



Fax Help Guide

Designing for Fax (Best Practice Guidelines)

This guide contains suggestions for best practices when using fax technology. These are suggestions, and not requirements. Failing to follow these guidelines will not prevent your fax from being deliverable (our fax platform automatically adjusts fax documents where it can), however following these guidelines will ensure that your fax is legible and doesn't waste recipient's resources.

The fax service will automatically adjust any fax document that you send to be compatible with the widest range of fax machines, so it is important that your fax document is designed correctly to ensure optimal quality is retained when faxing.

The majority of fax machines operate in black and white at 200dpi (dots per inch).

Fax Design

Greyscale or colour text will become shaded text in an effort to convert to black and white. While this process operates efficiently, there are shades and colours that can become washed and difficult to read. Hence it is ideal to avoid greyscale or colour text where possible.

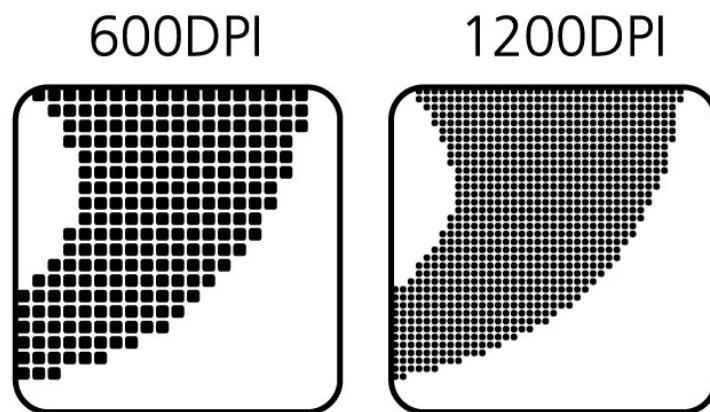
Dense and colour heavy images will also be treated in the same way – colours will be replaced with shades of black and white. This can result in images becoming difficult to view and containing a heavy amount of black (unnecessarily draining the recipient's fax toner).

Fax Preparation

As the majority of fax machines operate at 200dpi, any images/graphics will need to be down-sampled to match this standard.

DPI means “Dots per Inch” and refers to the number of ‘dots’ that the printer can print in an inch of space; the higher the value, the finer the print (similar to “pixels” with digital screens). If you provide a high resolution image (eg 1000dpi), the fax platform will need to remove a full 80% of the image’s “dots” before it is ready for faxing.

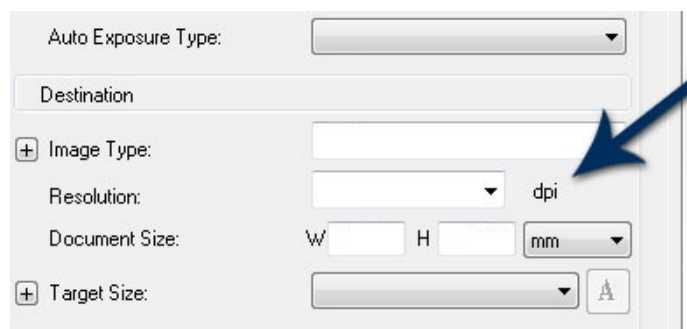
The below image visually shows how the dots are reduced between resolutions:



Keeping in mind that the above references 600dpi versus 1200dpi, whereas fax documents will be down-sampled to 200dpi (a 200dpi image will have one third of the 600dpi image’s dots).

The lower resolution the images/graphics you include in your fax document, the less down sampling required. This results in a better looking image when printed by the receiving fax machine.

Adjusting your scanning resolution can vary from scanner to scanner, however you will typically see some reference to “Resolution”, for example:



Here are examples of a document scanned at 600dpi in colour:



A high res image printed and scanned to 200dpi (this is black text)

A high res image printed and scanned to 200dpi (this is bold black text)

A high res image printed and scanned to 200dpi (this is grey text)

A high res image printed and scanned to 200dpi (this is red text)

A high res image printed and scanned to 200dpi (this is blue text)

When compared to a document scanned at 200dpi in black and white (this is pure scanning, this has not been processed by the fax platform or been handled by a fax machine):



A high res image printed and scanned to 200dpi (this is black text)

A high res image printed and scanned to 200dpi (this is bold black text)

A high res image printed and scanned to 200dpi (this is grey text)

A high res image printed and scanned to 200dpi (this is blue text)

Hence it is important to factor in colours and resolutions when scanning or creating a document.

When Scanning...

If you are scanning a document, use the following guidelines:

- Scan to PDF (*this will retain the document's fidelity*)
- Scan to 200dpi (*203x98dpi or 203x196dpi*)
- Scan to black and white (*2-colour 1-bit line art if possible*)

This will get you the closest possible representation of what the fax machine will receive.

When Creating a Document from Scratch...

If you are designing a new fax, use the following guidelines:

- Use PDF or Microsoft Word formats
- Use images close to 200dpi (*200 pixels per inch of page*)
- Scan to black and white (*2-colour 1-bit line art if possible*)

This will give you the best opportunity to send an attractive fax.