SETTING UP MULITPAGE PDF

FOR VARIABLE PRINT ENVELOPES

multipage PDFs can be a scary preposition the first time you dip your toe in the waters, but having a solid foundation with a well laid out spreadsheet makes the process quick and easy.

THINGS YOU WILL NEED:

● **PDF ENVELOPE TEMPLATE** - Make sure you download the PDF template of your chosen envelope to ensure your design and addressing are placed in the correct area.

● **DATA SOURCE FILE** - The data source file contains the information separated by columns for a quick visual of all the necessary information in your final document. This can be set up however you like. For the purposes of this blog I have chosen the set mine up with the following columns.

PREFIX | FIRST NAME | LAST NAME | STREET 1 | STREET 2 | CITY | STATE/PROV | ZIP | COUNTRY.

A data source file can be a comma-delimited file (.csv) or a tab-delimited (.txt) file in which each piece of data is separated by a comma or a tab, respectively. Each of these can start out as a simple Excel spreadsheet and saved into either format.

● **TARGET DOCUMENT** - The target document is an InDesign document that contains the data-field placeholders, plus all the common design work or return addresses that remain the same in each iteration of the merged document.
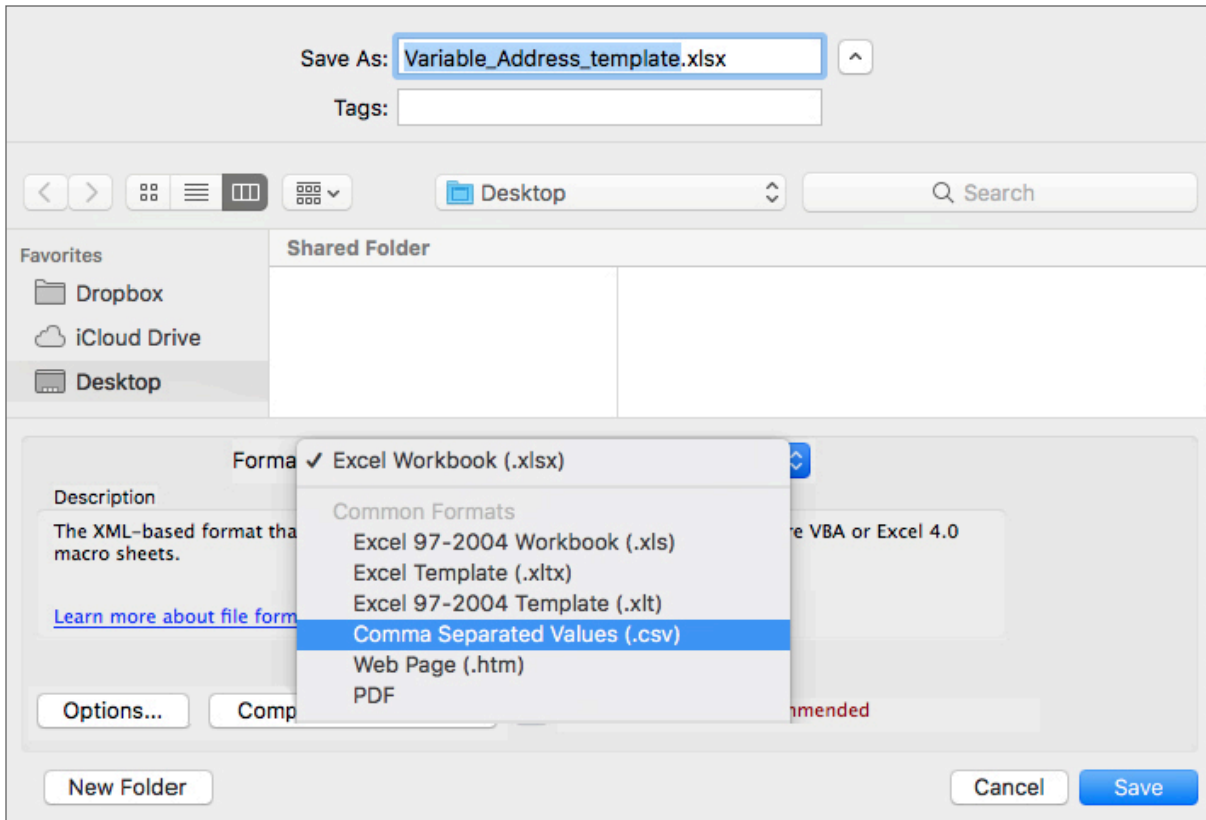
STEP 1.

Set up your data source file using Microsoft Excel

MICROSOFT EXCEL DOCUMENT SETUP

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
PREFIX	FIRST	LAST	STREET 1	STREET 2	CITY	STATE/PROV	ZIP	COUNTRY
Mrs.	Jane	Doe	1234 Main Drive	Apt 1	Anywhere	Minnesota	56003	
Mr. + Mrs.	Jonathan	Que-Public	323 Main Street		Anytown	Texas	76633	
Ms.	Joanna	Common	567 Avenue Road	Unit 604	Anywhere	Idaho	83440	
Mr. + Mrs.		Everyman	987 Street Trail		Anyville	Indiana	47041	
Dr.	Janice	Longlastname	10023 Cirle Drive		Anytown	British Columb	V3M 6A1	Canada

STEP 2.
"Save As" a .csv or .txt file (I prefer using .csv files)

Save As: Variable_Address_template.xlsx

Tags:

Desktop

Search

Favorites

Dropbox

iCloud Drive

Desktop

Shared Folder

Forma ✓ Excel Workbook (.xlsx)

Description

The XML–based format tha
macro sheets.

Common Formats

Excel 97-2004 Workbook (.xls)

Excel Template (.xltx)

Excel 97-2004 Template (.xlt)

Comma Separated Values (.csv)

Web Page (.htm)

PDF

Learn more about file form

Options...   Comp   mended

New Folder   Cancel   Save

STEP 3.
Create a new InDesign document to the size of your chosen envelope's "Art Size". In this case I am creating a multi-page PDF for the (A7) Euro Envelope, White, Digital Variable Print (7.5 X 10.0625)

InDesign CC   File   Edit   Layout   Type   Object   Table   View   Window   Help

New Document

Recent   Saved   Print   Web   Mobile

SAVED BLANK DOCUMENT PRESETS (2)   PRESET DETAILS

VariableEnvAddressing

[Default]   (A7) EuroOpen
8.5 x 11 in   7.5 x 10.0625 in

Width   Units
7.5 in   Inches

Height   Orientation
10.0625 in

Pages   Facing Pages
1

Start #   Primary Text Frame
1

Columns   Column Gutter
1   0.1667 in

▾ Margins
Top   Bottom
0 in   0 in

Left   Right
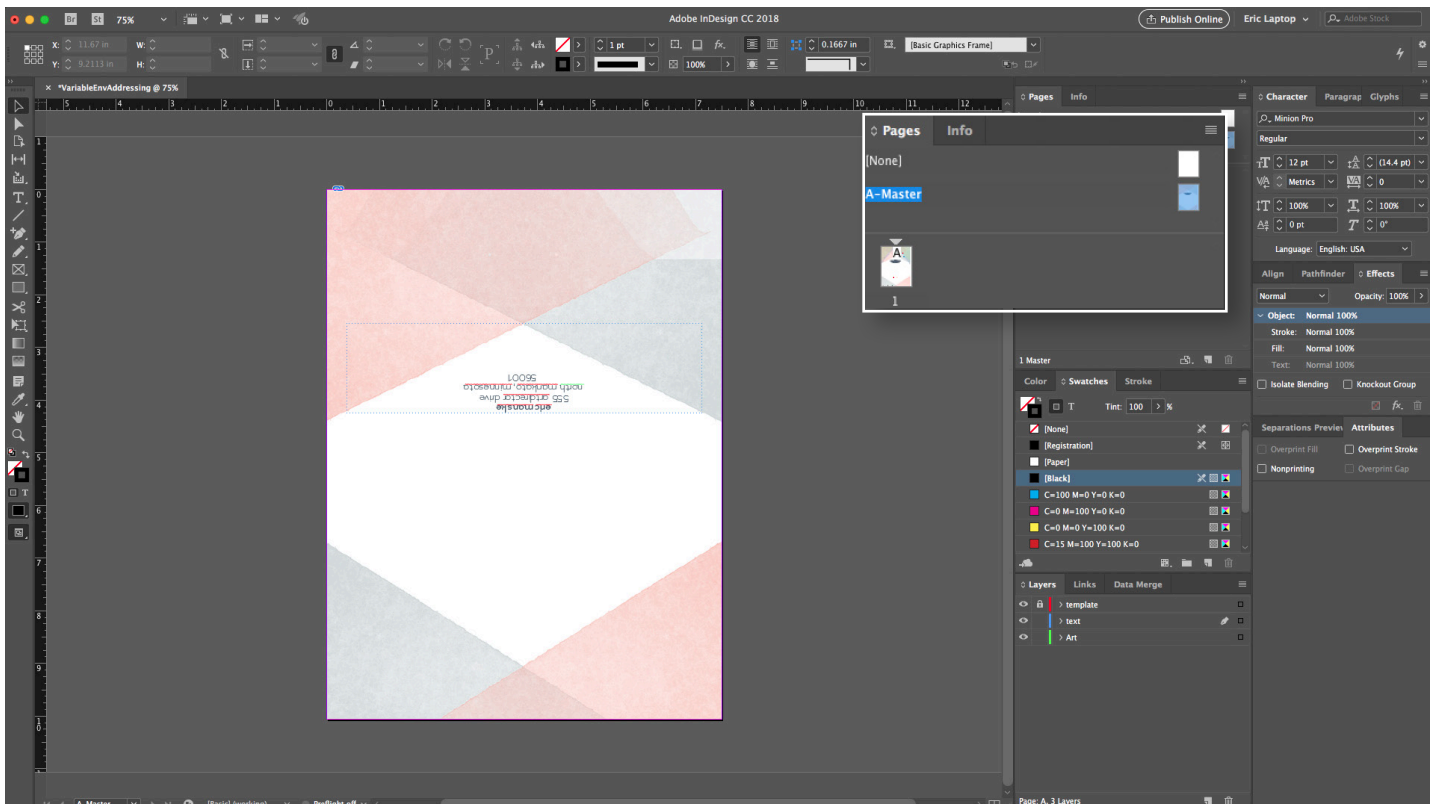0 in   0 in

Close   Create

STEP 4.

Import your the PDF template of your chosen envelope (File>Place) (CMD + D) on a separate layer.
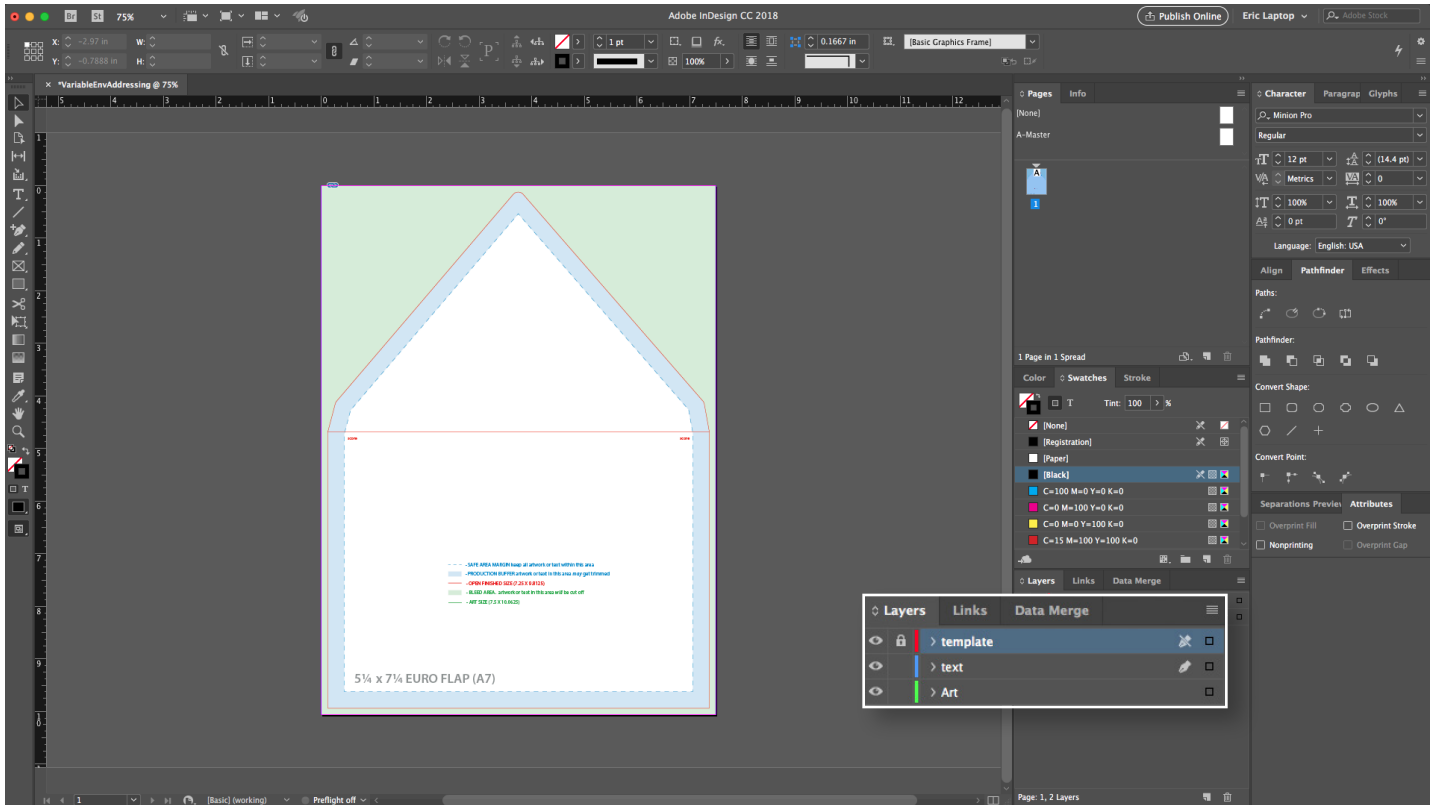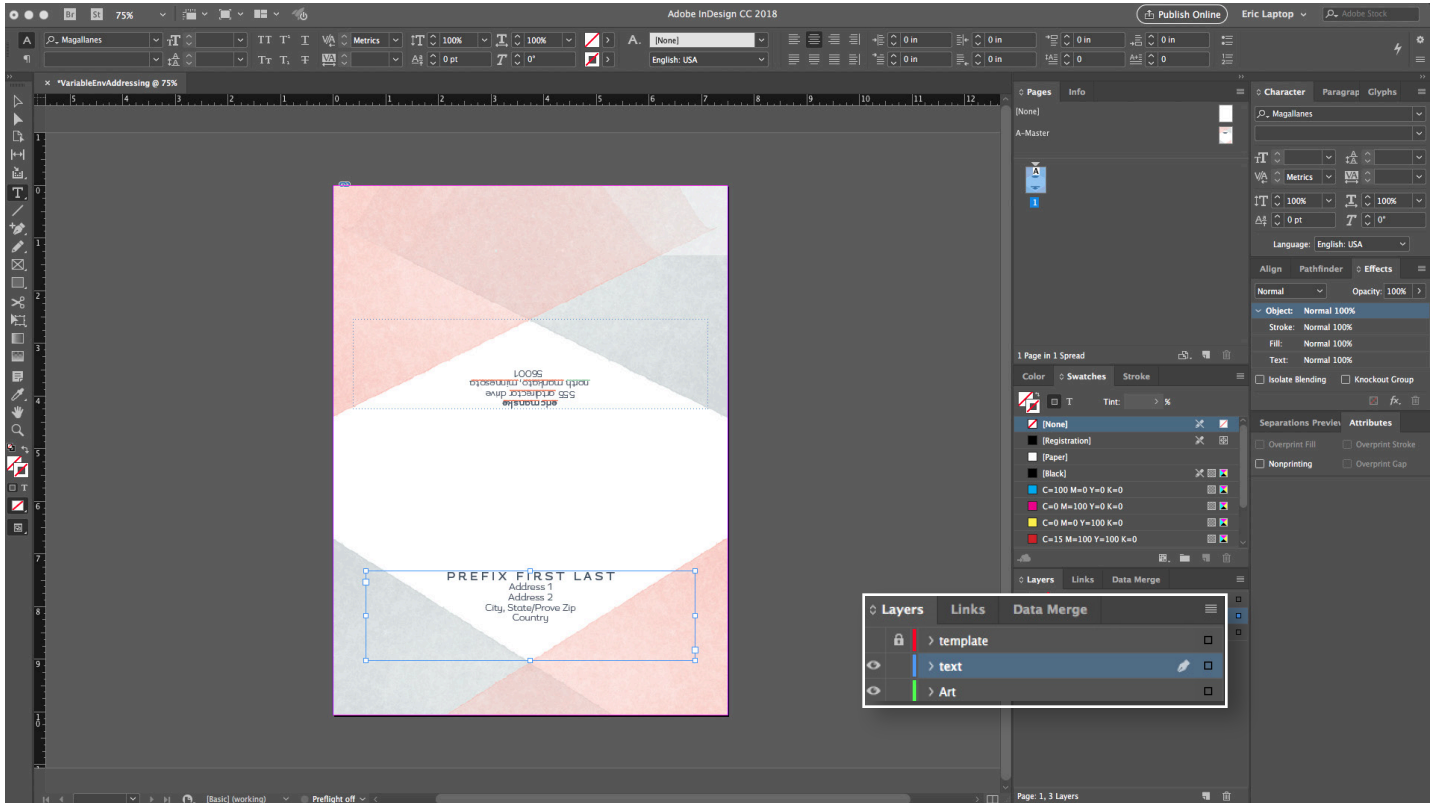

STEP 5.

Select your Master Page and set the art and/or text that will remain static throughout all pages of your final PDF.
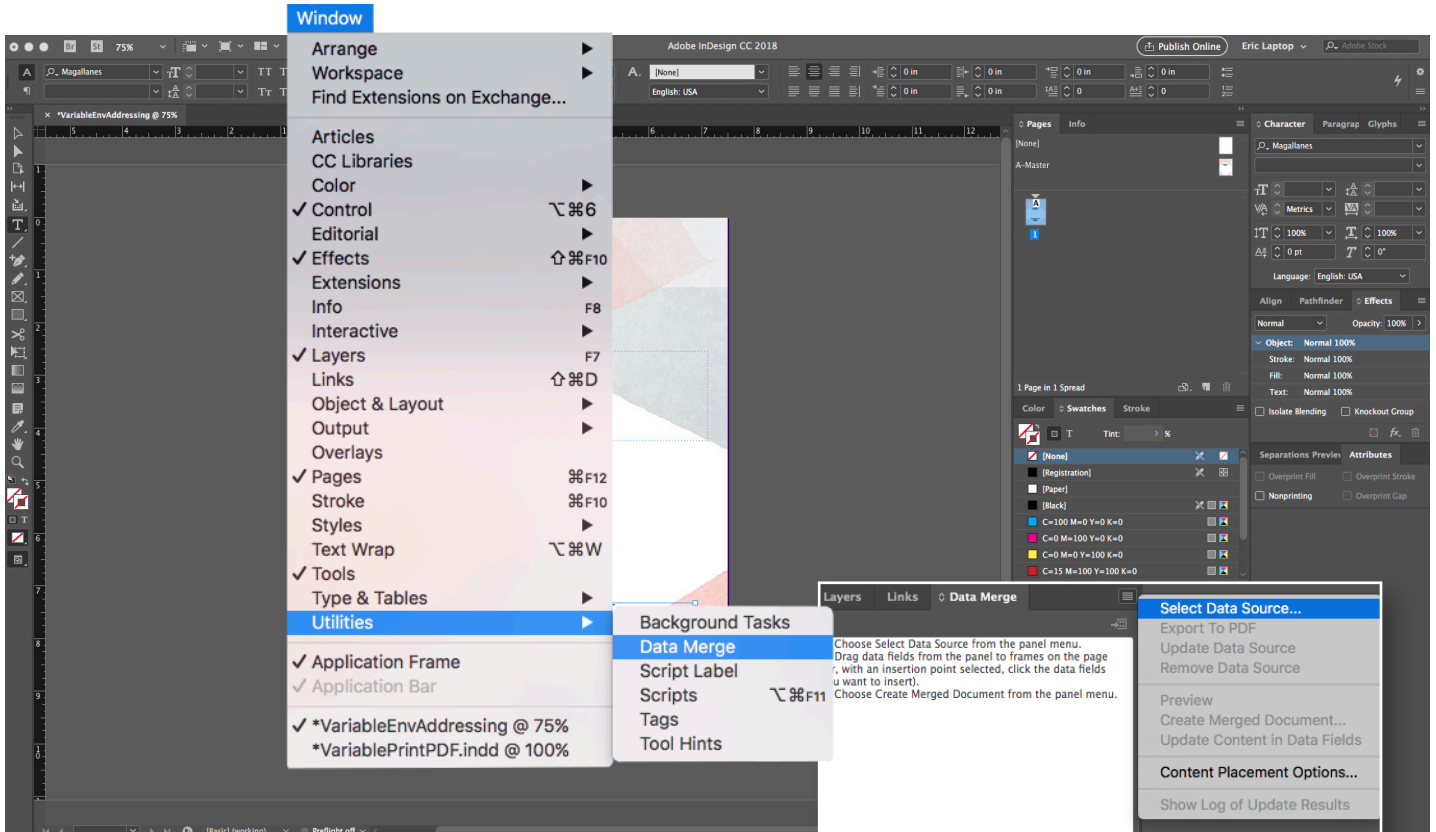
STEP 6.

Turn off your "template" layer and set your recipient text to reflect how you would like all subsequent pages to look using the headers you used when setting up your data source file.
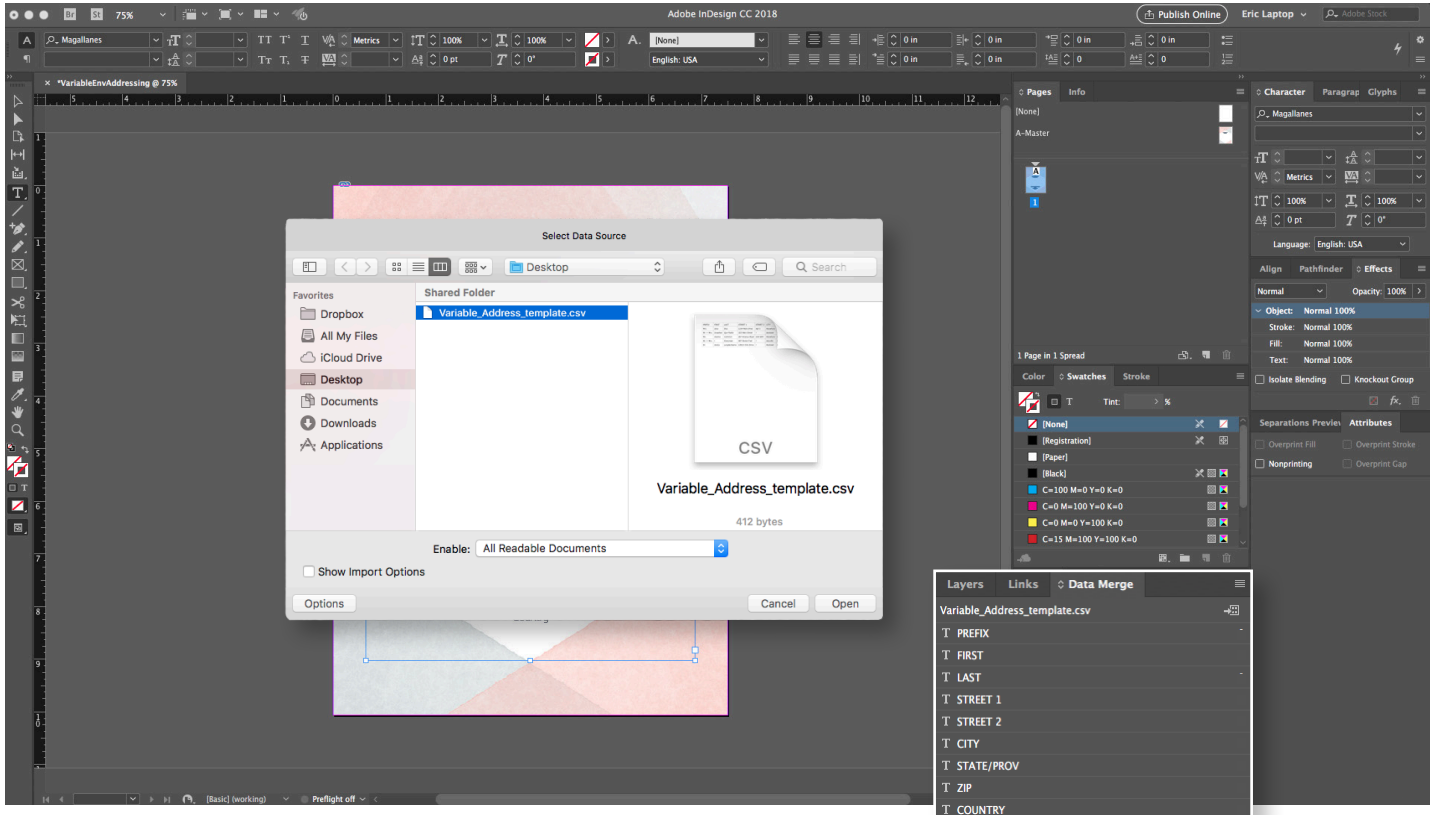

STEP 7.

Open the Data Merge window (Window>Utilities>Data Merge), then choose the Select Data Source... menu option.

STEP 8.

Once you choose your data source you will notice that all your column names from your .csv file populate the "Data Merge" window.
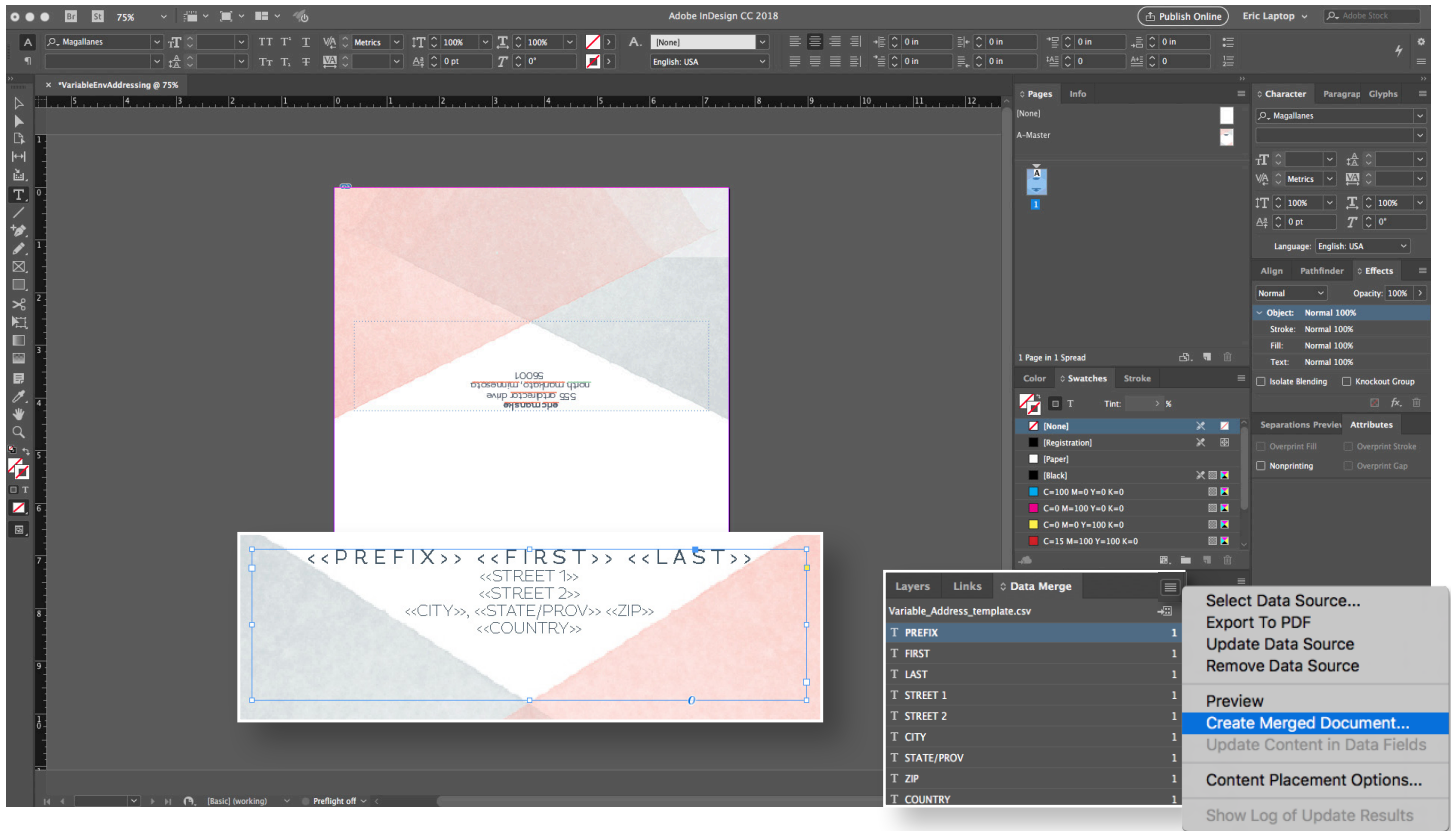

STEP 9.

Simply highlight the text and click the corresponding variable in the Data Merge window. You will see arrows << and >> appear once the variable has been set.
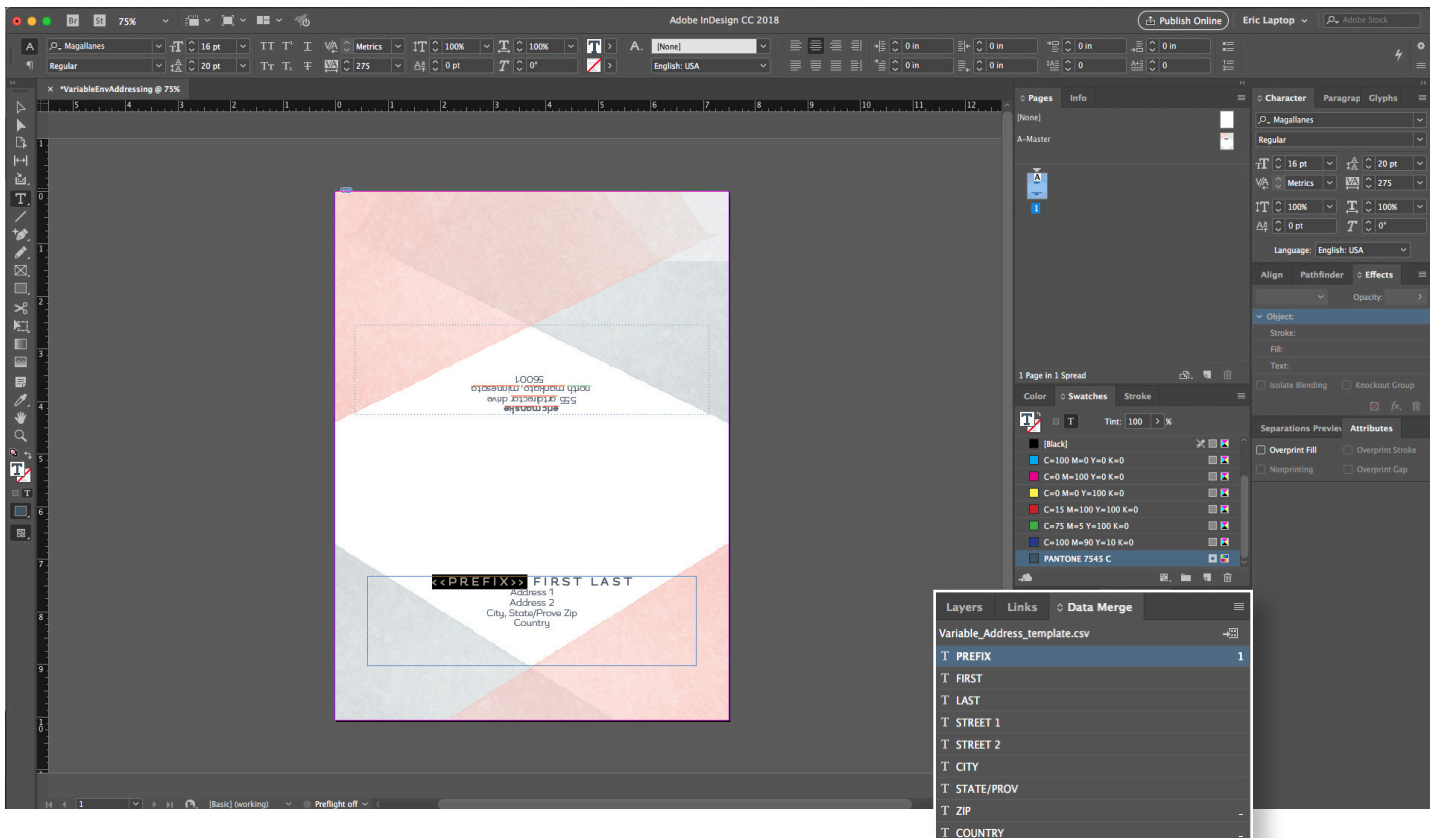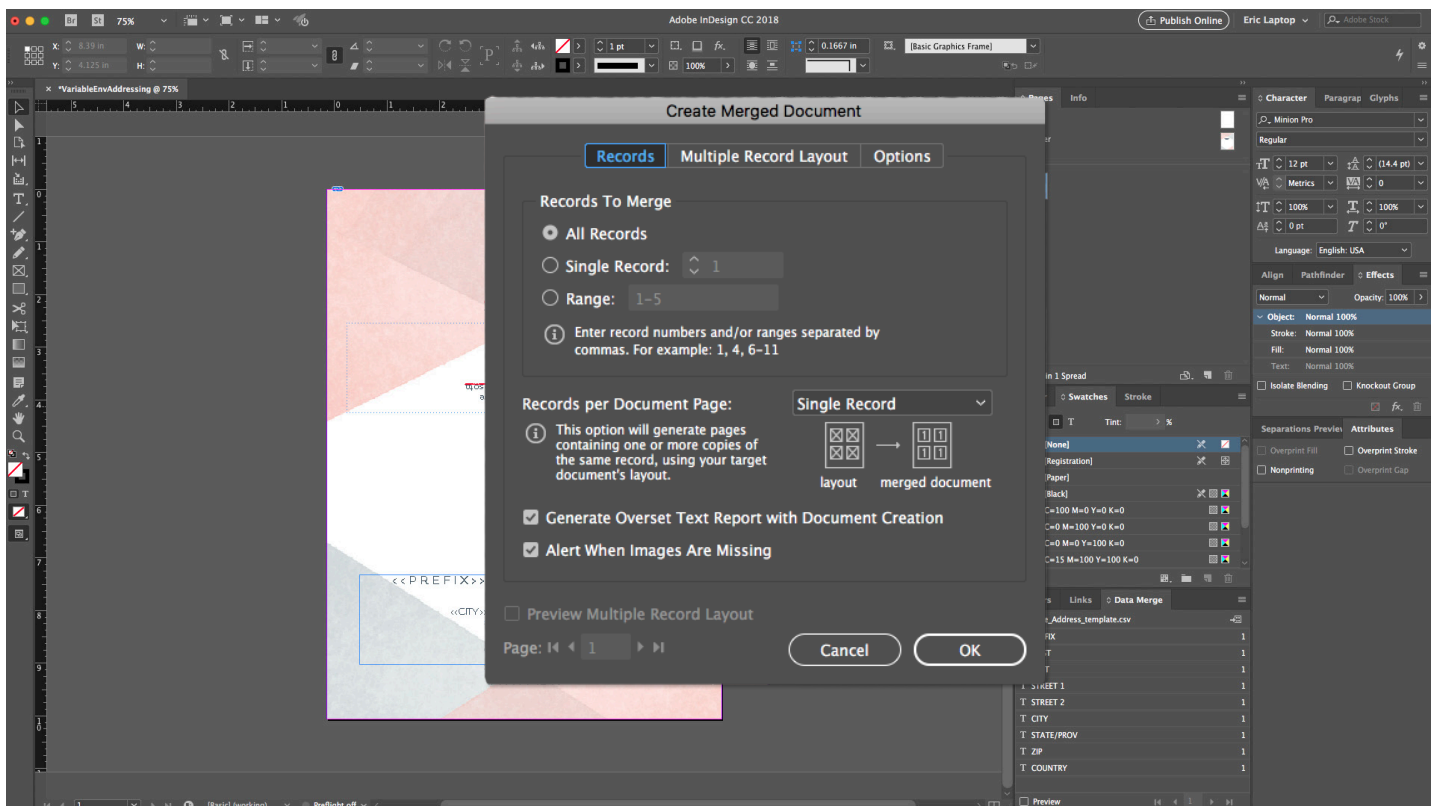
STEP 10.

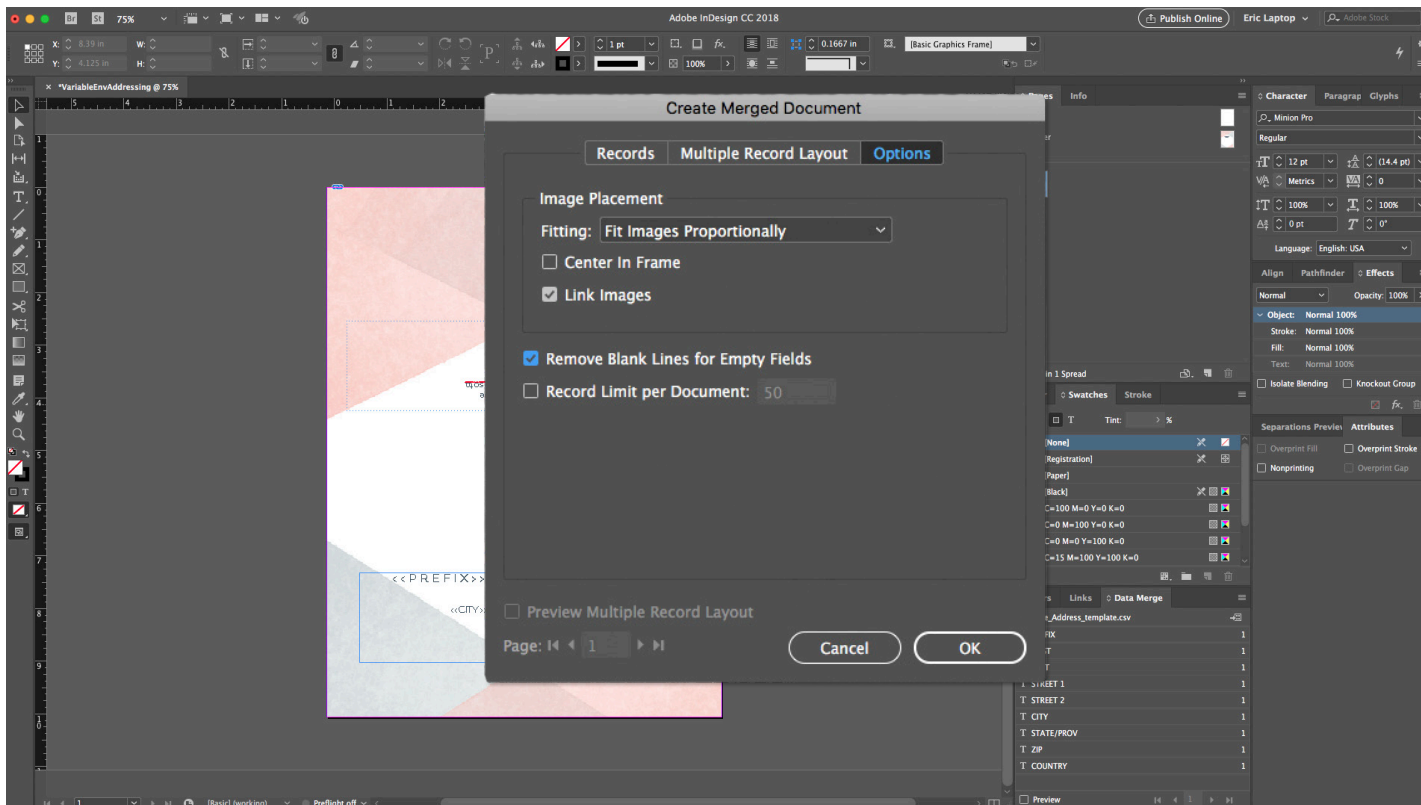**Once all your variables are set, choose the "Create Merged Document…" menu option fro the Data Merge Window.**

STEP 11.

use the default settings in the pop up window to create a new document.
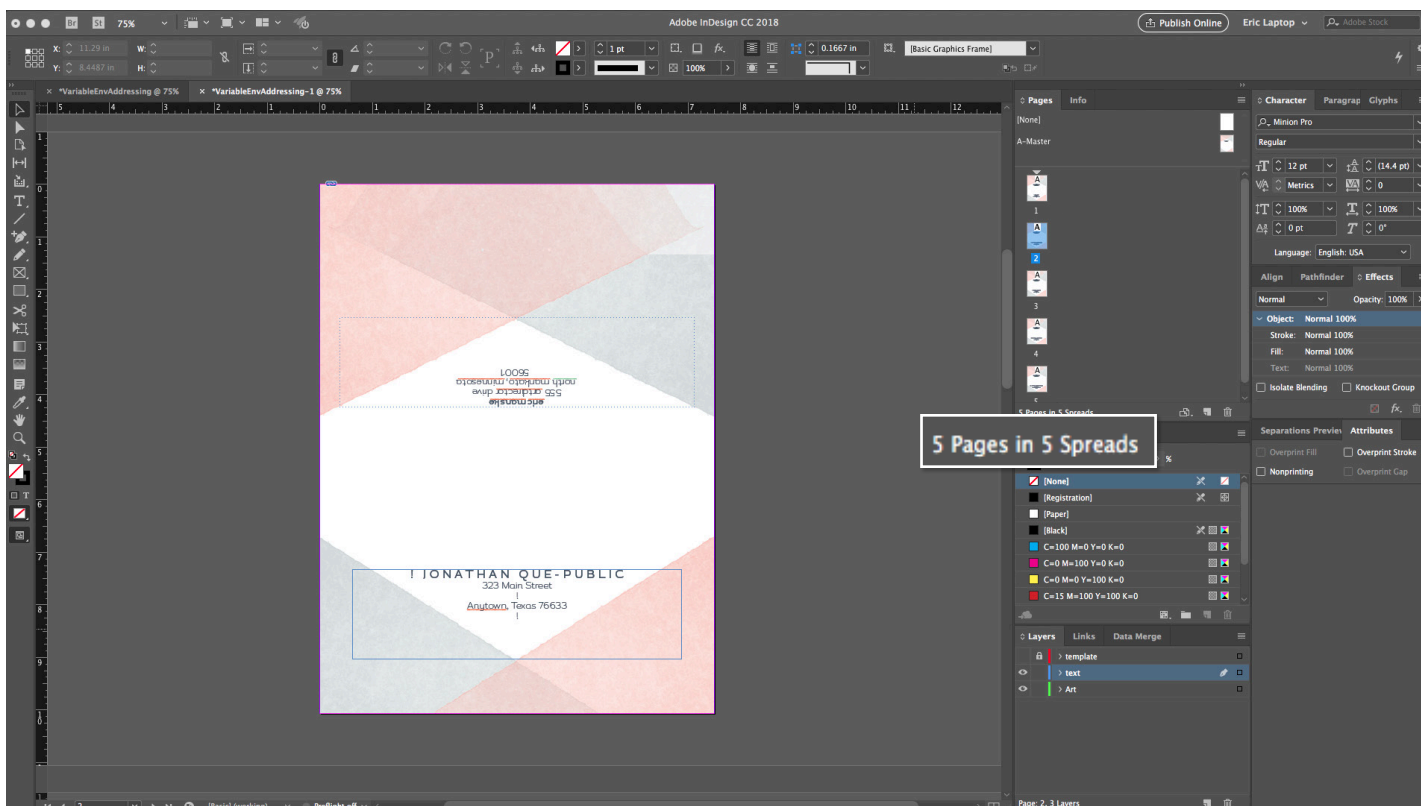
STEP 12.

Under the Options tab, make sure the "Remove Blank Line for Empty Fields" is checked to remove extra lines

STEP 13.

After you click OK a new window open with all your envelopes as separate pages. Verify that the number of pages matches the number of guests you are addressing.

STEP 14.

And just like that, your multi-page PDF is ready for upload.

A FEW THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND:

• **INCLUDE UNADDRESSED ENVELOPES** - keeping static elements of design and return address, include 10-20 unaddressed envelopes in case you forget someone or made a mistake with an address. The good news is, you can always use the extras whenever you want if you did everything perfectly!

• **CHECK YOUR QUANTITY** - When it comes time to upload your PDF you will need to ensure that the PDF contains the exact same number of pages as the number you are ordering. If you have 102 variable envelopes you will need to add a minimum of 7 blank or unaddressed pages so the quantities match. Our system will not simply add blank pages for you.

• **BE AWARE OF THIN LINES** - It is best to print out a test or two to ensure your addresses are legible and large enough to be read by the post offices machinery.

• **EXERCISE DUE DILIGENCE** - Before uploading and ordering all your beautifully designed envelopes, take a mock-up to your local post office to ensure their machinery can read the address and that it contains the necessary room needed on the bottom so they (or sometime you) don't have to hand cancel each envelope.

• **AVOID HEAVY DARK COVERAGE** - I like to follow the "less is more" rule of thumb when creating envelope designs. The design I chose for this post was one of several created by one of our talented in-house designers here at TOG.ink. The reason I used this design was 2-fold. One, it is a great example of a contemporary, on trend look. And two, although it is a full bleed design and covers a lot of real estate, the colors are light enough for the post office to print their bar codes on and they only contain a maximum of 20-30% total ink coverage.

Following these steps and guidelines should ensure your variable print multi-page PDFs come out looking spectacular every time. Happy designing! I look forward to seeing all your creativity come to life with our help here at TOG.ink.