

TECHNICAL GUIDE

COLOUR MANAGEMENT

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Second Edition


profit for purpose

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. How do I create a device profile?

A suitable test form is printed or viewed on a calibrated and fully functioning device, such as a printer or monitor. It's measured with a spectrophotometer and the resulting data saved in an ICC profile. The profile describes the characteristics of the device. This process is often called characterisation.

2. What is the point of device calibration?

Calibration and the associated processes ensure that a device works to its optimal capacity. It's no use trying to create an ICC profile for a device that isn't calibrated.

3. Why should I use device profiles?

To know how colours will be reproduced, exactly, on a given device. This is crucial when performing colour conversion between different devices.

4. How can I be sure my profile is accurate?

Through validation, using a spectrophotometer to check that known colours are accurately reproduced. Be sure to use a suite of different image types to ensure that they are rendered smoothly, without banding or clipping.

5. When should I communicate profile information to customers?

Whenever a client wants predictability and repeatability ensure they use the correct ICC profile in the design stage. This is the only way to adapt the design to the production substrate and correctly proof the output.

6. What is the financial benefit of a colour managed workflow?

Predictability, efficiency, error reduction, reduced remakes, less waste, throughput, and, not least, enhanced quality.

7. What sort of measurement instrument do I need to create device profiles?

For monitors a colorimeter, which costs less than a spectrophotometer, is enough. For output devices a high quality spectrophotometer is vital.

8. How often should I calibrate my colour devices?

It depends on how stable your devices are. A monitor generally only needs to be calibrated once per week, whereas some printers need calibrating several times per day, and/or whenever the substrate is changed.

9. What do I need to make an icc device profile?

The colorimeter or spectrophotometer needs to be controlled using suitable colour management software. This software should also be able to perform a validation of the ICC profile, to check that you reach the standard you want to achieve.

10. How can I make sure my customers submit colour managed files?

By making sure they understand how to do it. You can quality control the files in preflight, where all the crucial parameters are checked. The Ghent PDF Workgroup (GWG) provides a free range of preflight settings for many types of print production.



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