

Deploying a Mini POD

What Is a Mini POD

A mini POD is a small-scale print-on-demand system that can be transported in an individual's checked luggage. It is typically deployed for a single MAST event and can be left with the ongoing project.

Components of a Mini POD

A mini POD typically includes the following components:

- Cargo bag with straps to contain the following:
 - Printer – HP x551dw (or other printer) with ink cartridges included
 - Printer data cable
 - CISS kit for the printer, including installation instructions
- Additional components to go into suitcase or smaller bag:
 - Heavy duty long reach stapler (can staple up to 240 sheets)
 - Boxes of staples of various sizes for different book thicknesses
 - Flash drive with micro USB (for phones and tablets)
 - Roll of binding tape (preferred) or black duct tape for binding books
 - Ink (double-bagged to prevent leaking):
 - 5 liters of black
 - 1 liter each of cyan, magenta, and yellow

Packing a Mini POD

When packing the mini POD you must ensure that the bags do not weigh over 50 pounds and are not more than 62 linear inches (sum of width, height, and depth.) Anything larger, heavier, or oddly shaped will incur additional fees.

Large cargo bag

For the HP x551dw printer you must trim the box and the packing Styrofoam so that the height of the box is reduced to comply with the size requirement. You do not need to trim the box of the HP451 printer.

Make sure that the large cargo bags include the data cable and the CISS kit.

Small cargo bag

You should place within cardboard boxes anything that you put in the smaller cargo bag. You should also double-bag the ink, with the bags tied, and then test to make sure that there is no leakage. Check to see that the small bag contains all the components listed above. These should take up about half the space, leaving you a little room for some clothes.

Carrying a Mini POD

It may seem intimidating and even a little frightening to carry this equipment to a foreign country, especially to one not very friendly to westerners. However, the process is completely legal, so that assurance should give you confidence.

There are three “actors” that you encounter during the transportation process:

The Airline

The airline is concerned with collecting additional money for oversized or overweight baggage. As long as you pack the bags according to the [packing instructions](#), you should not face any extra fees.

TSA

The TSA (Transportation Security Administration) is concerned with preventing any security violations. To avoid problems with TSA:

- Do not carry any of the mini POD equipment or ink in your carry-on luggage. It should all be in your checked luggage because the CISS kit has a sharp implement (the awl that punches holes in the ink cartridges), and the ink bottles exceed the 3.4 ounce limit for carrying on liquids.
- Place inside the bags one Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) for each color of ink; keep the 2nd copy of the MSDS with you in your carry-on luggage.

Foreign Customs

When you land in a foreign airport, after going through Passport Control and collecting your checked baggage you will go through Customs.

When you go through Customs, you are expected to pay a duty on the mini POD equipment. This duty is usually about 25-35% of the value of the product, depending on country-specific regulations. You should bring enough cash to pay this duty.

To ensure that you pay the correct amount, you should have documentation to prove the cost:

- Invoice(s) when available
- Declaration of Gift Value documents for items that will be donated

Note that if your airport of entry is not your final destination and you have a connecting flight, you will need to re-check your bags and go through security again after leaving Customs.

Setting Up and Operating a Mini POD

See the *POD Installation and Operation Manual*: <http://openpod.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/POD-Installation-and-Operation-Manual.pdf>