NPES

The Association for Suppliers of Printing,
Publishing and Converting Technologies

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ISO PUBLISHES NEW PDF/X STANDARD

The latest in a series of PDF/X standards for digital data exchange has been published by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). The new standard, ISO 15930-3:2002 (PDF/X-3), covers complete exchange of print-ready material using color-managed and CMYK data, and is based on the Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) 1.3 Specification. It joins the very successful PDF/X-1a standard (ISO 15930-1:2001), which facilitates complete exchange of print-ready CMYK files. Together these international standards satisfy many of the data exchange needs of the printing and publishing industry.

The PDF/X (Portable Document Format for Prepress Digital Data Exchange) family of graphic technology standards is a specific adaptation of the Adobe PDF specification for use by the printing and publishing industry. PDF/X is increasingly used in print production, especially for the "blind exchange" of digital advertising material, and is gaining acceptance in other printing environments.

PDF/X-3 makes use of International Color Consortium (ICC) color management to allow exchange of both three-component data (RGB, CIELAB, etc.) and CMYK data.   Both PDF/X-3 and PDF/X-1a enable the exchange of spot color data. PDF/X-2, which will allow image substitution, is still in development within ISO Technical Committee 130 (Graphic technology)

PDF/X-3 was developed by Working Group 2 of ISO Technical Committee 130 with assistance from the European Colour Initiative (ECI) and the American National Standards Institute's Committee for Graphic Arts Technologies Standards (ANSI CGATS) Subcommittee 6 Task Force 1 (SC6 TF1). These committees include representatives of many of the major industry vendors, trade associations, publishers, printers and prepress companies.

Copies of both PDF/X-1a and PDF/X-3 standards are available for purchase from NPES, ISO, and ISO member national standards organizations.

An application note to assist in the development of PDF/X- compliant workflows and tools is available at http://www.npes.org/standards/Tools/PDF-X_Application-Notes_V3.pdf.

"The DDAP Association welcomes the addition of PDF/X-3. It opens the door to color-managed digital file exchange using an internationally accredited standard," said Alan Darling, COO of Quality House of Graphics and Chairman of the Digital Distribution of Advertising for Publications Association (DDAP).

Martin Bailey, Senior Technical Consultant of Global Graphics Software and chair of CGATS SC6 said, "The PDF/X-3 standard paves the way for industry adoption of color managed workflows. It will help to ensure consistent and reliable exchange as new developments such as digital presses, wide-gamut printing and cross-media publishing are implemented."

NPES The Association for Suppliers of Printing, Publishing and Converting Technologies is the secretariat to both CGATS and Working Group 2 of ISO TC 130. For more information about the

work of CGATS and the ISO's TC 130, contact the NPES Standards Department at 703/264-7200, e-mail mabbott@npes.org or visit the Standards Workroom on the NPES web site at http://www.npes.org/standards/workroom.html.

NPES is a U.S. non-profit trade association representing more than 460 companies engaged in manufacturing and importing for sale or distribution of machinery, equipment, systems, software and supplies used in every printing, publishing and converting process from desktop design and image generation and processing to multiple output options and targeted dissemination systems. As one of its many programs, NPES administers ANSI- and ISO-accredited committees developing standards of interest to the graphic technology industry. Complete information about the Association, its programs and its member companies is available on the World Wide Web at http://www.npes.org, by e-mail at npes@npes.org, by telephone at 703/264-7200, or by fax at 703/620-0994.