How to Create a Dynamic Poster
Issues to manage when creating a poster sized file

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Page Layout

Most users think that because they are creating a poster size file that the printer can print all the way to the edge of the paper, also known as a full bleed printer. In most cases a full bleed printer is something that you would find in a graphics print shop that carries offset printing equipment. The printer within the BHC is not a full bleed printer, so you must account for the necessary margins. The best way to overcome this problem is to find out what the maximum print area for your desired print area is for each large format printer that you will be using. The printer that is housed at Barrett is a DesignJet 4000 which requires .75” margin all the way around. Here is an example:

Within this example you can see that there is .75” margin all the way around the paper to allow for the printable area required by the printer. The easiest way to make sure that none of your information “falls off” the page is to adjust your “Page Setup” (located under the design tab in PP) to the printable area. This will allow you to use the entire page without the possible loss of any of your information.
Pixelization is caused when the size of an image that has a low level of resolution (dpi) is increased.

In order to increase the size of an image so that “pixelization” does not occur you have two choices:

1. Rescan the image at a higher resolution
2. Increase the DPI by the rule of ten. (Explained below)

Rescanning the image is your best choice. Some issues that make rescanning problematic are no access to the original image, image is too large to rescan, or lack of a scanner. When you are faced with the problems above the only choice is the “Rule of Tens” (RoT). To use the RoT you will need a graphic manipulation program like Photoshop or other similar programs. You will need to increase the resolution (dpi) by 10% each time until you reach the desired resolution. Here is an example (Assume the resolution (dpi) is 100 and you need it to be 300):

1. Change the image’s resolution to 110 dpi
2. Change the image’s resolution to 121 dpi
3. Change the image’s resolution to 133 dpi
4. Change the image’s resolution to 146 dpi and so on…
5. Continue until you reach 300 dpi

This method does work, but is not as effective as rescanning the file again.
What is the Rule of Thirds?

The basic principle behind the rule of thirds is to imagine breaking an image down into thirds (both horizontally and vertically) so that you have 9 parts. As follows:

As you’re taking an image you would have done this in your mind through your viewfinder or in the LCD display that you use to frame your shot. With this grid in mind the ‘rule of thirds’ now identifies four important parts of the image that you should consider placing points of interest in as you frame your image. Not only this – but it also gives you four ‘lines’ that are also useful positions for elements in your photo.
The theory is that if you place points of interest in the intersections or along the lines then your photo becomes more balanced and will enable a viewer of the image to interact with it more naturally. Studies have shown that when viewing images, people’s eyes naturally go to one of the intersection points rather than the center of the shot. Using the rule of thirds works with this natural way of viewing an image rather than working against it.

Here is an example:

![Image](image-url)

In this image head of the subject is on one of the intersecting points – especially his eyes which are a natural point of focus for a portrait. His tie and flower also take up a secondary point of interest.

To find this information and more on the rule of thirds, visit the following web site by Digital Photography School: [http://digital-photography-school.com/rule-of-thirds](http://digital-photography-school.com/rule-of-thirds)
Information within the Poster (Text/Image Ratio)

When creating a poster, you want to think of how the poster “flows” or how the information will “catch” your viewer’s eye. Here are a few examples that work well in moving the viewer’s eye around the page:

Image 1

Image 2

Image 3

Image 4

Image 5
Whether you are creating your poster to use only images or images and text the information should flow from start to finish. Each of these examples has a few things in common. Each uses the Rule of Thirds, the text is readable from a distance, uses positive and negative space, and in each poster the information flows from top to bottom.

In image 1 the header information is clear and easy to read from a distance and draws the viewer in for a closer look. The smaller sized text that contains additional information about the product is at the bottom of the page. The top heavy text is offset by the graphic at the bottom.

In image 2 there is very little text, but the images speak volumes. The centerlines of the students are on the right and left thirds and the two students offset each other by facing out. The information is large and easy to see and accentuates the images in the center.

In image 3 the midpoint of the hourglass is on the left third with the text offsetting the hourglass, and the colors are mostly based within the blue spectrum.

In image 4 you only have two colors (B/W). Each color offsets the other from right to left and the center point of the face is on the right third.

In image 5 we have a classic student poster. It has a large text header, smaller text that carries the bulk of information, and charts and graphs that support the information in the text. Graph is simple and not cluttered with unnecessary data markers or background color. Each column has a graphic/image with equally spaced columns.
Using white space to set the content apart
In general, documents with empty space, or "white space" around the text are easier to read than documents in which the edges, or margins, of the text are close to the edge of the viewing area. Documents with limited white space appear more cluttered, and may be difficult for some readers with reading disabilities. For example:

Compare the first screen shot with very small margins and almost no white space, to the second one with 15% margins and substantially more white space. Most readers find the second example easier to read. The extra space around the text provides a cleaner layout and helps the reader focus on the text.
Font Size

You have to understand your media when considering the font type and size. For this project you are creating a poster. As such, you need think of how your audience will be looking and interacting with your artwork. Given that the poster is 3’x4’ poster and that your audience will be at least a few feet back, you need to compensate with the size of the text. 72 point is equal to 1” regardless of the type of text font that you choose. When considering your size choices I would use at least 54 point for headers and at least 36 point for the body of text. This will give you 2/3” on the headers and 1/2” in the body. If you can, I would try to increase the size as large as possible so that your audience can read your text with ease.

The font style can be as important as the information contained within the poster. Each font type sends off a different message to the viewer. A font like Chiller lets the viewer know that this is a playful or casual event, while a font like Times New Roman says the information is much more professional. Choose your font carefully. Once you have chosen your font or fonts, stick with them. DO NOT use every font you have just because you have them, choose one or two and stick with them.
A poster is a visual communication tool. An effective poster will help you:

1. Engage colleagues in conversation

2. Get your main points across to as many people as possible

3. Serve as a source of information, conversation starter, and advertisement of your work.

In presenting your poster remember the following tips:

1. Prepare a 3-5 minute verbal explanation. You will be asked to explain your work and in making such a presentation, don’t read the poster. Instead, give the big picture, explain why the problem is important, and use the graphics on your poster to illustrate and support your findings and recommendations.

2. Tell readers why your work matters, what you did, what you found, and what you recommend. Avoid excessive focus on methods—it’s the results and implications that count.

For more resources on poster presentation check out the following websites:

http://www.ncsu.edu/project/posters

**Tosney, K. 2004. How to Create a Poster that Graphically Communicates your Message**
http://www.biology.isa.umich.edu/research/labs/ktosney/file/PostersHome.html