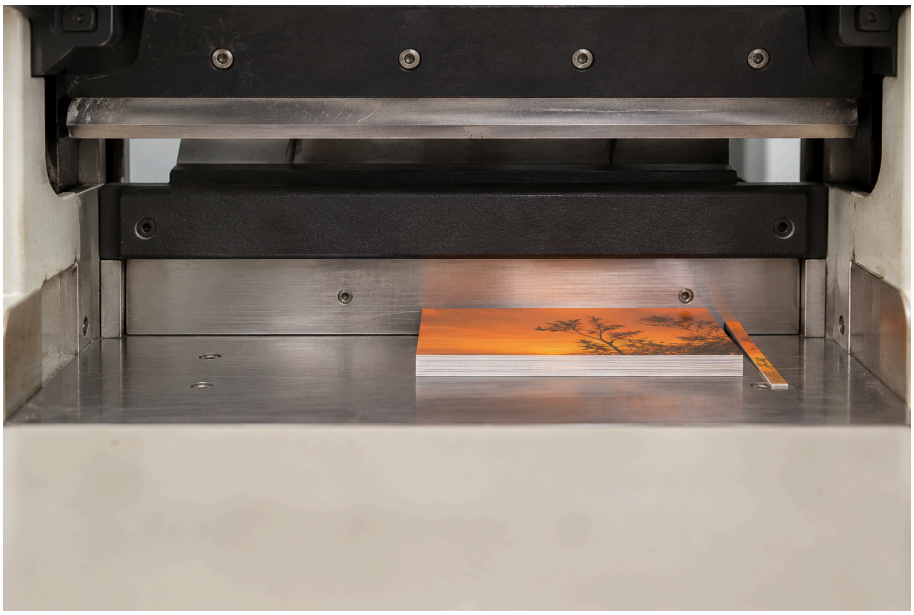
TAPFLARE / RESEARCH & PRACTICAL GUIDANCE

# PDF Preflight Checklist: Meet Your Printer's Specs

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## Executive Summary

A **PDF preflight checklist** should answer a specific question: does this exported Portable Document Format (PDF) file meet the requirements of this printer, product and order? Start with the supplier's current template, order specification and proof instructions. Supplier guidance genuinely differs: **MOO** asks customers to remove crop marks, while **Printed.com** describes an export workflow that includes them. Neither instruction is a universal printing rule. (support.moo.com) (www.printed.com)

For MOO's **Standard postcard**, the published trim is **6 × 4 inches**, the bleed area is **6.16 × 4.16 inches**, and the safe area is **5.84 × 3.84 inches**. Assuming symmetric placement, the displayed dimensions imply **0.08 inch of bleed per side**, calculated as (6.16 − 6) ÷ 2. That is **2.032 mm**, using the exact conversion of **25.4 mm per inch**. These are product-specific calculations; request the original template when displayed rounding could affect setup. (www.moo.com) (www.nist.gov)

Separate **structural preflight**, **visual inspection** and **production/proof approval**. A preflight profile checks the conditions it was configured to inspect; a report can locate errors and warnings. It cannot decide whether a marketing offer is correct. Smartpress explicitly states that its automated proof does not replace human review. Record each requirement, its source and revision, the expected and observed values, the check method, result and responsible owner. (callassoftware.com) (help.callassoftware.com) (smartpress.com)

**PDF/X conformance** supports a defined print-exchange workflow, but does not establish the job's minimum image resolution or bleed requirement. Follow the printer's requested PDF/X variant and output intent rather than choosing a universal preset. Judge images at their placed size: in the labeled hypothetical calculation below, a **1,800-pixel** image supplies **300 pixels per inch (PPI)** at **6 inches**, but **150 PPI** at **12 inches**. Exporting again does not establish that missing original detail has been restored. The decision framework is simple: **pass** a documented match, **correct** a demonstrated mismatch, and **ask** the supplier about an unresolved technical choice. Release the named file only after the required proof approval. (pdfa.org) (helpx.adobe.com) (printninja.com)

# Introduction and Background

A marketing production lead can receive a polished postcard PDF and still lack the evidence needed to authorize printing. The file may have the right appearance but the wrong dimensions, an unsuitable image at final size, or finishing artwork supplied in a form the printer does not accept. PrintNinja's file checklist, for example, ties page count and page size to the quote and asks for separate files for specified specialty options. (printninja.com)

For this report, **print-ready** means ready for the receiving supplier's agreed workflow. This is an operational definition, not a new certification. It keeps the review focused on the order: the same artwork can need a different export when the supplier, stock, finished size or finishing changes. PDFlib explains that choosing an appropriate output profile requires knowing the printing process and paper. (www.pdflib.com)

For Tapflare's audience of marketing buyers and practitioners, the useful handoff is the final PDF plus a record of what was checked. The worksheet below assigns unresolved questions to an owner so that a production lead does not have to invent a color profile or reinterpret an ambiguous template. It is an original acceptance framework, intended for inserts, postcards and brochures.

**Preflight** here means inspecting the PDF's technical properties against a selected set of checks. Those checks can be extended beyond basic PDF/X conformance: the **Ghent Workgroup (GWG)** publishes PDF/X-Plus creation and preflight specifications and best practices. The distinction matters because a general standards check and a supplier's product requirements are different evidence. (gwg.org)

The reference date is November 2026. Supplier examples establish the requirements stated on the cited pages when researched, not an acceptance guarantee for an unplaced order. The report therefore separates published instructions, original calculations and hypothetical file observations. It makes no measured claim about reprint savings or approval speed.

# Key Changes

## Replace a generic preset with the order's specification

The useful process change is to approve against a named specification. Obtain the exact product, dimensions, orientation, stock, sides, finishing and template revision before exporting. UPrinting's template guidance illustrates why product identification matters: some templates include additional folding and finishing options. A template chosen only because its overall size looks similar is insufficient evidence. (www.uprinting.com)

Create a short specification record:

- **Order:** Record the supplier, product, order reference and intended version.
- **Template:** Save the original supplied template and its revision or retrieval date.
- **Geometry:** Record trim, bleed edges, safe area and orientation.
- **Delivery:** Record accepted PDF/X variant, marks policy and page arrangement.
- **Color:** Record the requested color space, output intent and spot-color instructions.
- **Proof:** Record the proof type, approval owner and questions still open.

Where a supplier supplies a product template, use it to resolve detail: Printed.com directs customers to downloadable templates for safe-area and bleed information. Record which source controls when a general help article and an order attachment differ, and request confirmation rather than silently choosing between them. (www.printed.com)

## Treat PDF/X as a controlled exchange requirement

**PDF/X** is a family of PDF standards for print exchange. Select the variant requested by the receiving printer. Adobe explicitly ties the PDF/X choice to the print service provider's requirement, while the PDF Association explains that PDF/X does not define production-specific minimum image resolution or bleed. A filename containing “PDFX” supplies no independent conformance evidence. (helpx.adobe.com) (pdfa.org)

*Table 1* summarizes relevant distinctions. It is a question guide for the receiving workflow, not an export recommendation.

| Variant | Documented distinction | Acceptance question |
|---|---|---|
| **PDF/X-1a** | Print elements use CMYK, grayscale or spot colors. (pdfa.org) | Does the supplier require this variant and provide a matching export profile? |
| **PDF/X-3** | Supports color-managed workflows including RGB, Lab and International Color Consortium (ICC)-based color spaces under its rules. (pdfa.org) | Which source profiles and intended printing condition are accepted? |
| **PDF/X-4** | Preserves live transparency and supports color management; the relevant ISO specification supports RGB and spot-color data. (helpx.adobe.com) (www.iso.org) | Is this the requested version, with the correct output intent and job-specific checks? |

The table explains why neither “all RGB fails” nor “all transparency must be flattened” works as a universal rule. The chosen variant and receiving workflow control. Adobe documents a print-ready conversion workflow using a PDF/X-4 profile, but that workflow does not establish a particular supplier's acceptance. (helpx.adobe.com)

## Separate the declaration from the evidence

The PDF Association says PDF metadata must claim PDF/X conformance. Treat that declaration as a property to inspect, then obtain a conformance report from an appropriate checking profile. Also run the additional checks that represent this order, since PDF/X alone leaves production-specific image and bleed requirements open. (pdfa.org)

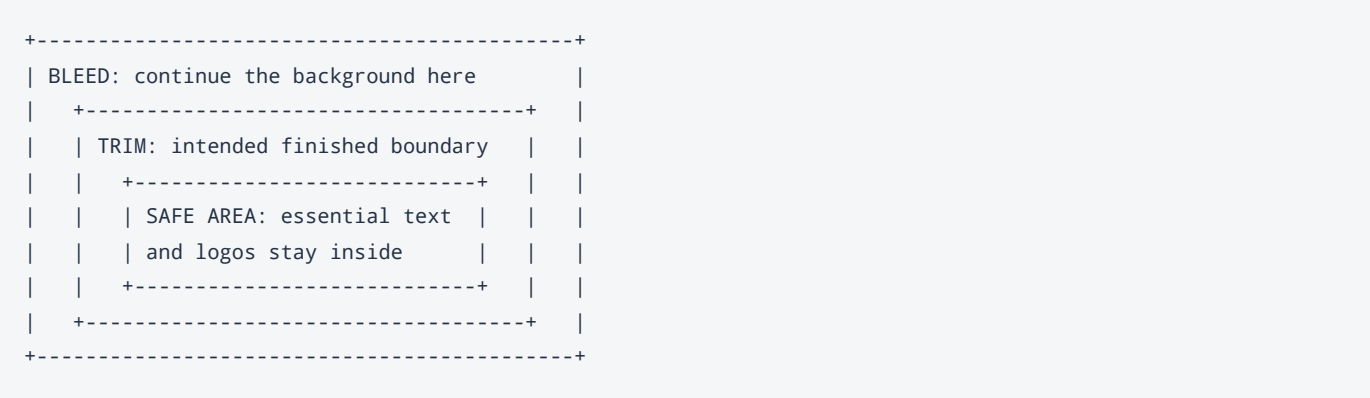
Record the profile name and settings alongside the result. callas documents profiles that define both checks and fixes. If a workflow fixes the PDF, identify the resulting file as a new version and inspect it again before release. A report about the incoming file should not be treated as evidence about an unreviewed replacement. (callassoftware.com)

# Implementation Considerations and Process Changes

## Map trim, bleed and safe area to actual artwork

**Trim** is the intended finished boundary. **Bleed** is artwork extending beyond that boundary, providing trimming allowance; Indiana University Printing Services describes this extra image or background color as leeway during trimming. The **safe area** is an inset region for essential content, with the applicable inset determined by the supplier. PrintPlace, for example, specifies a minimum text distance from trim in its layout guidance. (printing.indiana.edu) (www.printplace.com)

This original schematic is intentionally not to scale. The outer region represents artwork extending past trim; the inner region protects important content. Its lines are explanatory guides, not marks to add to the production PDF.




Inspect both page geometry and page content. A correctly sized **BleedBox** does not demonstrate that the background reaches it. Fireball Printing makes the distinction directly: bleed is extra background image, not simply extra white space. Check the visible artwork around every required edge, not just the numerical size of a box. (fireballprinting.com)

Check marks separately. University of Minnesota Printing Services accepts files with or without crop marks, while United Reprographics asks customers not to include them. These are independent examples of differing intake policies, not competing definitions of correct PDF geometry. (www.printing.umn.edu) (www.unitedreprographics.com)

## Use a copyable PDF preflight worksheet

*Table 2* is an original, compact evidence register intended for a single landscape worksheet. Replace bracketed fields with order evidence. “Not applicable” needs a reason; a blank result should remain open.

| Requirement | Source + revision | Expected value | Observed value | Check method | Result | Owner |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Product and file | [Order; revision] | [Product; version] | [Filename; version] | Compare order | [Pass/correct/ask] | [Buyer] |
| Trim and orientation | [Template; revision] | [Width × height] | [Measured values] | Page geometry | [Result] | [Designer] |

| Requirement | Source + revision | Expected value | Observed value | Check method | Result | Owner |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bleed geometry | [Template; revision] | [Required edges] | [Boxes; dimensions] | Page inspection | [Result] | [Designer] |
| Bleed artwork | [Template; revision] | [Coverage] | [Edge findings] | Visual inspection | [Result] | [Designer] |
| Safe content | [Template; revision] | [Inset] | [Closest content] | Visual + measure | [Result] | [Designer] |
| Marks and page order | [Supplier; revision] | [Policy; sequence] | [Observed] | Page review | [Result] | [Designer] |
| Fonts | [Supplier; revision] | [Embedding rule] | [Font report] | Structural check | [Result] | [Designer] |
| Images | [Supplier; revision] | [Effective PPI rule] | [Lowest relevant PPI] | Object inspection | [Result] | [Designer] |
| Color and output intent | [Supplier; revision] | [Spaces; profile] | [Object/report values] | Preflight + preview | [Result] | [Printer] |
| Spots and finishing | [Order; revision] | [Names; file setup] | [Plates; files] | Separations + review | [Result] | [Printer] |
| PDF/X conformance | [Supplier; revision] | [Variant; profile] | [Report result] | Conformance check | [Result] | [Designer] |
| Content and proof | [Approval brief] | [Approved version] | [Proof reference] | Human approval | [Result] | [Buyer] |

The register deliberately separates expected from observed values. “Checked” is weaker evidence than “measured width matches template.” It also separates technical ownership from purchase authorization. A printer can clarify an output condition while the buyer remains responsible for approving the offer and destination address.

For brochures, record single pages versus spreads, the reading sequence and the fold arrangement. Fireball's booklet instructions request single pages, with a cover exception explained in its guidance; Printed.com's checklist requests running order. Neither should be extrapolated to every folded product. (fireballprinting.com) (printed.zendesk.com)

# Fonts, Images, Color and Finishing

## Check fonts and images inside the exported PDF

Inspect the exported file rather than relying solely on the design application's status. In the font report, identify each font and whether it is fully embedded, subset embedded or unembedded. Enfocus explains that **subset embedding** includes the characters actually used. Supplier acceptance is a separate requirement: the dated Sheridan specification discussed below asks for full embedding without subsetting. (cdn.enfocus.com) (www.sheridan.com)

Use these object-level checks:

- **Fonts:** Compare every reported font's embedding state with the supplier rule.
- **Glyphs:** Inspect special characters, prices, punctuation and text near layout boundaries.
- **Images:** Read effective resolution at the final placed size, on both axes.
- **Compression:** Inspect the actual export for visible artifacts and lost detail.
- **Exceptions:** Identify the object and page, not merely “low quality somewhere.”

Adobe's Output Preview Object Inspector exposes resolution, color mode and transparency. Use those observations to populate the register. A report's scope matters too: Enfocus documents a font check that can ignore text outside a selected page box, illustrating why a profile's settings belong with its result. (helpx.adobe.com) (cdn.enfocus.com)

**PPI** describes image pixels per inch; **dots per inch (DPI)** describes printed ink-dot density in PrintNinja's explanation. Supplier terminology can vary. Smartpress, for example, labels its small-format recommendation **300 DPI** and its large-format recommendation **150 PPI**. Preserve that attribution and ask which effective image resolution the actual product requires. (printninja.com) (smartpress.com)

## Verify color, output intent and finishing instructions

**CMYK** means cyan, magenta, yellow and black; **RGB** means red, green and blue. Do not classify all RGB objects as failures without checking the receiving workflow. Blurb's PDF-to-Book instructions explicitly accept CMYK or sRGB in that workflow. That is a counterexample to a blanket prohibition, not permission to send RGB to every supplier. (support.blurb.com)

An **output intent** records the intended printing condition. GWG describes that requirement for PDF/X, and PDFlib says the print service provider should generally specify it. Adobe adds an essential limitation: output intents describe a destination but do not themselves convert the PDF's colors. Merely attaching a requested profile is therefore different from checking the actual objects. (gwg.org) (www.pdflib.com) (helpx.adobe.com)

For a color-sensitive order, record the supplier's requested ICC profile, permitted color spaces, spot-color names and ink limits. Avoid inventing a generic rich-black recipe or coverage limit. Adobe's Output Preview guidance directs users to the print service provider for maximum ink coverage. (helpx.adobe.com)

Inspect **overprint** and separations where relevant. Enfocus documents detection of white objects set to overprint, and Adobe cautions that preview results can vary with the printer, raster image processor (RIP) and output settings. Escalate uncertain rendering to the printer instead of treating a screen preview as production approval. (www.enfocus.com) (helpx.adobe.com)

Finally, reconcile finishing artwork with the order. UPrinting requests separate layers when combining foil and spot ultraviolet (UV) effects; PrintNinja specifies individual files for listed specialty options. Ask the actual supplier which arrangement applies, how masks are named, and whether the proof represents those effects. (www.uprinting.com) (printninja.com)

# Preflight Reports, Visual Inspection and Proof Approval

## Read the report as a record of configured checks

A useful report identifies the file, profile, settings and findings. callas documents reports listing errors, information and warnings, with problem hits highlighted through layers or masks. Use those locations to verify a finding and write a correction request. An “all clear” result should be read within the profile's scope. (help.callassoftware.com)

Keep the **original export**, any **corrected export** and their reports distinguishable. Where automatic correction is enabled, record which file was inspected after correction. callas describes profiles containing fixes as well as checks, so a production workflow should not assume that inspection leaves its input unchanged. (callassoftware.com)

A practical decision rule is:

- **Pass:** The observed value matches a documented requirement.
- **Correct:** Evidence demonstrates a mismatch the designer can resolve.
- **Ask:** The requirement is missing, conflicting or outside the reviewer's authority.
- **Hold:** A required correction, supplier answer or proof approval remains outstanding.

These labels are proposed workflow controls. They are not a supplier-issued grading system. An unresolved “ask” should not be converted into a pass simply because the submission deadline is close.

## Make visual inspection a separate task

Open the exact release candidate and inspect every page. Smartpress explicitly states that automated Instant Proof does not replace human review and identifies limitations involving spelling, layout and rotation. The following visual checks turn that distinction into a repeatable buyer review. (smartpress.com)

- **Content:** Confirm the approved offer, dates, prices and contact details.
- **Identity:** Check logos, brand colors and the intended campaign version.
- **Edges:** Inspect bleed coverage and essential content near trim.
- **Sequence:** Review fronts, backs, intentional blanks and reading order.
- **Orientation:** Confirm how the reverse relates to the front.
- **Folds:** Make a folded mock-up where the product needs one.
- **Destinations:** Following Montgomery College’s QR Code Usage Guide, confirm that QR codes direct readers to the correct digital content. Test links or scan codes from an appropriately sized sample.
- **Rendering:** Inspect transparency, knockouts and suspicious fine details.

For folded cards and brochures, Smartpress specifically recommends printing and folding the soft proof to confirm placement. A paper mock-up is useful evidence for orientation and panel relationships; keep color approval within the proof's stated scope. (smartpress.com)

### Approve what the proof can show

A **soft proof** is an on-screen simulation. The International Color Consortium describes soft proofing as a reasonably accurate simulation of printed appearance, and X-Rite explains the role of printer and monitor profiles. Treat viewing conditions and software configuration as part of the evidence when evaluating color. (www.color.org) (www.xrite.com)

Proof types have limits. Smartpress says its Instant Proof does not simulate paper stocks, coatings or specialty finishes. PrintNinja says electronic proofs do not show how final printed colors will turn out. Ask for the proof appropriate to the decision instead of interpreting every digital preview as a contract for physical appearance. (smartpress.com) (printninja.com)

Record who approved which proof and which file it represents. Smartpress requires customer proof approval before press and a revised approval after changes. Apply the actual supplier's release procedure, with content approval and technical acceptance separately visible in the record. (smartpress.com)

## Data Analysis and Evidence

### Product dimensions and the per-side calculation

The quantitative example uses MOO's published **Standard postcard** dimensions. It does not generalize them to other MOO sizes or other printers. *Table 3* puts the published values beside original arithmetic. Inches are converted using the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) definition of exactly 25.4 mm per inch. (www.nist.gov)

| Measurement or example | Published input or stated assumption | Result and interpretation |
|---|---|---|
| **Standard postcard widths** | Trim 6 in; bleed area 6.16 in; safe area 5.84 in. (www.moo.com) | Compare the appropriate boundary with the file, not just its displayed overall width. |
| **Standard postcard heights** | Trim 4 in; bleed area 4.16 in; safe area 3.84 in. (www.moo.com) | Check orientation and both axes. |
| **Symmetric bleed, article calculation** | (6.16 − 6) ÷ 2 = 0.08 in per side. | 0.08 × 25.4 = 2.032 mm; this is not a generic 3 mm allowance. (www.nist.gov) |
| **Symmetric safe inset, article calculation** | (6 − 5.84) ÷ 2 = 0.08 in per side, using the published widths above. | The same arithmetic applies to the stated heights; confirm exact template geometry if rounding matters. |
| **Image at original placed size (Hypothetical Example)** | 1,800 pixels ÷ 6 printed inches. | 300 PPI, applying the documented pixel-dimension/physical-size formula. (helpx.adobe.com) |
| **Image enlarged (Hypothetical Example)** | The same 1,800 pixels ÷ 12 printed inches. | 150 PPI; doubling physical size halves effective resolution without resampling. (helpx.adobe.com) |

The bleed and safe-inset calculations assume centered, symmetric boundaries and use displayed dimensions. They do not establish hidden precision in the downloadable template. If software reports slightly different units or rounding, compare with the original supplier template and ask which dimensions control. A copied generic bleed preset would bypass the product-specific evidence.

### Effective PPI is a placed-size measurement

The reusable calculation is **effective PPI = source pixel dimension ÷ printed inches on that axis**. Adobe defines printed resolution in pixels assigned to each printed inch; its resizing documentation gives the same pixel-dimension/physical-size relationship. Evaluate both axes when an image has been stretched differently in width and height. (helpx.adobe.com)

The hypothetical table changes physical size while holding the pixel count constant. It does not assert that either result is acceptable for a particular print order. PrintNinja independently illustrates the same principle: scaling an image to **200%** reduces **300 PPI** to **150 PPI**. Record the final PDF object's effective resolution against the supplier's threshold. (printninja.com)

Changing a resolution label is different from acquiring a better source image. Adobe says the total image data remains constant unless resampled, while PrintNinja explains that resampling a genuinely low-resolution source does not add real detail. For a demonstrated mismatch, replace the source, reduce its placed size, or obtain a supplier-approved exception. (helpx.adobe.com) (printninja.com)

### A dated workflow is evidence of variation

Sheridan's linked book-production PDF is **Revision 14**, dated **February 26, 2023**, despite “Feb2024” in its filename. It requests **PDF/X-1a**, prohibits crop marks, and lists **200 dpi** for halftone images. Those are dated document requirements, not a current postcard prescription or a universal resolution threshold. Obtain current job-specific confirmation before using that workflow. (www.sheridan.com)

## Case Studies and Real-World Examples

### Postcard acceptance decision (Hypothetical Example)

The following files and observations are fictional. A buyer is preparing a MOO Standard postcard campaign using the published **6 × 4 inch** trim specification. The approved order record must still supply all remaining technical and proof requirements. In this example, the designer delivers `welcome-card-v07.pdf`; the production lead reviews that exact file, not an earlier preview. (www.moo.com)

The review records these hypothetical findings:

- **Pass, dimensions:** Measured trim and orientation match the saved product template.
- **Correct, artwork:** The background reaches trim but leaves an empty strip in the required bleed.
- **Correct, marks:** Crop marks remain in the export despite MOO's removal instruction. (support.moo.com)
- **Ask, fonts:** The report identifies subset embedding, but the saved order notes do not state whether it is accepted.
- **Ask, standard:** Metadata claims PDF/X-4, but the required variant and conformance report have not been recorded.
- **Hold, release:** Technical questions and the required proof approval remain open.

These findings show why a checklist needs separate rows for geometry and artwork. MOO instructs customers to extend the background into bleed; a page box with the expected dimensions would not answer whether this fictional background actually does so. The designer owns the correction, while the supplier owns clarification of unspecified receiving requirements. (www.moo.com)

The lead should not infer a font failure merely from subset embedding. Enfocus documents what a subset contains; acceptance depends on the supplier rule. Nor should the lead select a familiar ICC profile to close an empty field. PDFlib says the output intent should generally be specified by the print service provider. (cdn.enfocus.com) (www.pdflib.com)

### Send an evidence-based correction request (Hypothetical Example)

A usable request could read:

“Please revise `welcome-card-v07.pdf` against the attached product template. Extend the background through the required bleed on the affected edge and remove crop marks. Keep the approved content and trim. Supply a newly named export and a fresh preflight report identifying the profile and findings. The production lead will obtain written confirmation of the required PDF/X variant, output intent and font-embedding rule before release.”

The marks instruction in this fictional request follows MOO's published policy. It should not be copied unchanged to a supplier whose specification includes marks. The point is to identify a demonstrated mismatch and its controlling source, rather than ask the designer to “make it print-ready” without acceptance criteria. (support.moo.com)

After correction, compare the new export with both the template and the approved creative. Recheck the changed edge, the marks and the report, then complete visual inspection and the actual supplier's proof procedure. The expected outcome is a traceable decision, not a promise that preflight can predict every characteristic of the finished print.

## Implications and Future Directions

The most useful process improvement is a portable acceptance record. Preserve the supplier specification, original template, release PDF, profile result, visual-review record and proof approval together. This is a recommended handoff structure. It lets a later reviewer identify which requirement was applied without reconstructing a decision from scattered messages.

Automation can support that structure when profiles reflect the job. callas documents variables that adapt profiles to jobs, customers and output conditions, while GWG publishes specifications that extend PDF/X checks. Those capabilities support more specific checking; they do not eliminate the need to obtain the correct inputs from the receiving printer. (callassoftware.com) (gwg.org)

Use this **printer-question sheet** wherever the evidence register contains an “ask”:

- **Template:** Which exact product template and revision control this order?
- **Dimensions:** Which trim, bleed edges and safe-area values must the PDF match?
- **Marks:** Should crop marks and other printer marks be included or removed?

- **Pages:** Are files required as individual pages, spreads or separate front/back uploads?
- **Standard:** Which PDF/X variant and conformance profile should be used?
- **Color:** Which ICC output intent, color spaces and ink limits apply?
- **Fonts and images:** Are subsets accepted, and what effective resolution applies to each image class?
- **Finishing:** How should spot colors, masks, folds and specialty effects be supplied?
- **Proof:** What does the proof show, who approves it, and what changes require approval again?

The questions are deliberately specific because supplier instructions vary. PrintPlace's FAQ, for example, says missing fold lines on a proof may mean folding was not ordered or custom trim was used; the appropriate response is clarification of the order, not the addition of arbitrary guide lines to production artwork. (www.printplace.com)

A reusable checklist should therefore preserve open questions rather than hide them behind a green result. When the supplier or product changes, review the expected values before reusing the profile. A previous approval is useful history, but it is not evidence that a different receiving workflow accepts the same file.

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

### How do you check if a PDF is print-ready?

Compare the exact exported PDF with the order specification, then record structural checks, visual review and required proof approval separately. Read actual object properties where necessary: Adobe's Object Inspector exposes image resolution, color mode and transparency. A general viewer's attractive preview is not a substitute for those observations. (helpx.adobe.com)

### Does a PDF/X pass guarantee the right bleed and resolution?

No. The PDF Association explicitly separates PDF/X requirements from production-specific minimum image resolution and bleed. Test conformance and the order's additional requirements. Also inspect whether the artwork covers the bleed, since extra blank space does not supply a continued background. (pdfa.org) (fireballprinting.com)

### Must the designer always add crop marks?

Use the receiving printer's policy. Printed.com's export guidance includes crop marks, whereas University of Minnesota Printing Services accepts files with or without them. Record the actual instruction in the PDF print specifications checklist rather than carrying a marks setting from another order. (www.printed.com) (www.printing.umn.edu)

### Should a brochure PDF contain spreads?

Ask the supplier for that product. Blurb's PDF-to-Book checklist, for example, requests individual pages rather than spreads. That book-workflow instruction illustrates why page arrangement must be confirmed; it does not determine how an unrelated folded brochure should be delivered. (support.blurb.com)

## Conclusion

A useful **print-ready PDF checklist** links requirements to evidence. Begin with the current product and order, preserve the controlling template, and replace vague assurances with expected and observed values. Where a requirement is missing, record a supplier question and an owner.

The central technical distinction is between conformity to a defined exchange standard and suitability for the actual job. Keep those judgments separate in the acceptance record. Geometry also needs visual confirmation: the expected boundary alone does not demonstrate continued artwork. (fireballprinting.com)

The worksheet turns those distinctions into a practical release decision. Pass a measured match, return a demonstrated mismatch for correction, and hold unresolved choices for clarification. Keep the report attached to the exact export it describes. After correction, inspect the replacement before treating earlier findings as closed.

Treat the checklist as a decision record that travels with the work. A clear correction names the object or page, the mismatch and the responsible person. A clear approval identifies the final file and leaves no required question disguised as a completed check.

Finally, distinguish content approval from technical acceptance and from the scope of the proof. A buyer should know which version was checked, what the proof can show and who authorized release. The result is a reviewable handoff for the specific printer and product, with assumptions visible and unresolved decisions assigned.

## Source links

Links cited in this article, in order of first appearance. Full addresses are provided for readers using extracted text.


1. https://support.moo.com/hc/en-gb/articles/360035605571-Removing-crop-marks
2. https://www.printed.com/blog/create-print-ready-artwork
3. https://www.moo.com/us/postcards/design-guidelines
4. https://www.nist.gov/pml/owm/si-units-length
5. https://callassoftware.com/products/pdftoolbox
6. https://help.callassoftware.com/m/62791/l/1711486-pdf-reports-using-masks-or-layers
7. https://smartpress.com/support/ordering-shipping/how-to-use-a-print-proof
8. https://pdfa.org/pdfx-the-key-facts
9. https://helpx.adobe.com/illustrator/desktop/save-and-export/export-files-to-different-formats/pdf-x-standards-compatibility-general-options.html
10. https://printninja.com/recommended-resolution
11. https://printninja.com/printninja-file-setup-checklist
12. https://www.pdflib.com/pdf-knowledge-base/pdfx-output-intents
13. https://gwg.org/resources/specifications-2
14. https://www.uprinting.com/support/print-templates
15. https://pdfa.org/technical-side-and-requirements-of-pdfx

16. https://www.iso.org/standard/55843.html
17. https://helpx.adobe.com/acrobat/desktop/print-documents/set-up-and-print-pdfs/print-ready.html
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THE PUBLISHER

# About Tapflare

Tapflare gives companies an on-demand design and web team for a flat monthly fee.

### How it works

Each subscriber has a dedicated project manager who learns the brand, assigns every request to a senior specialist in that kind of work, and reviews the result before it is delivered. Requests are submitted and discussed in the Tapflare portal, each plan includes a daily allotment of design or development time, and the client keeps full ownership of the export and source files.

### What it covers

Graphic design, custom illustration, presentation design, logos and brand guides, video editing and motion graphics, website and mobile-app mockups, and website development, from design mockups to HTML, to drag-and-drop builders or custom code.

### What it is not

Tapflare is not a marketing agency, a media-buying, SEO or copywriting service, a software product or a freelance marketplace. Where a reader needs one of those, the honest answer is to say so.

### Visit

See Tapflare and its pricing.

Articles published here explain general practice and cite their sources. Prices and plan contents, including Tapflare's own, change; check the provider's current pricing page before deciding.

**Website:** https://tapflare.com

This article is educational. Verify consequential medical, legal, financial, regulatory and technical decisions with appropriate professionals and the cited primary sources. Company services are described separately from the article's research findings.