



# UPLOADING ARTWORK

Best practices for uploading  
to American Image Displays

# 1



## WORKING FILES

Working files are the native files from their source program. Photoshop, Illustrator, and InDesign files would be your working files. Without these, we're limited in adjustments or revisions of the artwork.



## ASSET FILES

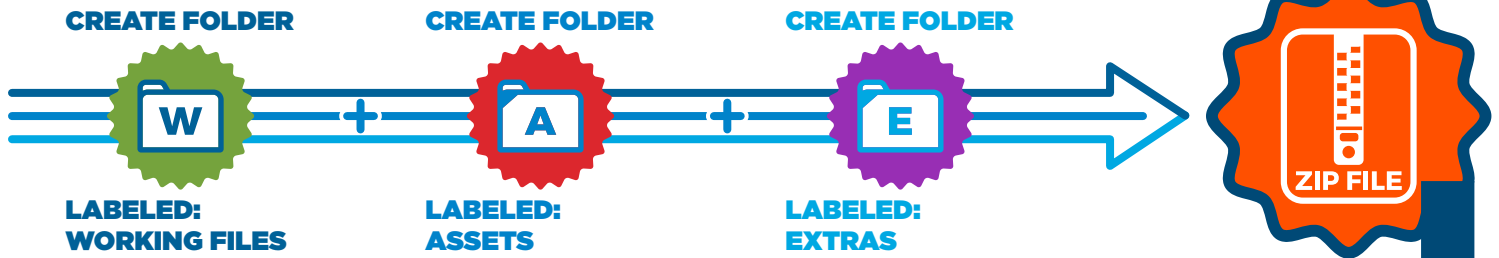
Asset files are the files attached or placed into your Working Files. This mainly relates to images, but also includes logos and fonts associated with your artwork. It helps to send these so that we're able to adjust size and resolution.



## EXTRA FILES

Extra files include all additional files that help us to provide you with the best possible result. These can be your own proof saves, PDF saves to accompany the working files, mock-ups to help us see your exact vision, and more.

EASIEST UPLOAD FORMAT



UPLOAD ZIP FILE TO:

**[american-image.com/prepare-upload-your-graphic-files](http://american-image.com/prepare-upload-your-graphic-files)**

ALTERNATIVE UPLOAD OPTIONS:

**wetransfer.com** *No Account Needed*

**dropbox** *You will need to create an account*

**onedrive** *You will need to create an account*

**google drive** *You will need to create an account*

**PROOF APPROVAL REQUIRED BEFORE PRINT**





# WORKING FILES

Best practices for quick turn-around on your display.

# 2

## PREFERRED WORKING FILES



**ILLUSTRATOR**



**PHOTOSHOP**



**IN DESIGN**

## ACCEPTABLE WORKING FILES



### PDF

While not preferred, PDFs are the easiest file for extraction and file conversion.



### MS OFFICE

MS Office files are not good for large scale print, but can be used as a base for redesign.



### JPG & TIFF

These files are flat. They cannot be edited in-house.

## REJECTED WORKING FILES



### GIMP/FREWARE

Any files created in GIMP or other free design programs will need to be converted to a PDF or JPG before we can view them.



### COREL SUITE

Any files created in the Corel Suite will need to be converted to an EPS, PDF, AI or JPG before we can view them.



### GIF/PNG

GIF & PNG files are web-based and cannot be accepted for print.

## MAINTAIN APPEARANCE

Resize your images in Photoshop using the Image Size Window with Preserve Details turned on. This ensures the best possible scaling for your images.

**UNDER 100**

### UNDER 100PPI (OR DPI)

Images under 100ppi or not properly converted will print with defects such as aliasing, jpeg artifacts, or image blur.

\*Some displays will require higher PPI.\*



## CMYK COLOR SPACE

Make sure your file, images and colors are in the CMYK color mode. Problems can result from using RGB. Below you can see the difference between RGB and CMYK Cyan.

Pantone colors are coded and easier to make exact. Usually used for text and logos, it's the best way to ensure your print color is exact across the board.



**100**

### 100PPI (OR DPI)

Images will appear clean when zoomed to 100%. They will print correctly, and not run the risk of extending the timeline of your order due to send-backs.



### ZOOM IMAGE TO 100%

Before submitting, check your graphics at 100% to make sure they look the way you want. This will help you get a better idea of the final product.

## CONVERT TYPE TO OUTLINES

Some fonts don't translate from file to file, system to system. While you can upload your font to us, that doesn't ensure it will have it's intended look once we install your font or use one from our library.

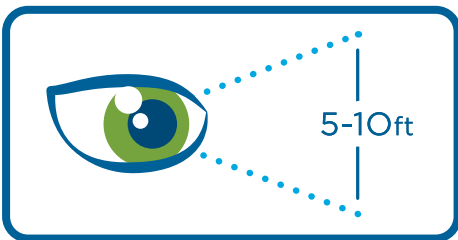
The best way to work around this is to convert all text to outlines in Illustrator & InDesign and to "Convert To Shapes" in Photoshop.

**TYPE**  
**TYPE**



## VECTOR OR RASTER?

If you are unsure if your graphic or logo is vector or raster, zoom in to see if there are any pixels. Raster images are like photographs, made up of pixels to create an image. So you will see jagged edges around your image. Vector images are paths, shapes, and lines and can zoom in forever with clear lines and colors.



## VIEWING DISTANCE

Most of your customers and clients will be viewing your graphics from a 5-10ft distance. Considering this along with the scale of most displays, it's not necessary to worry too much about blur or small amounts of aliasing. It's almost impossible to get clean results from up-scaling photos to certain displays due to size.

Try to visualize your display from 5-10ft, even by simply zooming out on the entire image. Any pixelation might not be that visible and you may find that some words need to have more visual emphasis.

## CREATE FOLDER



**LABELLED:  
WORKING FILES**



# ASSETS & EXTRAS

Asset files for your artwork.  
Extra files for specifications.

# 3

## ASSET FILES



### FONTS

If your company has an official font, it's recommended you send us a copy in case there are any edits we need to make to your artwork.

Unfortunately, some fonts can't transfer from computer to computer, so it's still preferred to outline the fonts before sending your design for print.



### LOGOS

Though you can embed vector logos into the artwork, sometimes a logo is a raster file due to image effects or otherwise. In either scenario, it's always a good idea to send us copies of your logo, both so that we can have it on file and so we can ensure we get the exact color and specs that you desire.



### PHOTOS

Whether it's a full background picture or just pictures throughout the design, embedding photos can bog down your file and stir up issues in the printing process. Always place photo files (**File>Place**) into the art and send us the photos you used.



### IN DESIGN PACKAGES

InDesign allows you to create "packages" with your artwork (**File>Package**). This is a convenient feature that packages all of your art and assets into one folder. It also packages fonts with the artwork but it's always good to double check if you want to send them. Licensing, Operating Systems, and other factors can affect whether we can use them or not. It's still preferred to outline all fonts.



### IMAGE RESIZING

It's best to start with large source images. If necessary, Photoshop is the most powerful program for resizing images. You have more control over how the pixels re-sample when increasing or decreasing size.



SMOOTH

### GRADIENTS

Gradients created in vector-based programs aren't always as smooth as those created in Raster. Here are two simple solutions if you notice banding issues.

1. If your artwork has no layers, open it in Photoshop and go to **Filter>Noise>Add Noise**. Add noise at 1-2% (or to your discretion – the lower, the better), with Gaussian Blur enabled with Monochromatic turned on.

2. If you can isolate the gradient layer, bring it into Photoshop in RGB mode. Ensure there are no other elements with the gradient and it's at-size with 100ppi. Go to **Filter>Filter Gallery>Brush Strokes>Spatter**. Set the Spray Radius to 25 and the Smoothness at 1. Additionally, you can add a noise effect of 1%, Monochromatic with Gaussian Blur enabled.

Do not convert your file to 16 bit. This will create needlessly large files.



BANDING

### CREATE FOLDER



**LABELED: ASSETS**

## EXTRA FILES

EXAMPLES OF EXTRA FILES AND THEIR USE.



PDF PRINT  
PDF PROOF  
BRANDING  
GUIDELINES



PNG, JPG PROOF  
GUIDELINE INFO



JOB NOTES  
GUIDELINES  
COLOR INFO  
SHIPPING INFO



JOB NOTES  
DESIGN MOCK-UPS  
BRANDING  
GUIDELINES



COLOR INFO  
PRINT SPECS  
SAVED AS IMAGE  
OR IN DOCUMENT



LOGO  
GUIDELINES  
LOGO SIZE &  
MARGIN INFO

### CREATE FOLDER



**LABELED: EXTRAS**



# MORE TIPS

Extra tips to help you along the way

# 4



Sans-Serif  
Serif  
Web Safe  
Web Safe



## CONTINUITY & BRANDING

CREATING YOUR OWN BRAND ECOSYSTEM

This one is important. Consistency is key with a company's visibility. In an already saturated market, you don't want to aid in the visual confusion. Having consistency in colors, fonts, layout standards, etc., helps to let the customer associate better with your brand. Two examples of effective branding are Apple and McDonalds. The majority of the people in the world connect primarily-white branding paired with simple fonts to Apple, and red and yellow with McDonalds, whether consciously or not.

These benefits are shared with small business. Not only does it help the customer associate better with your product, but it also takes a lot of guesswork out of how to handle your assets such as logos, fonts, and marketing collateral.



### CLEAR MESSAGE

KEEP IT SIMPLE

You often only have a few seconds to get a person's attention, and filling up space on a display can actually be a counter-productive disadvantage that steals light on select aspects of your message. Try to keep your display simple and effective so that it drives specific branding instead of covering everything.



### GRAB THE EYE

YOUR MESSAGE AT EYE-LEVEL

Your exhibit should be part of your story, and that story needs to read well. Your design should stand out with visual confidence. Guide the viewer's eye to the most important details using color, contrast, and composition.

### USE OF COLOR



HUE

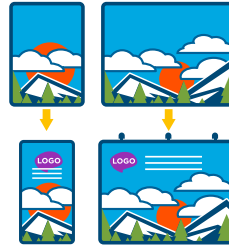
TINT (+WHITE)  
SHADE (+BLACK)  
TONE (+GRAY)

Color is important both in branding and general design. Here's a small guide to help understand the use of color and terminology involved.

### USE OF FONT

Sans-Serif | Serif | Script

You'll want to choose fonts that are easy to read from a distance. Unless it's not important text, people should be able to read your display at a glance.



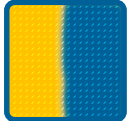
### USE OF IMAGERY

Which image you pick for a background is important. It is best practice to find something with the same orientation as the display you're planning on. Otherwise you may have problems with the photo not being wide enough or long enough to fill the background and still maintain print quality.

### FABRIC AND VINYL

GETTING TO KNOW YOUR PRIMARY SUBSTRATES

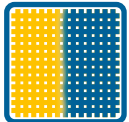
VINYL



In printing, substrates refer to the material on which your graphic will be printed.

Vinyl surfaces are textured and flat with the ink sitting primarily on the surface, and because of this they will do better to boast vibrant colors as well as any defects in the print.

FABRIC



With Fabric being more porous, the ink will soak in and will have a bit more spread to it; defects can hide better, but the color can lose some vibrancy.

### BACKLIT DISPLAYS

LIGHTS ON, WHITE OUT.



Backlit displays are a great way to give your exhibit some added flare. However, it's important to keep the colors easy on the eyes.

In the examples above, you should notice how contrast in the left example makes the message more clear. Also, lighter colors will wash out a little more than darker colors when you add backlighting.

### 1ST / 2ND SURFACE

ADHESIVE APPLIED TO DISPLAYS

First Surface



Adhesive is applied to the back of the print.

Second Surface



Adhesive is applied to the front of the print.