

Supply of Artwork for Cutter Guides

The supply of PDF files for Pre-Press is a well known route, whether it is exporting direct to PDF from InDesign or Distilling postscript files from QuarkXpress. It is the set up and design of the file that we will address here. Here are some hints and tips to make life a little more hassle free.

The first thing to say about getting a cutting guide made, is it's time consuming to the schedule, and it's an expensive item to buy. Your best option is to ask your printer about using an existing forme. At Caric Press we have a large selection of standing formes, and can see if we have one suitable for your job. We can also supply you with the dimensions, or a sample from the cutting forme, so that and your design can be incorporated to it.

You may want a unique job, so artwork will be needed to produce the guide from. The wood and metal trace is created directly from a PDF, via a Gerber routing machine. All we need, is the layout of the product on file.

The best and safest way, is to supply the printed part of your design on one file, and to supply the cutting guide as a separate PDF file. If you feel you need to make them both on the same file, then ensure the cutting lines are set up as a bespoke spot colour called Cutter Guide, and all the elements set to overprint. This will ensure none of the lines knockout of the printed job.

The standard elements used are usually 0.5pt lines. A solid line denotes a cut, and a dotted line represents a fold. This is important, as on the wooden cutting tool, thin metal strips are inset into the wood, sharp raised metal for a cut, and blunt slightly recessed metal for a fold. This cutting guide is pressed against the printed sheet, and this cuts or creases accordingly.

When cutting and creasing, we always try to cut from the front of the job, this creates a better finish if any of the cuts are slightly blunt. For this reason, the artwork for the cutting tool needs to be designed to run from the front of the product. In the following example, we can see some of the design criteria that we need to follow. The folder is oversize A4 with a 150mm pocket. The pocket is designed with a gusset (sometimes referred to as a capacity) to allow numerous A4 leaves to be inserted into it. As you can see, the front and back page have been set at 305mm x 215mm. There are then 3 x 5mm

capacities placed on the spine, foot and side of the pocket. This will create the depth on the finished folder. The capacity must be a minimum of 3.5mm wide.

Looking at the area indicated A.

To glue the pocket to the inside back cover, we have created a glue tab, it is to this that we will attach the adhesive. It is important that this tab is set to 15mm, and you must ensure that this area is free from image on the final design. The adhesive sticks better if it is directly on the paper. Notice that we have cut this to an angle, so once it is folded over, it is not visible on the finished product.

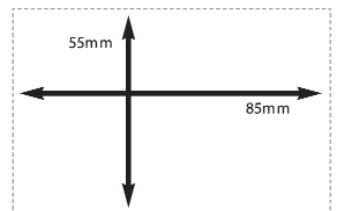
Looking at the area indicated B.

There are a few key areas on the folder. In figure 2 we can see that the pocket has been set back from the spine by 3mm. This means that when the pocket is folded up and the front cover closed, neither will be touching, which would make the folder buckle.

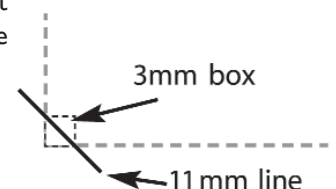
A common request is to place slots for a business card to sit in. This again is quite easy. Firstly create a square to the size of the card. In the example

shown, the business card is the standard 55mm x 85mm. Place this on the artwork where you would like the business card to sit.

The next step is to create a 3mm square, intersected by an 11mm line, set at 45 degrees at the two corners into which you wish to insert the card.



Finally remove the 3mm box, and the box indicating the business card, to leave the two solid 11mm cutting guides.



As always there are staff in our pre-press department on hand to help you with cutting guides - if you require technical help, call us on [01202 574577](tel:01202574577).

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