FAQ: World of Fiery Webinar – The ABCs of Producing the Best Match for Spot Colors

Will all variations found in the Spot-On tool be within printer color gamut?

Yes, all the printed patches are in the gamut since the printer printed them when you see them.

When I use the spot color adjustment tool, I can get the color I want, but then I can't get it to apply correctly to the file.

Do you have a named plate in the file with the name exactly matching what it's called in Spot-On? Is the library you like the color in "on top" at the right of the Spot-On window? Try dragging it up so it is the first of the libraries in the list then the color will be found there first.

Why aren't the latest PANTONE libraries already loaded on the DFE? Is this manufacturer dependent?

We build the DFE starting many months before the press is released and we freeze the software so that complete quality assurance can be completed. You can always download the latest from http://w3.efi.com/en/resources/educational-downloads/fiery-pantone-library-download.

What can be done with out of gamut color?

Not much. It is a matter of customer education or moving to a better sheet or to a print device with a larger gamut. Some like reflex blue almost always require a real spot colorant on the print engine.

I'm using an Epson Stylus Pro 3880 for proofing to customers. I understand this is not a machine you can "calibrate".

Correct, you need a Digital Front End (DFE, what we used to call a RIP) to calibrate and color manage the colors on your Epson. Even if you manage colors through the print driver from the Adobe CS applications you won't be able to calibrate so that the prints are consistent from day to day.

Please address transparency and spot colors? How to use Fiery spot colors for a solid with a photo and drop shadow placed over it?

If you have an example of a problem, please post it on the Fiery Color Forum at http://fieryforums.efi.com/forumdisplay.php/127-Fiery-Color-amp-Imaging so our experts can take a look. In general, to get drop shadows to work you need to set "optimize RGB transparency" on the color tab in the Job Properties. This will only work for a Fiery server running System 10 or later. If you are pre-System 10 you can try flattening the PDF or you can print from Acrobat using the Fiery driver which flattens transparency when sending the print to the DFE.

If the file containing spot colors has already been sent in CMYK PDF form, and my Fiery DFE can't recognize the spot color, could using the BYPASS Conversion setting possibly get me a more accurate spot representation...i.e., not converting thru any profile?

Passing through the old CMYK values will never give the right CMYK "recipe" to match on your press. Instead go to Resources->Spot Colors and look up the real spot color. Make sure you pick the right output profile for your paper at the top of the window. Now write down the CMYK values. Next add a new substitute color library, then a color inside that library. For the input, put in the CMYK values the converted spot color has in the PDF. For output, enter the CMYK values that are the real ones for the spot color with your profile. Make sure Spot Color Matching is turned on in the color tab of the job. If you think the lookup isn't working, set the output CMYK for

the substitute color to something wildly different and see if it prints that way. Refer to the forums if you need more help - http://fieryforums.efi.com/forumdisplay.php/127-Fiery-Color-amp-Imaging.

In regards to spot color and using the PANTONE swatches, I have the color bridge + series coated and uncoated charts. We print on Hammermill 28lb digital copy paper, but it is not coated. The uncoated swatch looks very dull compared to my Hammermill paper.

This is expected. The color of the uncoated swatches is more like the appearance you will get on an uncoated sheet. Just ignore the paper color and finish of the fan book.

Does Fiery eXpress for Epson have these spot color tools? If so where?

Yes, the Proofing and Proofing Advanced versions do, but not the Photo version since it is for images only. Tools are on the color panel in Fiery eXpress and libraries should include the original PANTONE Plus library but may not include the new 336.

A suggestion for substitute colors: You cannot substitute to 2 decimal places in CMYK, only 1. For instance, I cannot substitute for C = 79.22 (which is necessary sometimes) only for 79.2. Just a suggestion to carry this to 2 decimal places...

Thanks, we will see about changing this in the future. I do hear this comment a lot and the reason we only have one decimal place is simple: today most print devices are 8 bits (256 levels of gray). If I treat this as a scale of 0-100% dot, only 1 decimal place is significant in the % dot value. For example, 95% dot = 12.8 on the 256 count scale. 95.1% dot = 12.544. 95.11% dot = 12.5184. Since there are only 256 counts, you can't even see the difference between one decimal place in %dot when it translates to the 256-level space. You certainly can't see a difference of 0.01.

If you have a substitute color with RGB & CMYK, does it always come up that way? What happens if you need the true color that is RGB or CMYK again?

It will always replace if Substitute Color control is enabled. You can disable this by disabling the "Substitute Color" control on the color tab of Job Properties.

Spot color edits only apply to the picked profile at the time. However, in doing edits, sometimes this reverts to defaults. Has Fiery considered a pop-up menu which will validate the particular profile the spot color edits apply to?

A great idea. We will work on this for a future enhancement. Thanks.

Can you elaborate on using Coated vs. Uncoated PMS colors?

If you will print on a coated sheet, use the coated book. Use the uncoated book if printing on an uncoated sheet. If you aren't the one designing then you have to try to match what the designer specified, but if it's a "C" value and you are printing on uncoated it probably won't match unless maybe it's a pastel. So you'll need to work through that with the print buyer.

How do you set up the replacement colors on the Fiery?

Go to Resources – Spot colors in Command WorkStation. Add a Substitute color group then a color in that group. Make sure to turn on Substitute Colors for the job on the color tab.

I have had many requests for Metallic Spot colors. What would be the best way to go about this?

This is best achieved by an offline coater/laminator; there are several out there. Some digital devices offer metallics but not many. For short run digital it's a lot of extra work to get the color working on the digital press compared with doing it offline.

Do you have tips for working with gradients?

Try some samples. Colorimetry can work very well on some colors. Make sure to evaluate results in D50 always. If you find a specific problem, post it on the Fiery forums so that the experts can look at it and give you more advice.

How do you know if your Fiery DFE has updated PANTONE library?

Looking at the PANTONE download page and comparing is a good way but for the moment I can tell you latest is Pantone + V2. You also should keep the old Pantone V2 around since some of the colors changed so for legacy jobs you might want to put the older library on top. For this, take both coated and uncoated. There is also fashion and home on the site. http://w3.efi.com/en/resources/educational-downloads/fiery-pantone-library-download.

We were advised to make a copy of the PANTONE library before we made any changes to the color builds so that in the event something was way off we had a default to start from again. Do you advise doing this?

Sure, not a bad idea, although you can always download fresh versions from the Web site, too.

When would you consider changing the rendering intent/profile?

You need the profile for the paper you are printing on, either factory supplied but better if it's made custom for your print system with Color Profiler Suite. Then pick the profile for your paper. Rendering intent should be Colorimetric but that is generally set automatically for spots so you can't make a mistake.

Can you edit a document submitted to the DFE via Graphic Arts Package, i.e., without Pitstop or resubmitting the order?

It depends. Graphic Arts Package, Premium Edition will let you make color adjustments on the final raster so you can print without even re-ripping. PDF edits such as you can make with PitStop would need to be made before you submit the job again.

If you change a specific color as an RGB like suggested, a logo for example, will variations of the RGB also be adjusted? i.e., a logo with multiple shades of the same green?

It depends on how similar they are. You can try setting tolerance to "large" to see if one edit will get them all. If not then make specific entries for each in the substitute color table.

Is there a GCMI color library for Fiery?

We don't have one but you could make one if you have the L*a*b* values. I think it is small library. We will also inquire from our side about getting a library we could post.

What is the best practice when scanning paper with the handheld to create output profiles? Should I place extra sheets underneath?

Best is to measure on the white board that comes with the ES-1000/2000-i1. This is the ANSI standard white on which to measure color. If you are getting a lot of show through or measuring calibration patch pages too large to fit on the board then yes back up with 3-5 blank sheet but not more. The instrument is very sensitive to being held at an angle when measuring which a tall pile of backup stock will make happen. See if you can keep all the feet and the aperture of the device on the top sheet at all times so the device is always level.

How do I load Spot-On if it is not showing?

You may need to buy the Spot-On option for your Fiery DFE. It can be purchased here https://estore.efi.com/, or from your local EFI Fiery dealer.

Can you do the spot matching or see the flower petals with a bustled device or is an external DFE required?

Bustled is still a DFE, it is just one running Linux on a less powerful computer than a standalone server. You should still see Spot Colors under Resources in Command WorkStation unless your bustled has Spot-On as an option. Then you need to buy it. See the last question for a link to order or contact us and we'll help you order it.

If you make a spot color change, and have 2 entries in the Fiery DFE for the same PANTONE color, i.e., you've made a new group and copied the same color name, the 1st instance found will always be used.

This is true. Also if a color of the same name appears in 2 libraries the one on top in the order at the left of the Spot-On window will be honored.

Can you explain 2 color mapping?

Two Color Print Mapping refers to the ability to replace the black and magenta of a two-color job with the required spot colors without needing the designer to modify the original job. Generally, Magenta and Black are used as placeholders for the colors that will ultimately be used to print a two color job. But how does one print with something different? By using Two Color Print Mapping. Users merely select the "placeholder" colors and reassign them to an established named color or new formula they have in mind.

Can we manually import other spot color libraries if that library does not exist on our Fiery DFE? How can it be done?

Use the import button in Spot-On. The library needs to be a standard ICC named color profile.

How are the spot color let downs or tints calculated in the DFE?

This is done based on the colorimetric blending of the solid. It can be set to blend in CMYK with a patch on some Fiery DFEs.

Will an ES-1000 spectrophotometer do the same thing as an ES-2000?

Yes, but ES-1000 is probably UV cut, aka M2 mode. This is fine for calibration and measuring spot colors to match but if you will be profiling, it is useful to have the 3 modes ES-2000 offers: M0, M1, and M2.

Are the new PANTONE libraries specific for a given engines gamut?

No, the PANTONE libraries are made to give a wide variety of color choices. They are not targeted for the gamut of any digital device.

I have a PowerPoint file where I am using Substitute colors to successfully substitute a color for one part of the customer's logo, however when I do this it makes the change to the color, but now shows up some kind of background (I assume slide master) right in the middle of my substitute color that is not shown on the screen. What is an easy way to explain to the customer what is going on? They think it is a printer issue.

Not sure. This is one to post to the forums at and we'll get you and answer there. http://fieryforums.efi.com/forumdisplay.php/127-Fiery-Color-amp-Imaging-Topics