

A description of common errors you might find on preflight reports from Adonline and Adservices.

Fonts Not Embedded

Adservices - Missing fonts: - ArialMT

Adonline - Font ArialMT is not embedded (3x on page 1)

To ensure that the text in ads appears as intended by the designer, we require that all fonts used, must be embedded in the PDF document. Embedding fonts means that a copy of the font file is included inside the PDF document. This allows the ad text to be correctly reproduced even though the fonts are not installed on our systems.

In most professional design software embedding fonts is just a matter of selecting the correct option when exporting the ad. It doesn't matter if only the characters that are used (referred to as subset), or the complete font is embedded.

The Preflight function under the Advanced menu in Adobe Acrobat Pro can be used to find the elements with missing fonts.

Multiple pages

Adservices - Number of pages is higher than 1

Adonline - Number of pages more than 1

Advertising material supplied as PDF files must contain only one page. If supplying multiple ads, each one must be in a separate file.

Transparency

Adservices - "1" (Group59: Pos. x: 136.08 pt y:328.48 pt, width: 272.16 pt height: 22.73 pt):

Transparency is used in file.

Adonline - Transparent objects have been found (3x on page 1)

Transparency is used in by design software to produce effects such as drop shadows, or blends between two images. Our systems that produce plates for the press are not able to process transparency. If material is supplied with transparency our preflight systems will flatten the transparency, but in doing so, will often produce a very large file. Depending on the complexity of the transparency the file may become too large, and can stall the preflight process.

To avoid these issues, transparency should be flattened before delivery. This can most easily be achieved by exporting the ad as an EPS from the design software (eg. Adobe InDesign, Quark, etc.), then converting it to a PDF using Adobe Acrobat Distiller.

RGB Colour

Adservices - Page 1 "1" (Image3: Pos. x: 87.50 pt y:250.74 pt, width: 175.00 pt height: 167.00 pt):

RGB color image without ICC profile

Adonline - Remapped Device RGB color space to Device CMYK color space, keeping overprint (1x on page 1)

There are 2 main colour systems used for digital images, CMYK and RGB.

CMYK represents the 4 ink colours used in printing, Cyan, Magenta, Yellow & Black. These 4 Inks are combined to produce the colours on the printed page. We use CMYK for all files that are sent to be printed.

RGB is the combination of Red, Green & Blue light that is used by TVs and computer monitors to produce colour images. Image files created by digital cameras and scanners are usually RGB.

If an ad contains RGB elements our preflight systems will convert them to CMYK. When this happens it is quite likely that the colours will change from what was intended by the designer. Reds are the most likely colours to change. Bright reds will often become dull red, or even orange.

If the images have an ICC colour profile* attached then the conversion is more likely to be accurate. Images from the web are all RGB, and very few will include an ICC Profile. The Adservices preflight report will show if the images have an ICC profile or not. For best results all elements in an ad should be CMYK. Images can be converted to CMYK by using the Image Mode menu in Adobe Photoshop.

* ICC Colour profiles define the properties of devices such as cameras, scanners, printers and monitors, to allow accurate reproduction of colour, and conversion between colour formats (e.g. RGB to CMYK)

Total Area Coverage

Adservices - Page 1 "1": Total area coverage (TAC) on page is too high: 300.00 % > 240.00 %

Adonline - Total ink coverage of flat color is more than 240% (2x on page 1)

When several ink colours are printed on top of each other, there is a limit to the amount of ink that can be put on paper. This is referred to as either TIC (Total Ink Coverage) or TAC (Total Area Coverage). Ink coverage is specified as a percentage: using 100% of each process colour (cyan, magenta, yellow and black) equals 400% TAC. When the TAC is too high the ink will either bleed or not dry quickly enough, and smudge onto the next page.

For newsprint we use a maximum TAC value of 240%

When a preflight report has a Total Area Coverage warning it most likely means that an element in the file has not been optimised for newsprint.

Fairfax use a system called optiink, that will automatically reduce the Total Area Coverage on all material we print. Because of this Total Area Coverage is not a serious problem, however in correcting the ink coverage, the colour of effected ads will be changed. TAC warnings in a preflight report can often indicate there are other issues, such as RGB elements in the ad.

Registration Black or RGB Black

Adonline - RGB Black or impure CMYK Black is used (1x on page 1)

Registration black is when a combination of Cyan, Magenta & Yellow ink is used to produce black, instead of using black ink. This happens most often when RGB elements are converted to CMYK.

When registration black is used in ads it can produce a number of problems:

- Muddy, brown looking blacks
- Coloured fringes on the edges of text or black areas
- Blurry text

Files containing Registration black will also have Total Area Coverage warnings.

Note: Adservices does not specifically warn about registration black, but will still give a Total Area Coverage warning for the ad.

Effective Image resolution

Adservices - Page 1 "1" (Image5: Pos. x: 277.60 pt y:250.74 pt, width: 175.00 pt height: 167.00 pt): Resolution of a color image too low (found: 72.00 dpi - demanded: 99.00 dpi)

Adonline - Resolution of color or grayscale image is less than 170 dpi (2x on page 1)

Image resolution is the number of pixels (dots) in a given area. This is usually referred to as DPI (Dots per Inch). To produce crisp looking ads, we recommend all images be at least 200DPI.

When you have a bitmap image, such as a jpg file, it will have fixed pixel dimensions. For example you might have a logo that is 360 pixels wide. If you wanted to use that logo for a single column classified ad, it would be fine because at 1 inch wide it would have an effective resolution of 360DPI. However if you wanted to use that same logo across the top of a T42 display ad (about 5 inches wide) the effective resolution falls to 72DPI.

When the image resolution is too low, images will look blocky or blurry. When the resolution is too high, the file size of the ad will get larger without any increase in quality.

Often our clients use images from web pages. This might be ok if the image is used very small in the ad, however almost all images on the web have an effective resolution of around 72DPI. This is because 72DPI is the resolution of most computer monitors.

PDF Version Higher than 1.3

Adonline - Changed Acrobat version to 4.0 (PDF version 1.3)

To avoid problems with material being processed by our page layout and printing systems, we require that all PDF files should be version 1.3 or lower. Our preflight systems will convert higher version files to 1.3, but in doing so advanced features added in later versions will be removed. This might change the appearance of the ad.

Text Size Too Small

Adservices - "1" (Text36: Pos. x: 144.43 pt y:400.79 pt, width: 216.75 pt height: 89.58 pt): Font size of text with more than 1 plate colors is too small (found: 6.00 pt - demanded: 8.00 pt)

Adonline - Text of 6 pt, colored with 2 or more separations, is less than 8 pt (1x on page 1), Text of 4 pt is less than 6 pt (1x on page 1)

Because of the limitations of newspaper printing and paper quality, small text sizes often become unreadable. This is particularly a problem if multiple ink colours are used. Designers usually proof their work on high quality inkjet or laser printers, so might not realise that the small text will be a problem.