

All those acronyms... what are they and what do they mean?!?!

LPI, DPI, oh my.....

Defining a few common print acronyms

Acronyms are a part of life. So, they are also a part of the process of preparing files for printing. Here are a few defined.

LPI or Lines Per Inch generally refers to the frequency of the halftone screen used in a printing job. For example, you may read in the back of an expensive art book that it was printed at "200 lpi." Determining the lpi for a print job hinges on the paper used and on the print job. Many magazines are printed at 133 lpi and newspapers are generally printed at around 85 lpi.

DPI stands for Dots Per Inch. It is used to measure resolution of an image, output device, scanner or monitor and can be a little confusing. In prepress file preparation, the most important use of DPI is in image resolution. For example, a 72-dpi image off the Web probably doesn't have enough dots to print out very nicely. But an image scanned at 300 dpi and placed in the document at 100% will work very well. It is far better to have too much resolution than too little, so leave a little extra in case you want to crop or resize an image. But don't go overboard because high-resolution images take up a ton of hard drive space and waste time printing and editing.

EPS is a graphic format developed by Adobe Systems, Inc. It is a popular format to save your images for print. Short for Encapsulated PostScript, it is the preferred format for saving vector images made in Adobe Illustrator and Macromedia FreeHand. Many designers and prepress professionals only use the EPS format for saving their images.