image will still have the same number of pixels so the resolution will be 1800ppi. InDesign will have to edit out the excess information while it exports it to PDF. This means that the export process will take longer and be more prone to cause InDesign to freeze. Resize your images in Photoshop before inserting them.
- See the Printing from InDesign card for instructions on how to export to PDF for printing.

Photoshop
- Flatten layers before you save as a PDF. This will help keep your file size down.
- The most important setting in Photoshop is the “Image Size,” under the “Image” menu. This is where you control your image resolutions.
- Resize/resample your images only when you are finished editing. This will allow you to print to multiple sizes without degrading the quality of the image.
- Flatten and rasterize your document before saving as a PDF if you have filters and transparencies that don’t print correctly.
- See Printing from Photoshop card

Illustrator
- Avoid plotting from Illustrator. Save your file as a PDF and then open it in Adobe Acrobat to plot.
- Set your print tiling border to make sure everything will fit within the printable area of the sheet. In the print dialogue box set the printer and paper size then press done. In the View menu select show print tiling.
- the dotted rectangle shows you the printable area; keep everything inside this rectangle to avoid scaling when printing.
- If you have issues with transparencies not printing correctly, try rasterizing everything before exporting. Remember to save this as a different file so you can revert to the original.
- See Printing from Illustrator card for further instructions

Acrobat
- Try to keep your printing PDFs under 50mb. If your PDF is larger than this try optimizing it first. If it is still over 50mb consider reducing the resolution of your images. If you construct your files properly you shouldn’t have an issue with size. Even if your file is less than 50mb it may still be beneficial to optimize it.
- If your image comes out with a section missing, make sure that you unchecked Auto Rotate and Choose Paper Source by PDF Size
- Printing to the post script drivers of the different printers is recommended for image heavy files. The color Xerox has issues with images if you use the PCL driver.
- However, the PCL driver is much faster. So if perfect image fidelity is not an issue, go ahead and print to the PCL.
- Sometimes printing from PDF will result in unexpected results for files with a lot of transparencies. If this happens we recommend that you first try setting the PDF to Print as Image. If it is still not printing right, try saving the original document as a JPEG and then printing it.