CHECKLIST OF **PDF FILES** PREPARATION

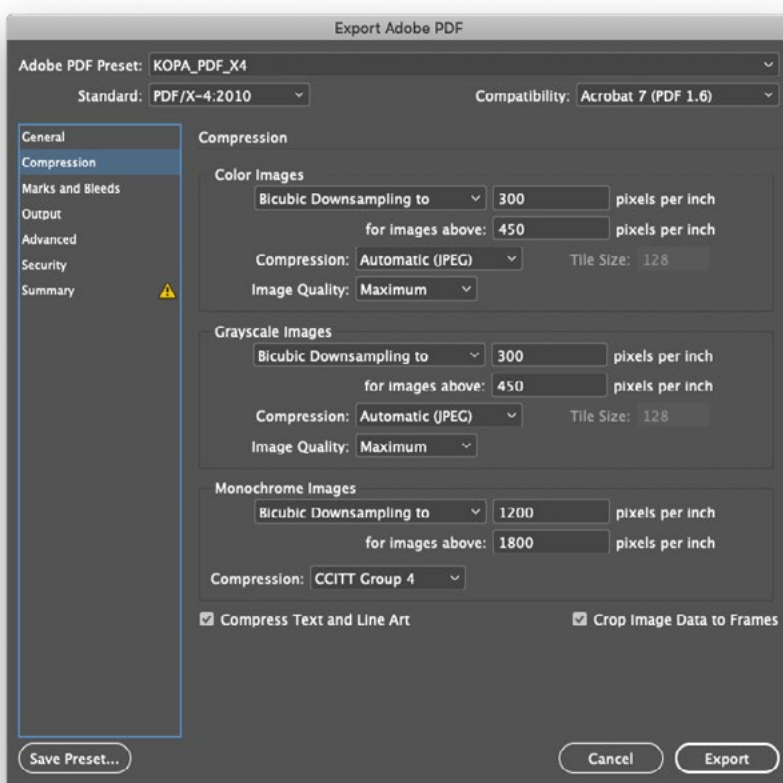The art of
printing / KOPA

Are your files print-ready?

BASIC CHECK-LIST

01 Files for production are accepted in PDF format only. PDF/X file standard is recommended.

02 File names. Do your file names include proper titles (cover, endpapers, etc.) that represent the purpose of the file? Example of file naming: "mymagazine_cover.pdf", "mymagazine_interior.pdf".

03 File for both sides of a printed sheet must be provided even if the content on both sides is identical.

04 Printing of the back side of the sheet is always done by turning the page sheetwise according to the PDF file orientation (portrait or landscape). Perfecting can only be used if it is requested in writing.

05 File preparation. If your product is going to be a brochure or a book, do you know how to prepare cover layout? Do you know the spine-width of your future book?

06 Trim-box. Have you set a correct trim-box (finished size) when making the document? Bleed area should not be included in the trim (finished) size of the document.

07 Bleed-box. Does the file have bleed?

08 Safe zone. Are important objects in the design (for example text) kept within a safe distance from the trim-box?

09 Color mode and spot colors. Does your file contain only the colors that will be involved in printing?

If you answered "yes" to all of these questions, your files are most likely ready to go on production.

PREPARATION OF PDF FILES

01 We highly recommend exporting PDF files for press with a standard setting: PDF/X-1 to PDF/X-4.

02 PDF file should have an Output intent set to an ICC color profile corresponding to the paper that is going to be used in printing (for coated paper – PSO Coated V3 (Fogra51)), for uncoated paper – PSO Uncoated V3 (Fogra52)) (download ICC profiles here). If you are unfamiliar with ICC profile handling, you can also use a default profile Coated Fogra 39 which usually comes bundled with graphic software. In such case, any additional color management will be handled in our prepress.

03 When preparing files for a brochure publication, all interior pages should be exported in one PDF file. However, the size of the file shall not exceed 1 GB limit. We recommend using **maximum** quality **JPEG** compression setting to achieve that.

04 Do not use "export as spreads" setting for interior pages. PDF file should be exported in single pages mode.

05 Make sure to include appropriate titles (cover, interior, endpapers) in filenames which would represent the purpose of the file. Example of file naming: mymagazine_cover.pdf, mymagazine_interior.pdf.

File preparation for saddle stitched brochures:

01 For self-cover brochures - cover and internal pages of saddle stitched brochure shall all be included in a single PDF file. Do not provide a design of cover page in a flat-size layout (spread), unless it is a non-standard size cover, cover with flaps, etc.

02 For saddle-stitched brochures, where cover is printed on a different type / weight of paper – cover and interior shall be provided as two separate PDF files with adequate file naming. For both cover and interior pages please export PDF files in single pages, not spreads.

File preparation for perfect bound (perfect sewn bound) brochures:

01 File for the cover shall be prepared as a flat-layout (spread) including front, back cover and the spine. If the cover has printing on the inner side, it should also be prepared in the same way (as a spread) and provided in the same "…_cover.pdf" file. Please mind that on the inner side the spine and 6-8 mm area around it will be used up for gluing and will not be visible on a finished brochure. For more information regarding safe zones and cover dimensions, please check our cover schemes.

02 Please consult your representative project manager about the exact spine-width or if you are not sure about the dimensions of the cover layout.

03 Interior pages shall be provided in a separate single-page PDF file.

File preparation for leaflets (folders):

4 page leaflets shall be provided in single page PDF files. Leaflets with more than 4 pages should be provided in flat-size layouts.

File preparation for UV spot varnishing, screenprinting, foil, embossing and debossing:

01 Files for each of the finishing techniques (UV spot varnishing, screenprinting, foil, embossing and debossing) shall be provided separately from the main print file. File for each of the finishing techniques should be same size and format (PDF) as the main print file.

02 Elements prepared for finishing shall be filled with 100 % Black. If UV spot, screenprintin, foil, embossing and debossing objects replicate any objects in the print file, the position and scale of these objects should match precisely. Please avoid using finishing techniques on texts smaller than 6pt and line elements thinner than 0,1 mm. Please keep a minimum distance of 0,4 mm between two separate objects with a finishing applied (two lines for example).

File preparation for die-cutting

A PDF format file shall be provided for die-cutting jobs. Dimensions in a die-cut file shall absolutely match the dimensions in product design file.

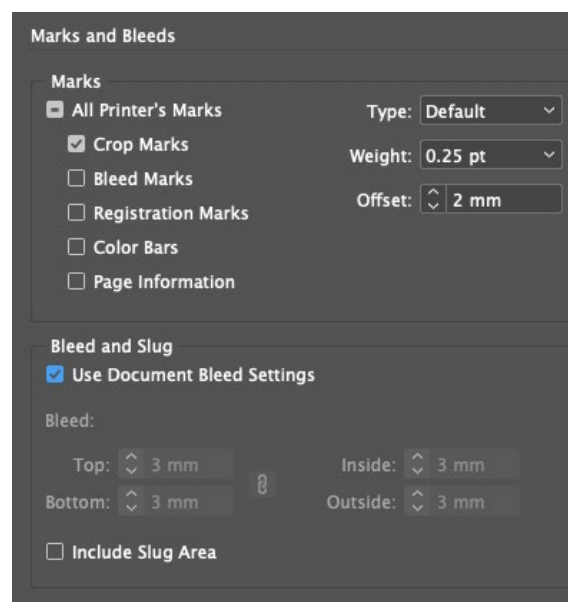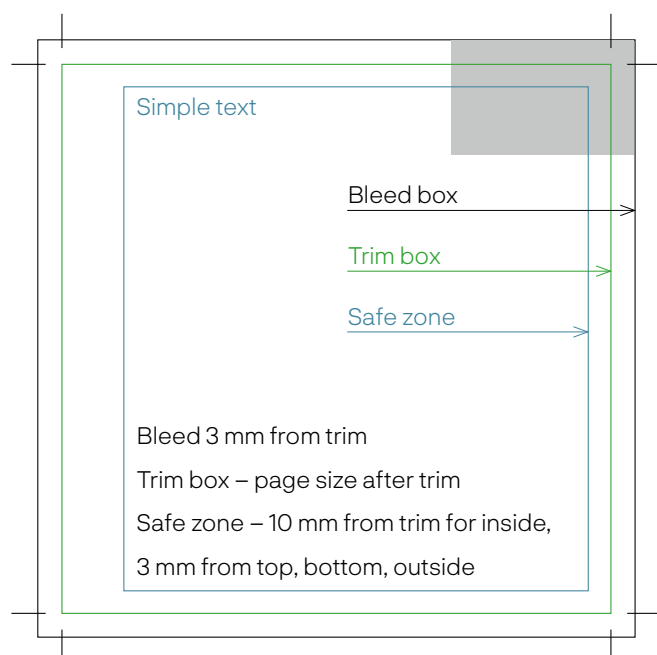## File preparation for different language versions

If you prepare a design for products in various languages, where only black is changing for variations, files shall be prepared as follows: background (same for all languages) - CMYK without a text which varies; different language texts - separate files, only black.

Alternative: prepare a PDF file with layers, where background would be CMYK and separate layers for each language.

TRIM-BOX, BLEED AND SAFE ZONE

Every print-ready file must contain:

01 A trim-box. Trim-box is usually invisible in the PDF, but it is a crucial piece of information about products finished size.

02 Bleed. All the objects in the file should either be contained within the safe zone or extended by at least 3mm into the bleed area (bleed-box).

03 Safe zone. To avoid any cropping or covering all important objects (for example: text) should be kept within a certain area called the safe zone. This area should be distanced at least 3 mm from top, bottom and outer edges of the page and 10 mm from the inner (spine) side.

Simple text

Bleed box

Trim box

Safe zone

Bleed 3 mm from trim

Trim box – page size after trim

Safe zone – 10 mm from trim for inside,

3 mm from top, bottom, outside

Marks and Bleeds

Marks
☐ All Printer's Marks   Type: Default ▾
  ☑ Crop Marks   Weight: 0.25 pt ▾
  ☐ Bleed Marks   Offset: ⌃ 2 mm
  ☐ Registration Marks
  ☐ Color Bars
  ☐ Page Information

Bleed and Slug
☑ Use Document Bleed Settings

Bleed:
   Top: ⌃ 3 mm   Inside: ⌃ 3 mm
   Bottom: ⌃ 3 mm   Outside: ⌃ 3 mm

☐ Include Slug Area

WHEN IS THE BLEED REQUIRED?

A bleed is required when a graphical object (image, text or background) spreads till the edge of your page.

In such case, you have to add bleed to the finished (trimming) size of your layout. Width of bleed shall be minimum 3 mm.
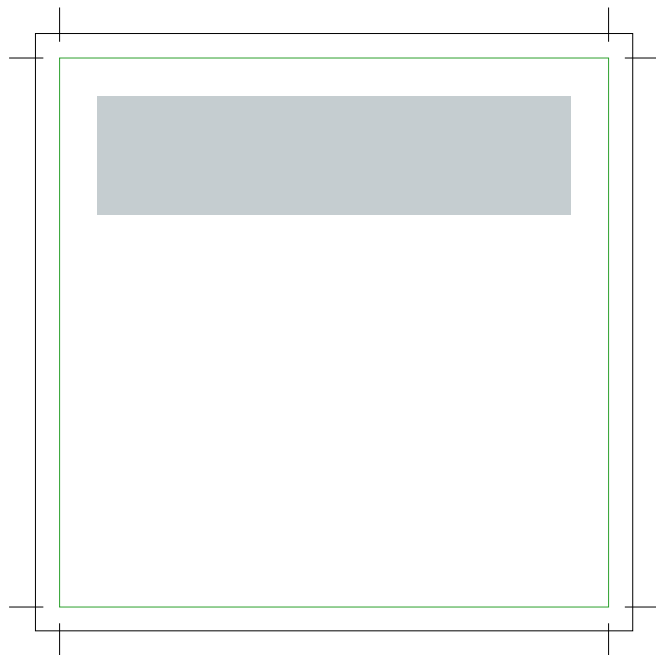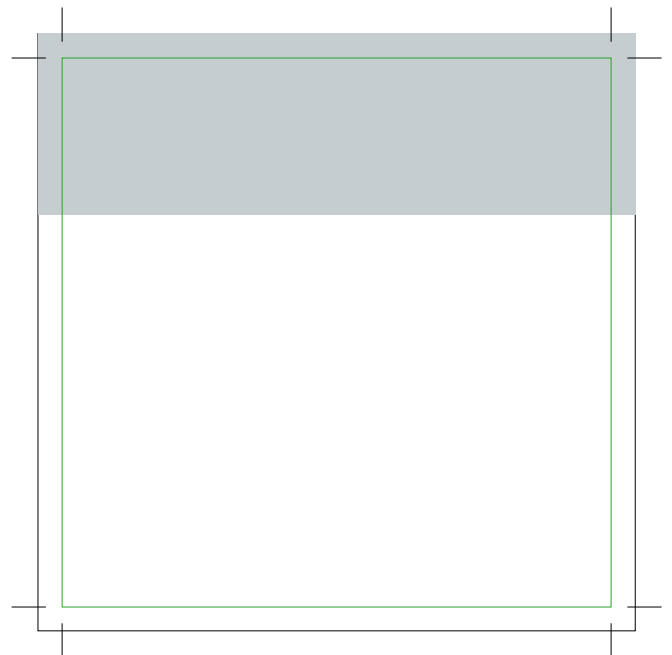

NO BLEED REQUIRED

BLEED REQUIRED

A brochure layout shall include bleed on three sides: top, bottom and outside. Bleed on the inside is not strictly required.

Important! Bleed on layouts of softcover brochure covers, wire-o brochures and other products (flyers, leaflets, etc.) shall be on all four sides.
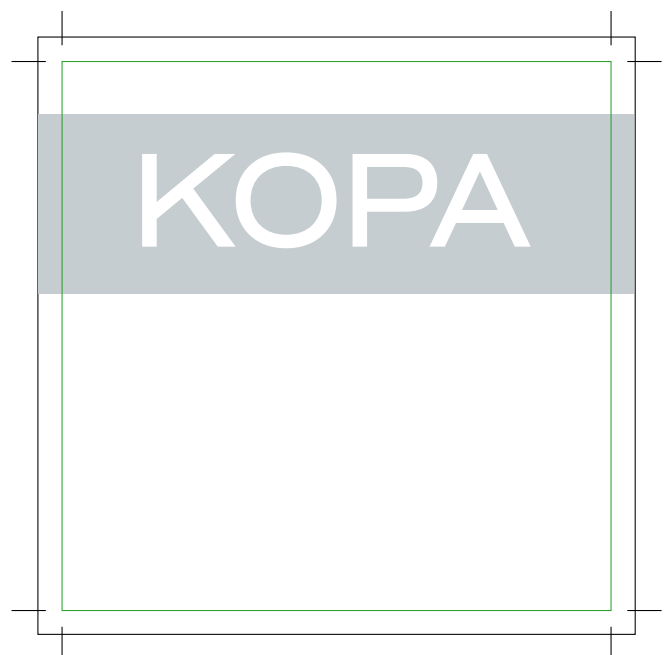

NO BLEED REQUIRED   BLEED REQUIRED

Before you export your PDF file please select the "include bleed" option.

We also recommend you to indicate crop marks and trim marks in your design. These should be software-generated and added at the PDF-making stage by ticking the "Crop Marks" option. Crop marks shall be at least 2 mm from trim box limits.

NO BLEED REQUIRED   BLEED REQUIRED
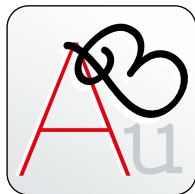
Graphic elements

Images

Make sure your design does not contain any low resolution elements.

Recommended resolution range is 300-350 dpi for CMYK and Grayscale images, and 600-2540 dpi for one bit bitmap images.

In any case quality of printed images of less than 150 dpi resolution may be low.

Also we recommend using only CMYK or Grayscale images, as any RGB images will be automatically converted by our software into CMYK elements, while result may be not what you're expecting.
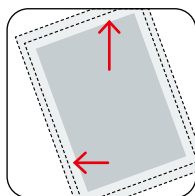
Fonts

PDF – ensure you embed all fonts when making your PDF.

EPS – ensure you convert all fonts into outlines when making your EPS.

Smaller than 7 point font shall be composed only from one of these colours: 100 % Black, 100 % Cyan, 100 % Magenta, 100 % Yellow or 100 % Pantone.

Smaller than 40 point black text shall be composed of 100% Black colour only. For 40 point or bigger size black text we recommend using Rich Black colour C50 M40 Y30 K100.

Safe design

Important information (images, text) shall not be closer than 5 mm to trim, die-cut, perforation, punching line or other peripheral limits.

On the second and third page of the covers, as well as on the all interior pages of a softcover brochure, important information shall be at least 8 mm away from inner page edge (spine side). Also 2 mm wide white stripes (without any print) shall be left from inside on pages mentioned before. This would allow adequate gluing of an internal block to a cover.

Important information in wire-o products shall be at least 12 mm away from a trim line of a sheet.

Lines

Lines shall be at least 0.08 mm thick.

Colour of lines of 0.2 mm or less thickness shall be single coloured, moreover lines shall not be rasterized (100 % colours are required).

Colours

Spot colours

Make sure spot colours you use are from Pantone library and are intented to be used in printing of your design.

Do not leave any SPOT colours in CMYK designs; automatic colour conversion may give unexpected result. Most convenient way to check SPOT colours is to select separation preview function in the Acrobat Pro software. Do not use different Pantone colour palettes. For example, the same file may not include Pantone 485C and Pantone 485U colours.

RGB colours

Do not use RGB colours or elements within your design. Every RGB element will be automatically converted into CMYK, while result may not be as expected.

Black colour

Pure black (K100%) graphic objects will automatically be set to overprint in the prepress stage. Therefore we strongly recommend not using pure black for all black graphics, texts > 24 pt and lines > 3 pt. Instead, use black mix, for example: C50 M40 Y30 K100. This is necessary to avoid undesirable overprint phenomena – different shades of black when black objects are located on graphic elements of another colour. Smaller texts and lines should remain K100% and set to overprint.

Black elements on non-transparent backgrounds (Pantone metallic colours, like PMS 871, 877) shall never be pure black or they might become dimmed. Other colours shall be added to the black mix (for example: C50 M40 Y30 K100) to prevent overprinting.

GREY

For the Grey background made of Black colour only we recommend using 5-40 % Black.

For the Grey background made of CMYK we recommend using 5-20 % of CMY and 5-100 % of K.
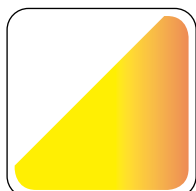
Grey shall not be composed of CMY only, without Black, while share of Black shall be greater than CMY.

Overprint colours

In case you accidentally set the "overprint" function for a filling or a line (which are overlaying other elements in the design), result will differ from the design, as paint is transparent.

In order to check if the design is prepared correctly, activate the "Print Preview" function in Advanced/Print production menu of the "Acrobat Pro" software.
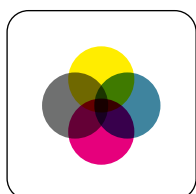
Fountain fills and transparences

Do not use fountain fills in spot colour jobs as this will cause your job to be rejected by prepress.

Do not use transparency functions of Microsoft and CorelDraw software. Please flatten any transparencies in the Adobe Illustrator or the Indesign prior to generation of PDF.

Never use multi-layer transparencies as this may cause problems when your file is processed through our workflow, and may not give the desired end result.

Total ink limit

Do not apply any colour, which total ink limit exceeds 300% (which is calculated by summing all C, M, Y and K elements together) in your design.

Please note, that our software will automatically decrease total ink limit till recommended 300% value for both – coated and uncoated paper types. In general, it will not affect colours, at least you will not notice much difference, however, in order to avoid such conversion, try not to overcome 300% of total ink limit for any type of paper.

Colour profiles

We recommend using PSOcoated_v3.icc color conversion profile for coated (PS1 types of paper (Premium coated)), maximum quantity of ink – 300 %, (according to FOGRA51 ISO 12647-2:2013).

PSOUncoated_v3_Fogra52.icc conversion profile is recommended for uncoated paper (PS5 type of paper), maximum amount of ink – 300 % (according to FOGRA52 and international standard ISO 12647-2:2013).
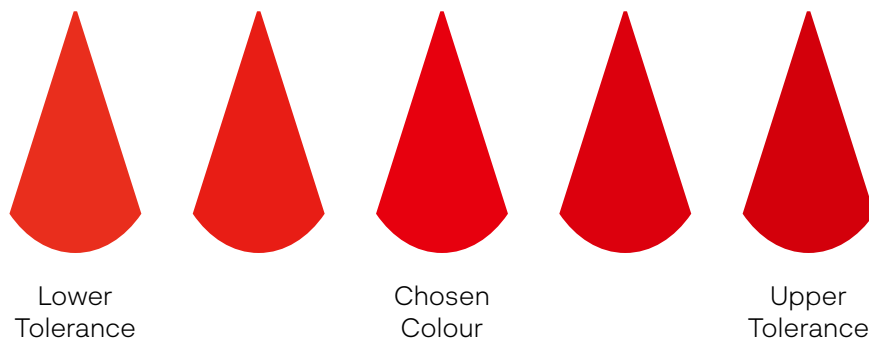
Colour / ink intensity tolerance

Slight colour variance on a printed product is inevitable because of many factors influencing printing process.

This means that colours may slightly differ from original design despite of printing quality, which is compatible with requirements of international standard and allowable tolerances.

On jobs with multi sheet products (especially books and brochures) there may be a variance in colour within the design itself (within limits set by the standard).
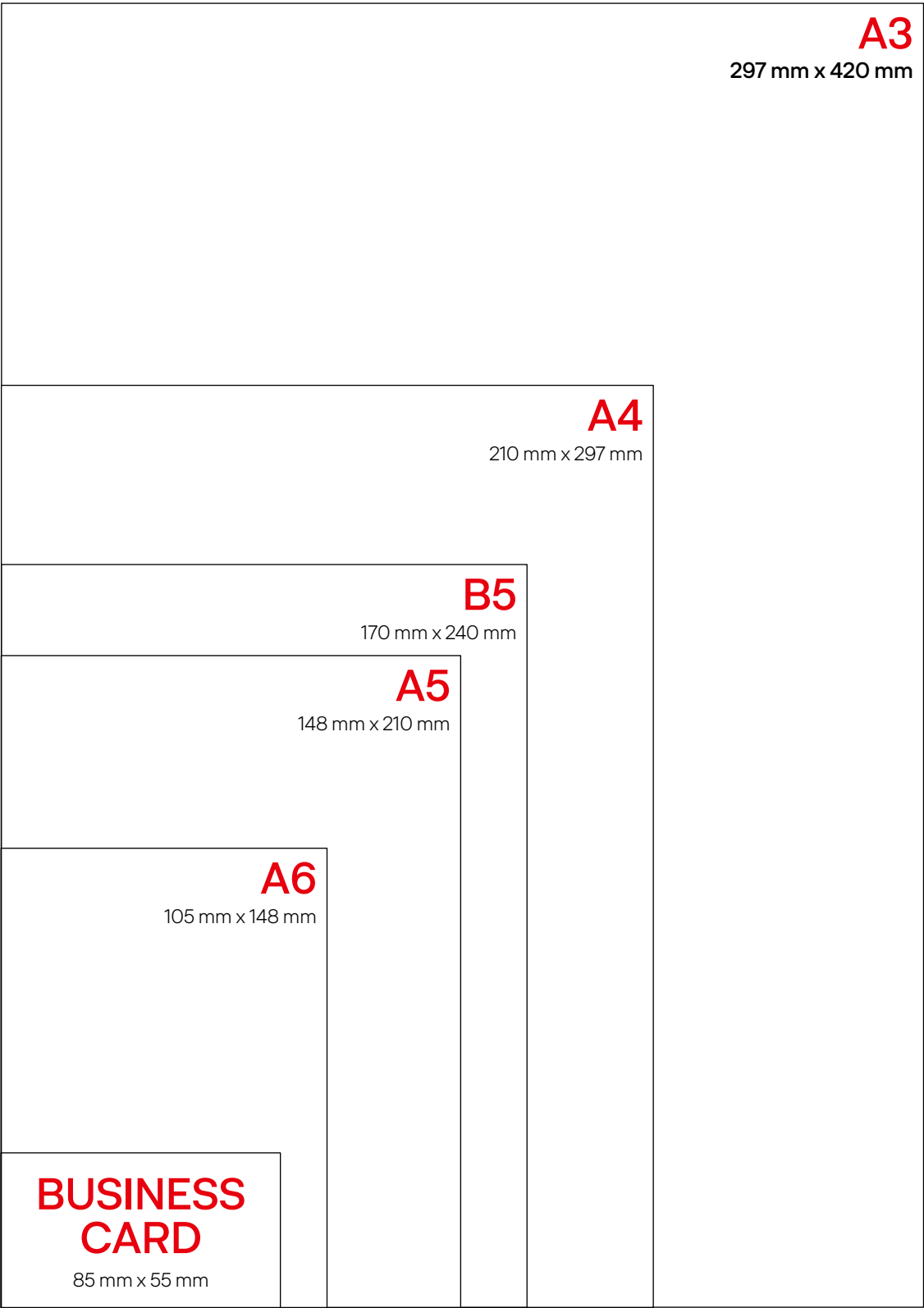
Also we would like to note, that subsequent reprints may slightly differ in colour as well.

Lower
Tolerance

Chosen
Colour

Upper
Tolerance

Screen colours

Image on the screen is composed of RGB colours; therefore it cannot be replicated with ink on paper exactly, where CMYK system is used. Moreover, screen image quality depends a lot on calibration of the screen
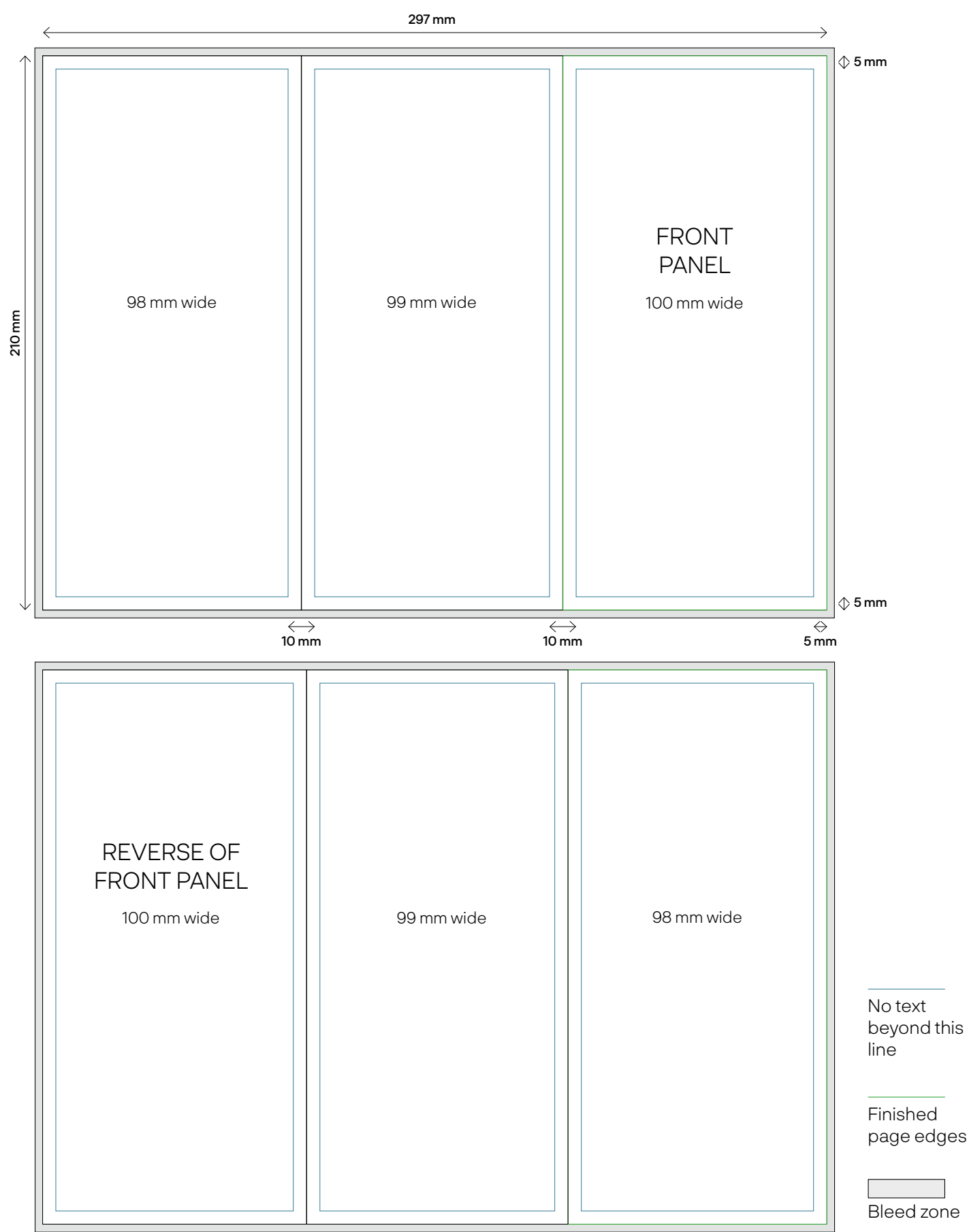
Standard page sizes for your design jobs
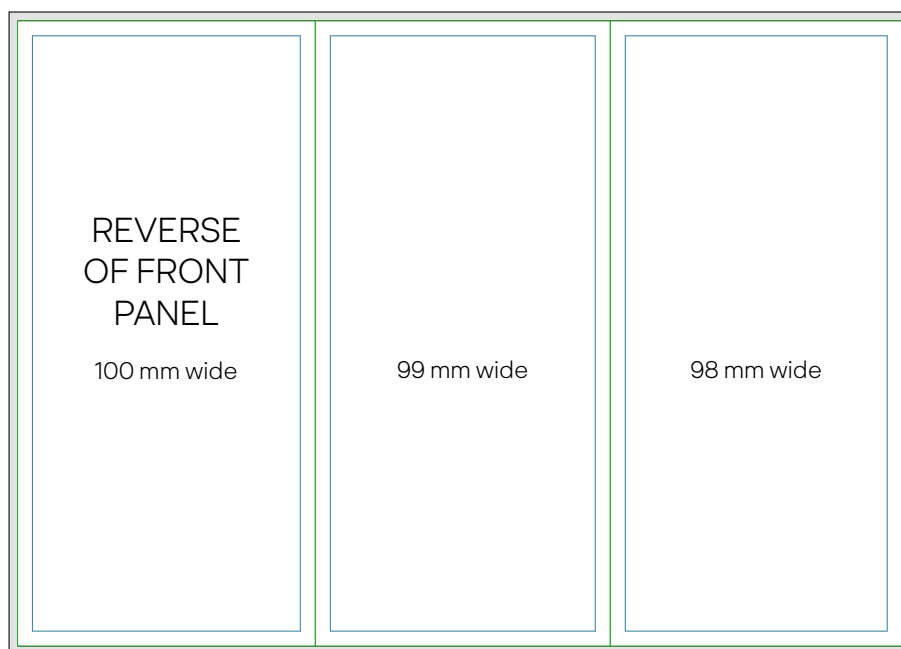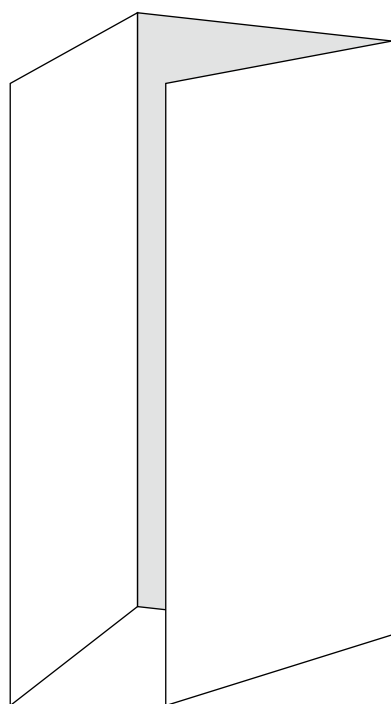
A3
297 mm x 420 mm

A4
210 mm x 297 mm

B5
170 mm x 240 mm

A5
148 mm x 210 mm

A6
105 mm x 148 mm

BUSINESS CARD
85 mm x 55 mm

OTHER SIZES: **A2** 594 mm x 420 mm

A1 840 mm x 594 mm

Layouts of leaflets

6 page leaflets
For preparation of 6 page leaflets please use the following sample:

297 mm

210 mm

98 mm wide

99 mm wide

FRONT
PANEL

100 mm wide

5 mm

5 mm

10 mm

10 mm

5 mm

REVERSE OF
FRONT PANEL

100 mm wide

99 mm wide

98 mm wide

No text
beyond this
line

Finished
page edges

Bleed zone

Important! The first page (cover) of a Letter type leaflet shall be wider than other pages. A width of pages of a Z type leaflets shall be equal.

Files for leaflets with more than one folding line, i.e. six page leaflets, eight page leaflets, etc., shall be supplied as a flat-size layout.
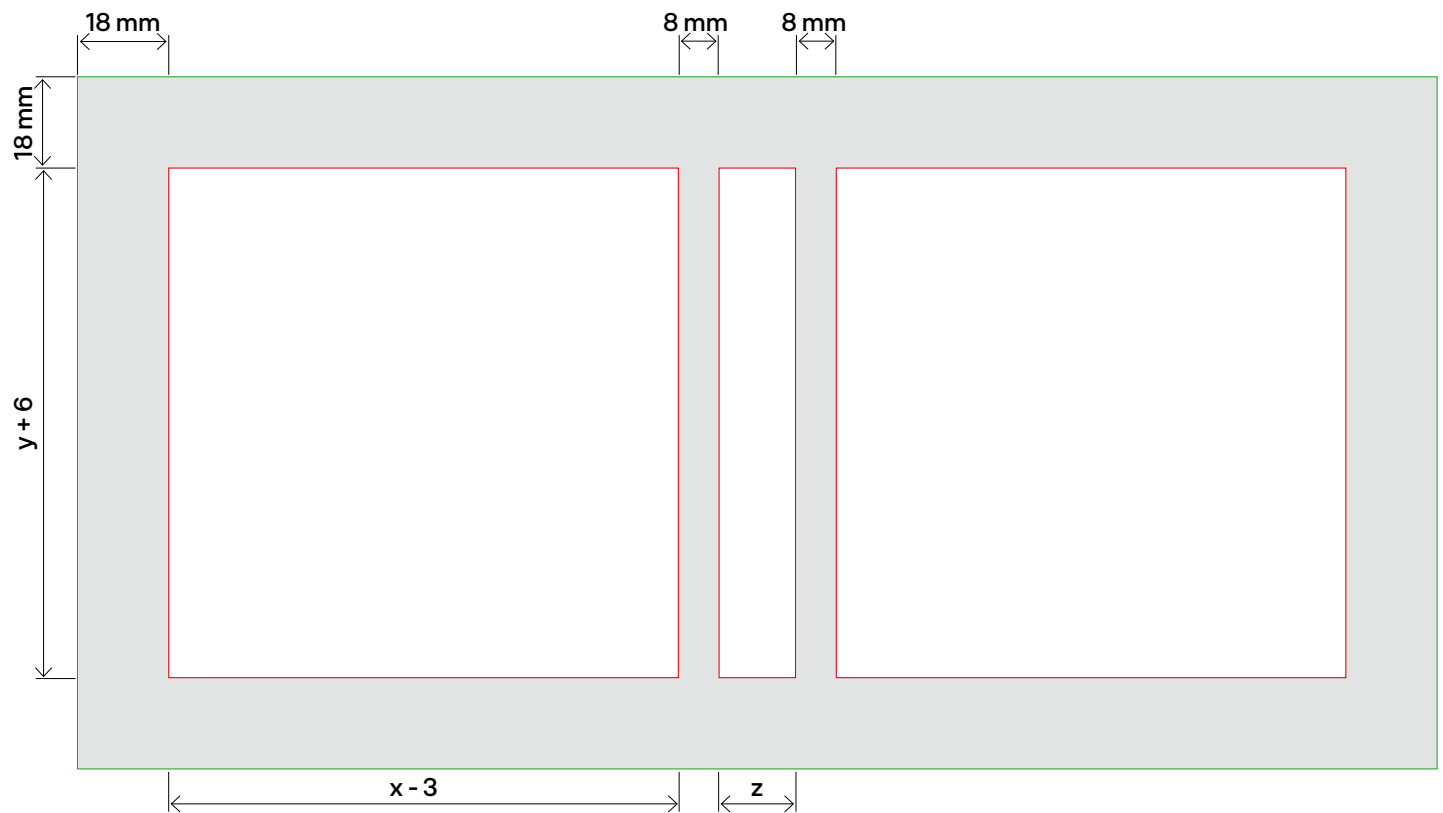

REVERSE
OF FRONT
PANEL

100 mm wide

99 mm wide

98 mm wide

————— No text beyond this line

————— Finished page edges

▭ Bleed zone

An example of the layout of a hard cover page

18 mm   8 mm   8 mm

18 mm

y + 6

x - 3   z

Layout size mm
X - inner block width, Y - inner block length, Z - spine width