



VARIABLE DATA PRINTING SETUP GUIDE

Tips and Guidelines for a Successful VDP Project

Variable data printing can be daunting at first. It really isn't as scary as it sounds! Here are some tips and guidelines to aid in setting up a successful variable data printing project for submission to CPCNeutek.

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Five sections to simplify things

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AN INTRODUCTION TO VDP

Dream Big!

If you're creating traditional static direct mail material, you know that a 1% response rate is about all you can hope for.

Put Variable Data Printing (VDP) to work for you. It's a fact that personalized messages receive higher response rates –some as high as 36%. And now, it's available to you with the quality of offset printing through CPCNeutek.

Execute 1:1 marketing and have it dramatically improve the effectiveness of your next direct mail campaign.

You have the data; don't be afraid to use it!

THERE IS POWER IN VDP

- More targeted and personalized contact with prospects
- Dynamically change images and messages based on interests, gender, age, location, etc.
- Statistics confirm the more personal the message, the greater the success rate!
- Relevant graphics and text commonly see a 2-5 fold increase in response rates



THINGS TO CONSIDER

What you **CAN DO** with VDP

VARIABLE IMAGES

Images can be as personal and poignant as needed, if the data is respectively specific. In other words, if you know Mr. Anderson loves to go fishing, why not include an image on his piece that fills this visual void with his favorite rod and reel? From tiny images to the entire page of your design, the scope of the variable image is up to you.

Types of acceptable graphic files

- .jpg
- .pdf
- .eps
- .tif

What about size and resolution?

In terms of file size, it's best to approach a project knowing that the larger the images that are swapping in and out, the greater the chance for performance issues and slow-downs in production.

- **A good rule of thumb is no larger than 1-5 mb for each image**
- **300 dpi images are standard for high resolution output**
- **Crop/size the image appropriately to the dimensions of its container/ placement**

What about transparency?

Variable graphics should not include transparency. There is one exception to this rule! Illustrator art or PDFs created with transparent layers can be used as VDP graphics with the goal of utilizing their transparency in the design. This occurrence should be denoted in special instructions for file prep due to the fact that the final output file for press has different requirements than normal. NOTE: requiring transparency in variable graphics increases RIP/production time and may increase the cost.

VARIABLE TEXT

Text should be considered one of the two greatest tools in your VDP toolbox. From single words/phrases to large sections of text, your verbiage does not have to be static.

What about fonts? Styles and effects?

Most fonts can be used as normal inside of a variable element. However there are some things to keep in mind regarding their usage.

- **.otf and .tff fonts commonly work great**
- **Font files **ALWAYS** need to be provided for variable text (even when submitting a PDF)**
- **Rule of thumb: if it can load into design software (InDesign) then it probably will work as a variable text font**
- **Style/effects application such as stroke and glow do not carry over on variable text**

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER I

Setting up and submitting your project successfully

BUSINESS AS USUAL?

For the most part, your document will be designed and setup as normal. However, when designing a piece to include variable elements, it may require a minor shift in your approach. Instead of conforming the variables to your design, try working your design around priority of your variable elements. In other words, think ahead to what variables could be swapping in and out and how that affects the rest of your piece's layout.

Tips/Requirements for layout

- **Variable elements (text/graphics) should be separated on a unique "VDP" layer (See Figure 1)**
- **Static elements can never be above a variable layer *(unless created as a "variable element" that doesn't change)**
- **Regarding variable text: try to anticipate the varying sizes of text that will "flow" in a designated area (See Figure 2)**

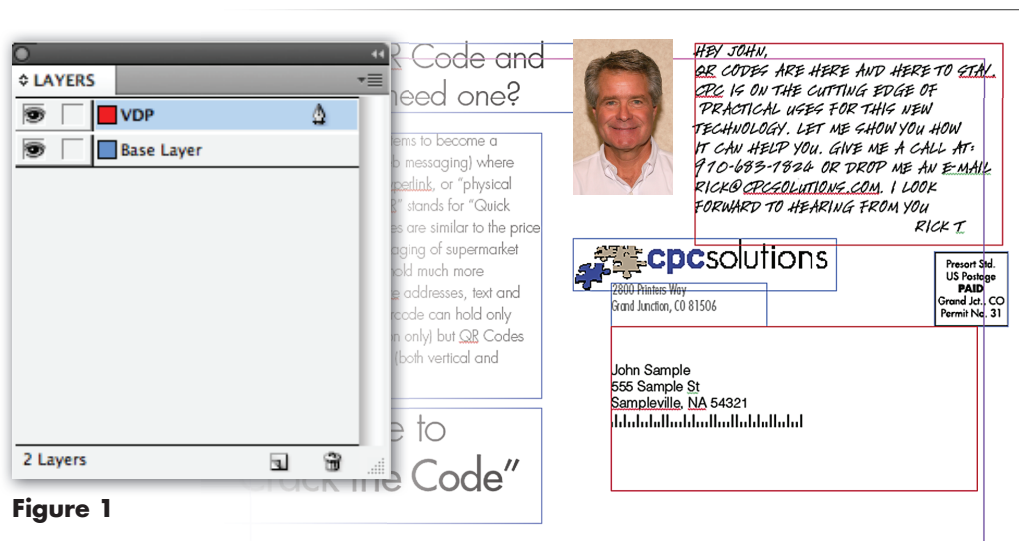


Figure 1

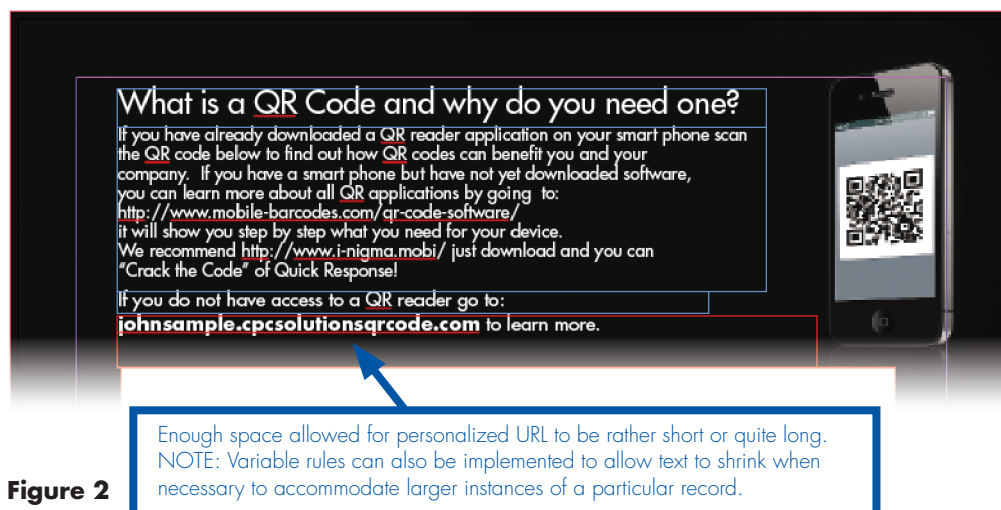


Figure 2

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER II

Setting up and submitting your project successfully

WHAT TO DO WITH ALL OF THESE VARIABLES?

Certain VDP projects are more advanced and complex than others. Some require special Javascript or rules on the production side to make things work. The majority of complex VDP situations are easily surmountable with organized, proper file setup.

What do I do with all of these variable images?

When submitting a job with multiple variable images, consider the following:

- **Images need to be triggered via the data**
- **Images should be consistent in file type/size (all .jpg or all .pdf etc.)**
- **Images should be consistent in naming conventions TIP: Use Batch naming software for large amounts of files (i.e. NameMangler for Mac)**
- **Package all the variable images in a folder titled "VDP Links"**

What do I do with all of this variable text?

When submitting a job with multiple variable text components, consider the following:

- **Variable text needs to be triggered via the data**
- **Variable text, if relatively short in length (i.e. names, phrases), can be included in the data spreadsheet respective to data records/fields**
- **Larger sections of variable text can be utilized via the use of external text resources. Provided with the knowledge of how the text is formatted (paragraph breaks, fonts, styles, etc.), we can take a field of data and use it to call in the text from the external resource.**

SUBMITTING THE FILES

The process of packaging and submitting the files for production is largely similar to traditional offset file submission.

InDesign

When submitting a job from InDesign:

- **Use the "package" method**
- **Be sure to include all necessary variable elements outside the project folder (as stated above)**

PDF

When submitting a job as a PDF:

- **Create a separate PDF of the "VDP Layer" as a guide for variable layout/positioning/implementation**
- **Include fonts to be used in variable text (even though the fonts for the static portion are embedded, variable fonts need to be provided separately)**
- **Be sure to include all necessary variable elements outside the project folder (as stated above)**

VARIABLE DATA IN MOTION

Basic Examples of Variable Text

VARIABLE TEXT STARTS WITH THE DATA

Variable text is controlled the same way as instances of variable images except the text can be pulled in directly instead of calling on external resources like images.

DATA

Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y
ZIP+4	POSTNET Bar	Intelligent Mail barcode	Dear	Sales First	Sales Last	Sales Phone	Sales Email	Image
81401-5078	81401507899	FADFAAFITDAD	John	Rick	Topper	970 683 7824	rickt@coloradoprnting.com	RickT.jpg
81401-5061	81401506199	DAATAFAADTA	Dave	Paula	Sellers	303 912 0525	paulas@cpcsolutions.com	PaulaS.jpg
81401-3854	81401385473	TAAFDODATAA	Betty	Paula	Sellers	303 912 0525	paulas@cpcsolutions.com	PaulaS.jpg
81401-5810	81401581031	DDDDFAADFADF	Berry	Dean	Rickman	970 683 7897	drickman@coloradoprnting.com	DeanR.jpg
81401-5078	81401507899	FADFAAFITDAD	Erica	Rick	Topper	970 683 7824	rickt@coloradoprnting.com	RickT.jpg

FINAL MERGED ART

What is a QR Code and why do you need one?

QR Codes allow everyday items to become a website (print-to-mobile-to-web messaging) where everything can become a hyperlink, or "physical world hyperlinking". The "QR" stands for "Quick Response". These smart codes are similar to the price barcodes found on the packaging of supermarket items, however, QR Codes hold much more information (including website addresses, text and phone numbers). A price barcode can hold only about 20 digits (one direction only) but QR Codes can hold up to 7,000 digits (both vertical and horizontal directions).

Look inside to
"Crack the Code"



HEY JOHN,
QR CODES ARE HERE AND HERE TO STAY
CPC IS ON THE CUTTING EDGE OF
PRACTICAL USES FOR THIS NEW
TECHNOLOGY. LET ME SHOW YOU HOW
IT CAN HELP YOU. GIVE ME A CALL AT:
910-683-1824 OR EMAIL ME AT
RICK@CPC-SOLUTIONS.COM.
FORWARD TO HEARING FROM YOU



 **cpc**solutions
2800 Printers Way
Grand Junction, CO 81506

John Sample
555 Sample St
Sampleville, NA 54321



VARIABLE DATA IN MOTION

Basic Examples of Variable Images

VARIABLE IMAGES START WITH THE DATA...AND IMAGES

The entirety of variable data printing all starts with a data source. This spreadsheet of information controls each variable, whether text or image.

DATA

Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y
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81401-5061	81401506199	DAATAF A ADTA A	Dave	Paula	Sellers	303 912 0525	paulas@cp cs solutions.com	PaulaSA.jpg
81401-3854	81401385473	TAADF A DDAT A AD A	Nancy	Paula	Sellers	303 912 0525	paulas@cp cs solutions.com	PaulaSA.jpg
81401-5810	81401581031	DDDDF A FAFF A FF A	Erica	Dean	Rickman	970 683 7897	drickman@coloradopr int ing.com	DeanR.jpg
81401-5078	81401507899	FADF A AF A TTD A	Betty	Rick	Topper	970 683 7824	rickt@coloradopr int ing.com	RickT.jpg

IMAGE BANK



DeanR.jpg



RickT.jpg

Most of this magic occurs on the CPCNeuterk side of things. You just need to supply the elements(Data, Images, Art, & Text.) We take care of the rest!

FINAL MERGED ART

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910-683-1824 OR DROP ME AN E-MAIL
RICK@CPCOLUTIONS.COM. I LOOK
FORWARD TO HEARING FROM YOU

RICK T



 **cpc**solutions
2800 Printers Way
Grand Junction, CO 81506

John Sample
555 Sample St
Sampleville, NA 54321



Presort Std.
US Postage
PAID
Grand Jct., CO
Permit No. 31

VDP CHEAT SHEET

Setting up and submitting your project successfully



VARIABLE GRAPHICS :

Acceptable File Types

- .jpg
- .pdf
- .eps
- .tif

Image Size and Resolution

- Multiple images no larger than 1-5mb ea.
- 300 dpi
- Crop/size according to image placement

Transparency

- See section on transparency (Things to Consider)
- Try to keep art in a flattened state

VARIABLE TEXT :

Acceptable Font Formats

.otf and .tff

Always supply variable text fonts with the job files

Stylings such as stroke and glow do not carry over to the Variable Data Software

Large text resources can be supplied in separate design documents that denote specific formatting for use as a text variable

Another technique for large amounts of text is simply combining text with other art and supplying an entire PDF (i.e. the entire side of a postcard) to be called in via a data field

DESIGN/LAYOUT :

Layers

- All VDP elements should be on a separate layer
- Remember variable elements are typically "above" static art

Spacing

- Accommodate VDP text by anticipating the maximum space needed or alternative sizing necessities (Shrink to fit Rule)

VDP

- Be sure that all instances of VDP have a trigger method in the data (i.e photo names listed in database)

FILE SUBMISSION :

InDesign

- Use package method under "File Menu"
- Include all external variable resources such as images in a folder designated "VDP Links"

PDF

- Include all variable elements separately on a second pdf file as a guide for production
- Include fonts used in variable text
- Include all necessary variable resources (Data, Photos, Text)

Any technical questions or specific concerns on how something should be set up can be directed to your CSR on the job and they will pass the question along to the appropriate VDP specialist.

Contact us toll free 1.800.332.1069