

# Using spot color

*An inexpensive way to add impact to your print projects is to print with one or two PANTONE® spot colors.*

Graphic design software such as Adobe Illustrator, InDesign, PageMaker, QuarkXPress, and CorelDraw allows you to specify and assign spot colors. Keep the following items in mind when designing projects with Pantone spot colors.

- Consult printed color swatch books. Always choose your colors from a “Pantone Color Selector,” a printed guide containing swatches of Pantone colors. Color swatches displayed on your screen do not display the actual Pantone color accurately.
- Use tints to broaden your color palette. One way to broaden your palette from the one or two Pantone colors that you

are using is to assign tints of those colors to objects on your page. Pantone 200 is a deep “apple red”. But a 20% tint of Pantone 200 will print as a light red, and a 50% tint will fall somewhere between the 20% tint and solid Pantone 200.

- Use blends and gradients with care. Your software may allow you to create a “blend” or “gradient” from one color to another, but be careful doing this with spot colors. It is safe to create a blend from a Pantone color to a tint of that same Pantone color. However, a blend from a Pantone color to black or another Pantone color may create problems when your print vendor makes film or

plates. If you need to do this, seek the advice of your print vendor.

- Be careful with transparency. Adobe InDesign and Illustrator allow you to apply semitransparent effects to drop shadows, text, and objects. As long as objects with these effects do not touch spot color objects, you should be fine. However, spot color objects that partially “show through” other objects can create problems for your print vendor. Consult with your vendor if you need to use transparency features with spot color.

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