



Digital Art Submittal Guidelines

Media

CD's, DVD's, USB drives and e-mail (10MB max per e-mail) are acceptable. We can also provide small hard drives in special situations.

FTP, Dropbox or similar internet-based file sharing services are preferred.

Star Signs can provide FTP and Dropbox access on request.

All fonts must be converted to outlines or included for our use in production. Fonts are required for message layouts.

Include all linked files. The use of pre-flight software is strongly recommended for art containing linked files and live fonts.

Preferred File Formats

We are currently using Adobe Creative Cloud software, always the current version.

Illustrator files are preferred for all cutting process, all materials.

For large format printing, vector-based Illustrator files will scale up cleanly. If large images are used, Photoshop is the preferred format, with vector smart objects copied from Illustrator as necessary.

PDF may be used as a last resort, please see note below.

Other Formats

Adobe Acrobat (PDF) is **only acceptable for quoting**. The compressed nature of PDF files is destructive to the artwork. As a result most PDF files cannot be used directly for production. Art conversion time and additional fees will apply.

***The only exception is to save the PDF with the Illustrator default setting - with the box checked to preserve Illustrator editing capabilities.**

Image files such as JPEG, PNG and GIF taken from web sites are not acceptable for production. Some pixilation and compression artifacts can be seen in these file types, so they should be avoided. TIFF and EPS images with higher resolutions may be acceptable for printing, see table below.

Placing, linking or embedding image files in Adobe Illustrator files (ai, pdf, eps) does not automatically generate outlines. The resulting file(s) will require conversion if outlines are needed for cutting processes.

In addition to Adobe Illustrator and Adobe Photoshop, we also use SketchUp and Geomagic Design (similar to Solidworks or Inventor) for our drawing and design processes. As a result, we can also accept *.SKP, *.AD_PRT, *.AD_ASM, *.STP/*.STEP, *.dwg and *.dxf. Please send a test file to verify compatibility.

When sending any CAD formats such as DWG or DXF, please resolve all linked (XREF or similar) files before submitting. Please leave layers intact or send only the floor plan layer(s). These files often require conversion. Please send a test file verify compatibility.

Linked Graphics and Resolution

Illustrator: include linked/placed images and fonts as separate files, please do not embed.

Photoshop: leave as many layers as possible, this will assist with color and layout adjustments for production.

Indicate any color numbers to match such as Pantone, Matthews Paint, CMYK, brick or EIFS, powder coat, etc.

The following may be used as a rough guide to determine finished resolution. The combination of print size and resolution should yield a file size of less than 6 GB.

viewing distance (ft)	resolution (ppi)	intended use
20 ft + :	40-75	billboards, exterior wall murals
10-20 ft :	75-100	banners over 3 ft tall, back-lit pole signs
5-10 ft :	150-200	Interior wall displays, overhead signs, vehicle graphics
1-5 ft :	300+	menu boards, back-lit directories, posters mounted within arm's reach