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DESIGNING ACCURATE COLOR: FROM IMAGE TO SOLID COLOR 4-COLOR PROCESS.

USING PANTONE MONITOR CALIBRATION TOOLS HELP DESIGN FOR CMYK PROCESS PRINTING.

Updated July 6, 2014

How many times have you found that perfect color in your PANTONE Formula Guide for a client, just to see something completely different when you go to press in 4-color? Or, your agency spent thousands of dollars on a photo shoot, only to have those images print desaturated and off-color? You are not the problem; you just might not be using all of the right tools for the job.

Color communication can be as hard or as easy as you make it with the tools Pantone provides. Creatives and professionals have known for years that monitor calibration is essential in seeing colors properly onscreen. But knowing is not doing, and we all know that PANTONE® Spot Color reproduction in a 4-color process environment can be "spotty" at best. However, if you are regularly calibrating your monitor and use a reference for spot color printed in 4-color process, you can stay ahead of the game, and in some cases, ahead of your production department.

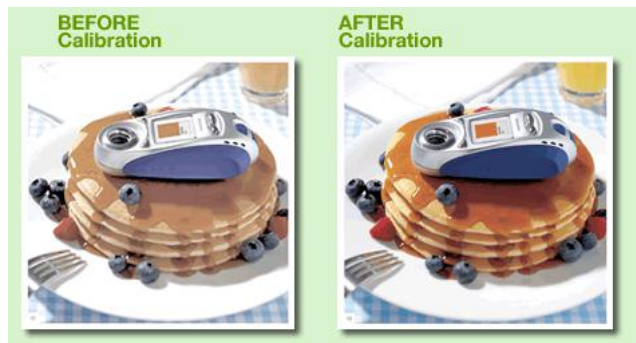
A Case Study

Let's take for instance our product catalog- With the life-style imagery and product matching color could easily have come out posterized and/or flat on press.

Once our concept was sketched out and identified, we knew product shots, color themes and lifestyle images would play an integral role in the creation of the catalog. To avoid color issues on press, our photographer, art director, design firm, in-house designer and production team all worked on this piece using a PANTONE COLOR BRIDGE® to decide which spot colors could be achieved on a 4-color print run and a PANTONE Color Munki Design calibrated monitor to ensure accurate color from capture to press.

Ensure What You See is Accurate

Beginning at the photo shoot, we knew dealing with so many natural colors and product shots and squeezing those colors into CMYK could be an issue. So we made sure that everyone touching this project (photographer, art director, designer and production) was up-to-date with his or her monitor calibration. With the Color Munki Design, it's easy to calibrate each display and you are back to work creating and/or shooting



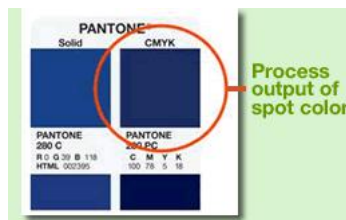
Now that everyone is calibrated both in the photo studio and at the Pantone offices, we moved forward with the shoot and shot selection process. At this point there is no need to worry about bad color corrections or any miscommunication of color from anyone. Despite the fact we are all working on different monitors, Mac laptops, Apple Cinema displays and a Dell LCD, each display is calibrated to the same Whitepoint and Gamma, guaranteeing that we all see the colors photographed accurately.

Even after the shoot and shot selection process, it is imperative that we all remain calibrated as the images are retouched and color-corrected for placement in the catalog layout.

Knowing the Language from Spot-to-Process:

Once our images were chosen, our design and layout began. In the case of the image below, our designer wanted to build a design around the two predominate colors (PANTONE 655 C and PANTONE 1675 C) within this shot.

In Adobe® Photoshop®, with PANTONE Color Manager software open, our design team accessed the PANTONE Color Libraries within Adobe Photoshop to determine the closest PANTONE color match to the Color Munki "molding" and used their COLOR BRIDGE to decide if this was the right color to print CMYK. As the blue molding was reading PANTONE 655 C, a quick glance into the COLOR BRIDGE shows that PANTONE 655 C will print much flatter and darker when printed in process, not what we would see during the design of the piece or what we would expect off press.



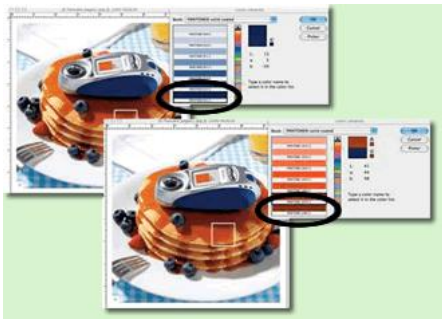
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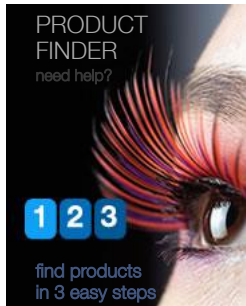
With this in mind, our design team was able to choose PANTONE 288 C, a PANTONE Color with a much more subtle difference when printed 4-color.



If we had not used the COLOR BRIDGE, gone to press thinking we would get a close match to PANTONE 655 C in this 4-color job, we would have been very disappointed with the finished product.

Related Links:

- [Color Munki Design](#)
- [PANTONE Monitor Calibration tools.](#)
- [Color Bridge Set: Coated & Uncoated](#)
- [PANTONE Formula Guide](#)



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