Procedure for obtaining cocking / shimming values

When a flat includes compensation for cocking / shimming, the result is that the ***image*** on the plate will be tilted so that the press operator no longer needs to tilt the ***plate*** - he can just position the plate normally and the image will be aligned to the paper.

To set up cocking / shimming compensation, you will need to determine the distance (inches) that the left or right side of the plate needs to be raised by in order to be aligned. In PRESSflo we don't measure the angle that the plate needs to be tilted by, but rather the amount it needs to be raised by.

PrePage-it test queue

Create a new PrePage-it test queue (or modify an existing one) so that it is configured with CMYK = Yes (since it often happens that only black separation is processed if configured as CMY = Not Blank).

How to figure out the cocking / shimming amount

The procedure to follow is similar to the one for finding web growth compensation values, with a few differences.

1. Create a test file (e.g. InDesign):
    a that is the size of the plate (e.g. 35" x 23")
    b with a rectangle that has a 1" margin all around (e.g. 33" x 21")
    c and centerfold lines (see example Web Growth Test - Registration color.pdf) *or* gridlines (e.g. one inch apart) filling the entire rectangle
    d make everything (rectangle, lines) the color: Registration
2. Create a 1-Up template (the size of the plate, e.g. 35" x 23") with one page (also the size of the plate). Add a slug line containing the plate color e.g. <pub>-<color>.
3. Create a PrePage-it Web job using this template. Job can be configured with Auto-Approve, but it is preferable to avoid Auto-Output.
4. Submit the test file (directly to PrePage-it Web) and output the 4 plates on CTP.
5. Determine which of the 4 cylinders is the "straightest" (best aligned) and note it down as the Reference Cylinder.
6. Test 2 cylinders at a time: the Reference Cylinder and another one. For example, if Magenta is the straightest cylinder: first print Magenta and Cyan, then Magenta and Yellow, then Magenta and Black.

7. For each printout of 2 colors (e.g. Magenta and Cyan):
    a look at the left or right edge of the 2 rectangles
    b measure the distance from a Reference Cylinder gridline (e.g. Magenta) to the other color's corresponding gridline (e.g. Cyan)
    c enter this distance into the **Press Config** for the corresponding cylinder (e.g. Cyan)

Note

PRESSflo tilts the plate image from the bottom left or bottom right of the plate (as indicated by the red line in the Press Config) - it is not tilted/rotated from the center of the plate. However on the test file, whether you measure the shim distance from the line going along the bottom of the rectangle or the line going through the middle of it, the distance will be the same.

8. When all values have been entered, save the **Press Config**.
9. Now remake 4 plates using the PRESS config (select PRESS config, select tower, resubmit pairs and re-output plates) and reprint the sheet. Then check to make sure all 4 colors are now aligned.

Tips

✓ *If you have already gone through the process of setting up web growth/stretch compensation, then you can use same test job / imposition setup / template / test file / PrePage-it queue for both web growth and shimming tests.*

✓ *If some cylinders require cocking, the press operators may already know the amount needed because they may already be doing some mechanical adjustments to compensate for it. For example, if they are placing tape or shims on the cylinders, then it may be sufficient to know (i) which way the plate is tilted (rotated) and (ii) by how much? If this information is available, then it can be used to configure PRESSflo and then tested on the press. If not, then you can follow the procedure outlined below.*

✓ *You cannot see the effects of the shimming by looking at the View-it softproof. You will need to reprint the sheet to make sure the 4 colors are aligned.*

✓ *If it looks like the shimming is not having any effect: try a test by putting an exaggerated value for the Shimming (like 2 inches) - this will make it clear how the image is being rotated.*