1 Certified PDF Magazines the Netherlands

1.1 Introduction

Delivering print ready advertisement files in PDF according to the standard 'Certified PDF Magazines the Netherlands' (update January 2010)

Digital advertising material for placement in Dutch consumer-and business magazines should be delivered as print ready digital files in Certified PDF according to the described standard. Certified PDF here implies: PDF/X-1A PLUS files that have been created using a 'Ghent PDF Workgroup compliant application' and which have been properly pre-flighted with the correct PDF check profile.

1.2 An International Standard

The 'DALTC' has created a standard for the creation, checking and exchange of digital advertising materials: ´Certified PDF for magazines the Netherlands´.

DALTC is the Dutch technical committee for digital delivery of advertisements with participants from: NUV, VEA and CMBO. This standard complies with the international specifications of the 'Ghent PDF Workgroup' used in several countries. (www.gwg.org)

1.3 Checking upfront improves reliability!

During the creation of Certified PDF according to the standard, the creator checks the 'plain' PDF on many different properties. When the digital file passes the check, it is ´certified´ with a digital stamp; the creator knows that the file complies with the standard for delivery to magazines.

The publisher receiving the Certified PDF file will see instantly whether the file has been certified according to the proper standard and further processing can start immediately.

This makes a trustworthy transfer of advertising material possible and this way of working excludes discussion about responsibilities between the creator and the receiver of the digital document. With some knowledge of the applicable software and its settings, creating proper Certified PDF files is not complicated.

1.4 Which workflow to select?

Print ready Certified PDF's can be created in different manners, which are more or less automated.

Dutch or local consultants and training partners that can help you with the correct set-up and use of your Certified PDF workflow can, amongst others, be found at www.enfocus.com at: 'Europe-Netherlands /or 'your country' -Training-Find your trainer'.

1.5 What software can be used with what job options and PDF Profiles?

There are different ways to create a proper 'Certified' PDF.

Adobe Acrobat 8.x or Adobe Acrobat 9.x (Professional) in combination with Enfocus Instant PDF 09.

► Install the required joboptions in Acrobat Distiller.

► Apply the proper PDF Profile (.ppp file) in Instant PDF.

2. Agfa ApogeeX Create or higher:

► Import the proper PDF Profile.

3. Adobe Acrobat 8.x or Adobe Acrobat 9.x (Professional) in combination with Enfocus PitStop Professional 09.

► Install the required joboptions in Acrobat Distiller.

► Apply the proper PDF Profile in PitStop Professional.

4. Adobe Acrobat 8.x or Adobe Acrobat 9.x (Professional) in combination with Enfocus PitStop Server 09.

► Install the required joboptions in Acrobat Distiller.

► Select the proper PDF Profile in PitStop Server under Default PDF Profiles, Ghent PDF Workgroup Specifications 2008.

5. Adobe InDesign 5 (CS3) and InDesign 6 direct PDF export in combination with one of the above-mentioned PDF control / preflight software packages.
WARNING: use the correct settings. (See also: Can direct PDF export be used?)
6. There are a several other applications next to Enfocus which are also Ghent PDF Workgroup compliant. Using these you can create reliable PDF files also. (Amongst others: OneVision, Markzware, PrintSure, Dalim etc. For more information: See www.gwg.org).

1.6   What is the use of the 3v3 settings?

There are two types of PDF settings:
For PDF's in CMYK and for PDF's in RGB or a mix of RGB and CMYK. At the moment in the Netherlands we have agreed only to use PDF's in CMYK. For this purpose the 1v4 settings must be used. These settings are based on the international PDF X-1a standard.
In some countries also PDF's in RGB are being used for specific applications; in that case the 3v3 settings apply. Those settings are based on the international PDF X-3 standard.
For the Netherlands the 3v3 settings are not relevant for the delivery of PDF's for ads.
So: only use the 1v4 settings.

1.7   What are the proper PDF joboptions and PDF profiles for your job?

For advertisements in full colour (CMY and/or K) for web offset, gravure and sheetfed offset):
► Export PDF from InDesign CS3/4 MagazineAds_1v4_IND4.joboptions
Acrobat Professional 8 or 9 Distiller:
► MagazineAds_1v4.joboptions Enfocus software: MagazineAds_1v4.ppp
For advertisements with spot colours in sheetfed offset:
► Export PDF from InDesign CS3/4: SheetSpotHiRes_1v4_IND4.joboptions
► Acrobat 8 and 9 Distiller: SheetSpotHiRes_1v4.joboptions
► Enfocus software: SheetSpotHiRes_1v4.ppp

1.8   Where can you find the proper joboptions and PDF profiles?

The setting files can be downloaded from: www.certifiedpdf.net.
To be found under: Community/DALTC (CMBO). We advise you to register (free) on this site to stay up-to-date concerning the used specifications. More detailed information on the content of the specifications for the PDF joboptions and PDF Profiles can be found at: www.ghentpdfworkgroup.org.

1.9   Why are there multiple job options and PDF profiles?

By now, the advantages of using Certified PDF have been proven in practice, specifically for the delivery of advertisements in magazines and newspapers. Other segments of the printing market increasingly recognize the benefits of Certified.
Specifications exist for commercial printing jobs in weboffset and -gravure, sheetfed offset and digital printing. To cater for the differences between these processes it was necessary to produce different PDF joboptions and PDF profiles for each of those processes.
Internationally the 'Ghent PDF Workgroup', assembling trade organisations from most countries, has created the necessary specifications for the different types of use.
The Ghent PDF Workgroup specifications are compliant with the International ISO standard PDF/X-1a, and add the necessary additional checks. This makes the specifications compatible with the PDF/X-1a used in countries like Germany and USA.
Also trade organisations in different countries like the Netherlands have started to make use of these specifications for their local standards. Please check for: www.certifiedpdf.net or www.gwg.org.

1.10 Where can specifications for commercial web offset and -gravure be found?

These setting files can be downloaded from: www.certifiedpdf.net.
To be found under: Community/DALTC (CMBO).
The proper joboptions and PDF profiles for these applications are:
► InDesign CS3/4: WebCmykHiRes_1v4_IND4.joboptions
► Acrobat Professional 8 and 9 Distiller: WebCmykHiRes_1v4.joboptions
► Enfocus Products WebCmykHiRes_1v4.ppp
Or check for your Application Software settings www.gwg.org/specifications 1V4.
The creation and control / preflight procedure is identical to the delivery of print ready Certified PDF files for advertisements.

1.11 Can direct PDF Export be used?

Direct export from PDF files is possible from InDesign CS3 and higher is as good or better than using Postscript and Adobe Acrobat Distiller to create print ready PDF.
There is a WARNING however: with Adobe CS serious problems can occur when Adode Acrobat and InDesign PDF export are used indifferently. Through a fault in the interface of Adobe CS you will see Distiller joboptions in InDesign as well. If you were to use these, the direct PDF export would go wrong. To tackle this problem the Ghent Workgroup has made separate joboptions for Distiller and InDesign. You will only get good PDF's with InDesign CS3 and higher if you use the appropriate joboptions.
► These are called: _1v4_IND4.joboptions.
► In Distiller you must only use the _1v4.joboptions.
QuarkXPress 7 and higher have also PDF Export, but has been known to cause occasional problems. That is why, it was advised to create Postscript according to the directions of the Ghent PDF Workgroup first, and use Adobe Acrobat Distiller with the proper joboptions to create the PDF and then to check it with the correct PDF profile in one of the applications mentioned earlier.
Automation can be setup in the Preferences of QuarkXPress. This remains to be a very reliable working-procedure.

1.12 Does Certified PDF automatically provide the right colour?

No, Certified PDF does not guarantee this! It is not possible to create a built-in check on colour rendering in the PDF profile. But it is possible to make the colour rendering of your advertisement predicable. In order to do this it will be necessary to use colour management in the reproduction process by using ICC colour profiles.
Every system in this process (digital camera, scanner, screen, proof-system and printing process) has its own colour space that can be documented in an ICC colour profile.
By using such an ICC colour profile in every part of the production chain and using these profiles correctly in the various software applications your screen and your colour proof provide an acceptable rendering of the final printing results.
A prerequisite is that every part of the production chain is calibrated regularly. By doing so set measuring standards are introduced into the workflow. Subsequently the printing process takes place according to set standards; so there are no manual adjustments.
If you want your proof to give an optimal representation of the expected print result on a chosen type of paper the colour conversion (from RGB to CMYK) and your colour proof must be done by using the correct ICC colour profile, matching the used printing technique and paper type. Ask your publisher or printer for the correct colour profile!
For MagazineAds the default profile that is used - when no colour management is applied - will be ISO Webcoated.icc.
For Sheetfed specifications this will be ISOcoatedV2_300.icc. The proof naturally has to have been made from the PDF that you supply to the publisher or printer.

1.13 How do the specifications deal with PDF's in the RGB colourspace?

At this stage only Certified PDF's are accepted that are in the CMYK colour space (or with spotcolours for sheetfed). Future specifications for RGB workflows are in preparation by the Ghent PDF Workgroup. If, however, you want to use RGB in the lay-out, you can do this in InDesign for instance; from where -using the correct ICC colour profiles -you can export to CMYK PDF's.

1.14 How do I check overprint?

Overprint is a complicated matter, as most software applications deal with it differently. The use of overprint in the PDF file can be checked upfront in Adobe Acrobat Professional 8 and higher, by viewing the page with the function 'Overprint preview' in the 'Advanced' menu switched on.
Check if the result on the screen exactly matches the proof you provide with the Certified PDF document. Using the (free) Adobe Reader (version 7 and up) you can also check overprint by viewing the page with the function 'Overprint preview' in the 'Preferences' menu switched on.
Printers should set up their RIP in such a way that the final printed result shows the same overprint effect as the above mentioned applications show when 'Overprint Preview' is switched on.

1.15 Overprint settings in QuarkXPress and Adobe InDesign

Overprint in the past:
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 Pro 6 and higher 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 with the Overprint Preview in the (free) Acrobat Reader 9.x.
► 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 maintaining 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 your printer.

When organising your colour management workflow you can also use the expertise of the following Dutch specialists:

GOC	www.goc.nl
ISI	www.isi.nl
Koldenhof Grafimedia Expertise	www.koldenhof.nl/site/index.php
2KNOW	www.2know.nl
VIGC	www.vigc.be
Herman Hartman	hhartman@xs4all.nl
Doesum Software + Support	www.doesum.nl