

# Total Area Coverage (TAC)/Ink Density

Total Area Coverage (TAC), or Ink Density is the total combined % value of the CMYK inks. This value should not be higher than 280% anywhere on the artwork. TAC over 280% can be an issue in raster images, text or vector art.

## Checking for High TAC

**InDesign:  
Separations  
Preview** with the Ink Limit set at 280%. Areas on the art that are above 280% will appear in red.



**Acrobat:  
Output Preview** with the TAC set at 280%. Areas on the art that are above 280% will appear in green.



## Raster Images

If an image has more than 280% Total Area Coverage, the TAC can be reduced by using **Gray Component Replacement** (or GCR) in **Photoshop**.

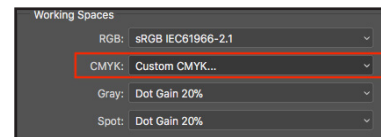
*Follow the steps below:*

### Step 1

Open the image in **Photoshop**, and **Convert the image to RGB** with Image menu>Mode.

### Step 2

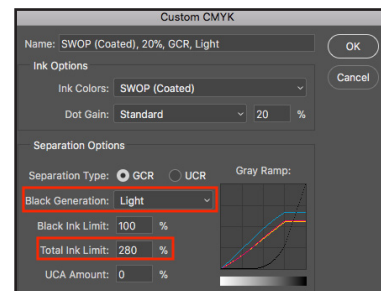
Go to **Edit>Color Settings**. Change the **Working Spaces>CMYK** drop-down menu to: **Custom CMYK** (Refer to Illustration A).



(Illustration A)

### Step 3

In the Custom CMYK window, change **Black Generation** to **Light** and change **Total Ink Limit** to **280%** (Refer to Illustration B).



(Illustration B)

### Step 4

Click **OK twice**, **Convert the image to CMYK**, then **SAVE** the file.

## Text or Vector Objects

If text or vector objects have more than 280% Total Area Coverage, the TAC can be reduced in **Illustrator or InDesign**.

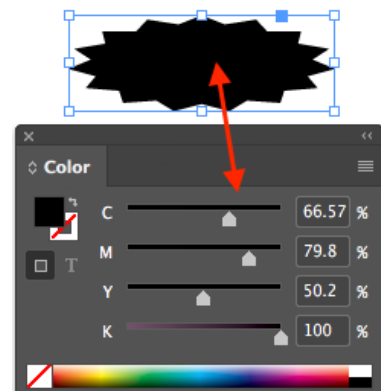
*Follow the steps below:*

### Step 1

Open the image in **Illustrator or InDesign** and select the text or object.

### Step 2

Move the sliders in the color palette, for each color, to change the values so that the total equals 280% or less.



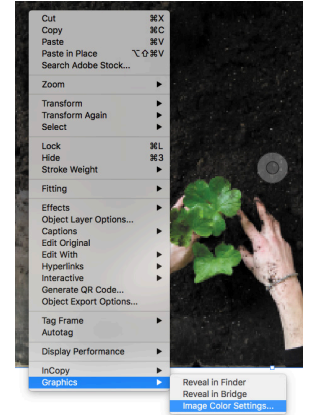
# Troubleshooting Steps

Occasionally, you may find a situation where you know that the steps for correcting TAC using GCR were followed exactly, but when the PDF is created, it appears that the file was not corrected. Below are some troubleshooting steps that will help you correct the file.

**Step 1.** In the InDesign file, make sure the new “Fixed” image is linked.

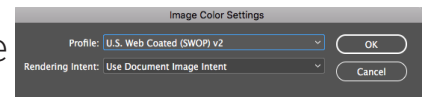
**Step 2.** Select the image in InDesign.

**Step 3.** Right-click on the image, and select **“Graphics”** in the pop-up menu.



**Step 4.** Then select **“Image Color Settings”**

**Step 5.** In the **“Image Color Settings”** window, make sure that the Profile is set to **“Use Document Default”** or **“U.S. Web Coated (SWOP)v2”**. If it is not, change it to be one of these 2 profiles.



**Step 6.** Remake the PDF.

---

**\*If the PDF is still wrong after going through steps 1-6, continue at step 7.**

---

**Step 7.** Go to the **PDF Export settings**.

**Step 8.** In the **“Output”** tab, verify that the **“Destination”** is set to **“U.S. Web Coated (SWOP) v2”**, if it is not, change it.

**Step 9.** Remake the PDF.

The TAC should now be correct in the PDF.

