

Microsoft Office Productivity

Convey hard data without weighing down your PowerPoint presentation design

Information Systems Protection

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Nail down new tools and terms for Windows Vista deployments

Design, Media & Graphics

Three image resolution myths debunked

From the Editor

Presenting raw data can sometimes bore your audience. Or worse, you may lose them if your facts and figures are too complex. We'll show you how to create a chart for your PowerPoint presentation that gets your message across while remaining visually appealing.

Before you upgrade to Windows Vista, you want to ensure that your hardware and software is compatible. We'll show you how to use the Windows Vista Upgrade Advisor to assess your computer, and then give you a handy reference chart so you can familiarize yourself with Vista tools and terms.

Image resolution isn't always what it seems. Separate fact from fiction as we debunk three image resolution myths that may trip you up.

MICROSOFT OFFICE PRODUCTIVITY

Convey hard data without weighing down your PowerPoint presentation design

In today's competitive market, you need to deliver presentations your audience can understand — and then remember — after you leave the meeting room. It's easy to pack a presentation with numerical data in an effort to get it all in, but if you clutter your slides with words and numbers, your point and your audience are lost. You need a method to get your data-driven message across with high-impact visuals. As shown in **Figure A**, we've designed a technique to create borderless column or bar charts that deliver both data and a visual punch.

Plant the seed

Your background image is the key to creating a washout chart. For this technique, you'll format your background image once and then make a copy of the background image. You'll then wash out the copy for use in your chart.

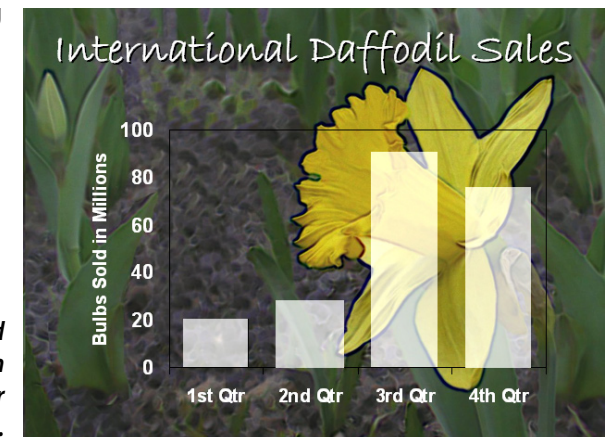
Tip: In nearly every presentation you design, you should start with a subtle background image. When washing out a chart, be vigilant about subtleness, and also select a background image that uses dark colors.

Dig in to slide creation

Once you choose a background image, you're ready to create your slide and basic chart.

To create your chart slide:

1. Create a blank slide.
2. Insert your background image by selecting Insert | Picture | From File, and then navigating to and selecting the image. Click Insert.
3. Resize the image using the sizing handles so that it covers the entire slide background.
4. Insert a text box by selecting Insert | Text Box, and then add a title for the slide. Remember to use font colors that



A

The darker background colors make this slide an excellent candidate for our washed out chart.

contrast with the background and use a font no smaller than 36 pt.

5. Arrange any text boxes with chart placement in mind.

Because the background tells so much of your slide's story, avoid using additional images. If you must include a company logo, limit its size.

Insert and format your chart

The next step is to insert and format the chart. Begin with inserting a basic chart.

To create a basic chart:

1. Select Insert | Chart to insert a Column chart and open a basic Presentation Datasheet.
2. Enter your data in the datasheet's columns and rows.
3. Because wider columns look better with this technique, we used only one variable, as shown in **Figure B**. To remove a variable, right-click on the column or row header and choose Cut from the shortcut menu.
4. Click on your slide somewhere outside of the chart area to deactivate the chart. Size and position the chart on the slide as desired.

Look over your chart now and compare how the text color contrasts with the areas on the background it covers. Also determine if you wish to add custom titles. You can make those changes and more when you customize your chart.

To customize a chart to prepare it for the washout technique:

1. Double-click on the chart to edit it.
2. To change the axis font, right-click on the x- or y-axis and choose Format Axis.
3. On the Font tab, select a Font color and a Background color from the Color and Background dropdown lists. We chose White and Transparent, respectively. Repeat steps 2 and 3 for the other axis.
4. If your chart is simple, such as ours, and thus you don't need a legend, remove it to streamline the chart by right-clicking on the legend and choosing Clear.
5. Right-click in the Chart Area and choose Chart Options if you wish to add titles. **Figure C** illustrates the Chart Area.
6. Enter text in the appropriate text boxes on the Titles tab, as shown in **Figure D**. Click OK, and then right-click on the title and choose Format Axis Title to format the font, if desired.
7. If you wish to remove the gridlines as we did for our example chart, right-click on a gridline and choose Clear from the shortcut menu.
8. To format the column type so that you can wash it out, right-click on the Chart Area and choose Chart

Type from the shortcut menu. Choose Clustered Columns from the Chart Sub-type section of the Standard Types tab. Click OK.

9. To change the spacing between each column, right-click on a column and choose Format Data Series from the shortcut menu. On the Options tab, change the gap width, as desired. We chose 50.

Wash out your columns

Now that you've finished with the necessary and aesthetic chart

customization, you're ready for washout magic. To save time and repetitive steps, begin by copying the original background image onto a new blank slide. You can delete this slide later.

To create and format the washout image:

1. Right-click on the background image and choose Copy.
2. Select Insert | New Slide and choose Blank from the Slide Layout pane. (In 2000, select Blank in the New Slide dialog box and click OK.)

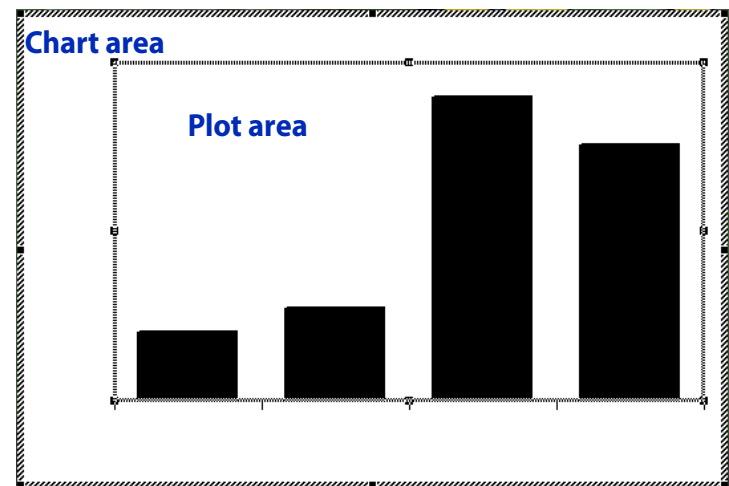
B

Enter your data using the Datasheet window.

	A	B	C	D	E
	1st Qtr	2nd Qtr	3rd Qtr	4th Qtr	
1	20.4	27.4	90	75.6	
2					
3					
4					
5					

C

Find the Chart Area between the active chart edge and the plot area's edge.



3. Right-click on the new slide and choose Paste.
4. On the Picture toolbar, click the Color button and select Washout (choose Image Control | Watermark in 2000), as shown in **Figure E**.
5. Use the corresponding icons on the Picture toolbar to increase or decrease the Brightness and Contrast, as desired.

Now that you've finished formatting the washout image, you'll copy it back to the original slide and crop it to the columns.

To create custom borderless columns with the washout image:

1. Right-click on the washout image on the temporary slide (be sure to select the image, not just the slide) and choose Copy.
2. Right-click on the original slide and choose Paste.

3. Move the image so that it exactly covers your original background image.
4. Activate the Picture toolbar and click the Crop button.
5. Use the cropping handles to crop the graphic to just larger than the original bar, as shown in **Figure F**. For more precise placement, press and hold the [Alt] key while you drag a cropping handle.
6. Repeat steps 1 through 5 for each column. When complete, your slide should look something like ours in **Figure A**.

You can use this technique regardless of your slide's topic, but it's easiest to implement when you use a bar or column chart.

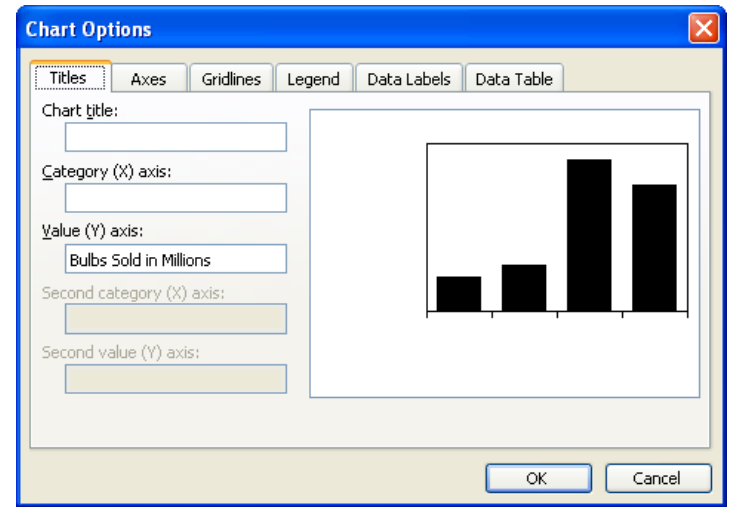
Business skills for the new world of work

In business today, productivity is key to your success. Whether that means setting up projects for success, forecasting and analyzing trends, or managing critical business information, it is vital that you have the skills to work at peak performance. You already know how to use Microsoft® Office System applications. New Horizons offers Microsoft Business Skills Series Courses to teach you how to use those applications to more efficiently manage, work with, and prioritize information to make better decisions. Go to www.NewHorizons.com for information on courses that cover topics such as:

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- 4007 Creating Effective Presentations Using Microsoft Office PowerPoint 2003
- 4008 Building Better Microsoft Office Word 2003 Documents In Less Time

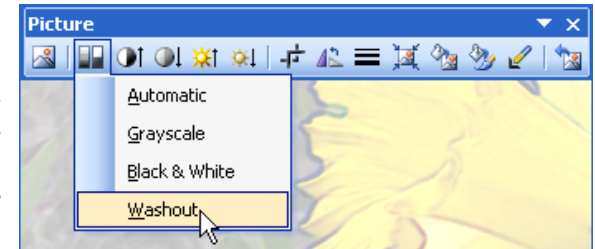
D

In the Chart Options dialog box, you can add titles and perform other formatting tasks.



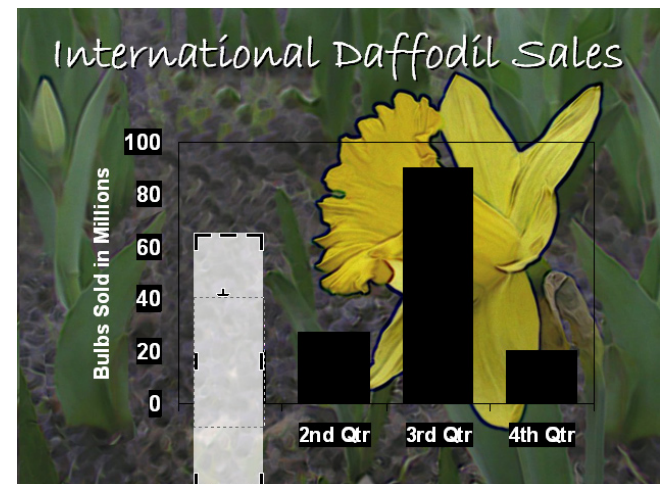
E

Wash out your image copy and then change the contrast and brightness to levels you think will be appropriate for your columns.



F

Use the cropping handles to crop the new image to the original column's height and width.



Take the guesswork out of choosing your Vista upgrade path

When you consider upgrading to a new operating system (OS), you certainly wonder if your current computer hardware and applications are compatible with that OS. Vista upgrade considerations bring the same concerns — and you shouldn't wait until after you've purchased the upgrade to find out how your system will fair. Fortunately, you can run the Windows Vista Upgrade Advisor for a quick analysis of your hardware as well as recommendations on what Vista edition is for you. **Bonus:** We'll clue you in to the best ways to find out if your applications will work on Vista.

Understand what Upgrade Advisor does

To run Windows Vista Upgrade Advisor, you must download and install it on every computer you plan to upgrade.

When Advisor runs on a workstation, it scans the computer's hardware and then recommends a Vista edition based on the scan. It also gives specifics about any problems it sees, including basic application compatibility problems.

Put Advisor to work

Downloading and running the analyzer is a straightforward process. To download it, simply point your browser to www.microsoft.com/windowsvista/getready/upgradeadvisor/default.mspx and click on the Windows Vista Upgrade Advisor link in the middle of the page. Once installed, you're ready to run it.

Note: You may have to install MSXML 6.0 Parser prior to installing the Upgrade Advisor.

To scan your system with the Windows Vista Upgrade Advisor, make sure you first connect every hardware device you want to use with that computer and Vista, such as printers or USB thumb drives, to the computer. Then run through the Advisor tool by launching it from All Programs and stepping through the prompts to start the scan. When the Scan Complete indicator appears, click the See Details button.

The resulting page reports if your computer can run Vista, and which version you should purchase for it, as shown in **Figure A**. You can also click any available See Details button to open the Report Details window shown

in **Figure B**. Select a tab on that page for details related to the System, Devices, Programs, and Task List.

Ensure application compatibility

In addition to determining your hardware's ability to run Vista, you need to know if your applications can run with it. Advisor gives you some program compatibility information, as shown in **Figure B**. We recommend you contact the vendor for your critical applications because many vendors began testing their apps months ago and can tell you the status.

Take advantage of compatibility tools

Microsoft offers several tools to test for application compatibility and to help your legacy apps work with Vista.

Related Courses

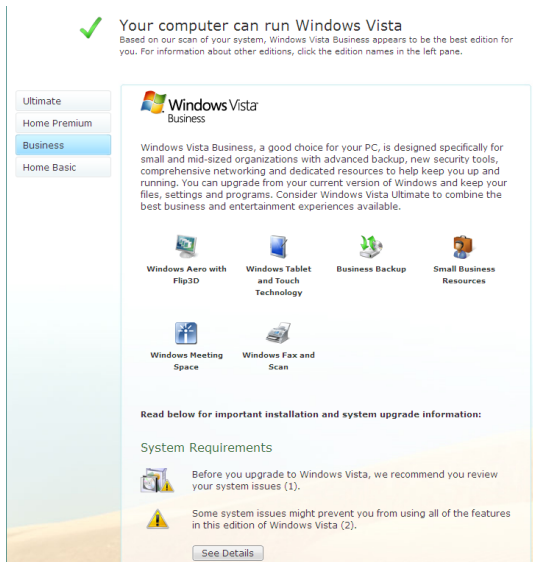
- 5115 Installing and Configuring the Windows Vista™ Operating System
- 5117 Installing, Configuring, Troubleshooting, and Maintaining Windows Vista®
- Windows Vista - Level 1
- Windows Vista - Level 2

Vista's bottom line hardware requirements

Most computers purchased in the last two years should run Vista, though not necessarily all its available features. One example is the new Aero feature. Aero requires a graphics card that has 128 MB memory and uses the new Windows Display Driver Model (WDDM) drivers.

For basic functionality, the bottom line requirements for Vista are:

- 800 MHz processor
- 512 MB of RAM
- A 20 GB hard drive with 15 GB of free space



A Advisor recommends a Vista version based on the hardware specifications and without you comparing specs to requirements yourself.



B Learn more about specific hardware that may prohibit you from the upgrade path you want.

If you plan to roll out Vista to more than a few computers, you might consider using the Microsoft Application Compatibility Toolkit, version 5 (ACT). With ACT, you can create and install a package on all of your computers. Use it to inventory all apps on company computers and analyze their compatibility. ACT works best for larger organizations where it's more cost effective to configure an ACT server and package than to stop by every computer to check which apps are installed.

Once you upgrade a computer to Vista, the Windows Vista Program Compatibility Assistant runs in the background to resolve application compatibility issues that arise. Vista also comes loaded with the Program Compatibility Wizard so you can manually work with Vista to choose compatibility modes for your apps.

Nail down new tools and terms for Windows Vista deployments

If you're considering upgrading your systems to Vista and figure you're ready to jump right in, think again.

With Vista, Microsoft axed the long standing text-based image and installation process in favor of a new, XML-based process — and took away other familiar tools, too. In future issues, we'll help you over the hurdle with instructions on the new deployment process. For now, show off your Vista smarts with our quick guide to Vista's deployment tools.

Windows Vista Deployment tools

New Tool	Replaces	Description
Windows Deployment Services (WDS)	Remote Installation Services (RIS)	Use to deploy Vista and XP images
Setup.exe	WINNT.exe and WINNT32.exe	Use to initiate the installation
Windows System Image Manager	Setup Manager and Notepad	Use to create and modify Unattend.xml
Unattend.xml	Unattend.txt, sysprep.inf, cmdlines.txt	A single answer file instead of multiple files
User State Migration Tool (USMT) 3.0	User State Migration Tool (USMT) 2.0	Vista/XML version of USMT
ImageX	System Preparation tool	A command line tool you can use to create WIM images
Microsoft Windows Imaging (WIM)	Sysprep	File-based instead of sector-based
Windows PE boot images	MS-DOS boot floppies	Edit system config, format drives etc., without starting the primary OS
%systemroot% directory	\i386 directory	All Vista components placed in various %systemroot% subdirectories

Three image resolution myths debunked

Whether creating images for web or print, you'll no doubt spend some time in the Image Size dialog box. But don't turn your image resizing into a guessing game — educate yourself on the right way to handle all of your image resizing needs. Read on to discover the truth about image resolution and what really matters when it comes to pixels.

Related Courses

- InDesign CS3 - Level 1
- InDesign CS3 - Level 2
- Photoshop CS3 - Level 1
- Photoshop CS3 - Level 2

Myth #1: Web graphics should be 72 ppi

In the early days of the World Wide Web, the standard screen resolution was 800 x 600 pixels, which in turn, provided a resolution acceptable for viewing images at 72 or 96 ppi. Hence, 72 ppi images for the web became the norm, as well as part of the lingo. When we hear the term *low-res image*, a 72-ppi image is what comes to mind.

However, images don't necessarily need to be 72 ppi to use online. Image resolution is of utmost importance for print graphics, but not so much for web graphics. For one thing, you can't control what the end user has set for his monitor resolution. Another point is that changing the resolution alone doesn't change the file size or the dimensions of the image. You need to resample the image to accomplish that.

To test this technique on your own:

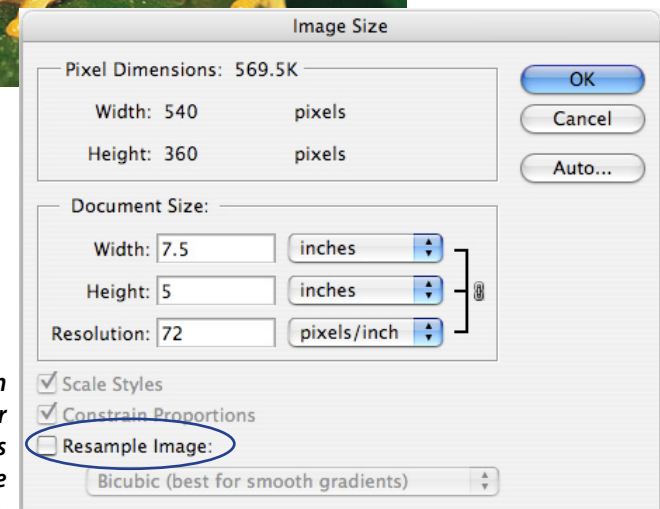
1. Launch Photoshop and open an image.
2. Choose Image > Image Size to display the Image Size dialog box.
3. Deselect the Resample Image check box, as shown in **Figure A**.
4. Change the resolution.
5. Note that while the Document Size Width and Height values change, the Pixel Dimensions file size, Height, and Width remain the same, as shown in **Figure B**.

When preparing images for the web, you need to pay more attention to your image's actual pixel dimensions and file size. So if you need to create a banner graphic that is 400 pixels wide, you should focus on the Pixel Dimensions section of the Image Size dialog box, not the Document Size section.



A

Image resolution doesn't change your file size or dimensions — you must resample the image.



Myth #2: Print graphics should all be 300ppi

If you're preparing graphics for printed materials, you might assume that all images should be 300 ppi. That's simply not true. You use a number of variables to calculate your image resolution for print jobs, including output device, paper stock and line screen.

Output device

Use **Table A** as a guideline to determine image resolution requirements for any graphics you may place in your

documents. However, your printer's manual or your service bureau's specifications — which can supply you with tailored specifications — should trump any general recommendations.

Note: For line art, you should set your resolution at 1200 ppi or the resolution of the final output device — whichever is lower.

Line screen and paper stock

Most output devices are capable of printing more than one screen frequency

— for the most part, the paper that the piece is printed on determines the line screen. For instance, too high of a line screen may result in dot gain; too low of a line screen and not enough dot will be placed — it all depends on the paper's characteristics. This is evident in the images shown in **Figure C**, which were printed at various line screens on the same paper. The typical LPI settings for various media and the paper stock they're commonly printed on are shown in **Table B**.

Your image's resolution should be twice the screen frequency to produce enough halftone dot in print. If you

need to resize an image, multiply its current resolution by the percentage of enlargement or reduction to get the final resolution it will need:

$$2 \times \text{LPI} \times \text{resize \%} = \text{PPI}$$

Myth #3: Don't resample your images

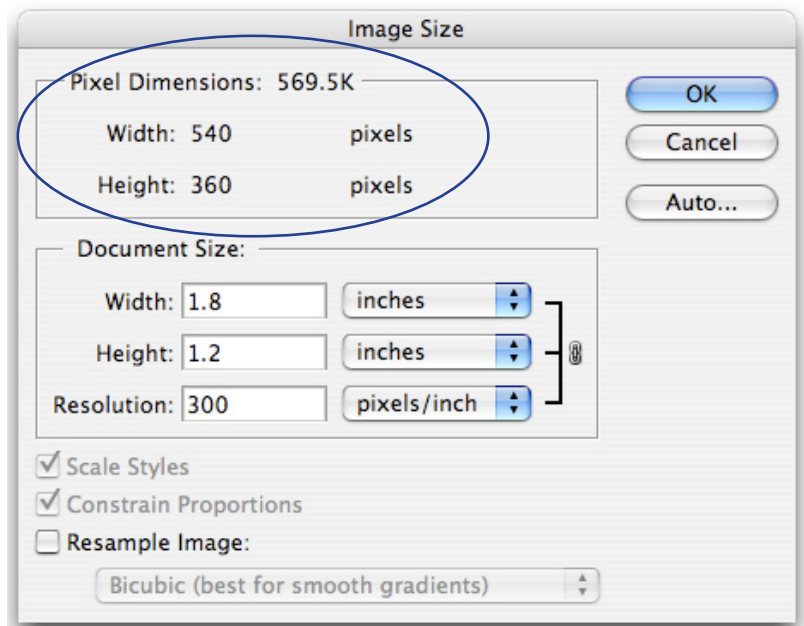
In the early desktop publishing and electronic image age, designers used great caution when resampling images. Much of the resampling hesitation stemmed from the fact that film scans were notoriously grainy. With today's digital cameras, you're often safe to

Table A:

Print guidelines for graphics.

Output device	Resolution quality	Resolution for raster images	Color space
Desktop printer	Low resolution	72-100 ppi	RGB* or CMYK
Laser printer	Medium resolution	100-300 ppi	RGB* or CMYK
Printing press	High resolution	300-355 ppi	CMYK*

*High-end printing in an RGB workspace may be possible. Check with your service bureau.



B The Pixel Dimensions width and height don't change when you modify an image's resolution.

Graphic & Design eTips to Enhance Your Work

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upsample an image 200 percent! Now that's progress!

Keep these tips in mind as you upsample (add pixels to) or downsample (remove pixels from) your images:

- **Don't resample incrementally.** In Photoshop's early years, pixel pushers had to resample in 10-percent increments to achieve the best possible quality. But that's no longer the case. Photoshop's Bicubic Smoother and Bicubic Sharper resampling algorithms work best in a single pass. In fact,

incremental resampling in current Photoshop versions can have adverse effects on your images, such as accentuating the artifacts caused from resampling.

- **Start with a quality image.** You'll get a much better resampled image if you start with a high-quality image. Photoshop isn't a miracle worker, so don't expect a lousy image to resample into a better one.
- **Interpolation doesn't add detail.** When you resample images you're relying on predetermined

algorithms to either add or remove pixels from your image. You'll never achieve more detail than what you start with.

- **The more pixels, the merrier.** If you have to resample images, you're better off downsampling from high-resolution images with more pixel data, than upsampling

from low-resolution images with less pixel data.

- **Purchase a plug in.** Since upsampling is generally more complicated than downsampling, consider purchasing a third-party plug-in designed specifically for this task. 🌐

Table B:

Screen frequencies used in commercial printing

Media	Paper	LPI
Newspaper	Newsprint	100-120
Magazines, brochures	Uncoated/coated	133-150
High end magazines, art books	Coated	175-400

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