



GENERATING PDF USING ADOBE EXPRESS

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USER GUIDE



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Version: 2026-V2

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June 2026

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About Ghent Workgroup

The GWG, formed in June 2002, is an international assembly of industry associations, suppliers, educators, and industry members from around the globe. The GWG aims to establish and disseminate process specifications for best practices in graphic arts workflows. Since its inception almost 20 years ago, the organization has consistently produced numerous process specifications for PDF exchange, developing practical tools for automating processes and testing and establishing consistent PDFs for print, publishing, and packaging production – all free at www.gwg.org.

Members are comprised of graphic arts associations, including CAPT, CIP4, Fespa, Fogra, JP/Politikenshus, Lab9 Pro, Medibel+, Printing United Alliance, TAGA Italia and VIGC. Vendor members include Adobe, callas software, Canon, DALIM Software, ECO3, Enfocus, Fiery, Heidelberg, HYBRID Software, Hybrid Software Helix, PageProof, Reprintelligence, Ricoh, Tech Research (TagG) and Ultimate Tech. Industry members are Direct Mailers, Pragmeta, RRD Communications and Ubisoft. Educational members are Arteveldehogeschool, CEC Latam, Darmstadt University of applied sciences, Future Schoolz, GIPT Mumbai, Hochschule der Medien, ISEC Lisboa, RIPT Kolkata, Rochester Institute of Technology, The MARA Technological University (UiTM), University of Ljubljana, University of Novi Sad and University Wuppertal.

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Table of Contents

Introduction.....	3
Setup.....	4
Selected Type.....	4
Resize.....	5
Add Margin & Bleed	5
Margins.....	5
Bleed.....	6
Create PDF.....	7
Setup.....	7
Color Mode	7
Multiple-Page Documents	8
Test File and Result.....	9
Test File.....	9
Result.....	9
Add-ons.....	10
Introduction	10
Installing Add-ons	10
Install.....	10
PDF.....	10
Press Ready PDF/X.....	11
Preflight.....	12
Introduction	12
Preflight and Preflight Report	12
Report	12
RGB Conversion	13
Recommendations for Print	13



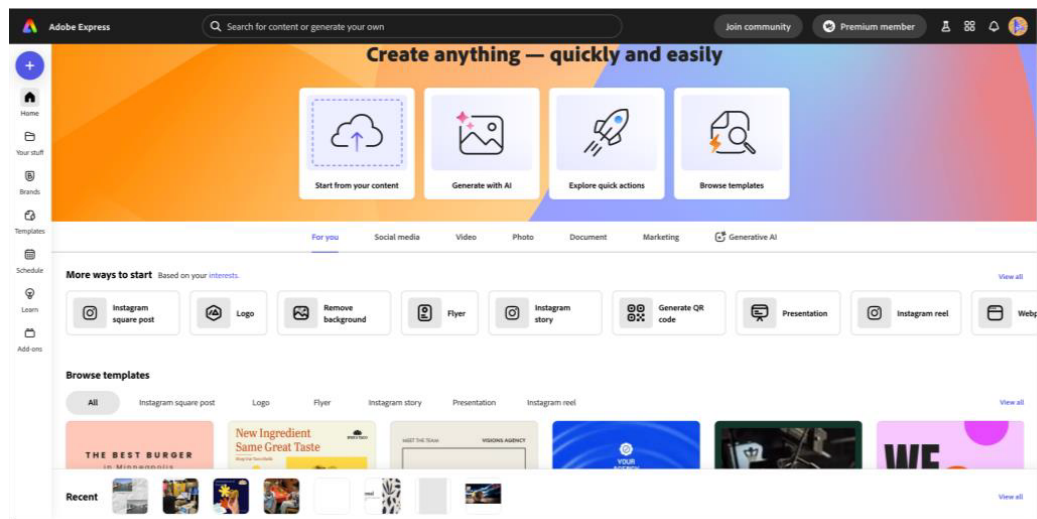
Introduction

Adobe Express® is becoming popular in in-house printing offices, marketing, and communication offices. For this reason, we felt it was important to take a closer look at it. In this document, we share our expertise and provide recommendations for the correct and predictable production of created files.

Setup

Set up a new document in Adobe Express.

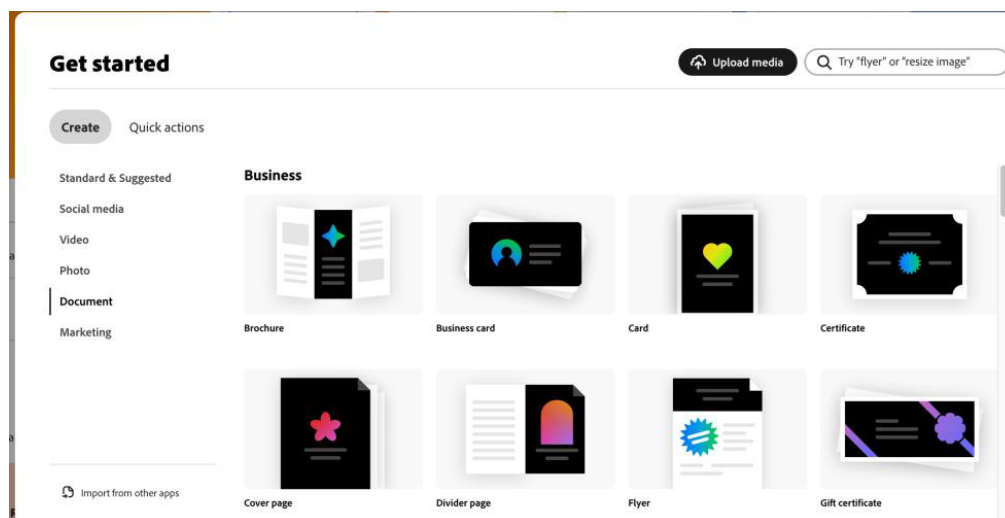
- Select the type of document to create.



- Click on "Document."

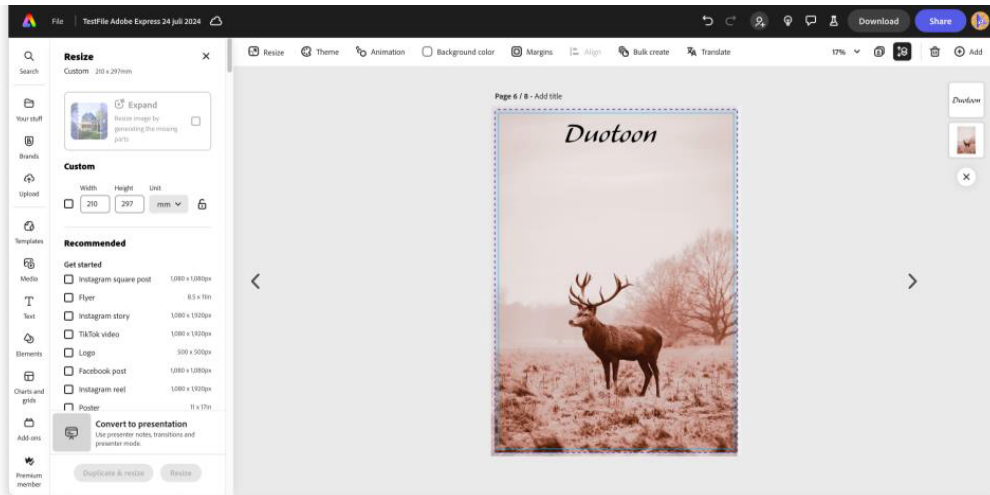
Selected Type

There are several types available, such as Flyer, Poster, Report, Newsletter, and others. For example, we used the type "Brochure."



Resize

To create bleed, the document must be larger than the final size. Typically, 6 mm is added for a 3 mm bleed on each side (see Bleed).

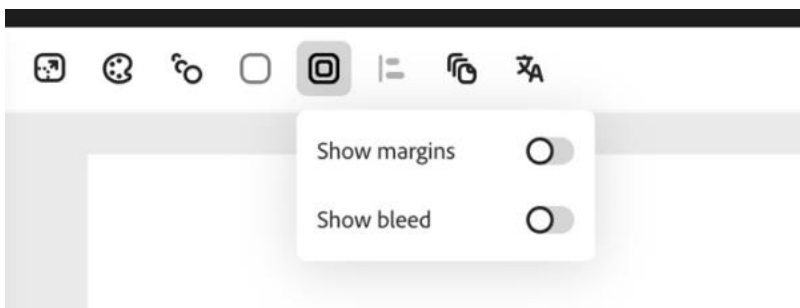


Afterward, the document is trimmed on all sides.

Add Margin & Bleed

At the top of the blank document, there are additional settings such as:

- "Show margins" and
- "Show bleed."



Due to bleed, a larger document size is set (of 6 mm).

Margins

"Show margins" provides a visual reference for the graphic designer by displaying a 3 mm border within the finished document size. When printing to a laser printer, there is always a

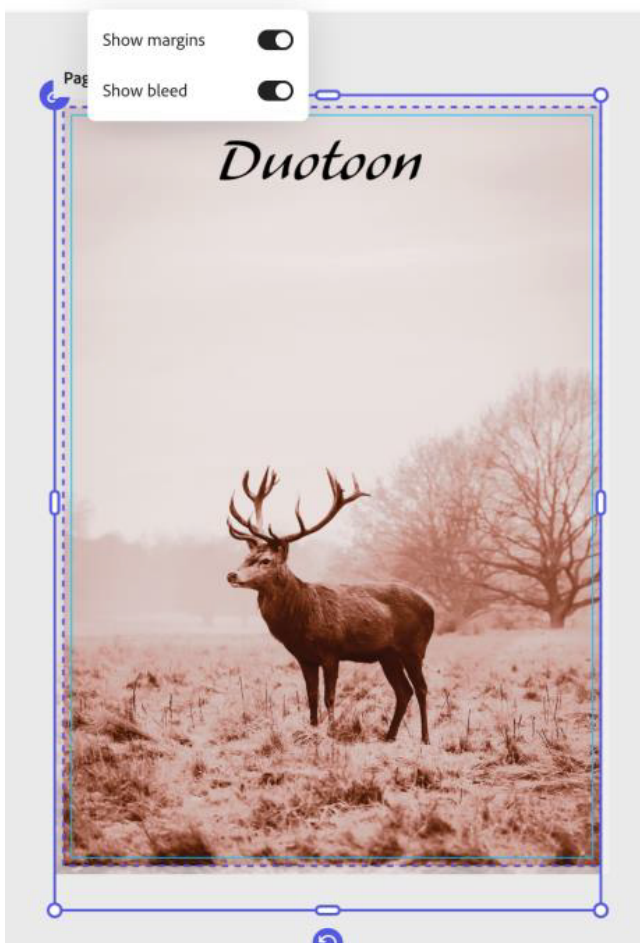
white border around the document because these systems cannot print to the edge of the paper. For inkjet printers, the driver can enable borderless printing.

Example: Print a photo on inkjet photo paper with an inkjet printer.

Bleed

"Show bleed" is a visual reference for the graphic designer. It displays a 3 mm border outside the finished document size.

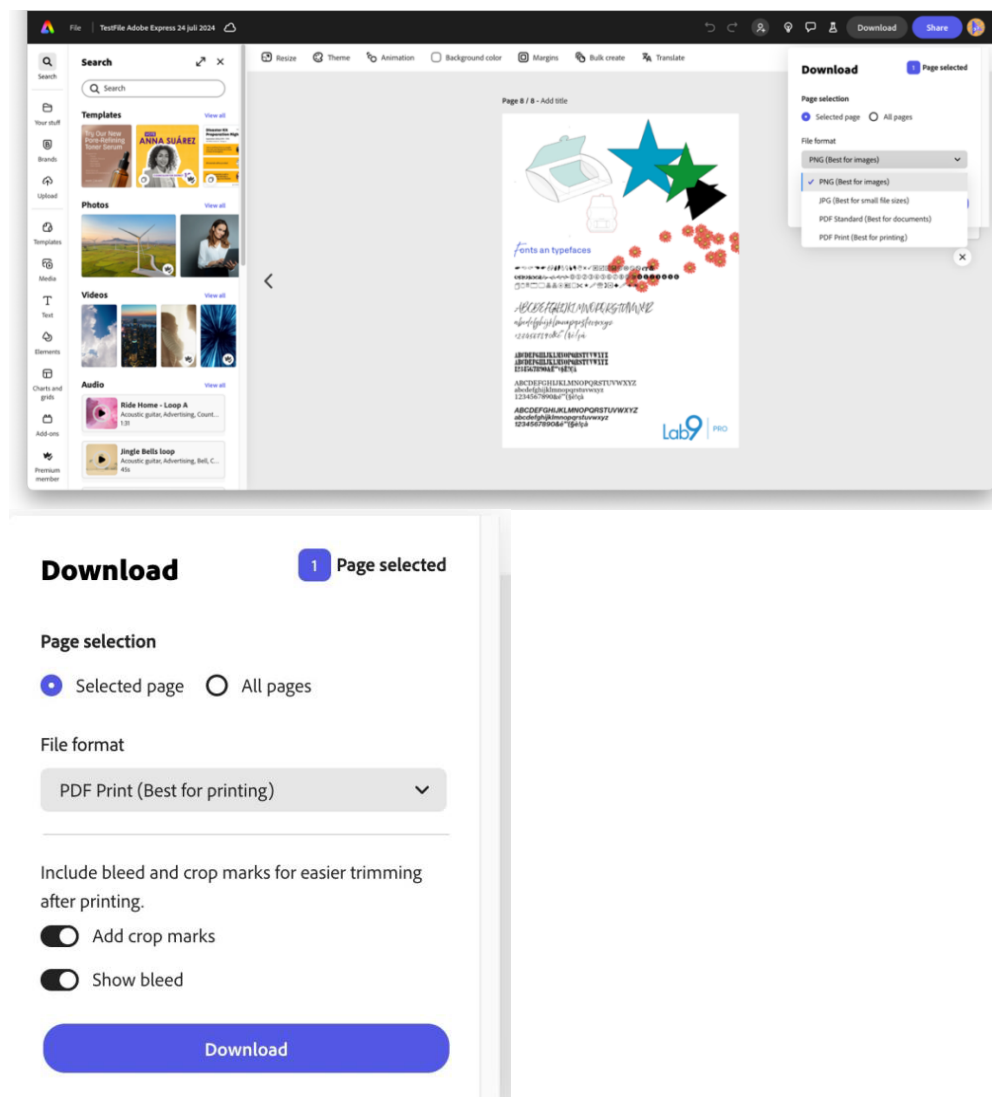
For example, when a photo is used as a background image and white space around the image after trimming must be avoided, the edges of the image should be extended to the indicated bleed border.



Create PDF

Setup

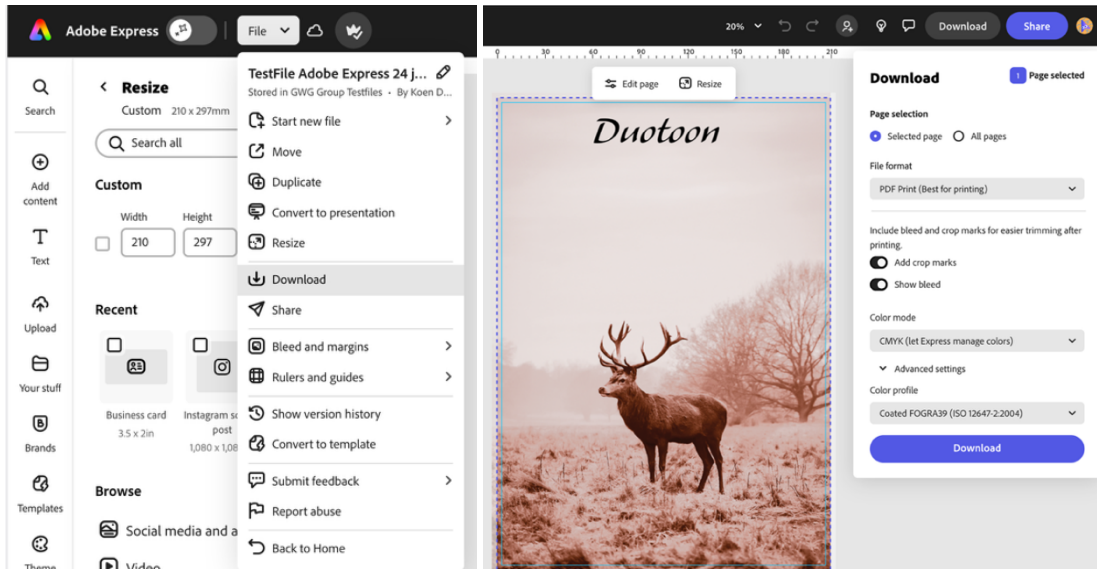
At the top right, the **"Download"** button is available. Several options are presented, but for printing, the **"PDF Print"** version needs to be selected. Optionally, crop marks can be added and the **"Show bleed"** option can be enabled.



Color Mode

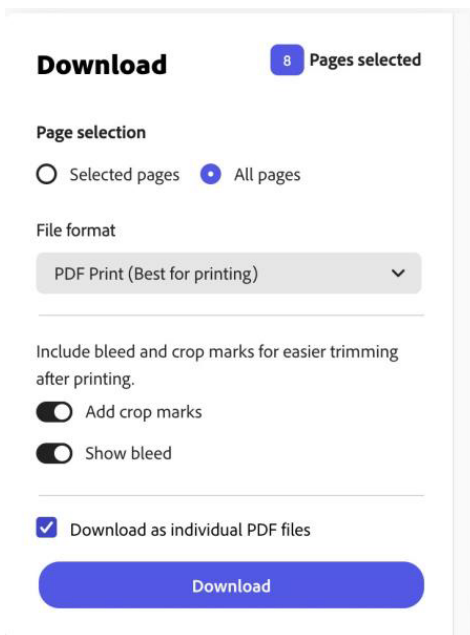
The **"Color mode"** option is now available, allowing the selection between RGB and CMYK. RGB is the most commonly used color mode for most projects and is recommended for

typical use. If CMYK output is required, the colors can be adjusted in the **"Advanced Settings"** option. A selection of preinstalled ICC color profiles is provided to help accurately convert content to CMYK.



Multiple Page Documents

Multiple pages can also be exported as individual pages. This option is not mandatory but may help with automation later.



Test File and Result

Test File

We tested Adobe Express with the same test file we use to evaluate all solutions we have tested (link to webpage where all guides are available).

Result

The result is a PDF exported with bleed and crop marks. Below are some screenshots from the eight-page document used to test Adobe Express.

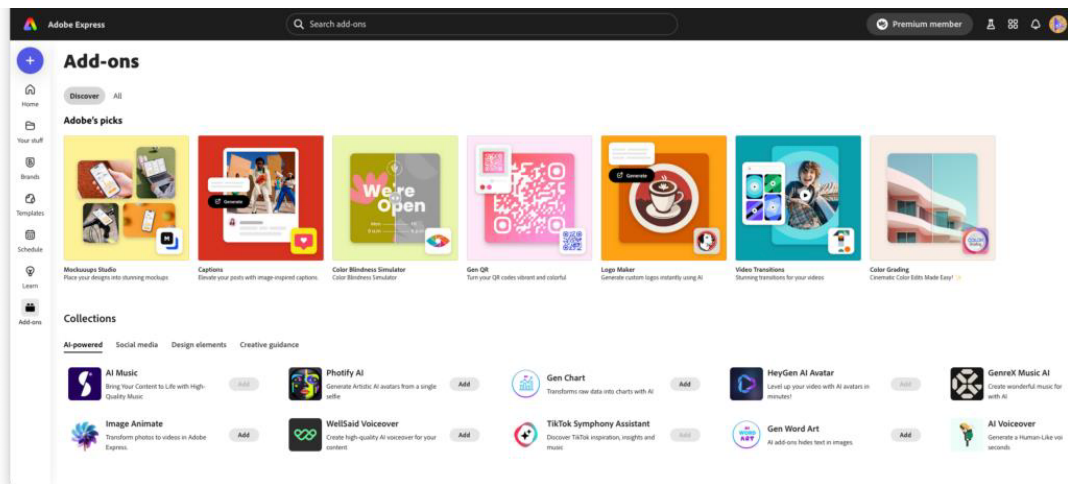
Exmple:



Add-ons

Introduction

“**Add-ons**” extend the functionality of Adobe Express and allow both Adobe and external developers to distribute them to users through the Adobe Marketplace. Adobe is not responsible for the quality of these add-ons. Some may be more useful than others.



Add-ons have a separate icon in the sidebar on the left.

Installing Add-ons

To access these extra features, “**Add-ons**” need to be installed. In some cases, creating an account may be required to use them, and not all “**Add-ons**” are free of charge.

Install

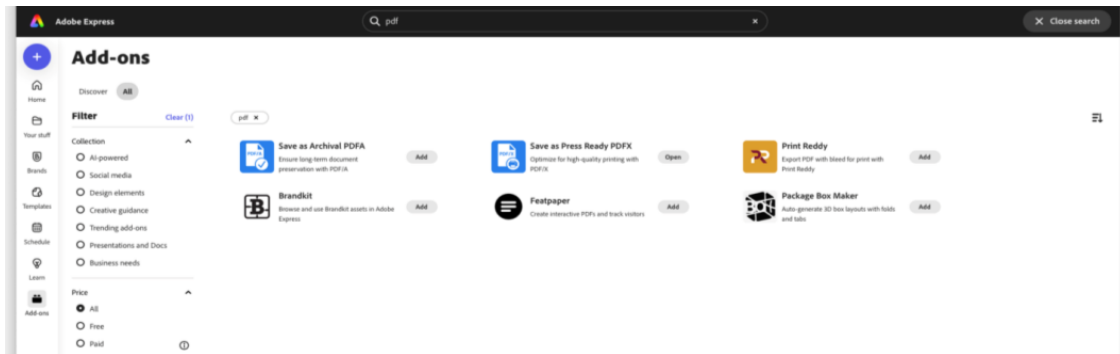
Installing an add-on is very easy.

- Open Adobe Express and sign in.
- Click the “**Add-ons**” icon in the sidebar on the left.
- Search for add-ons by scrolling or using the search function at the top.
- When a useful add-on is found, click “**Add**”.

PDF

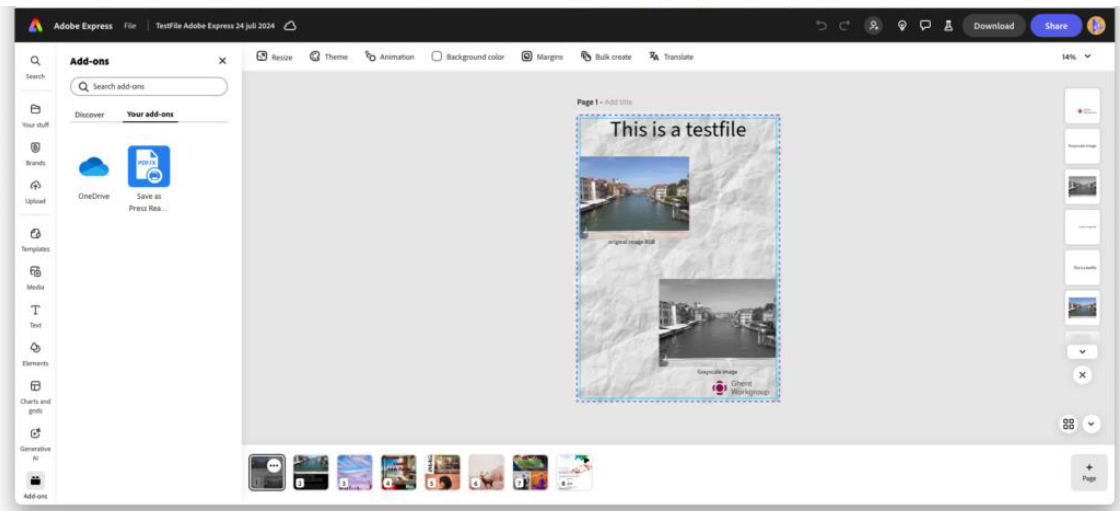
We searched for PDF and found different “**Add-ons**”.

- For Archiving – PDF/A
- Press Ready – PDF/X
- Print Ready



Press Ready – PDF/X

- Click the **"Add-ons"** icon in the sidebar on the left.
- Search for add-ons by scrolling or using the search function at the top.
- After finding the useful add-on, click **"Add"**.



- The file can be exported as PDF/X-3, PDF/X-4, or PDF/X-6.

Preflight

Introduction

In the GWG, we have created preflight profiles for digital printing. In most cases, documents generated by Adobe Express® are printed on digital output devices. The preflight profile was used to check the test file GWG_Digital_Print 2022.

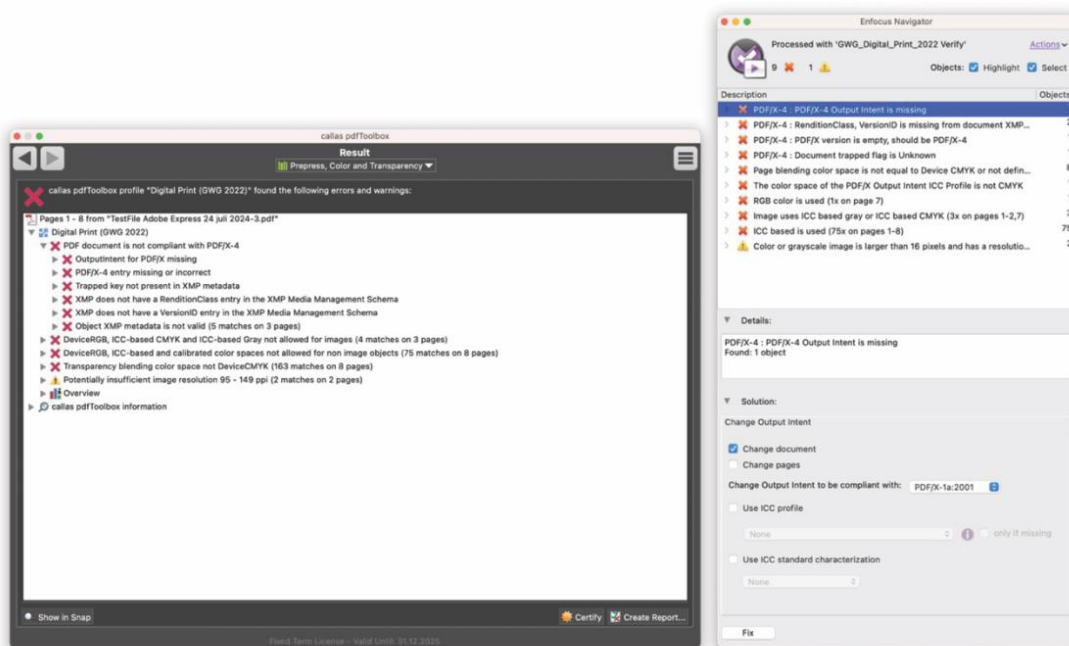
We used the verification version, so there is no automated correction.

Preflight and Preflight Report

We performed the test using callas pdfToolbox version 15 and Enfocus PitStop version 24.11.

Report

A screenshot from each application:



The most important messages are:

- Output Intent is missing.
- Device RGB or RGB is used.
- Transparency blending color space is not Device CMYK.



RGB Conversion

When importing images, logos, designs, etc., the document is automatically converted to RGB.

Also, when CMYK images are imported into Adobe Express®, they are converted to RGB. The transparency color space is therefore also RGB.

Recommendations for Print

The document should reproduce correctly on digital devices. For commercial printing presses, the document should be converted to CMYK using workflow systems or color servers.