

Quebecor Printing, Inc.

Book Publisher Reduces Prepress Time by 30 Percent When Customers Submit Files in Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF)

Adobe® Acrobat®

Key Benefits

- The Press Optimize feature in Acrobat 4.0 makes it easy for Quebecor customers to create PDF files with embedded graphics and other necessary information in a single file, eliminating errors and reducing the prepress process considerably.
- Acrobat 4.0 allows Quebecor customers to embed all fonts and to cancel the job if a font is missing, ensuring that files print only if correct.
- Turnaround time is reduced because PDF eliminates the need for manual pagination.
- With Acrobat 4.0 and a third-party plug-in, Quebecor can convert RGB composite files to the CMYK files the imposition software requires.
- Errors are reduced because customers can proof PDF files before submitting them.
- PDF files are reliable, resulting in faster processing times and less time spent troubleshooting.

If you're one of the country's largest book publishers, reducing prepress time and errors can significantly improve customer satisfaction, decrease operating costs, and give you a distinct competitive edge. That's why Quebecor Books, a part of Quebecor Printing, Inc., is encouraging its largest customers to submit print jobs in Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF).

"Acrobat 4.0 allows customers to easily create PDF files that are optimized for press," says David Warren, systems analyst. "This reduces prepress time and costs by making it likely that files print correctly the first time."

Streamlined Workflow

Quebecor Books prints multicolor books, ranging from publications of Time-Life Books to Thomas Nelson Bibles to owner's manuals from General Motors and Saturn cars. As one of the country's largest book printing facilities, Quebecor occupies one million square feet under one roof. In such a large operation, workflow efficiency is crucial for containing costs and providing top-notch customer service.

Quebecor heralds PDF as an efficient alternative to tedious manual prepress processes. When customers submit PDF files instead of film, prepress time is cut substantially. In this streamlined workflow, customers use Adobe Acrobat software to convert native application files to PDF files that can be sent to Quebecor Books via the Internet, the WAM!NET digital networking service, or on disk. All Quebecor has to do is import the PDF files into ScenicSoft preps imposition software to create imposed PostScript® language files. The resulting files are sent

to a Gerber Crescent imagesetter or Gerber Impress proofing device, and Digital Dylux bluelines are created automatically.

Optimize PDF Files for Press

Quebecor is taking advantage of new features in Acrobat 4.0 to save time and improve quality in the prepress operation. "We suggest that our customers use the Press Optimize option," says Warren. "It makes creating the perfect PDF file almost foolproof. We also like the option of viewing PDF files using the fonts contained within documents instead of local fonts. This way we see exactly what the customer intended, not what our computers interpret it to be."

"We save about 40 hours by proofing composite PDF files instead of individual color-separated files."

—James Schmidt,
Senior Technical Writer,
Rosemount, Inc.

Imposing Composite PDF Files

Acrobat 4.0 helped Quebecor reduce the time and costs of printing a two-color 1,500-page industrial catalog for Rosemount, Inc., a manufacturer of industrial process instrumentation. In the past, Rosemount sent Quebecor color-separated PostScript files. Now Rosemount can submit catalog files as composite PDF files. Quebecor uses Acrobat 4.0 and the Quite a Box of Tricks plug-in from Quite Software to convert the color space from RGB to CMYK. "We save about 40 hours by proofing composite PDF

files instead of individual color-separated files," says James Schmidt, senior technical writer for Rosemount.

Rosemount leverages its PDF files not only for the print catalog, but also for its CD-ROM catalog. "We used to pay outside programmers to create the CD-ROM," says Schmidt. "With Acrobat, we can easily create the CD-ROM files ourselves, saving significant time and money."

Reliable PostScript Files

Quebecor reports that PDF is unsurpassed in its reliability, maintaining consistent quality and accuracy. This translates to faster processing times, less troubleshooting, and greater profitability. "PDF runs through our equipment smoothly," says Warren. "We previously expected errors at the RIP. But when we RIP a PDF file, even one error a month is shocking." The reason: Acrobat Distiller® 4.0 automates preflighting by informing customers of missing fonts and allowing them to cancel jobs or correct problems right away. Also, Acrobat 4.0 prints the fonts that customers embed in the PDF, even if the same font is present in the RIP. "Using the fonts from the customer's PDF file gives us an extra level of reliability by eliminating the possibility that our font versions might be different from theirs," says Warren.

When Quebecor receives PostScript files from customers, the company relies on Acrobat software to enhance their reliability. Quebecor uses Acrobat Distiller to convert PostScript files to PDF, and then back again to PostScript. "The resulting PostScript file is exceptionally reliable and

consistent, because Acrobat Distiller is a PostScript 3 interpreter that outputs clean, reliable PostScript files," says Warren.

"With the Press Optimize option in Acrobat Distiller 4.0, we save labor costs, processing time, and error-correction time. PDF saves our customers and us a substantial amount of time and money and, at the same time, enables us to deliver better service."

—David Warren,
Systems Analyst,
Quebecor Printing, Inc.

Automated Pagination

Before adopting Acrobat software, imposing PostScript language files was a time-consuming task, subject to errors. One of Quebecor's prepress operators manually inserted each file into the run list in the correct order. If a file was inserted in the wrong order, the job had to be re-run. "In a worst-case scenario, we would receive a separate PostScript file for every page in a 2,000-page book," says Warren. "Manually inserting each file could take several hours." Now, Quebecor saves valuable hours in the imposition process by automating pagination with Acrobat and AppleScript. AppleScript invokes Acrobat to convert each PostScript file to a PDF file, and then combines all the PDF files in the proper order, based on filenames, to create a single PDF file.

Benefits for Customers

Customers who submit PDF files value the faster turnaround and lower costs. They also appreciate the lack of surprises when they proof blueines. "The PDF file looks exactly like the blueine will," says Warren, "so customers can eliminate correction charges by catching errors before sending files to us." Correction charges can add up to many thousands of dollars. In addition, the small size of PDF files makes it practical for customers to submit them electronically, reducing or even eliminating shipping costs.

Time and Cost Savings

"With the Press Optimize option in Acrobat Distiller 4.0, we save labor costs, processing time, and error-correction time," says Warren. "PDF saves our customers and us a substantial amount of time and money and, at the same time, enables us to deliver better service."

Quebecor Printing, Inc. Systems At-A-Glance

Software

Adobe Acrobat 4.0
Quite Software's Quite a Box of Tricks plug-in
ScenicSoft preps imposition software
Mac OS 7.6 to Mac OS 8.5
Microsoft® Windows® 95, Windows 98, and
Windows NT®

Hardware

Apple Power Macintosh 8100 computers
Apple Power Macintosh G3 computers
IBM, Compaq, Acer, and Gateway PCs
Gerber Impress waterproof
Dupont Digital waterproof
Gerber C42s
Linotronic film devices
Crossfield scanners
Scitex tracks

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