

Checklist for submitting variable data jobs to McClung

Setup

1. The easiest programs in which to create VDP jobs are InDesign or Quark. Other programs will probably require extra steps.

Fields

2. Variable data fields should be clearly marked on hard copy. In your layout, use field name instead of sample text, ie: [address1]
[city], [state], [zip]

We suggest not using the <> symbols to set off the fields because our variable data application deletes what is inside <>. Other brackets, such as [], work fine.

3. If there are variable graphics, each record in the mailing list will have to have a field with the variable graphic's full name (or a code with a legend attached, ie: 100=robert.eps).

Type

4. The designer may wish to create separate text boxes for specific lines or paragraphs of variable text so if there is copyfitting, the other text is not compressed.
5. Unless otherwise specified, we will copyfit by compressing the type width, not by making the font smaller.
6. OTF and TrueType fonts work the best, since we usually have to move back and forth between Macs & Windows computers to complete a VDP job.
7. You cannot have condensed or expanded type in variable text frames; text must be 100% width and height.
8. Working with tabs in variable text frames has limitations and will take extra time.
9. Variable text cannot have strokes.
10. There is limited support for variable text on a path. We have to recreate the path in our VDP program.

Transparency

11. No objects with transparency (such as InDesign's drop shadows, feathering, rounded corners & the transparency palette) can be above any portion of a variable text or graphics frame.
12. There is limited support for variable text with drop shadows. We have to recreate the drop shadow in our VDP program. Variable text cannot have transparency (or other related transparency functions in InDesign.)

Color Swatches

13. You must define color tints as their own color swatches.

Photos & Graphics

14. Photos & graphics, if variable, must be 100%. Do not crop or rotate within the graphics frame. (The graphics frame itself can be rotated). Generally we import photos & graphics using the best fit setting, so make sure the photo size ratio matches the graphics frame size ratio.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact one of the Digital Printing Team at McClung:

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VDP jobs solely in InDesign

We may be able to do some VDP jobs solely in InDesign. Here are the advantages and limitations:

Advantages:

- Variable text can be on a path
- Variable text can be expanded & condensed
- Variable text can have strokes
- The full range of transparency, feathering, corners, etc. can be used on variable text and graphics

Limitations:

- No copyfitting (text that is too long will simply disappear)
- No rules (for example, we can't program it to remove a comma if the field is empty)
- Large databases will take extra time

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