**Poster-Making Protocol**

The following is a set of guidelines that will assist you in successfully producing posters for printing on the large-format printer (Hp Z3200ps / Hp 5000ps). Many of these are the result of personal observation and trial-and-error. Please adhere to them as you produce your poster file.

**General**

* Posters are produced using MS PowerPoint™, Adobe Photoshop™, Adobe Illustrator™, or Adobe Acrobat™ but jpg, gif, and tif files can also be printed.
* Posters formatted as a single PowerPoint slide are limited to 41 inch x 56 inch in either aspect (portrait or landscape). Please set the dimensions before constructing the slide.
* All elements (text, graphics, tables. Etc.) may be either composed from within PowerPoint™ or imported (cut &paste, dragged) from other commonly used programs.
* Please avoid using Textures like “marble”, these can cause printing errors.
* Using the Cal Poly logo is permissible; however DON’T use the university “seal”<http://www.csupomona.edu/~publicaffairs/graphics/logotype.shtml>
* If you would like, you can contact Kevin Franke, and he will send you a blank template to get you started.
* Please submit completed poster files one week before you need them printed.

**Text**

* For text, the best results are usually obtained by entering the text directly into text boxes, rather than pasting from another program such as MS Word™.
* Avoid using non-standard fonts. The use of non-standard fonts will result in font-substitution. This can lead to some very unpredictable results (such as the substitution of the character (µ) with an icon of a computer).
* Avoid using “auto-sized” and “auto-formatted” text boxes. These can also result on unpredictable results, especially when used at the rigth-hand margin of the poster.
* If possible, avoid using graphical backgrounds for text boxes (such as in the title-block). These can cause printing to fail entirely. At present, the “marble” background available from within MS Power Point™ is a notable offender (it almost always causes printing to fail until it is removed). The use of solid-color backgrounds appears to work fine.
* Be cautious of text boxes that overlap. Under certain circumstances, overlapping text boxes can obscure each other and/or other elements of the poster. If the text box is larger than necessary (i.e. contains unnecessary blank lines or carriage returns), remove these.

**Graphics**

* Graphical objects may add meaningful content and visual appeal, but they also add complexity to the print-file and increase the chances of problems at the time of printing.
* Improperly dimensioned pictures can drastically inflate the size of the poster file. They also place an excess burden on MS PowerPoint™, the computer, and the printer. As a general rule, pictures should have resolutions no greater than 200 – 600 dpi, and should be dimensioned to the final desired print size (e.g. If you want it to be 4 inch x 4 inch on the poster, re-dimension it to be 4 inch x 4 inch).
* Avoid using MS PowerPoint™ to make drastic changes to the size of the image (i.e. taking a “huge” image and making it look small by using the “corner-resizing” function within PowerPoint™. While doing so may make the image appear to be smaller, it doesn’t really change the size of the image. Doing so will result in an unnecessarily large poster file and, perhaps, print failure.
* Use a common image format such as jpeg or gif. While there are many types of image formats available, MS PowerPoint™ doesn’t handle all of them equally well (some are not handled at all). If in doubt, use the “import image” command to determine which types of file formats your version of PowerPoint™ can handle.
* Be cautious of greatly enlarging bit-mapped images on posters (bmp, jpg, gif, etc.). Doing so will result in loss of “apparent detail” and unacceptable “blurriness” in the final result. This is especially true for diagrams and cartoons (aliasing”-“jagged-edges”). If you have to use diagrams, try to make then with a program that uses “vector graphics”, such as Adobe Illustrator™. Vector graphic images may be resized freely, without loss of detail. The Cal Poly “logo” is a common victim of “aliasing”, because individuals try to resize a small jpeg/gif of it to fit on their title bar. A better choice is to use a vector-drawn version of it (this may be obtainable from the graphics department, see link above).
* To import tables (from MS Excel™, for example) use “copy”-“paste special”, rather than just “copy”-“paste”.

**Object grouping**

While grouping objects makes them easier to position and manipulate, it frequently causes problems at the time of printing. Therefore, please remember to un-group objects before presenting the poster file for printing.

**Backgrounds**

While “plain-white” backgrounds may seem unappealing to some, they offer a better chance of printing success. The use of “graphical” backgrounds adds complexity and size to the poster file. This could result in failure at the time of printing. It’s also very wasteful of ink (the same holds true for “solid-color” backgrounds).

**Compatibility issues**

There are many versions of MS Office™ currently in use. In addition, there are slight differences between the versions of MS Office™ available for IBM PC™ and Macintosh™. These differences can raise compatibility issues. At present, the poster printer is served by an Apple iMAC™ running OSX™ 10.6.8 with MS Office™ 14.1.2

* Whenever possible, save your poster in “Office 95/98” format.
* Posters may be presented for printing via any of the following media formats: 1) ISO9660-CD Rom,  2) USB-Flash drive.  Additionally, files smaller than 10Mb can be submitted as attachments and emailed to kjfranke@csupomona.edu

**Submitting posters for printing**

All poster files should be submitted to me no later that **1 week (seven (7) days) before the poster is needed. Failure to adhere to this timeline may result in the poster not being printed.** I realize that, in the past, this long-standing policy was “more honored in the breech”. However, current demands on my time necessitate strict adherence to it.

**Disclaimer**

The above guidelines are intended to help minimize the chances of a problem arising during poster printing. This is, by no means, a comprehensive set of preventative measures. Novel problems can and do arise from time to time. However, adhering to the above will maximize the chances for success.

Happy poster printing,

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