

FAQ

Tension and Pillowcase Fabric Graphics



What is a tension fabric graphic?

If you said, "It's a graphic printed on fabric," you would be oh so close. Tension fabric graphics attach to a frame so the fabric is taut edge-to-edge, creating "tension." Typically, the graphic has Velcro hook sewn along the border, usually top and bottom, and attaches to Velcro loop on the frame.

What is a pillowcase fabric graphic?

Think of a printed pillowcase with zippers. A pillowcase graphic wraps around a frame structure and the inner and outer sections zip together along the least obvious edge. This creates a tailored fit. Almost all hanging sign structures are wrapped in pillowcase fabric graphics.



How does a tension fabric graphic differ from a pillowcase fabric graphic?

Tension fabric graphics attach to the frame, leaving the frame exposed. The fabric is held taut by attaching it to the frame using Velcro. Pillowcase graphics slip over the frame and hide the frame structure. The fabric is secured by a zipper(s).

What are the benefits of fabric graphics vs. traditional first surface graphics?

- **Flexibility.** An array of fabric options and finishing exists. Fabric graphics can be adapted to just about any hardware
- **Storage and Shipping.** Fabric is lighter than many other graphics. Fold your graphics neatly when in storage and take up much less space.
- **Care.** Fabric graphics can be washed and steamed and are just as durable and long lasting as traditional graphics.
- **Lightweight.** Larger graphics weigh less, perfect for draping or creating space definition.
- **Cost.** More image bang for the buck!
- **Green.** There are the obvious transportation and storage benefits. Even more exciting is the growing list of fabric options created from recycled materials.
- **No glare.** Fabric is the perfect choice for media walls or any backdrop that is being photographed or filmed.
- **Versatility.** Fabric can be applied to most display and hardware options and is perfect for skinning or covering displays or objects. Custom covers can be created to drape over objects, wrap, or completely pillowcase them!

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Do fabric graphics offer the same color saturation, vibrancy, definition, and overall image quality as other graphics?

Fabric not only matches other graphic options, it often exceeds it! Dye sublimation equipment is more advanced than ever offering near continuous tone (limited by the texture of the material you choose) and exceptional detail created from high dpi outputs and sophisticated image patterns. Color is permanently dyed into the fabric creating a deep saturated image.



How do tension fabric graphics attach or hang on the frame?

Tension graphics will usually have Velcro sewn into the perimeter. The finish used is dependent on the frame system requirements and or customer preference.

How do pillowcase fabric graphics attach or hang on the frame?

We sew a seam along the bottom edge of the frame to attach the inner and outer sides of the pillowcase. The top has zippers to secure the two sides with slots made to accommodate eyebolt or hanging hardware. Depending on the size and shape of the frame, vertical zippers may also be necessary. The seams are sewn to the inside of the pillowcase to create a smooth, fitted finish.



What is the maximum size of a seamless tension graphic?

Are there limitations to the maximum print width?

The maximum size depends on the fabric and printing process. Contact your account representative or project manager for details. Some frames are too large to cover without a seam. In general, the maximum width varies from 118" to 58" depending on the process.

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What is the maximum size of a seamless pillowcase graphic? Are there limitations to the maximum print width?

All pillowcase graphics have seams, usually just at the top and bottom of the structure. However, some frames are too large to cover without a seam. Frames such as a tapered circle need to be pieced because the shape of the print is an arc, making it too large to print in one piece.

How should tension fabric graphics and pillowcase graphics be cared for?

It is recommended that graphics be zipped up, folded, and stored in a bag. You may spot clean by wiping with a damp cloth. If it is necessary to wash the graphic and it is small enough, use a commercial size front-loading washing machine. Wash on the gentle cycle, with cool water. It is VERY important that the graphic be ZIPPED during washing. Dry cleaning is not recommended.

To limit getting the graphic dirty during installation, keep the set-up area clean by using a drop cloth and wash your hands prior to set up. You may want to consider purchasing inexpensive white cotton gloves. Wearing the gloves while handling the graphic will minimize the transfer of dirt and oils to your graphic.

What is the preferred file set up for tension graphics and pillowcase graphics?

Files should be set up with at least 1 inch of bleed on all sides and marked with guides or crop marks to indicate art area versus bleed. The best file formats are Photoshop layered files, InDesign, Illustrator, or Quark documents. Files need to be set up as close to 100 percent as possible with a minimum resolution of 100 dots per inch. For more detailed information, contact your account representative or project manager.

Other things to consider are the live area, the diameter of the frames poles, and borders. If your critical art is too close to the edge of the frame, it may disappear as the graphic bends around the frame. Try to keep critical information 3 to 5 inches from the edge and either make borders wider or do not use borders.



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What is standard turnaround time for a tension fabric graphic?

Typical turnaround time is per customer request. Larger jobs require more production time and should be scheduled accordingly.



What is standard turnaround time for a pillowcase graphic?

We request a minimum of 3-5 production days to accurately produce a pillowcase graphic. The frame has a separate production lead time.



Do you require the framework for tension graphics or pillowcase graphics?

Whenever possible it is best for tension graphics to be fitted to the frame. This way we can assure proper fit. We can produce tension graphics with very detailed frame specifications with sizes and finish clearly communicated if it is not possible to send the frame.

Pillowcase graphics do require a frame for accurate fit. We document finished graphics with photographs to assure the quality of the final product.

