

Color Guides: From early times to today digital world

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Abstract

Color Guides used to be the most prominent tool for defining a specific color for a printed job. Numerous suppliers ranging from ink manufacturers to prepress companies and specialized vendors such as Pantone, have created and launched printed and digital color guides.

This paper investigates the history and the evolution of color guides from the early times until today. In particular, the structure and characteristics, the usefulness and the applications, as well as their contribution in the color workflow in design, prepress and printing is investigated and analyzed.

The objective of this paper is to investigate the types of color guides / charts, their course of evolution and their applications in the printing process and workflow. In addition, the usefulness of the color guides is discussed, along with the application of printed color guides and charts in the digital production and workflows in the printing business of today.

The research conducted, has been further focusing on the digitalization of color guides and charts. The degree of digitalization of the color guides and their implementation in digital design, prepress and printing workflows is investigated and the steps from paper/printed guides towards the digital ones is addressed. Finally, the future of printed color guides / charts is discussed

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