<u>Design Advice: Overprint settings in QuarkXPress and Adobe InDesign</u>

Overprint in the past

Until recently most pages for print productions were designed in QuarkXPress. In Quark the designer can apply overprint settings (trap information) to overlapping coloured items or text elements. The following settings can be chosen: Default, overprint or knockout. Designers are often not using these settings knowingly, in most cases documents are designed in such a way that a designer wants overlapping colours to be knockout and only black text elements overlapping coloured areas should really be printed in overprint mode. A disadvantage of the QuarkXPress application is the fact that the effects of such overprint settings cannot be previewed on the display. The fact that many designers did not really check overprint settings in the past forced printers to set up their RIP in such a way that only black text was produced in overprint and all other elements were produced as knockout. This sometimes caused a problem for a designer who willingly had chosen to apply an overprint setting as in such a case the final print result differed from the designer's expectation.

Overprint today

We notice an increasing use of Adobe InDesign CS. This application offers the designer the possibility to visualize immediately on screen the effect of the applied overprint settings in print. An increasing number of designers are deliberately using the extra creative effects that can be achieved with the overprint settings. This means that printers now are obliged to set up their RIP in such a way that overprint settings that are present in a PDF are maintained in the final print. The consequence of this is that a designer who does not make correct use of the overprint settings may end up with a print result that does not meet with their expectations.

Warning

Designers are strongly advised only to apply the overprint setting of a colour area or a text element when the overprint effect is really wanted. When black text is overlapping colour areas the overprint setting should be 'on' in order to avoid white edges. InDesign and Illustrator users can immediately see the effect of overprint settings by means of 'Overprint Preview'. Unfortunately Quark does not have the ability to preview the effect of overprint settings on the screen. In case of a colour area that completely covers another item Quark will automatically apply overprint. So please be aware of this behaviour of the application! Fortunately there is a method for Quark users to check overprint. After a PDF has been produced from a Quark document the overprint effects can be checked in Adobe Acrobat (6 or later) by using: Advanced / Overprint Preview and Separation Preview.

Urgent appeal

- ✓ Only use the overprint setting in case you really want the overprint effect.
- ✓ Before sending the PDF to the printer check it by using the Overprint Preview and the Separation Preview in Acrobat (6 or later) or with the Overprint Preview in the (free) Acrobat Reader (7 or later).
- ✓ Make sure that your colour proof or reference print shows the same overprint behaviour like the Certified PDF when viewed with the overprint preview 'on'.

Responsibility

The person creating the QuarkXPress or InDesign file is responsible for the correct use and the final check of overprint settings. The printer is responsible for main- taining the overprint settings from the supplied PDF in the final print result. In case you have any doubts about the correct procedure please do not hesitate to contact us or to send some test files. For our contact information see: www.charlesworth.com.