
Setting Acrobat Distiller 4.05c Options for Print-ready PDF Files

About this Booklet

This booklet contains recommendations for how to set Acrobat 4.05c Distiller options to create print-ready PDF files for printing at our facility.

To get started immediately, follow the *QuickClick* tips at the top right corner of each page and duplicate the snapshot views on your computer. Snapshots are taken from the Macintosh platform, but are similar enough to use when working on a PC platform.

We've included detailed descriptions below each snapshot, should you decide to customize the Distiller options we recommend. Although you can change some settings without adversely affecting the usability of your PDF, please discuss your changes with our technical staff before submitting files for production.

Note: This booklet does *not* cover how to create a clean PostScript file from your application software.

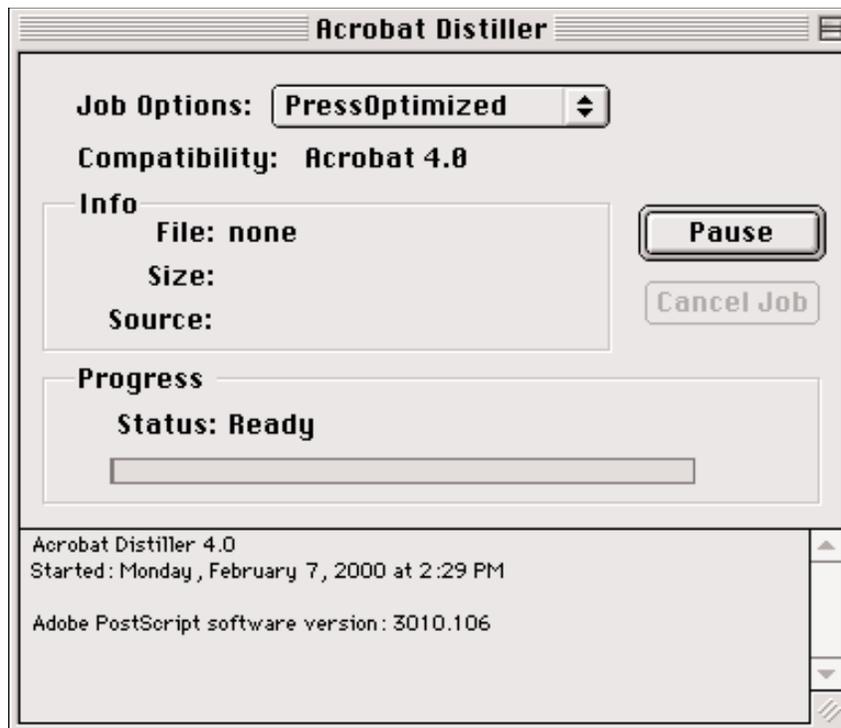
Before You Begin

Following is a list of items to be aware of before creating PDF files:

- Spot Color Blends in QuarkXPress will turn into CMYK
- DCS 1.0 or 2.0 Images will only work in a separated workflow
- Duotones, tritones, etc., will turn into CMYK separations.

Software That We Support

York Graphic Services supports Acrobat 4.0 and uses the PDF version 1.3.



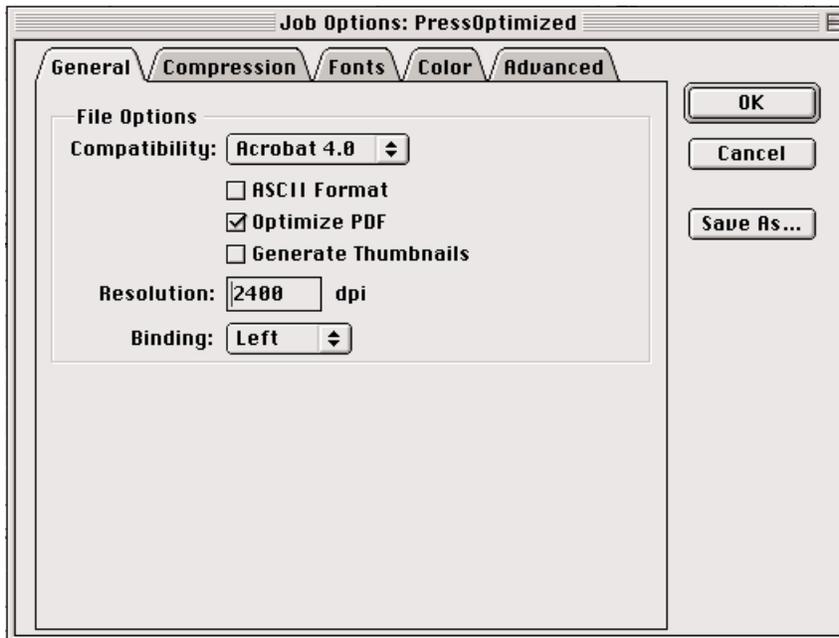
QuickClick 1

Upon launching Distiller, the Acrobat Distiller dialog box appears.

Select PressOptimized from the Job Options menu.

Job Options

Selecting PressOptimized is the single most important step in preparing your PDF file for press.



QuickClick 2

Access the Job Options dialog box by typing Command J.

Select the General settings as pictured here.

General

Compatibility: Select Acrobat 4.0. This selection is especially critical if you are using duotones and colorized TIFFs that require the PostScript 3 DeviceN color space operator.

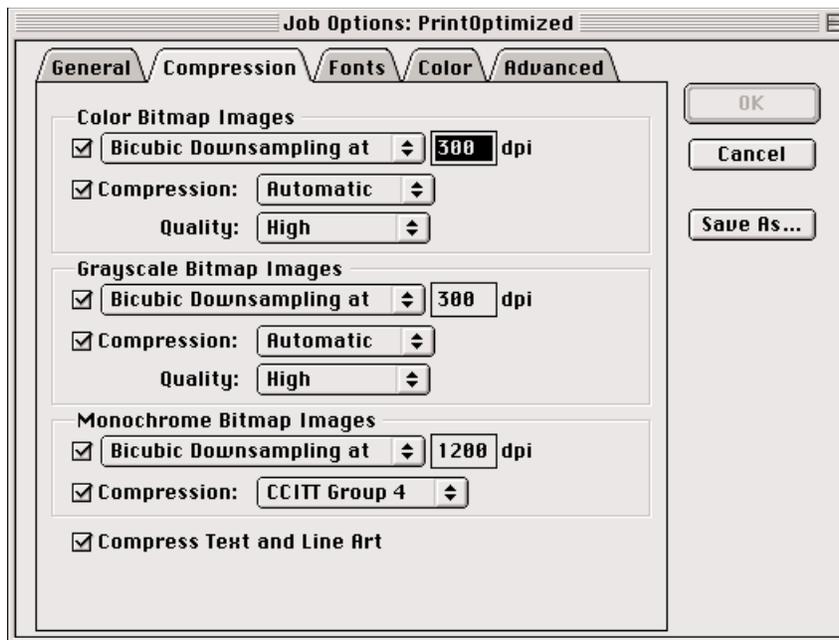
ASCII Format: Deselect this option to reduce PDF file size. ASCII files are approximately 20% larger than binary format files. The ASCII setting is used for older transmission protocols that easily confuse binary data as control code, causing end-of-file errors. This setting has no effect on the usability of your files.

Optimized PDF: Select this option to reduce PDF file size. Every element inside a PDF is placed in an object database. Objects that are used more than once in a document are duplicated in the database, resulting in larger file sizes. Optimizing the file removes this duplication. This setting has no effect on the usability of your files.

Generate Thumbnails: Deselect this option if you don't use thumbnails; select it if you do. Thumbnails can be generated later on using Acrobat 4.0. This setting has no effect on the usability of your files.

Resolution: Set to 2400 dpi (your default setting). The wrong setting here could cause problems. This value is used when calculating blends and processing vector-based art.

Binding: Select Left (your default setting). Any other setting could cause problems with imposition.



QuickClick 3

Select the Compression settings as pictured here.

To avoid a rare bug in Distiller turn off all downsampling.

Compression

(Color & Grayscale) Bitmap Images

Bicubic Downsampling at 300 dpi: This should be your default setting when the bug is fixed. Other settings could affect the usability of your PDF. This is the most precise method, but takes a little longer during Distilling. The dpi setting should be twice the value of the line screen your job will be printed at. Oftentimes you will not know what line screen will be used when your job is printed. 300 dpi is sufficient all the way up to 200 line screen. By default, Distiller will not modify these images unless they exceed the value entered by a factor of one and one half times.

Note: The dpi here refers only to the resolution of bitmapped images within a file. It does not refer to the overall dpi of your device.

Compression: ZIP is a lossless compression technique. This is the safest setting for the highest possible quality.

Automatic may be selected if JPEG compression does not concern you. JPEG compression has been a part of our workflow since Level 2 PostScript was introduced in 1992. We all have been using it without knowing it, so don't be afraid of it in this context. If you just can't deal with lossy compression, select the ZIP compression. Automatic uses both JPEG and ZIP compression, Distiller parses the image first and decides which algorithm to apply. JPEG is applied to smooth images, while ZIP is applied to images with sharp color changes.

Quality: 8-bit

If you choose Automatic compression, Maximum should be your default setting—any other setting may affect the quality of your output. If you are printing on uncoated paper the high setting should give you acceptable results. If you choose to use ZIP compression instead of automatic this should be set to 8-bit. The other ZIP option is 4-bit, this is a lossy version of ZIP compression and it will affect the usability of your PDF.

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Monochrome Bitmap Images

See the discussion above in reference to bicubic downsampling. If you choose to use it, set the threshold to 1200 dpi.

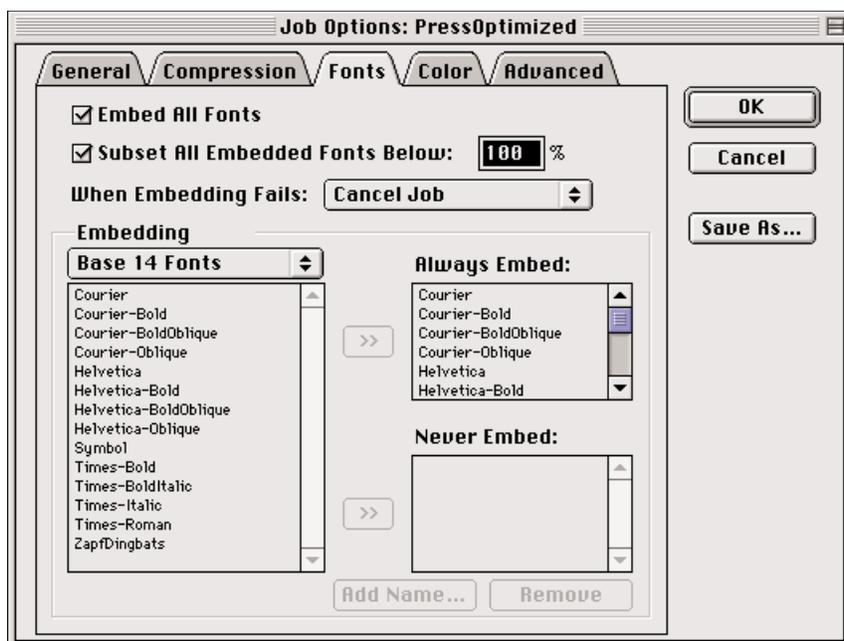
Compression: CCITT Group 4 is a lossless compression algorithm that works great with monochrome images. That actual setting here should not affect the usability of your files.

Compress Text and Line Art: Select this option. This is a lossless compression algorithm, so it will not affect the quality of these elements in your PDF file.

Don't be afraid to use compression. These settings can create a PDF that is one-tenth the size of your original file. This results in less disk space, faster copying across networks, e-mail, Internet and to removable media.

Note: When creating duotones, tritones, and colorized TIFFs...

With Acrobat 4.0, a new PostScript construct called DeviceN provides support for these types of images. To make this work, the image must be created in Photoshop 5.02 or higher. The PostScript file from your layout application must be saved as Level 3. Using the Job Options recommended in this booklet, Distiller 4.0 can create a proper PDF with the correct color information. Lastly, your printer must use an Adobe PostScript 3 RIP with in-RIP separation capability. Make sure all of these tools are in place before you commit the job to PDF. Many applications can create colorized TIFFs, so check with the software vendor to ensure that your application supports the DeviceN operator.



QuickClick **4**

Select the Font settings as pictured here.

Note: Select all of the Base 14 fonts and add them to the Always Embed list.

Fonts

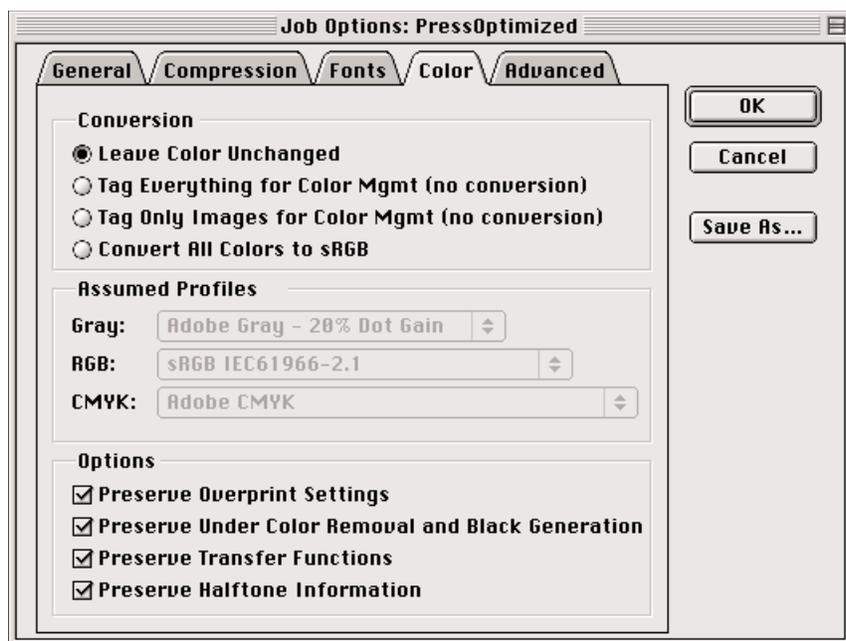
Embed All Fonts: Select this option to prevent font substitution at print time. If you have trouble embedding fonts check the license agreement that came with the fonts. Adobe allows all of its fonts to be embedded in a PDF, while other font vendors may not (i.e., TrueType fonts, OpenType fonts). Modifying or removing any of the fonts in the Resources folder/directory can cause problems.

Subset All Embedded Fonts Below: Select this option and specify 100% so that Distiller will embed only the font characters used in the document. Distiller also renames the subsetted fonts in the PDF file to prevent an available font with the same name from being used for viewing or printing. Turning this on can limit last-minute corrections, but ensure that you will not have font problems.

When Embedding Fails: Select Cancel Job (your default setting) to ensure that a PDF file will not be created when distilling a PostScript or EPS file with one or more missing document fonts.

Embedding

A new feature in Acrobat 4.0 is the embedding of the Base 14 Fonts. To enable this, select all of the fonts listed under Base 14 Fonts and then click the >> button next to always embed.



QuickClick 5

Select the Color settings as pictured here.

Color

Conversion

Leave Color Unchanged: Select this option so no color conversion takes place—unless you and your printer are using a complete color managed workflow and have adequately tested your settings. By default, you can select only one radio button.

Assumed Profiles

This option is not available when Leave Color Unchanged is selected. Again, communication and testing with your printer is very important before you change these settings.

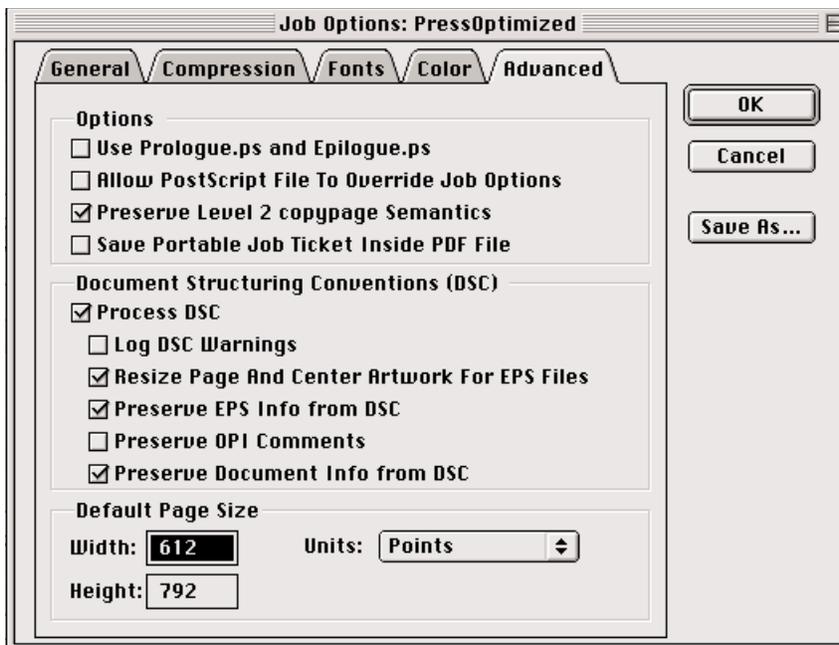
Options

Preserve Overprint Settings: Select this option. The RIPs used by most printers allow them to override this setting if necessary.

Preserve Under Color Removal and Black Generation: Select this option. The RIPs used by most imagesetters allow them to override this setting if necessary.

Preserve Transfer Functions: Select this option. The RIPs used by most printers allow them to override this setting if necessary.

Preserve Halftone Information: Select this option. The RIPs used by most printers allow them to override this setting if necessary.



QuickClick 6

Select the Advanced settings as pictured here.

Then click on OK.

Advanced

Options

Use Prologue.ps and Epilogue.ps: Deselect this option. This is used if someone has written custom PostScript commands that modify the behavior of Distiller. Selecting this will only affect your PDF if you have a custom prologue/epilogue.

Allow PostScript File to Override Job Options: Deselect this option. Certain commands can be put into a PostScript file to modify the behavior of Distiller. The PageMaker 6.5 Plus export PDF function is an example of an application that does this. Turning this off ensures that Distiller is acting the way you want it to at all times. If you work in PageMaker exclusively and never want to deal directly with Distiller you can turn this on.

Preserve Level 2 coppage Semantics: Select this option. It's unlikely that your job will ever use this, but it may. If you always create Level 3 PostScript for Distiller then you should turn it off. A symptom of this setting being incorrect is variable forms data printing in a stack instead of separate pages.

Save Portable Job Ticket Inside PDF File: Deselect this option, unless you and your printer are using PJTF. It doesn't hurt to leave it on, but why bother if you don't use it.

Document Structuring Conventions (DCS)

Processing DCS: Select this option. If deselected, it will only adversely affect your PDF if you are using OPI.

Log Warnings: Select this option. This option is for tech support types. Leave it on in case you have to ask a question. It will not affect the usability of your PDF either way.

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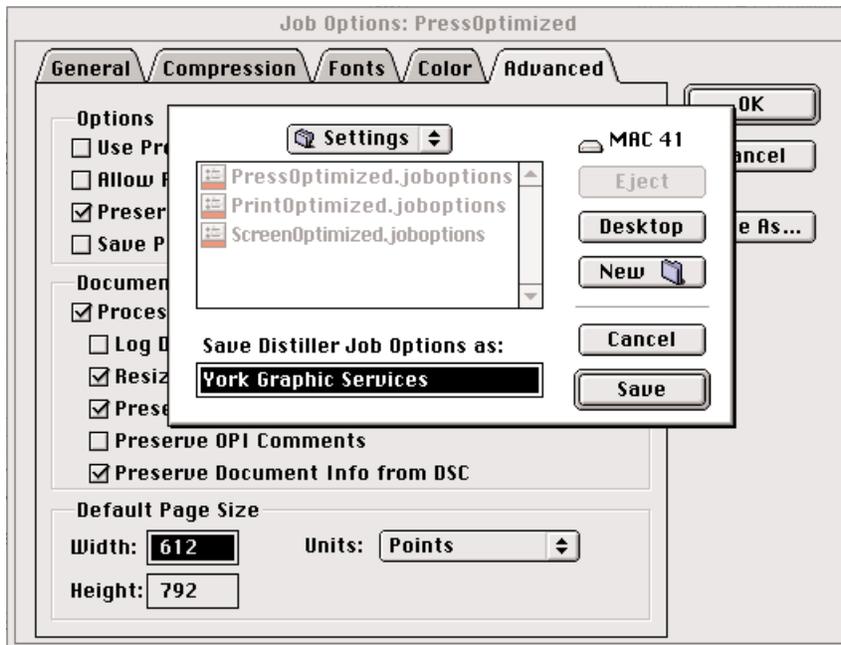
Resize Page and Center Artwork for ESP Files: This only applies if you are Distilling individual EPSF files. If you would like them centered on a nice tight page, then turn it on. If you are Distilling an EPSF that represents a specific page size, you should turn this off. You will need to set the Default Page Size properly. EPSF files do not have a size defined in the PostScript. Any PostScript file you create using the print dialog of your layout application will contain a page size definition, so it is unlikely that this setting will be an issue.

Preserve EPS Info from DCS: Select this option. It will help if troubleshooting is necessary. However, turning it off will not affect the usability of your PDF.

Preserve OPI Comments: Deselect this option if you are not using OPI; select it if you are. OPI somewhat contradicts the main value of a PDF. The value of a self-contained file is that it is completely portable. Some of the preflight programs used by printers do not work well with this setting turned on. OPI can be very tricky to do correctly. Be sure to test OPI with your printer before deciding to use it. Corel Ventura requires you to declare a link type at the time a picture is placed, so Corel users should contact their printer before they start typesetting.

Preserve Document Info from DCS: Select this option. It provides basic information to the printer about the origin of the documents. Deselecting this option will not affect the usability of your PDF, but it could affect troubleshooting efforts.

Default Page Size: This only comes into play when Distilling EPSF files. If your EPSF file represents a page, then this setting will most likely be trim size plus one-quarter inch. Ask your printer if you have questions.



QuickClick **7**

After clicking on OK, you are prompted to name the new Job Options file.

Once saved, this name will be selectable from Distiller's main Job Options menu (where you initially selected PressOptimized).

Any Job Options that a user creates is easily modified, so consider locking it in the Finder or changing the properties to read only in Explorer. Job Options files are stored in the following folder/directory structures:

Location of Job Options file on Mac: Applications:Acrobat 4.0:Distiller:Settings

Location of Job Options file on PC: C:\Program\Files\Adobe\Acrobat 4.0\Distiller\Settings

Note: Job Options files are platform independent and can be copied to or from a Mac or PC. On the Mac, the icon will appear as a generic document, but will still work.