

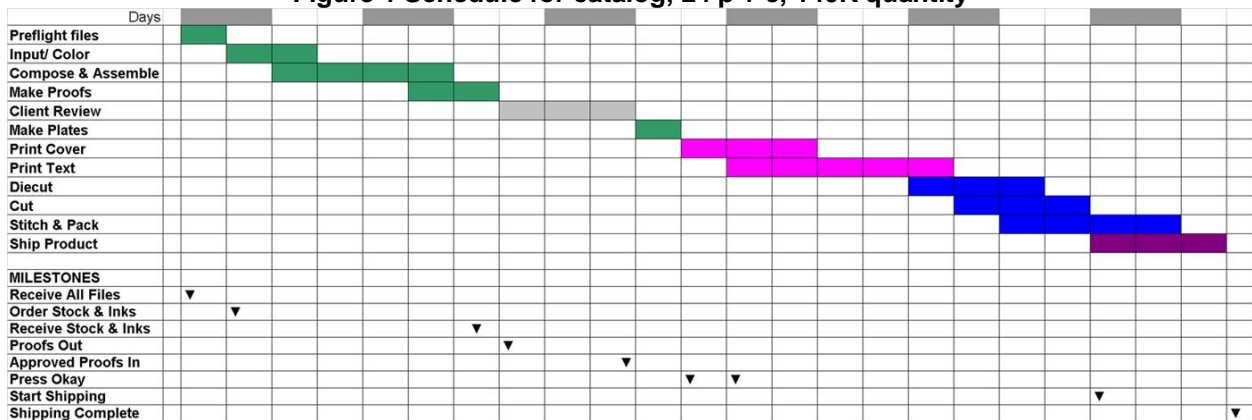
Keeping Projects on Track

Most projects that Geographics produces have complex and critical schedules. This service note summarizes the ideas we find help keep projects moving to a successful completion.

Our best advice is to start talking with your account manager early, ideally as the project is taking shape. Geographics will identify the right questions to build a reliable schedule. Many projects go on to mail or kit pack. The mail house may need set-up samples in advance of the job. The job may need to deliver to a show or meeting. It is very important to communicate the end point—how many, to where, and by when prior to establishing a production schedule.

We can advise you on time requirements for receiving stock, matching PMS colors, or completing special finishing like foil stamping. Although press commitments are not made prior to booking a job, advance discussion help to avoid time problems later.

Figure 1 Schedule for catalog, 24 p + c, 140K quantity



Milestones

At the time a job is opened, your project manager will want to confirm the timetable for six milestone events.

1. When will Geographics have all the files to create the job?
2. When proofs will be available to you.
3. When approved proofs will be received by Geographics
4. When the press okay is scheduled
5. When finished product shipments will start
6. When will shipping complete.

Of all the delays that can change a schedule, the most frequent cause is a delay in receiving the job files. Geographics will preflight all jobs. The Preflight process is the most effective way to avoid delays and extra costs, but the Preflight process requires complete job files. Transmitting files when expected is a very important start to an on time finish.

Proofs

If no issues are found in Preflight, Geographics Prepress will begin to work your job. Depending on the complexity of the job, Prepress time may be a few hours to a number of days. The next major milestone is when color proofs and DBL's are available for approval.

It is not uncommon to make corrections in the proofs what will require a second round of proofs. As the job moves forward, the Geographics production team continually reviews job status versus expected press date. If you picture a big city transit schedule, you will understand the difficulties. Every press, cutter, folder and binder has a waiting list of different time requirements. If one process falls behind, many projects can be sidetracked.

Your project manager is highly motivated to have your job ready to plate for the press schedule. Prior to approving a job for press, the project manager and Prepress will review your returned proofs. Please give your proofs careful attention, and then send them back as soon as possible.

Press

Early in the job, Geographics will confirm who in your organization will participate in the press okay. As the date approaches, your account manager will communicate any schedule adjustments. Press schedules will be as accurate a prediction as we can make. But, keep in mind that every job is a creative exercise.

Your job may involve more than one press run. Sheetfed jobs should be allowed to dry, typically 12 hours, before additional printing or bindery work can start. Some jobs will include an outside service such as embossing or lamination. These steps take time that must be included in the production schedule. Complicated coordination is easier to manage if the job starts when expected and prints when expected.

Done

Most Geographics jobs ship by truck. The Shipping department works with your project manager to get your materials delivered in great condition, on time, and at the lowest cost. We are most successful when we have the distribution details early and complete. Like quality printing, quality shipping requires skill and time. Make sure your starting game plan takes the project all the way to the end zone.

Your production experience will be more relaxed and enjoyable if you keep two points in mind:

- The more we know about your plans the better we can help you succeed.
- The production schedule represents our optimum plan to reach your goals. We will always offer options; but we start with the best.