STUDIO
SKILLS

Four rules for printer proofs

How to correctly mark up amendments

Ian White, technical services director, Potts Print, www.potts.co.uk

Multiple views

If you're relying on your printer to do amendments, you need to explain what you want properly. Poorly communicated amendments might mean that your printer has to reproof a job when it wasn't really necessary. And proofs need to go through various quality-checking procedures, so there are a number of people who need to understand your corrections – it's not just the artworker or Mac operator, it's also the plate-checker and all sorts of other people.

Be precise

If you write requests such as: 'Make this lighter,' or 'Make it bigger', we won't know how light or how big you mean. Sometimes this will be obvious, if it's something that can only fill a certain space, but sometimes it won't be clear if you mean 2 per cent bigger, 20 per cent or 200 per cent. Don't assume prior knowledge about your design or your brief. While we try to question things as we go along, you can't do that at certain times of the day.

Make it obvious

Many younger designers haven't been introduced to traditional correction symbols. It's not vital to know them – so long as what you're marking on the proof is clear, whether you underline something and add a 'take out' symbol or simply score through it. The important thing is clarity. It's easy to get so caught up in the design process that you assume the person reading your corrections has been on the same journey you have.

Keep it relevant

If you've done internal proofing for your creative director or senior designer, it might be that those amends are still on the proof. So, when we get it back, we might see two sets of amends. If your printer sees a word or an image that's been circled in red pen with a question mark in blue pen, it's going to raise questions. If there's information that we don't need to see, go through and clearly mark it as something to ignore.
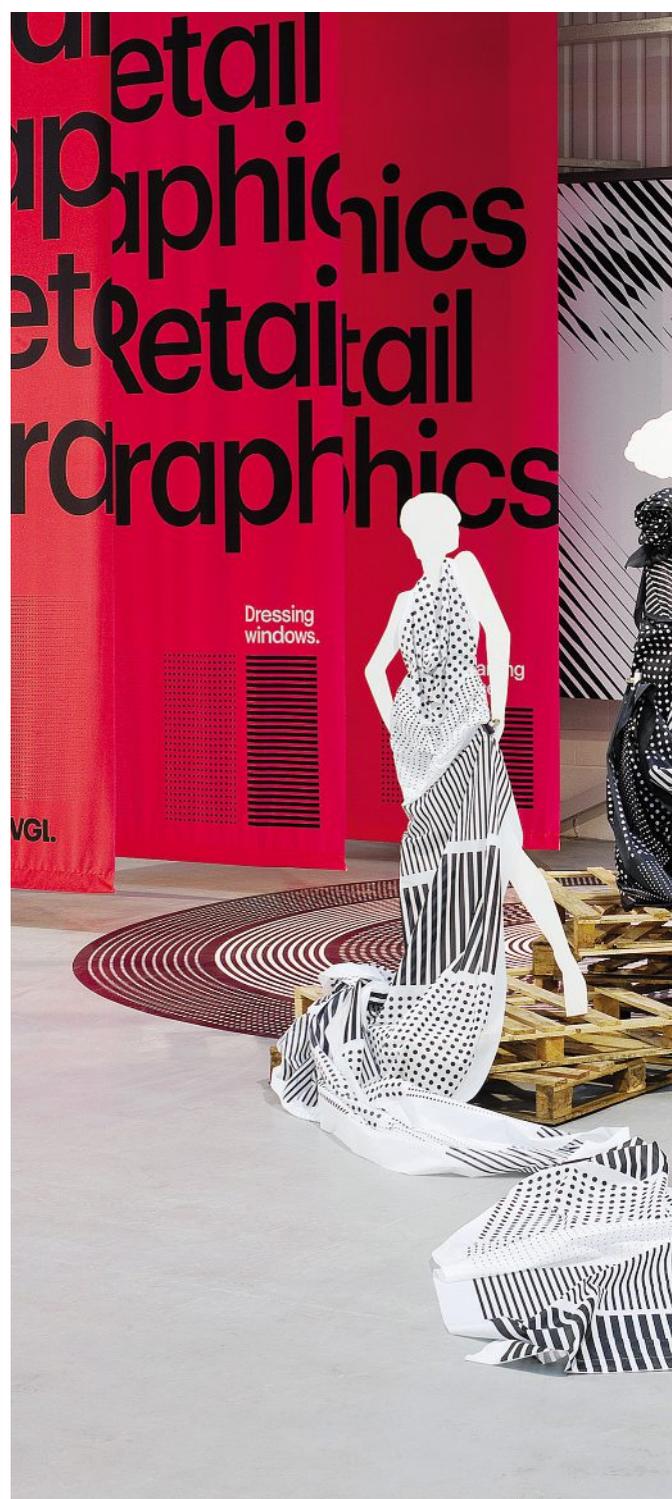
CREATIVE
SKILLS

Understanding ink density

It's a vital part of the print process, but what does it mean?

By Rob Griffith, technical director, The Colour Collective, www.colourcollective.co.uk

◼◻◻ Ink density is the amount or thickness of ink on paper. The thicker the layer of ink, the stronger the colour. Ink film thickness can't be measured directly, but you can measure ink density with a densometer, which measures the amount of light reflected from a print sample. The less light there is being reflected, the denser or thicker the film of ink. ◼◼◻ Ink density will depend on your press operator, the ink used, the paper stock and a whole host of other factors – and it's one of many variables that will affect how a design appears in print. These days, good printing companies will conform to stringent standards, such as ISO 12647, which make it easier to get a good match between presses. ◼◼◼ While designers should have a good knowledge of the printing process, they have no influence over ink density. If you're concerned about the colours in a design, you need to ensure your printer is chosen on quality criteria as well as price. If a printer conforms to standards such as ISO 12467, then it's a sign that they're capable of the necessary quality procedures.

Shortcuts Switch between views in Bridge by hitting Ctrl/Cmd+\

Dressing windows.

VGL.