

MEXICO VENDOR VISUAL ASSET MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES 2015 MEXICO'S VISUAL STANDARDS GUIDES

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LOWE'S MEXICO ADVERTISING REQUIREMENTS

Photography:

Lowe's Mexico only accepts the highest quality photography and reserves the right to refuse images provided by outside sources.

The examples below illustrate our expectations of product photography. While we do not in any way want to restrict creativity in the photography process, these shots depict our minimum requirements.

Silhouette: (Silo)

This is a silhouetted photograph that is consistent with photography guidelines. It is typically used in preparations that show an array of similar items side by side. Our photography standards enable us to communicate the angle and lighting conditions so that the items, once shot, can be re-used.

Custom Photography:

This is where the photography studio's creativity comes into play. Dramatic product shots are silhouetted images that are shot from interesting perspectives in a way that accentuates the product's key attributes. For example, a power tool should be shot in a way that conveys the message of "power," while a shot of flooring should convey "beauty."

In all cases, if a vendor uses a studio, the studio should bill that vendor directly. All images will be exclusive to Lowe's Mexico with unlimited usage rights.

[Avoid stock photography, especially in large format usage like overhead doors; we do not want the same image being used by a competitor. Buy-outs are acceptable.](#)

Lowe's Mexico prefers digital photography, though conventional photography is acceptable for front cover

images.

Front cover photography (digital or conventional) should be 5" x 7" RGB images at 450 dpi, saved as uncompressed Photoshop TIFF files. This also applies to all live nursery and plant photography.

Other photography should be 4" x 5" RGB images at 450 dpi. Images with a background should be saved as uncompressed Photoshop TIFF files. Images with a clipping path must be saved as Photoshop EPS files.

Scene photography should include products and props that are composed of Lowe's Mexico merchandise.

Please carefully consider the product group being shot and determine if it might make sense to include some lifestyle or room scene photographs that would be relevant for the Mexican market.

CONTENT MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

File Naming Conventions:

File Naming Conventions: Identify images with the Lowe's Mexico six digit item number (SKU). Put a capital "M" at the beginning of the item number and a lowercase "p" at the end. The file extension ".eps" should be included in the file name for clipped and non-clipped pixel-based images. Example: M123456p.eps

Identify vector-based graphics with the Lowe's Mexico six digit item number (SKU). Put a capital "M" at the beginning of the item number and a lowercase "p" at the end. The file extension ".eps" should be included in the file name and Original file name should be appended with "_ai" prior to extension. Example: M123456p_ai.eps

Commas are used to link numbers that have the same amount of characters. For example, if the item numbers 123456, 123467, 123478, 125489 were all in the same shot, the name of the photo would be M123456,67,78,5489p.eps.

All common numbers reading from the left to the right have been dropped. The commas tell the database to link the photo to all our 6 digit item numbers.

Identify images with a clipping path by adding the work "SILO" to the end of the item number. Example: M123456pSILO.eps

Images of products that do not have corresponding Lowe's Mexico item numbers use the product name and/or style instead of an item number. Example: Pandora Special Order Carpet should be named MSOSPandoraCarpetp.eps.

Images of products that only have a vendor model number use the vendor name and product model number in place of the Lowe's Mexico item number. Example: model 123 should be MVENDORAMEMDL_123p.eps.

Logos:

Please provide any applicable brand logos as Adobe Illustrator 8.0 EPS files. Also, please provide any applicable logo usage guidelines and a list of Lowe's Mexico SKUs with which each logo can be used.

Product Specifications:

All copy should be provided to Lowe's Mexico using a specifically formatted copy template for each product.

Acceptable Disks and File Transfer Methods

- CD-ROM; DVD-ROM (Preferred)

Images or copy not following guidelines will not be accepted.

VENDOR RESPONSIBILITIES

Vendors must submit advertising information in accordance with Lowe's Mexico standards.

Vendors must contact Lowe's Mexico Marketing Department when a new product line has been approved by

Lowe's Mexico Merchandising Department or a product changes in some way that will affect photography or copy. (i.e., color change, new feature, warranty information change, etc.).

Vendors must respond to all requests from Lowe's Mexico for samples of product, copy specifications and/or photography. Our ability to advertise products correctly and in a timely manner is dependent on vendor cooperation.

When Lowe's Mexico selects a vendor's item for inclusion in an advertisement, we must have the vendor's response to the request within 48 hours. Vendors are responsible for meeting all due dates set by Lowe's Mexico. Failure to do so will result in having the product deleted from the ad.

Upon request, vendors should send no-charge product samples to the specified photo studio by the due date indicated by Lowe's Mexico Marketing Department. Products sent to a designated Lowe's Mexico photography studios must be tagged with the following information:

- Lowe's Mexico item number
- Vendor name/contact information
- Vendor model number/vendor product name

All merchandise shipped to Lowe's Mexico's designated photo studios will become the property of Lowe's Mexico upon receipt and at no cost to Lowe's Mexico.

COLOR IMAGE SPECIFICATIONS FOR ADVERTISING

Format for clipped and non-clipped pixel-based images:

- Adobe Photoshop EPS format
- TIFF (8 bits/pixel) Preview
- JPEG (Maximum quality) Encoding
- 8-bit/channel RGB
- Adobe 1998 RGB color gamut
- Minimum of 450 dpi
- Minimum of a 4" x 5" aspect ratio
- If image has a shadow, the active clipping path should crop it out so it does not print. A second, saved path that includes the shadow should be included in the image.
- File extension ".eps" should be included in file name

General Image Characteristics:

- No alpha channels or layers
- No guides or rulers
- No bubbles, fingerprints or Newton rings from scans
- No transfer functions
- No signatures or watermarks

General Image Color and Quality:

- Images should be prepared to an "ideal" RGB standard
- Densities of around 250 for shadows
- Densities of around 25-30 for highlights
- Minimum image sharpening
- No (unintentional) color casts
- No evidence of compression artifacts
- No evidence of interpolation ("rezing up")
- No evidence of scanning from printed pages
- No evidence of dust or scratches
- Moiré patterns should be minimized
- Color should be matched to product PMS colors (list to be provided)
- Color should be as rich, vibrant and eye-catching as possible for the shot
- Color should be balanced over-all and not "blown-out" in highlights
- Shadows should be rich and contain detail

- Realistic and life-like flesh-tones
- Realistic life-like grass color
- Realistic reflections
- Realistic and neutral shadows
- Realistic retouching - as seamless and undetectable as possible
- Retouching should be convincing at a minimum of 200% magnification

Clipping Path Information:

- Clipping path name should be "Path 1"
- If image requires alternate clipping paths, name them Path 2, Path 3, etc.
- Additional, "Selection" paths CAN be saved if needed as selection shortcuts for color correction
- Selection paths should be named with "Work_" followed by a unique description so they will list after the clipping paths in the window
- There should be no unsaved "work paths"
- Clipping paths should be drawn and not "quick-mask" or magic wand masks
- Cut about 1 or 2 pixels into the image to prevent anti-aliasing
- Cut around shadows fading into pure white should NOT cut into the image
- Flatness settings should be set to "1" device pixel
- 256 control points or fewer on each path (PostScript level 2 limitations)
- Crop images close to the clipped item so file size and white space will be minimized within the image frame
- Clipping paths should be complete and closed around the image
- When inner openings show background, use compound paths

Built or "Manufactured" Shadows:

- Color should be neutral gray so they can be used on a white background
- Shadows should reside on the black plate if in a CMYK image
- Compositions should look realistic and not compete with, or over-power the product
- Shadows should appear to come from a single, soft light source
- Shadows should be soft and progressively lightened as they move away from the product
- Shadow edges should be progressively blurred as they move away from the product
- Shadow should "anchor" the product to the ground - no floating or hovering products
- Shadows should not appear in front of the product unless it is intentionally back-lit
- Perspective should appear to be the same as the shot
- Shadows should take directional cues from the natural shadows and highlights on the product

COPY SPECIFICATIONS

Vendors should request copy templates on a regular basis because templates are regularly revised

- Copy templates should be filled out completely
- Spelling and grammar should be accurate

LOGO SPECIFICATIONS

Format for Logos and Vector Graphics:

- Adobe Illustrator EPS format
- Illustrator version 8.0 compatibility (no transparency)
- Transparency should be flattened to preserve appearance
- TIFF (8 bit Color) "Transparent" Preview

- Include Document Thumbnails
- CMYK PostScript Level 2
- If the graphic contains colors other than CMYK or PMS colors, convert to CMYK
- If the graphic contains named, PMS colors, DO NOT convert to CMYK
- File extension “.eps” should be included in file name
- Original file name should be appended with “_ai” prior to extension

Pixel-based Logos:

- Should be auto-traced if possible
- Auto- Traced logos should follow Graphics Specs above
- If auto-tracing is not practical, clean up logo as much as possible:
- B/W logos should be saved as Bitmaps or Grayscale at highest resolution possible
- If clipping paths are required, follow clipping path specs in Image section
- Color logos that do not contain photographs should be saved as CMYK
- Color logos that contain photographs should follow RGB image specs

General Logo and Vector Graphic Characteristics:

- Flattened Artwork only - no layers or templates
- No items should be hidden
- All items should be unlocked
- There should be no stray points without color or strokes
- Un - stroked or filled perimeter boxes around logos DO NOT need to be deleted
- All type should be converted to outlines - NO FONTS should be needed to open the file
- Unused paintbrushes and color swatches should be deleted
- All fills and strokes should be set to knock-out - No overprinting
- Output resolution should be set to 1200 dpi
- Split long paths should NOT be checked
- Logos and Vector Graphics should NOT contain placed images - Rasterize the logo if needed
- Any vector graphics or logos that are rasterized should use the following settings:
- Width and Height should fit within an 8.5” x 11” page (or about 6” wide)
- Resolution: 1200 pixels/inch
- Anti-aliased and Constrained Proportions should be checked
- Mode: CMYK color (if vector artwork only)
- Mode: RGB color (if rasterization is due to placed images)

General Logo and Vector Graphic Color and Quality:

- Logos should fit on a letter-sized page (or about 6” wide)
- Logos and graphics should consist of one item per file (not all variations on one page)
- Logos and graphics should be built to be used at 100% whenever possible
- Any colors that cannot be converted to CMYK should be PMS colors
- Gradients do not need to be rebuilt if they do not contain CMYK or B/W colors
- Items should be limited to 256 control points per path (PostScript level 2 limitations)
- Auto-traced logos should be repaired to have compound paths
- Bezier curves and angles should be smooth and clean
- Baselines should be straight and aligned
- All paths that contain fills should be closed
- No additional trapping elements should be present

COLOR PROOFING SPECIFICATIONS

Information that should be attached to every color proof shipment:

All information that applies and is available to the vendor

- Lowe’s Event ID
- Round of proofs (1st, Rev. 1, Rev. 2, Final, etc.)
- Supplier contact info for questions (a business card is acceptable)

- Name, phone extension and Lowe's mail code of recipient at Lowe's (Advertising Production = 3WPM)
- Desired turn - a round time of proofs (in days – not just "ASAP")
- Supplier of files that produced proofs and contact info (if different from proofing vendor)
- Proofing output dpi (600, 1200, 2400, etc.)
- Max density of images – including black ink limit and UCR/GCR
- Curve applied to proofs (linear or name/type of profile for reference)
- Printing type (sheet-fed, web heatset / coldset, etc.)
- Printing paper type (35# SNC 65 Brite, 50# Coated #5, etc.)
- Proofing screen type (halftone, stochastic, etc.)
- Printing lpi and dot shape/size
- Proofing output lpi and dot shape/size (if different from printing lpi)
- Proofing output substrate (commercial gloss, publication matte, etc.)
- Trap settings shown in proof (none, or overlap – in points)
- Compression type used on images (EPS, JPEG, uncompressed TIFF, etc.)
- Acrobat Distiller compression settings used to make PDFs (if applicable)

Information that must be on every color proof:

All information that applies and is available to the vendor

- Date/time of printing
- Scale of page proofs (100% will be assumed unless marked)
- Name and scale of each image on randoms

None of this information should be proprietary to the vendor supplying proofs to Lowe's Mexico . This information gives context to the proofs so Lowe's Mexico can make more informed, faster and more consistent color decisions. Without it, the color reviewer is guessing.

Color Proof DOs:

- DO ship all color proofs in protective packaging
- DO ship page proofs in page order
- DO supply return shipping information if corrections are required
- DO label shipments with "set" info (set 1 of 4, etc.)
- DO ship marked-up proofs back with new proofs during correction cycles
- DO hinge overlays at top edge of proofs if overlays are required
- DO try to keep like products together on multiple-up randoms, if possible
- DO run page proofs at 100% – Tile if necessary

Color Proof DON'Ts:

- DO NOT apply paper clips or staples to color proofs
- DO NOT trim off crop marks on page proofs, unless requested
- DO NOT reference prior jobs (Example: "same settings as Event 125")
- DO NOT individually package proofs (adds weight and slows reviewing time)

STANDARDS BY WHICH COLOR PROOFS WILL BE JUDGED

Suppliers should be aware of these standards every time color is viewed:

- Color proofs should accurately represent the final printed piece as closely as possible
- Color depth should be optimized for the specific print vehicle and paper type
- Color proofs should simulate:
 - printed ink color
 - substrate characteristics, including color, gloss and dot gain
 - printed screening (if possible)
- Color should be as accurate to product colors as possible
- Color should be realistic and life-like (especially skin tones, plants and grass)
- Retouching should be realistic and as undetectable as possible
- Clipping paths should be clean and accurate
- Color should be rich, vibrant and eye-catching (according to design intentions)
- Color should be balanced across the image and not "blown-out" in highlights

Color corrections will be marked if:

Excluding obvious supplier errors or omissions

- Leaving image as-is will adversely alter perception of product or ad's intent
- Cost of adjustments to images does not outweigh potential benefit to the ad
- Quality of image or proof does not meet the above standards