

Canon Colorado

FLXfinish+ File Setup Guide

Photoshop & Illustrator

What Is FLXfinish+?

Canon FLXfinish+ is a selective matte-and-gloss technology built into the Canon Colorado series. It works by applying different UV curing settings during the print process — not by adding a coating or varnish on top. Areas designated for gloss are printed and cured differently from matte areas, producing a premium visual contrast, all in a single pass.

Which areas print gloss and which stay matte is determined entirely by a spot color channel in your artwork file. The ONYX RIP reads that spot channel and drives the printer to apply the correct curing method to each zone automatically.

HOW IT WORKS	
	Your file contains a spot color channel named exactly "Spot2" (no space).
	In the spot channel: black (100%) = gloss. White (0%) = matte.
	VisuFlare's ONYX RIP maps the Spot2 channel to the Canon's Gloss output channel.
	The gloss effect is achieved through UV curing — not a varnish or laminate.

Before You Begin

File Requirements

Printer	Canon Colorado series (FLXfinish+ capable model)
Color mode	CMYK is recommended — RGB files can work but colors may shift.
Resolution	100–150 PPI at final output size. This is the minimum higher is better.
Bleed	Minimum 0.125" (3 mm) on all sides – Add what you need.
Spot channel name	"Spot2" — exact spelling, no space, case-sensitive

Black in channel	= Gloss
White in channel	= Matte (no effect)
Export format	TIFF with spot colors enabled, or PSD if placing into Illustrator

CRITICAL: Spot Channel Naming

The spot channel must be named exactly: Spot2

Variations such as "Spot 1" (with a space), "spot1", or "SPOT1" will NOT be recognized by the ONYX RIP.

Name it correctly or the gloss effect will not print.

Setting Up in Adobe Photoshop

Complete your CMYK artwork first, then add the Spot2 channel as the final step before saving.

Step 1 — Confirm CMYK Mode

Go to Image > Mode and confirm the document is set to CMYK Color. If it shows RGB, convert now (Image > Mode > CMYK Color). Verify new colors and make edits if needed. Then flatten the image making sure any effects added haven't been lost or changed.

Step 2 — Open the Channels Panel

Go to Window > Channels. You will see C, M, Y, K channels listed plus a composite CMYK channel at the top.

Step 3 — Create the Spot2 Channel

Step 1	Click the Channels panel menu (three-line icon, top-right) and select New Spot Channel.
Step 2	In the New Spot Channel dialog, type the channel name exactly: Spot2
Step 3	In the Color Picker, Set the display color to something visible — magenta or cyan works well. This color is for screen reference only and does not affect the printed output. Click OK to close the Color Picker.
Step 4	Back in the New Spot Channel dialog, set Solidity to 10%. This gives you a faint screen preview of where the channel is painted. Click OK.
Step 5	Verify the channel appears in the Channels panel named exactly "Spot2".

Step 4 — Paint Your Gloss Areas

Select the Spot2 channel in the Channels panel. Use **black (100% opacity)** to paint areas that will print gloss. Use **white (0% opacity)** for areas that should stay matte.

You can use any Photoshop painting or selection tool on the spot channel: the Brush, Pen tool selections, Magic Wand, Select Subject, or filled selections. Working in pure black gives the cleanest gloss output.

TIP — Common Approaches

Product photos: Use Select > Subject to isolate the subject, then fill the selection with black on the Spot2 channel.

Logos / text: Ctrl/Cmd-click the layer thumbnail to load it as a selection, then fill with black.

Full-bleed gloss: Select gloss mode on the non-specialty product.

Spot gloss highlight: Leave most of the channel white; paint black only on the elements to highlight.

Step 5 — Save Your File

Do NOT flatten the file. Save using one of these formats depending on your next step:

- Going directly to ONYX: Save as TIFF (File > Save As > TIFF). In the TIFF Options dialog, ensure "Save Spot Colors" is checked.
- Placing into Illustrator: Save as PSD (File > Save As > Photoshop). All channel data will be carried over when the PSD is placed in Illustrator.

IMPORTANT

Never flatten or merge layers before saving — this destroys the spot channel data.

Do not export as PDF from Photoshop for this workflow. Use TIFF or PSD.

Setting Up in Adobe Illustrator

For the Canon Colorado FLXfinish+ workflow, the recommended approach is to build your spot channel in Photoshop, save as PSD, and place that file into your Illustrator document. Illustrator is used for vector elements and layout — the spot gloss data lives in the placed Photoshop file.

Option A: Place a Photoshop PSD (Recommended)

Step 1	Build and save your FLXfinish+ PSD in Photoshop following the steps above. Make sure the Spot2 channel is present.
Step 2	In Illustrator, go to File > Place. Select your PSD file. Leave "Link" unchecked so the spot channel data is embedded.
Step 3	Add your vector artwork, text, and other elements in Illustrator as normal. The gloss effect will be wherever it was painted in the Photoshop file.
Step 4	Save the Illustrator file as PDF/X-4 if you need to submit a PDF, or export the placed PSD separately for ONYX. Confirm with VisuFlare if unsure which format to submit.

Option B: Spot Color Swatch in Illustrator

If your artwork is entirely vector (no raster image component), you can create a spot color swatch in Illustrator directly:

Step 1	Open the Swatches panel (Window > Swatches) and click New Swatch.
Step 2	Configure the swatch: - Swatch Name: Spot2 - Color Type: "Spot Color" - Color values: C:0 M:100 Y:0 K:0 (magenta — a visual reference only) Click OK.
Step 3	Apply the Spot2 swatch to the objects that should receive the gloss finish. Place gloss shapes on a dedicated layer named "Spot2" above your artwork.
Step 4	Select all Spot2 objects, open the Attributes panel (Window > Attributes), and enable Overprint Fill. Verify with View > Overprint Preview.
Step 5	Export as PDF/X-4 with Color Conversion set to No Conversion. Confirm Spot2 appears in the Ink Manager and is not converted to process.

NOTE

When using the Illustrator swatch approach, the mapping of Spot2 to the Gloss channel is handled by VisuFlare's ONYX RIP — the spot color value you set in Illustrator is only for screen display.

If in doubt, use Option A (placed PSD) — it is the workflow Canon's documentation supports directly.

Quick Reference Checklist — Colorado

	PHOTOSHOP
☐	Document is CMYK
☐	Spot channel created and named exactly "Spot2" (no space)
☐	Gloss areas painted black (100%) on the Spot2 channel
☐	Solidity set to 10%
☐	Saved as TIFF (spot colors enabled) or PSD — not flattened
	ILLUSTRATOR (Option A — Placed PSD)
☐	PSD built in Photoshop with Spot2 channel present
☐	PSD placed into Illustrator as embedded (not linked)
	ILLUSTRATOR (Option B — Vector Swatch)
☐	Spot color swatch created and named exactly "Spot2", type = Spot Color
☐	Spot2 objects on dedicated layer; Overprint Fill enabled
☐	Exported as PDF/X-4; Spot2 not converted to process in Ink Manager