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Graphic technology — Prepress digital data exchange — Colour targets for input scanner calibration

Technologie graphique — Échange de données numériques de préimpression — Cibles de couleur pour étalonnage à l'entrée du scanner



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Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

Draft International Standards adopted by the technical committees are circulated to the member bodies for voting. Publication as an International Standard requires approval by at least 75% of the member bodies casting a vote.

International Standard ISO 12641 was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 130, *Graphic technology*.

Annexes A, B, and C of this International Standard are for information only.

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Introduction

The technical requirements of this International Standard are identical to the American National Standards IT8.7/1-1993 and IT8.7/2-1993. These documents resulted from the joint efforts of an international industry group that included participants representing a broad range of prepress vendors, film manufacturers, and users. This group, initially identified as the DDES (Digital Data Exchange Standards) Committee, later became the founders of the ANSI IT8 (Image Technology) accredited standards committee which is responsible for electronic data exchange standards in graphic arts prepress.

Purpose of this International Standard

Colour input scanners do not all analyze colour the same way the human eye does. These devices are designed to optimize the signal generated when typical materials are scanned. Colour reflection and transparency products use various combinations of proprietary dye sets to achieve visual responses that simulate the colour appearance of natural scene elements. The ability to achieve the same colour appearance from different combinations of dyes is referred to as metamerism. Because both photographic dyes and input scanner sensitivities vary from product to product, there is a variability in the input scanner response to metameric colours produced by the various materials. The intent of this International Standard is to define an input test target that will allow any colour input scanner to be calibrated with any film or paper dye set used to create the target. This International Standard is intended to address the colour reflection and transparency products which are generally used for input to the preparatory process for printing and publishing.

The target was designed to be useable for calibration by visual comparison and as a numerical data target for electronic systems and future development. The target design made use of a uniform colour space to optimize the spacing of target patches. The tolerances developed for individual coloured patches meet the values needed for both numerical and visual analysis.

Design of the target

The CIE 1976 ($L^*a^*b^*$) or CIELAB colour space was chosen as the space to be used for the design of the colour calibration target. Uniform spacing in hue angle, lightness and chroma, and tolerancing in terms of differences in these parameters (ΔE_{ab}^*) is believed to provide a reasonable distribution of coloured patches in the most effective manner. Although CIELAB was defined with reference to reflection viewing conditions, tolerancing in terms of vector differences (ΔE_{ab}^*) does provide a reasonable error estimate for transmission materials as well, although the uniformity of the space is dependent upon the conditions of viewing.

The design goal was to define a target that would have, as its main part, as many common coloured patches as was practical, regardless of the dye set used. It was

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determined that the remainder of the target should define the unique colour characteristics of the particular dye set used to create a specific target; the values for each target patch should be established using a common procedure.

To provide a reasonable measure of the colour gamut that is within the capability of modern colour papers and films, all manufacturers of these products were invited to provide colour dye data along with the necessary minimum and maximum density data for each of their image forming colour dye sets. Data were provided by Agfa Company, Eastman Kodak Company, Fuji Photo Film Company, and Konica Corporation. These data were then used to estimate the CIELAB colour gamut that each paper and film dye set could produce. This estimate was achieved by mathematical modeling (by several of the participating companies) using methods which were different but gave very similar results. Annex A provides additional reference material concerning the method used in selecting aim values.

The following documents provide reference information on the computational methods used in gamut determination:

1. N. Ohta, "The Color Gamut Obtainable by the Combination of Subtractive Color Dyes. V. Optimum Absorption Bands as Defined by Nonlinear Optimization Technique," *Journal of Imaging Science*, 30[1], 9-12(1986).
2. M. Inui, "Fast Algorithm for Computing Color Gamuts," *Color Research and Application*, 18[5], 341-348 (1993).

All computations were based upon the use of the CIE 2 degree observer and D_{50} illuminant. All transmission measurements were made using diffuse/normal or normal/diffuse geometry as defined for total transmittance. All reflection measurements were made using $0^\circ/45^\circ$ or $45^\circ/0^\circ$ geometry as defined in ISO 13655. The reference white was assumed to be a perfect diffuser. The use of an absolute reference allows all colours on similar media (reflection or transmission) that have the same colorimetric definition to also look the same when viewed at the same time.

The gamut plots developed were then used to determine the colour gamuts for film and paper that were common to all of the provided dye families. The limiting values of chroma were then reduced to 80% of their computed values to create a "common gamut" for purposes of target design.

The goal was to have all coloured patches defined in the same way (regardless of the product used) and to have as many patches as practical. The defined colour gamut therefore required a pattern with a consistent reference. An existing colour input target provided by Eastman Kodak Company under the designation of "Kodak Colour Reproduction Guides, Q-60™" was used as a guide in the development of the target. The Q-60™ target used 12 approximately uniformly spaced hue angles in CIELAB. These were sampled at three chroma values at each of three lightness levels. Although this pattern does not provide equal spacing in terms of ΔE_{ab}^* , it does provide an easily understandable and defined patch arrangement. It was adopted for these targets with the addition of a fourth product-specific chroma value at each hue angle/lightness combination.

Lightness levels were chosen for each hue angle to best characterize the gamut at that hue angle. The three common chroma values were then chosen such that one fell on the computed 80% chroma limit common to all the products and the others were equally spaced in chroma between this value and the neutral. The fourth chroma, which is product-specific, was defined to be the maximum available from each product at the specific hue angle and lightness level. This provided a consistent mapping for all products.

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It was also felt to be important to include scales in each of the individual dyes, dye pairs, and a dye neutral along with areas to define product minimum and maximum densities.

A "vendor-optional" area was provided so that different target manufacturers could add unique patches of their own determination beyond those which are required by this International Standard.

Manufacturing tolerances

In order to permit practical production of these targets, tolerances had to be set which were capable of being achieved over a significant number of targets. However, this conflicted with the relatively narrow tolerances required for numerical colour calibration. Different tolerances were therefore defined for differing applications, with the objective of minimizing variations as far as was reasonable.