

Industry Standards

The Programs used by Designers



If you are a sales rep or customer who works with a graphic designer, it's important to know there are many different types of Image and Layout programs used in the Graphics Industry. There is no way that we can learn or understand them all. However, we should know what types of programs our company's graphic artist uses when creating printed material. Here is a brief overview of what some of the Industry standard programs for print are capable of.

Image Creation Programs

An Image Creation program can be used for drawing, or embellishment of a photograph or graphic. To bring the image into the program a transfer can be done through the means of a scanner or a connection to a digital camera. In addition, images can also be drawn through use of a mouse or digital stylus. There are two main image programs, created by Adobe. Here's brief description of what they are used for.

Adobe Photoshop (.psd and .psb)



Adobe Photoshop is what its name describes. Its main use is: to work with photos. Digital photographs of various file types can be opened in this program and then the photograph can be changed or manipulated using the various tools within the program.

Adobe Illustrator (.ai and .eps)



Adobe Illustrator is a program used for drawings, work with type and illustrations. It could also be called a layout program as well, but it is mainly used for vector image creation which will be explained more later on. (See Vector) In addition, photographs can be placed into Illustrator, this is known as a placed "eps" and this will be explained in more detail in another brochure. But the main use of Illustrator is to create or trace drawings and use them in the digital and printing world.

Layout Programs

There are a number of Layout Programs used in the Graphics Industry. Their purpose is for the compilation and layout of text and images on a page, and then those pages are compiled into a book or magazine. Some Layout Programs are for desktop use (so that a salesperson can edit the file), for instance Microsoft Office Word. Others, like Adobe InDesign, are specifically for the Printing Industry. This brochure deals with programs that are Printing Industry Standard.

Adobe PageMaker (.pmd)



Adobe PageMaker is a legacy layout program for placing text and graphics into it and creating layouts of brochures and newsletters. It was a Printing Industry Standards program. Now it's replaced by the product called Adobe InDesign.

Adobe InDesign (.indd)



Adobe InDesign is a Printing Industry Standard Program used by graphic designers. It and its competition program QuarkXPress are used to create many of the high quality printed materials we see in advertisements and magazines. To insure that the overall layout of an InDesign file is not accidentally changed or corrupted, it's often converted into a PDF file. *See PDF*

QuarkXPress (.qxd)



QuarkXPress is a nearly identical layout product to Adobe InDesign, except it was created by another company. However its files, depending on the version of the file, can be opened and edited in Adobe InDesign.

Adobe Acrobat Distiller / Reader (.pdf)

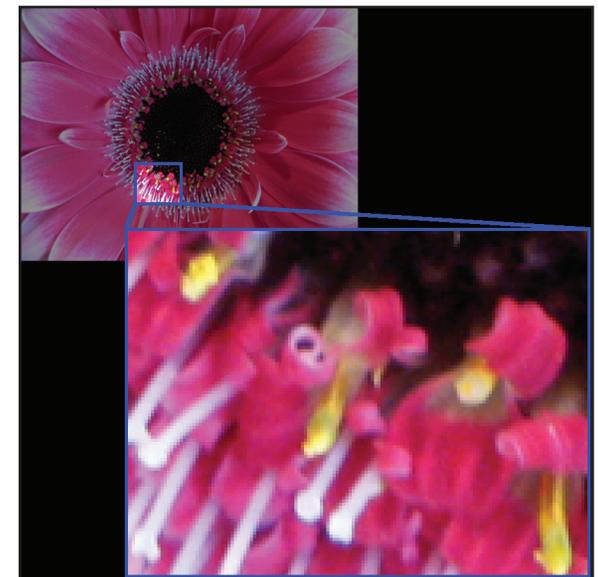


This program is used in the final creation of a small compact file that can be made from any of the programs above. It's often the final file sent for printing.

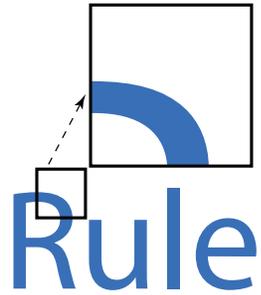
Other Related Definitions

Some words that are used to describe the difference between certain image creation programs:

Raster - refers to a photograph or image that contains pixels or little coloured dots. As you enlarge the image you can see the dots more clearly and the image becomes more blurry or pixilated.



Vector - an image that is created in a drawing program. Some examples are type or a logo. You can scale the object to any size you like and it will always maintain its smooth curves. It's edges never lose its shape or become blurry.



Resolution - what gives a photo its image quality. The higher the resolution the better the quality, but the larger the file size. Resolution is measured in dots per inch (dpi) or pixels per inch (ppi). A low resolution image is between 72dpi and 150dpi which is good for emails, the web, and Microsoft PowerPoint, but not for print. A high resolution photo is 300dpi or higher and is best to send to a local print house.



Resolution of flower Image Approx 100dpi



Resolution of flower Image Approx 300dpi

It's important to remember that a vector image is scalable and has no resolution and so this should not be a concern when dealing with vector types of files.

Hopefully this information has provided you with some helpful knowledge and a better understand of digital tools used by most Graphic Designers; for further definitions on words used in the Graphic/Print Industry, please consult the "Printing Jargon" brochures found at www.theinkrag.com



For more information on the Adobe Products mentioned visit: www.adobe.com

For further information on QuarkXPress products visit: www.quark.com

Industry Standards

The Programs used by Designers in the Marketing, Advertising & Printing Industry



Image Creation Programs
Layout Programs
&
Other Related Definitions

Produced by The Ink Rag