



Lev Promotions

www.levpromotions.com Phone: 858.205.1398 info@levpromotions.com

Almost Everything You Never Wanted to Know about Artwork, but Need to Understand

You want your logo, branding and/or messaging on a product. Well, you've come to the right place because that's what Lev Promotions does!

The trick is making sure that the artwork prints properly on the product(s). We want a clear, crisp, legible imprint that does your branding proud.

What you need to know is that not all artwork is created equal...while something might look great on a computer screen, it may not when a physical imprint is needed - like on a piece of paper, pen, mug, shirt or one of the other thousands of imprintable products out there!

If artwork isn't your thing, or you're not familiar with details of creating a graphic for a printed product as opposed to a graphic for the web, here are the basics so we can help you get the right artwork format for the best possible outcome!

And, seriously, if you're not the graphics person, you don't really need to know this - either pass this onto that person or we'll be happy to work with you to prepare your artwork to meet production specifications - depending on the complexity of the artwork, there might not even be an additional fee when you place your order; or a small fee if you're not ready to place the order or the artwork is complex. You can even send us your artwork file (info@levpromotions.com) ahead of time for a complimentary review.

The main thing to know is that most printed items work better with vector artwork than with raster (or bitmap) files. (If you'd like concise technical explanation on vector vs. raster files, Adobe has one at www.adobe.com/creativecloud/design/discover/vector-file.html)

Vector vs. Raster Files



Vector artwork can be enlarged to any size without losing clarity or resolution because images are created using a mathematical formula of points and connecting lines.

The outline image represents what the artwork looks like in a "wireframe" view. While you can't see the points, you do see the lines that connect the points that create the shapes.

There is no distortion of the image when enlarged, so it is clear and crisp when printed.

Raster artwork files may be able to be used for print purposes if they're created at a minimum of 300 dpi (hi-res) at the size they're meant to print at.

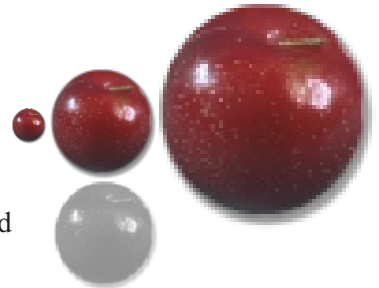
Enlarging a raster image reduces its dpi (dots per inch), resulting in loss of crispness, especially fuzziness around the edges. That's because raster images are created using dots (pixels) placed next to each other to create an image. Enlarging the image just causes those dots to get bigger as they fill in space.

The smallest plum is at about 300 dpi. You can see that, each time we enlarged the size of the graphic, it becomes a bit less sharp and some detail is lost. The middle one ends up at 97 dpi and the largest one is 47 dpi.

The grayscale image shows what the artwork looks like in "wireframe" view. Notice that you can start to see the dots that make up the image and the outer edges are fuzzy.

Now, you might ask what happens if I start with a low-res image (like the largest plum) and I save it using art software as a 300 dpi image? Well, you'll have a 300 dpi file that has most of the same fuzziness and lack of detail in it and will be a huge file size that might become difficult to work with and could even crash the app used to work with it! Just like in cooking, if you start with subpar ingredients, you'll end up with a subpar result.

No matter what anyone does (or tells you), photographs are always raster files. Nothing can be done about that but to see if they can be used given the size and resolution they were originally saved in.





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These are the file types that work best for printing anything in real life:

Vector Files

- EPS
- AI
- CDR
- PDF (not always, but usually when created in CorelDraw or Adobe Illustrator)

In order for these files to open correctly, please be sure that they are saved at 300 dpi and that all fonts are converted to curves or paths (depends on the application used to create it).

And remember, a raster image or file placed/embedded into what would normally be a vector file, doesn't make those images vector! A raster file is always a raster file - it must be converted (redrawn) to convert it to vector.

Raster Files - these should all be at 300 or higher dpi at the actual imprint size.

- TIFF
- JPEG
- BMP
- PNG

If you're not sure what you have or if it will work, we'll do a complimentary review of your file to let you know what it is and if it needs to be adjusted or converted to create the best possible results for your project.

Files that Won't Work

- Powerpoint
- Word (Exception may be for imprints which are all text like tip-in pages, itineraries, etc...)
- Excel (Exception for variable data printing like names, addresses, numbers, etc. and this would be a separate file from the imprint layout itself.)
- Publisher
- Images grabbed off the internet (these are almost universally low-resolution raster images at 72 dpi).

These file types will always need to be converted to a type and resolution that will work for printing on anything other than possibly paper products. We can handle the conversion for you, often for about \$45 and we'll send you the file upon request.

Color Models

There are several different color models out there - each with it's specific purpose:

- PMS (Pantone Matching System) - a specific color that can be created by mixing a preset formula of inks
- CMYK - this is what your color printer prints in with all colors being made from a combination of cyan, magenta, yellow and black
- RGB - this is how your computer shows color; it creates all colors by combining red, green and blue
- Hex - this is used for online purposes only

For more information on PMS vs. CMYK (the two models used in printing), go to <https://www.pantone.com/articles/technical/spot-vs-process-color>.