

# CREATING CUT PATHS FOR RASTER IMAGES IN CORELDRAW®

## GETTING STARTED

This document will teach you how to create a cut path and an offset cut path around a raster image using CorelDRAW®. Once your cut path is created, it can be imported into Wasatch SoftRIP® and used with the Cutting Options feature to create custom pieces.

### STEP 1

Open a new blank document in CorelDRAW® (File > New or CTRL+N).

### STEP 2

Import your raster image, as shown in Illustration 1 (File > Import or CTRL+I).

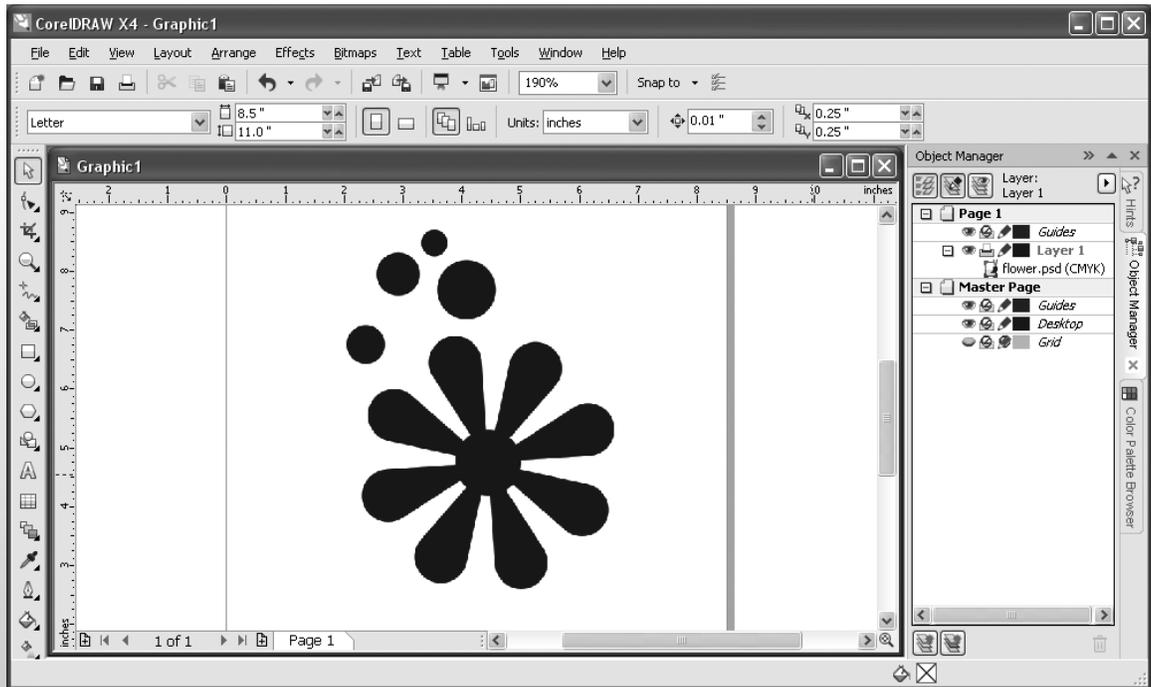
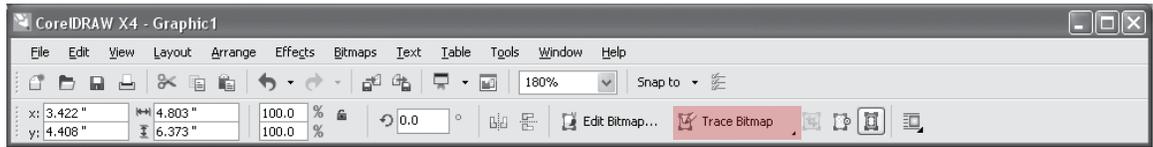


Illustration 1

### STEP 3

Select your image. In the properties bar that runs along the top of the document, click on the Trace Bitmap button (Illustration 2).

Illustration 2



### STEP 4

Select Outline Trace and choose the tracing method that best suits your needs. For our illustration, we've selected the Line Art tracing option.

### STEP 5

In the PowerTRACE™ window that opens, there are a number of options to choose from (Illustration 3). The tracing options you selected in Step 4 will open default Trace Controls and Options menus. If the defaults don't work for your image, simply adjust them until you achieve a desired result.

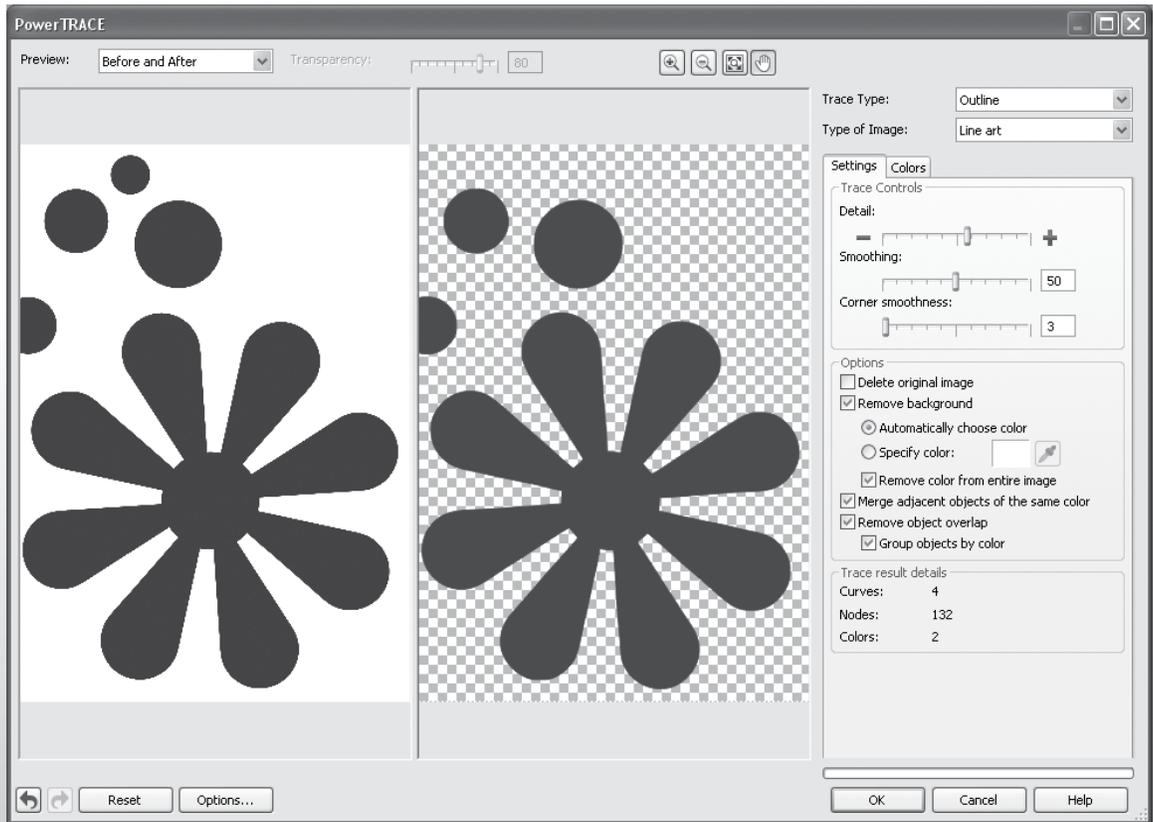


Illustration 3

**STEP 6**

Under Trace controls, we've set our Detail to just above the halfway point on the slider, our Smoothing to 50, and our Corner smoothness to 3 (Illustration 3).

**Note:** Detail lets you control the amount of original detail that is preserved in the traced result. Higher values maintain more detail and result in a greater number of objects and colors; lower values discard some detail and result in fewer objects.

**Note:** Smoothing lets you smooth curved lines and control the number of nodes in the traced result. Higher values result in fewer nodes and produce curves that do not closely follow the lines in the source bitmap. Lower values result in more nodes and produce more accurate trace results.

**Note:** Corner smoothness works in conjunction with the Smoothing slider and lets you control the appearance of corners. Lower values maintain the appearance of corners; higher values smooth corners.

**STEP 7**

Under Options, we've chosen to remove the background and color from the entire image. We've also merged adjacent objects of the same color, removed object overlap, and grouped objects by color (Illustration 3).

**Note:** By default, the source bitmap is preserved after being traced, and objects in the traced result are automatically grouped. You can have the source bitmap automatically deleted after the trace is complete if you select Delete original image.

**Note:** You can choose to remove or preserve the background in the traced result. With the Outline Trace method, you can also specify the background color to be removed. If the background color around the edges is removed but some background color still shows through some areas of the image, you can remove the background from the entire image.

**Note:** By default, object areas that are hidden from view by overlapping objects are removed from the traced result. You can choose to keep the underlying object areas. This feature is useful for traced results that will be output to vinyl cutters and screen printers.

**Note:** To reduce the number of objects in the traced result, you can combine adjacent objects of the same color. You can also group objects of the same color so that you can manipulate them more easily in CorelDRAW®.

**STEP 8**

Once you have your Trace Controls and Options where you want them, click OK.

**Note:** Since we did not elect to delete the original image in our Options menu, the traced image is placed on top of the original image.

**STEP 9**

Select the traced image. Click the Fill button on your toolbar and select None. Click the Outline button on your toolbar and select Hairline (Illustration 4).

**Note:** The traced image (that is now the path) and the original image should be vertically and horizontally aligned. However, if needed, you can move the path or make adjustments to it.

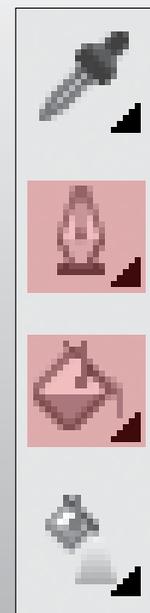


Illustration 4

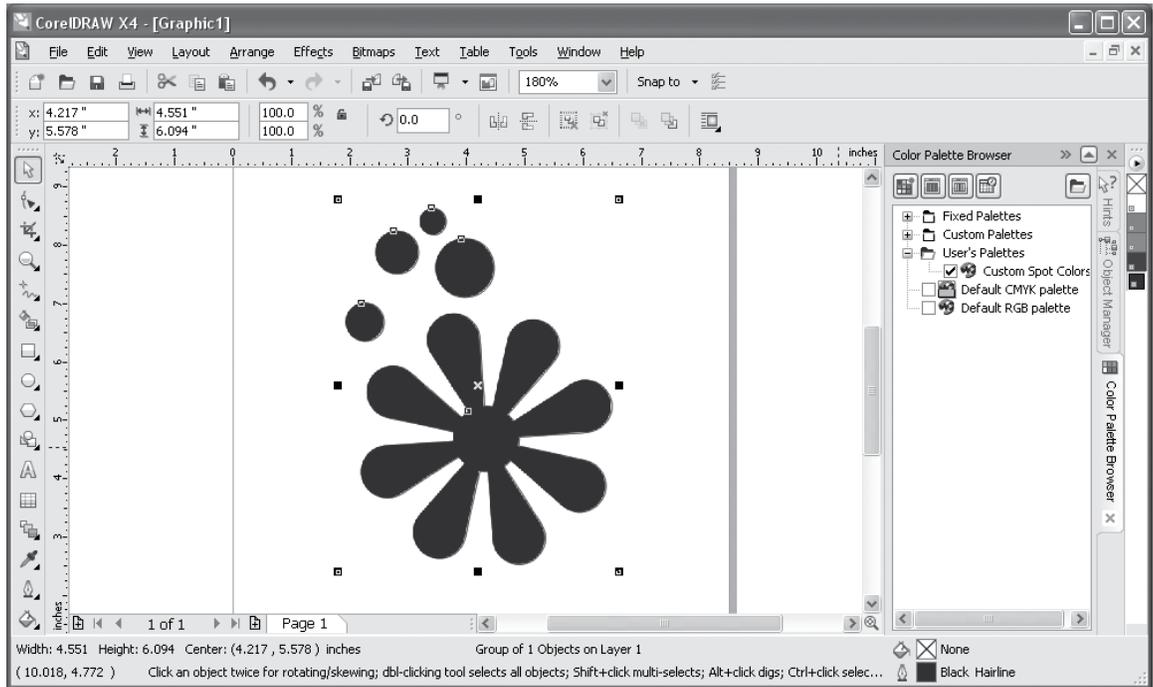


Illustration 5

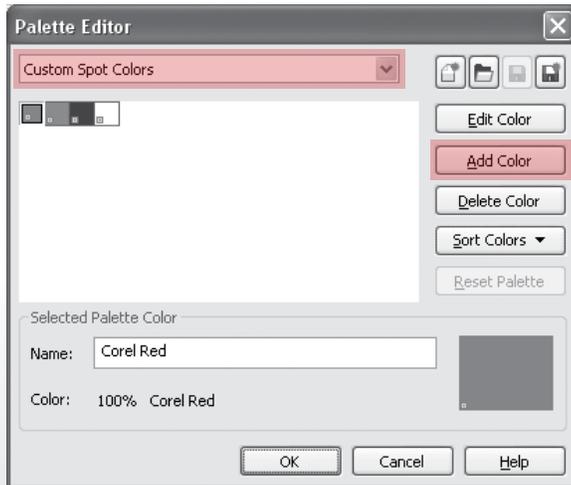


Illustration 6

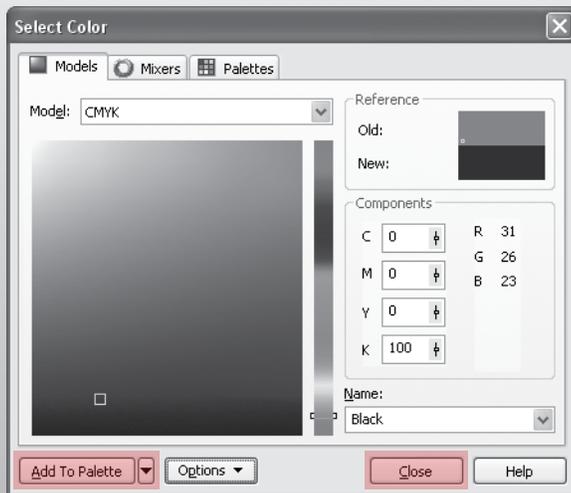


Illustration 7

**STEP 10**

Select your path, as shown in Illustration 5.

**STEP 11**

Go to Window > Color Palettes > Palette Editor. From the drop down menu, select User's Palettes > Custom Spot Colors (Illustration 6).

**STEP 12**

Click on the Add Color button (Illustration 6). Select the Models tab and choose a color for your path (Illustration 7).

**STEP 13**

Click the Add to Palette button. Click the Close button (Illustration 7). This will take you back to the Palette Editor.

**Note:** A new window does not open when you click the Add to Palette button.

**STEP 14**

Click on the color you just added and name it cutpath (all one word), as shown in Illustration 8. Click OK.

**STEP 15**

Select your path. Go to Window > Color Palettes > Color Palette Browser. Under User's Palettes, click the box to the left of Custom Spot Colors to activate that palette.

Right-click the cutpath color swatch from the swatches menu located on the right side of the screen. You will see the color applied to your path at the bottom of the screen (Illustration 9).

**STEP 16**

Export your file as an EPS (File > Export or CTRL+E).

**STEP 17**

Your cut path is now ready to be used in SoftRIP.

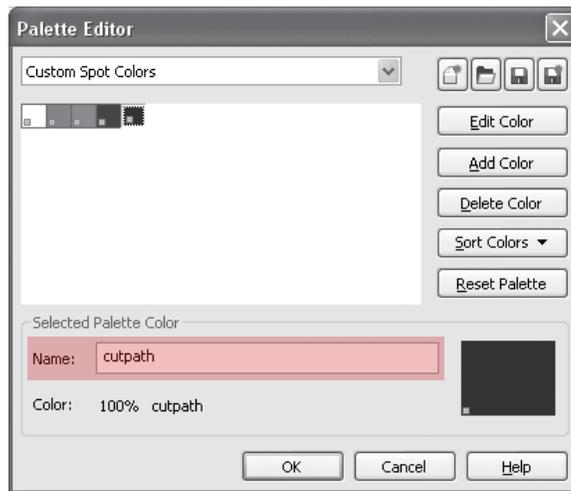


Illustration 8

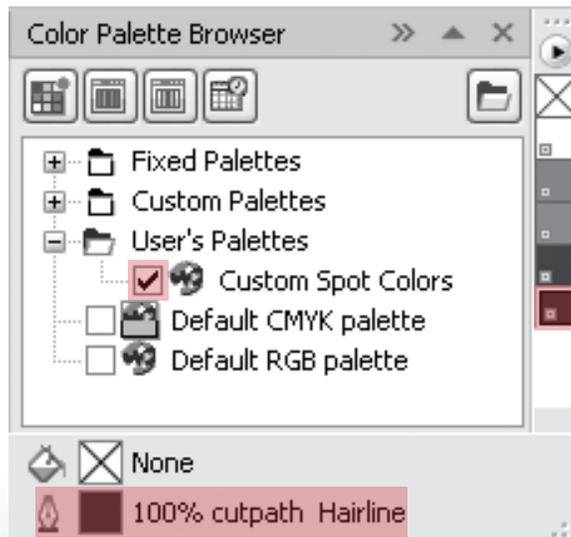


Illustration 9

## CREATING AN OFFSET CUT PATH

An offset cut path is useful when you need to create white space around your finished piece or when you are using a bleed. To create an offset cut path around a raster image using CorelDRAW®, complete Steps 1-9 above. Once those steps have been completed, follow the instructions below.

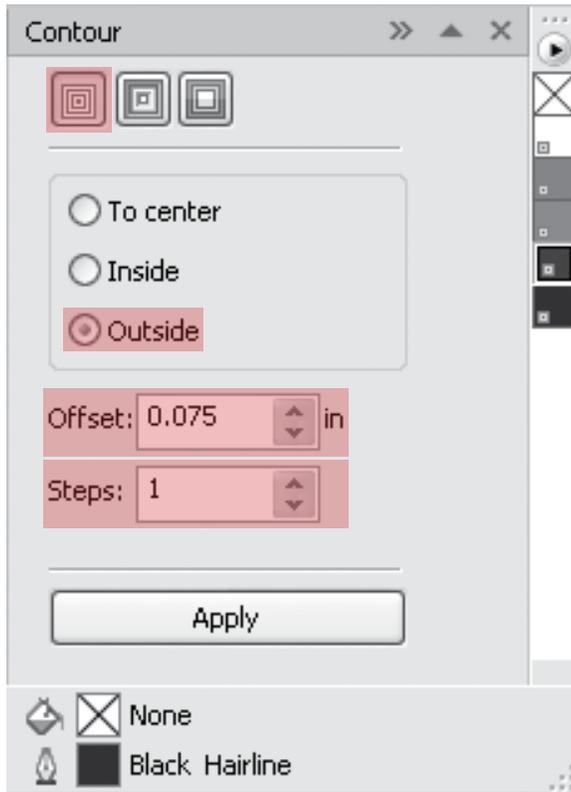


Illustration 1

### STEP 1

With your path still selected, go to Effects > Contour or CTRL+F9. This brings up the Contour menu, as shown in Illustration 1.

### STEP 2

Click the Contour Steps button to start creating your offset path (Illustration 1).

For our illustration, we've selected an Outside contour. We've set our Offset to .075 and our Steps to 1 (Illustration 1).

The results of this contour can be seen in Illustration 2.

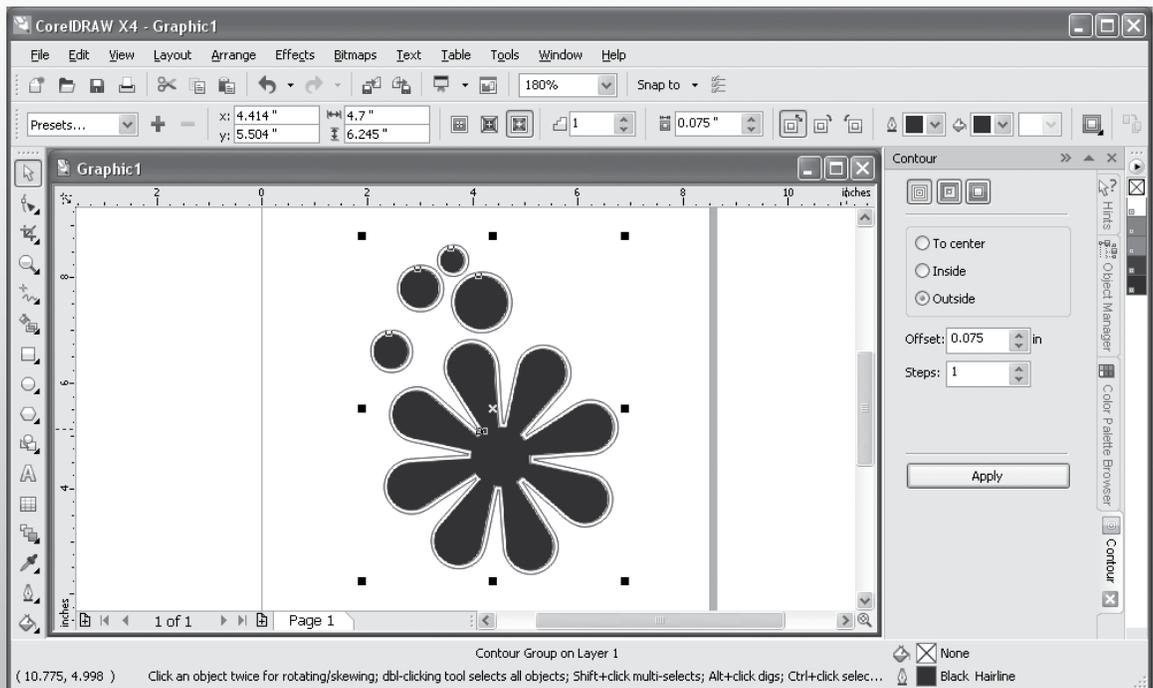


Illustration 2

**STEP 3**

The offset path does not replace your original path, so the original path needs to be deleted.

Right-click on the offset path you just created and select Break Contour Group Apart or CTRL+K.

Select your original path and delete it.

**STEP 4**

Select your path. Go to Window > Color Palettes > Palette Editor. From the drop down menu, select User's Palettes > Custom Spot Colors (Illustration 3).

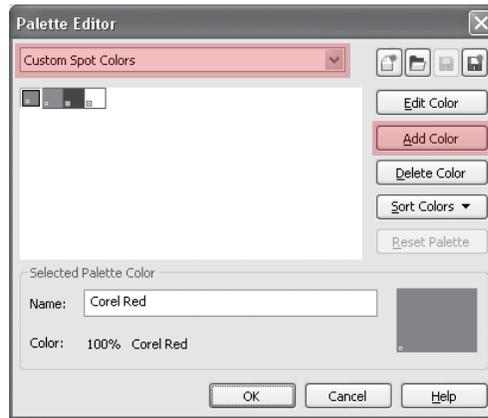


Illustration 3

**STEP 5**

Click on the Add Color button (Illustration 3). Select the Models tab and choose a color for your path (Illustration 4).

**STEP 6**

Click the Add to Palette button. Click the Close button (Illustration 4). This will take you back to the Palette Editor.

**Note:** A new window does not open when you click the Add to Palette button.

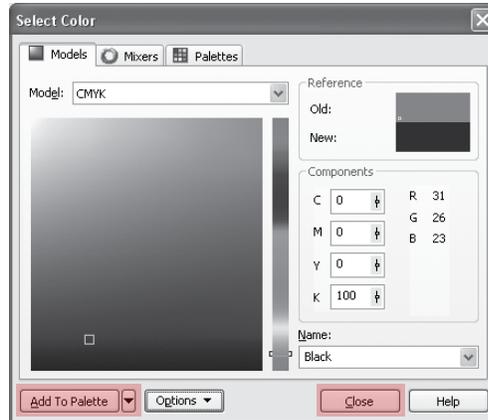


Illustration 4

**STEP 7**

Click on the color you just added and name it cutpath (all one word), as shown in Illustration 5. Click OK.

**STEP 8**

Select your path. Go to Window > Color Palettes > Color Palette Browser. Under User's Palettes, click the box to the left of Custom Spot Colors to activate that palette.

Right-click the cutpath color swatch from the swatches menu located on the right side of the screen. You will see the color applied to your path at the bottom of the screen (Illustration 6).

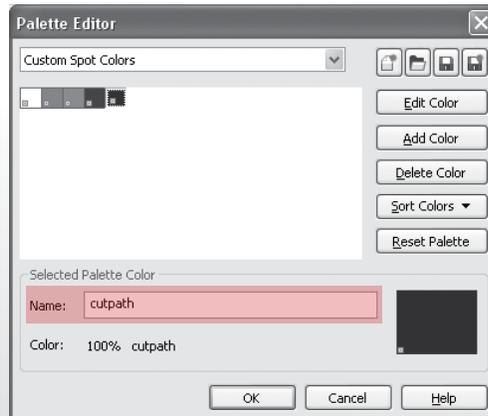


Illustration 5

**STEP 9**

Export your file as an EPS (File > Export or CTRL+E).

**STEP 10**

Your cut path is now ready to be used in SoftRIP.

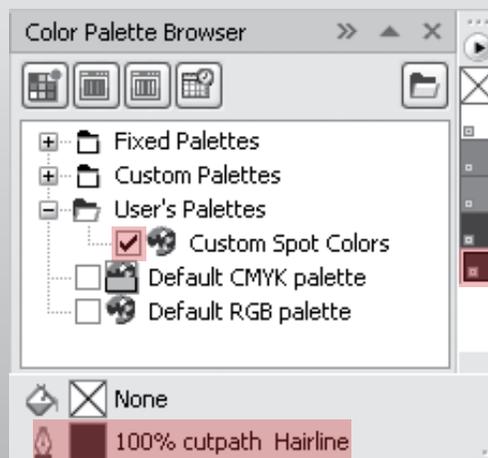


Illustration 6