Knowledge Share

Here is a **quick list** of the different **file extensions** you may come across when working with marketing and communications folks.

Learn what each of them stands for, how the file format is used, and when to request or use it.

Different File Types | When to Use Them

AI: Adobe Illustrator
AI files are vector files used by designers and commercial printers to generate files of different file formats and sizes. AI files can only be opened using Adobe Illustrator.

.ai

tip While you can't open these files without the program, it's helpful to always request packaged up native artwork at the conclusion of the project.

EPS: Encapsulated Postscript
EPS files (vector-based) are most commonly used by designers to transfer an image or artwork into another application. EPS files can be opened using Adobe Illustrator, Freehand, or Adobe Photoshop.

.eps

tip This is always the preferred file type when adding logos to materials. If your logo is NOT available in this format, designers can create EPS versions which are good to have.

PDF: Portable Document Format
A PDF is a universal file format that preserves/embeds the fonts, images, layout and graphics of any source document, regardless of the application used to create it. These files cannot be edited. Most computer users can open/read these file types.

.pdf

tip Many printers now accept high-resolution, print-ready PDFs. Always confirm with your design team that PDFs for printing are high-resolution, print-ready PDFs (there is a big difference between standard PDFs and print-ready files.)

PSD: Photoshop Document
The PSD file format, usually a raster format, contains graphics and photos created in Adobe Photoshop image editing software, which is most commonly used by designers and printers. PSD files can only be opened using Photoshop and may be created in layers.

.psd

tip If you have the software and readily know how to use it, having a designer create layered files can be a helpful tool for DIY usage later on.

JPG: Joint Photographic Experts Group
A JPG file is a compressed image file that does not support a transparent background. The level of compression in JPG files can vary in resolution:

- High quality for desktop printing
- Medium quality for web viewing
- Low quality for email

.jpg

tip Mobile phones and tablets take low-quality pictures and are not ideal for print pieces.

GIF: Graphics Interchange Format
GIF files are low resolution files most commonly used for web and email purposes. Almost all browsers can support the use of GIF files, which use a compression scheme to keep the file size small. GIF files can be created with a transparent background.

.gif

tip This file format is not one to worry about readily needing/using.

TIF: Tagged Image File Format
The TIF/TIFF file format is most commonly used for storing images, photography, or art. It is the standard format for high-quality images. Though large in size, TIF formats are considered to be the most reliable format for high-quality images.

.tif

PNG: Portable Network Graphics
The PNG file format is most commonly used for websites due to their low resolution. PNG files can be created with a transparent background.

.png

tip This can be a helpful file type, when used small, in PowerPoints, or when a transparent background is needed.

Notavi Creative
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