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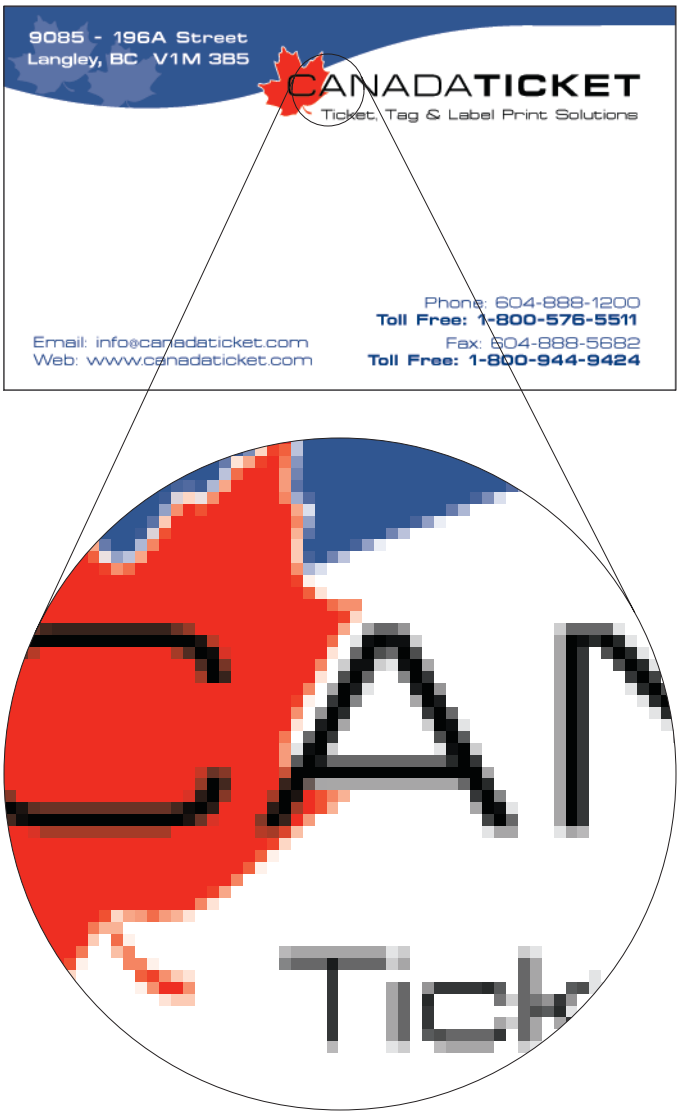
Bitmap Artwork vs. Vector Artwork

Digital artwork is broken down into two basic types; Bitmap and Vector. This is not the file format the artwork was saved in (TIFF, JPEG, GIF, EPS, AI, FH ,etc.) but rather the way the artwork itself was actually created.

Bitmap images (scans, digital photos, web images, and the like) are created from a series of tiny colored squares, called pixels, that when viewed at 100% produce a seamless image similar to a photograph. A pixel is a variable-size unit meaning that you can fit 72 pixels within an inch, 300 pixels within an inch, even 2540 pixel within an inch. The more pixels used to create the image, the higher the quality. A scan made up of 300 pixels per inch (ppi) will look much better than the same image at 72 pixels per inch set at the same dimensions. Low resolution images (72ppi - 200ppi) will look jagged and grainy when printed on a press because there is simply not enough information, in terms of pixels, to create a quality image.

Vector images differ greatly from bitmap images in the fact that they do not rely on any kind of resolution to determine their quality. Instead of using pixels to create the image, vectored art uses a series of points to define the boundaries of an element and the computer fills in the rest. Think of it as a digital connect-the-dots. The advantage of vectored art is its scalability. As you increase or decrease the size of the art, the points are either spaced farther apart or drawn closer together. The computer re-connects the dots and the art looks good no matter what size you make it. The result is a clean, crisp printed image.

Bitmap Artwork



Vector Artwork