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(aka, print shops)

The preparation of charts for a large-format plotter is actually very similar to preparing a print job for your own printer. With a little preparation, you can eliminate problems that sometimes occur at the Service Bureaus and reduce "hidden" costs.

This page provides advice and answers to common questions regarding the process of preparing chart files and dealing with Service Bureaus.

[Featured vendor](#)

The items you will need to take to the Service Bureau are:

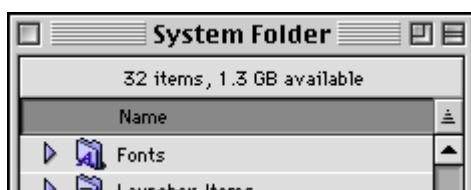
- Your saved chart file (usually saved to the Reunion 5/Charts folder)



- A copy of the SuperChart application file (usually located in the Reunion 5 folder).
Any Service Bureau with a Macintosh (any good Service Bureau **will** have a Mac!) can print directly to the plotter using the SuperChart application.



- Any fonts included in the chart.(located in the System Folder/Fonts Folder).



The Service Bureau (i.e. Kinko's, etc.) will not allow any "unauthorized" software (i.e. the SuperChart application file) to be installed on their computer system. Why?

A:

We understand why they have taken this precaution. Many software programs install extensions which may cause conflicts with their existing software or hardware configuration.

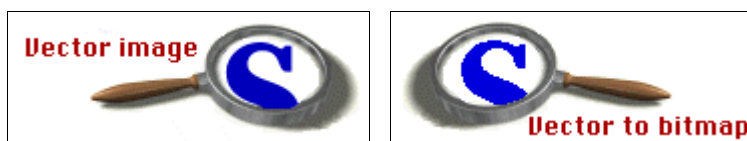
SuperChart will **not** install ANY extensions in the Mac. SuperChart is a very small application and will only place a preferences file in the Preferences folder when you first launch the SuperChart application. When your chart has been printed (to your satisfaction), they can delete the two files (your chart file and the SuperChart preferences file) from their system.

Q:

If the Service Bureau still refuses to install the SuperChart application on their system, I have to supply them with a PICT image of the chart (File -> Save As PICT Image - page 43-23), however, the results are "jaggy." What can be done to improve the quality?

A:

A PICT image may contain both Vector (fonts, boxes, lines) and bitmaps (images). The "jaggies" happen when the high-resolution PICT image is opened in a program that converts the PICT data into a bitmap image. Examples include programs such as Photoshop and ColorIt. Image-editing software programs use a bitmap file format.



The Service Bureau will obtain the best results by importing the PICT file into **drawing** or **page-layout** programs.

Examples include: Deneba's Canvas, CorelDraw, Adobe's Illustrator, Macromedia Freehand, Quark XPress or Adobe PageMaker. Good Service Bureau's will have at least one of these programs.

Chart Size

SuperChart has no size limitations. Keep this in mind, as many other programs have maximum document size limitations and therefore can't properly display an image exceeding the maximum size. It will either import a partial image or will distort the image to fit the maximum size. [Please consult with the Service Bureau for page size limitations of their software programs.](#)

Q:**What should I be looking for when selecting a Service Bureau?****A:**

The following items are in no particular order
(other than how I remembered them)

Do they...

1. **Use Mac's?** [We hope so, this will make life much easier](#) {:>)
2. **Use ColorFast or Ultra Violet (UV) safe inks?**
This ink is formulated to resist color fading in direct sunlight.
3. **Perform Lamination?** There are two methods used to protect your charts:
 - 1) Heat set lamination (this will cover both sides and leave a small plastic edge)
 - 2) Adhesive vinyl (this can be applied to one or both sides leaving no edge).[In addition, ask if they have matte or dull finish lamination, this will reduce reflective glare.](#)

Can they...

1. Provide **shipping**?
[\(You know aunt Mildred wants a copy!\)](#)
2. Print on **glossy coated paper**?
(Looks great, but expensive and will have a reflective glare.)
3. Print on **matte/dull coated paper**?
(Looks very nice, less glare.)
4. Print on **heavy offset paper**?
(Most economical and quite durable.)
5. **Complete the job within 5 to 7 working days?**
(Rush orders usually have an upcharge.)

Q:**My Service Bureau only has PC-based machines. What do I do now!@#\$\$%?****A:**

The main problem in using a Windows machine will be fonts. The Mac font format is different than the PC font format, even if they have the exact same font name. This applies mostly to charts saved in the PICT file format.

One workaround for the Service Bureau is to use a program which will convert the Mac fonts into PC fonts.

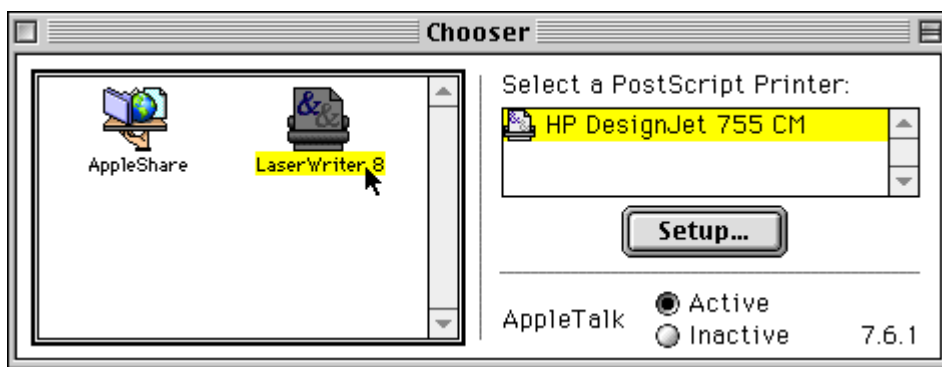
This [Web page](#) will explain a little more about font conversion (Mac to PC) software. Also available from this site are two shareware font conversion utilities. In addition, check out this [Web site](#) for the MAC2PC

beta font conversion package.

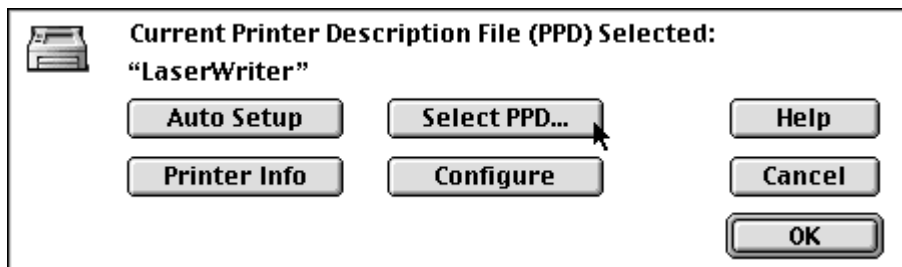
Suggested output methods to PC:

Print to File using a PostScript print driver (i.e. Laserwriter 8.4 or newer driver) to create a .PS (**PostScript**) file. The Service Bureau can print directly to the plotter using this file format and the font information is contained within the file (**no font conversion necessary**). **Postscript files cannot display a preview image on screen and cannot be edited easily.**

It is best if you select the same printer **PPD file (PostScript Printer Description)** as the Service Bureau (using the Chooser). This will enable you to select the same page size they will output. Contact the Service Bureau for a copy of the print driver and PPD.



Click Setup to select a different PPD.



The print driver and PPD file will be located on the hard drive in the System/Extensions/Printer Folder or Printer Descriptions Folder.

Instructions for Printing to a File.

1. With chart open in SuperChart, choose **File -> Print**
2. Select **File** as the Destination
3. Click **Save**
4. Select where the file will be saved (i.e. Desktop) and **name the file**
5. Click **Save**
6. **Copy the file to a removable disk** (Floppy, Zip, Jaz, etc.) and take to the Service Bureau.

Listed below are sites for downloading PPD files of the most common plotter printers.



[Hewlett Packard PPD site](#)

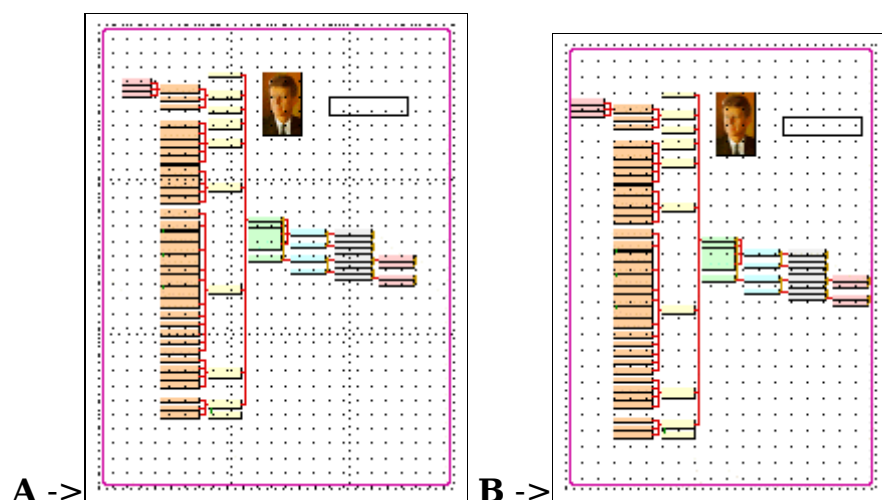
[EnCAD PPD site](#)

[ColorSpan \(LaserMaster\) PPD site](#)



Create a .PDF file using [Adobe's Acrobat \(Portable Document Format\)](#). This format is widely accepted by Service Bureaus as a de facto standard file format (**no font conversion necessary**). A .PDF file **can be edited** by the Service Bureau if necessary. **Editing done by the Service Bureau will usually incur extra charges.**

Multiple page charts to single page charts



Try to design your chart with a specific chart size in mind. Contact the Service Bureau for common chart sizes, then make your chart fit.

Example **A** is a nine page chart (8.5 x 11, portrait layout), overall size is 25" x 33."

Example **B** is a one page chart on 20" x 29" paper. As shown, the chart fits both paper sizes.

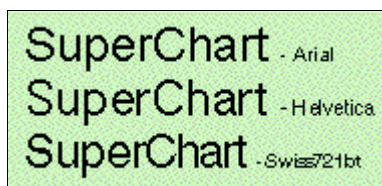
Hint:

It's best if the multiple-page chart size is as close to the final one-page chart size. This will make it easier for the Service Bureau to print the chart without having to make adjustments. **This is where those pesky extra charges usually occur.**

Fonts

If the Service Bureau prints your chart **directly from SuperChart**, it is a good idea to provide a copy of the fonts used in the chart. There may be times when the Service Bureau will not have the exact same font.

Adobe's Helvetica font is **not** the same height and width as TrueType's Arial or T1's Swiss721bt. They look very much the same, but the differences will show when a font is substituted.



Images

Photographs that are pasted into your chart will become part of the saved chart. There is no need to take a copy of your image files to the Service Bureau.

Featured Vendor

We at [Heartland Family Graphics](#) like Reunion and SuperChart as much as you do, and have tailored our services to take advantage of its strengths. Our philosophy is to provide extremely convenient, quality printing services tailored to the needs of professional and amateur genealogists using Reunion (versions 4, 5 and 6) ...all at a reasonable price.

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