



Not all white papers are printed, and of those that are, not all are printed in color. Test-print your final PDF in black and white to see how the color looks that way. If you use colors that are too close in tone or density, they may look the same in black and white. Where those colors are significant, like in a pie chart, not being able to tell them apart in black and white can be irritating. If you see this happening in your test printout, go back to the graphics and change one or more colors to make them easier to tell apart in black and white.

Don't just take whatever graphics the engineers give you and plunk them into your background. Many engineering-style diagrams are disasters that don't give up their messages without 20 minutes of scrutiny. Can you really expect that much effort from any reader of your background? Expect to edit every graphic the same way you edit text to make it more comprehensible and easier to scan for your target audience. In fact, you may need to use an original image from an engineer as the starting point to create a simpler diagram for your readers.



To fix a drawing that's too dense, try to separate the various messages into two or three separate graphics and use each one at the appropriate place, or not at all. Or see whether you can drop two-thirds of the information packed into one graphic so that what's left makes a useful illustration.

A background isn't the place for any fancy, overproduced graphics. Many engineers distrust anything that looks too "slick." And you don't want to include any "smug shots" of happy business people working together in peace and harmony; these images give your whole paper an aura of fake-ness, which isn't what you want. Instead, you want all the graphics in a background to say, "Here's our product out there working in the real world!"



To find out more about the types of graphics and how to use them, check out Visipedia from the graphic software publisher SmartDraw at www.smartdraw.com/resources/glossary.

Using rich media

Using rich media, like animation, audio, or video, in a background isn't yet a common practice, as I explain in Chapter 3. Rich media will likely become more common in backgrounds over the next few years, but if you can't use it today, don't worry. The last thing you want in your background is anything that looks gimmicky.

Several reasons contribute to the slow uptake of rich media in backgrounds. To start, rich media hasn't yet become an industry standard in B2B marketing, so few white paper sponsors or creators even think of using it. Backgrounds are generally prepared by using the media assets, like graphics and slide decks, that a vendor already has on hand. If a vendor has no rich media suitable for a background, no one will likely create it just for this purpose. Also, rich