



resolution guide.



All too often, pixelation can occur when choosing images for printing. Pixelation is the term used when images look too blocky. This happens when they aren't high enough quality to display clearly.

This guide will help you understand resolution for printing and what DPI and DDI mean. It also explains how to fix several different document formats and image issues.

Basic Explanation of Resolution

Images made up of dots are called raster images. Another image format is the vector, which is made from equations and will never look distorted, no matter the size.

A common misconception is that an image which looks fine on a computer screen will be okay to print, but this often isn't the case. In technical terms, screens only display documents at 72 DPI, but when they're printed they'll be at 300 DPI. The exception to this is a high quality vector image.

DPI stands for Dots Per Inch, and as images or graphics are made up of small groupings of dots, the greater concentration per inch means a higher resolution image that is suitable in a larger format.

When raster images are printed at increased DPI, the distortion you'll see is called pixelation. There is no way to increase the resolution of an image. In order to improve it, you'll need to go back to the software used to create it and improve the design.

Example:

72dpi



300dpi



How to Check Resolution

The easiest way to check resolution on a document is to view it on a computer screen at three or four times the size of the final print – if possible. For example, when you view a PDF, zoom in to 300% or 400% and you'll be able to check out how your document will look when printed.

This is because your computer screen will display your image at 72-100 DPI, but print documents are in 300 DPI.

How to Create High Resolution Documents

The instructions on how to create high resolution documents can also be used to fix documents.

When Certain Parts Of A Document Are Low Resolution

In this case, the best idea is to replace low resolution images with ones that are high resolution or vectored.

When looking for files with better resolution, you might want to ask your web designer or purchase stock images from sources like Shutterstock or iStockPhoto.

Depending on what you're printing, you may also be able to resize your image file smaller, to reduce the effects of pixellation. Remember to check your resolution, as mentioned earlier!

You could also rebuild your image, although this is the option with the most effort. Many pictures cannot be rebuilt and logos are often impossible, so redesigning them can add to the budget. However, if you would prefer this route, please contact us for a design quote and we'll be happy to assist. The last option is to "risk it" and print your images as they are. However, we don't recommend it as they will be pixelated and likely not the clean, crisp appearance you're after.

When Part Of A Document Is Vectored And The Rest Is Low Resolution

This dilemma suggests that the software used to create your image has incorrect settings, and as a result the quality has been reduced when saving as a .JPG or a .PDF. For example, the export settings in Adobe InDesign might be configured incorrectly, or you've saved to a .PDF from a Word document.

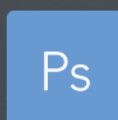
Solution: this problem is usually fixable by changing the options when saving a .JPG or a .PDF. Make sure that the resolution options are set to a minimum 300 DPI and compression options are at maximum.

When The Whole Document Is Low Resolution

There are several issues that could cause this, which usually relate to the software used to create the file. Please refer to the settings and guide for your particular software:



Adobe Illustrator



Adobe Photoshop



Adobe InDesign



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