

The Right Proof for the Job

Press time and paper are the two largest cost elements in most print projects. To efficiently translate your ideas to print, Geographics offers four types of proofs to represent the final product. This service note explains the best use of each type of proof. Geographics proofs can be characterized as: soft electronic proofs, inkjet color proofs, digital halftone color proofs and digital blue line mechanical proofs.

The right proof is a very valuable tool. It is a reliable prediction of the paper and ink result. It reveals critical detail. It allows you to confirm expectations. It prevents lost press time. It prevents frustration. It makes press checks an easy experience.

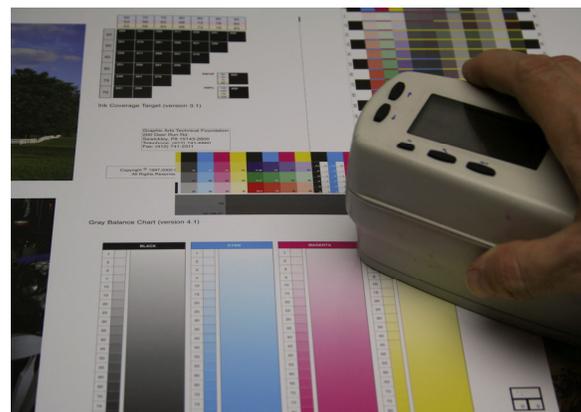
Fuji FinalProof



FinalProof® is Geographics contract proof; our best representation of the press. What makes FinalProof a good representation?

- The base material is a very consistent pigment, not a dye.
- The image is a halftone, made to the same screen rule and angle as the press plate.
- The proof can usually be made on the same stock as will be used on press.
- The proof is calibrated to SWOP standards.

In addition, Geographics regularly prints QC targets to fingerprint each press to FinalProof materials. This process adjusts for the limitations of lithographic color inks and mechanical effects such as temperature, pressure and ink film splits. Every month Geographics makes FinalProof a more exact replica of what the press will do through the process of printing, analyzing and fine tuning.



While FinalProof is the right proof for most jobs, it does have limitations. Custom PMS colors are simulated using CMYK colors. On matte finish stocks, FinalProof laminates will show a bit more gloss than the printed piece. Varnish effects can't be simulated. And, FinalProof materials are relatively expensive.

Inkjet Color Proofs

Geographics produces Epson inkjet color proofs for less critical color projects. Inkjet proofs are approximately 2/3 the cost of Fuji proofs. This lower cost is the main attraction of inkjet proofs.

On the other hand, inkjet has significant limitations. Inkjet produces a dithered dot, rather than a halftone dot. Since the image

isn't screened as the print image will be, the proof won't show moiré patterns that may cause difficulty on press. The proof can not be made on the same stock that will be printed. And finally, dye based inkjet inks tend to fade over time.

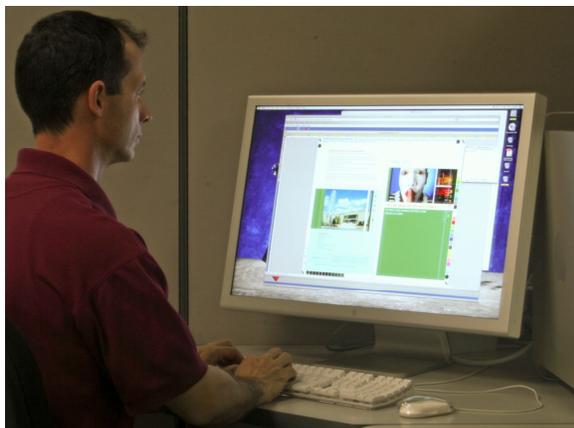
Digital Blue Line Proofs



Digital Blue lines are two sided inkjet proofs that show critical information such as page layout. DBLs are great for reading type, checking crossovers, paginations and trim. Images will be shown in the correct orientation, size and cropping. Geographics DBLs also show the location of score lines, perforations and die cuts.

DBLs will show the location of spot PMS colors, but DBLs are not intended for color evaluation. Clients will normally review both a FinalProof and a DBL proof.

Soft Electronic Proofs



Soft electronic proofs are fast, low cost, and can be reviewed simultaneously in several locations. Soft proofs are viewed on the internet through a secure connection. Electronic proof software makes it easy to track changes and page approval. Soft proofs help keep big projects on track as pages can be viewed as soon as Prepress prepares the page. Soft proofs are ripped data files, so they are views of the same information that will be used to produce the press plates.

Soft proofs are good for proofreading text. The biggest limitation of an electronic proof is that the color displayed on a monitor is only a very limited approximation of the printed color. In fact, most monitors can display a color range far larger than what can be printed on the most advanced printing press. So, soft proofs are not suitable for critical color control.

Working with Proofs

Consider the lighting used to view your color proofs. Proofs are intended to be viewed at 5000 Kelvin illumination. This standard is consistent with the color temperature of sunlight at midday.

Allow time for your eyes to adjust to the level of light in the viewing area. Start by getting an overall impression of the proof. Take an arms length view of the entire proof for 10 seconds, then look away. Did any areas stand out? If so, investigate these in more detail.

Move from the general to the specific. Concentrate on the most important elements, usually images, then PMS colors, then text. Finish with a check of non-printing areas. Are these clean and free of color tint?

Check whites, grays and blacks. They should not show a significant color cast. Pay special attention to "memory" colors such as blue skies, green grass and red tomatoes. Mismatch in these colors will be especially noticeable.

Work deliberately, but avoid staring at an image. Your goal is fresh eyes for each page of your proof. As you progress, make notes of your impressions. We recommend you review the entire proof set before you start marking changes.

On the DBL proof, note that perfs and scores are correctly indicated.

Are all corrections from previous proofs made and made correctly?



Probably you have read the text many times already. Still, it is not unusual to spot typographical errors in the final color proof. We recommend one last careful read of the copy. Experienced buyers know the time is well spent.

As you mark up proofs, indicate the element to change. Describe the end result you want. Allow the printer to determine the best way to achieve that result. We recommend that type changes and layout changes be marked on the DBL; and color changes be marked on the color proof. Be consistent as you edit the set.

Remember to sign each page of the corrected proof. The Geographics project manager will call to discuss your corrections and confirm your instructions can be carried out.

Congratulations! A thorough review of the proofs for your job will prevent problems and make the press okay easy. It also communicates your color objectives to Geographics so that we can print exactly what you imagined.