

PDF Makers

1. PS Magazine - PDFing Cheap

[Excerpts from article August 5, 2003]

Title: PDFing Cheap

URL: <http://www.pcmag.com/article2/0,4149,1195058,00.asp>

Date Accessed: 3 May. 2004

PDFing Cheap

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August 5, 2003

A manufacturer posts copies of its product manuals online as PDF files. A speaker at a conference e-mails his presentation to attendees as a PDF file, which is a small fraction of the size of the original Microsoft PowerPoint document. A lawyer sends the final copies of a contract to her client as a PDF file. A magazine receives ads as PDF files, and sends each issue to the printing plant in PDF.

PDF (Portable Document Format) lets people exchange nearly any type of electronic document with complete fidelity, regardless of the program with which it was created or the operating system on which the source application runs. The person creating a PDF can password-protect and digitally sign a document and even set options that prevent it from being copied, edited, or printed. Hyperlinks and bookmarks can be inserted for simpler navigation through large documents, and files can be indexed to provide faster searching.

Most important, nearly everyone has a program for viewing PDF files. Over the past ten years, Adobe Systems, the company that invented and defined the format, has given out over 500 million copies of its free PDF reader, originally called Adobe Acrobat Reader and now simply known as Adobe Reader.

Far fewer people, however, have the tools for creating PDF files. The two primary programs for creating them are [Adobe Acrobat 6.0 Standard](#) and [Adobe Acrobat 6.0 Professional](#), which cost \$299 and \$449, respectively. Although their prices may seem steep, these programs are loaded with advanced features for business users and graphics professionals who frequently create PDF files. [Acrobat Standard](#), which is targeted to business professionals, includes tools for reviewing, commenting on, and approving documents. In addition to those features, Acrobat Professional lets you create PDF forms that users can fill in electronically; it also adds preflight tools (which let you test

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for potential printing errors) and a way to preview color separations.

Many of these features are beyond the needs of casual users, and people with basic PDF needs probably can't justify paying hundreds of dollars to create the occasional PDF file. For such users, Adobe offers two less expensive options. Adobe Acrobat Elements, which works as a printer driver, is a bargain at \$29 per user, but it is available only in quantities of 1,000 or more. Create Adobe PDF Online (\$9.99 per month, with the first five documents free; <http://createpdf.adobe.com/>) is Adobe's online solution; simply upload source documents and the service converts them to PDF.

Fortunately, Adobe has opened up the file format, and now a variety of third-party PDF creation tools are selling for a lot less than Acrobat Standard and Professional. We review 12 of them here, all of which typically work as printer drivers inside any application.

2. PDF File Conversion

Title: PC Magazine

URL: http://www.pcmag.com/image_popup/0,1735,s=1663&iid=26070,00.asp

PDF File Conversion

PDF FILE CONVERSION						
All file sizes are in kilobytes. Low scores represent maximum compression (not necessarily best quality). Bold type represents first place among products reviewed.						
	Word	Excel	PowerPoint	Internet Explorer	Photoshop	CorelDraw
Original file	55	49	165	199	15,361	18
Adobe Acrobat 6.0*	48	18	181	200	251	8
Adobe Create PDF*	154	60	378	107 [†]	592	N/A
BCL EasyPDF 3.1	288	133	893	476	1,032	8
eDocPrinter PDF Pro 5.58	87	16	397	328	950	6
eXPertPDF Printer 2.0	61	17	447	415	10,180	6
FinePrint pdfFactory PRO 1.57	31	16	519	150	166	5
Jaws PDF Creator 3.0	141	70	651	255	98	2
LeadTools ePrint 3.0	27	20	632	311	10,221	4
1-Step RoboPDF 3.0 beta	45	10	914	191	186	12
pdf995 and pdfEdit995	67	27	925	361	9,737	2
PDF-XChange 2.5	39	12	111	173	720	6
PowerPDF 2.0	61	17	447	415	10,180	6
602Pro Print Pack 2002	904	146	887	579	1,933	55
Win2PDF Pro	24	11	2,363	181	472	13

RED denotes Editors' Choice. We tested all products at the default settings. * Reported for comparison. [†] The software did not capture the images.
N/A—Not applicable: The service does not support this format.

3. FinePrint pdfFactory PRO 1 57

Title: FinePrint pdfFactory PRO 1.57 review by PC Magazine

URL: <http://www.pcmag.com/article2/0,1759,1190644,00.asp>

- Price: \$99.95 list
- Company Info: FinePrint Software LLC, <http://www.fineprint.com/>

Editor Rating: ●●●●○

Unless high-quality graphics and photos are going to be an essential part of your PDF files, you can rank FinePrint pdfFactory PRO 1.57 as one of the best solutions in this group, especially in adding navigational structure and security. The program can generate a PDF file with a table of contents from a Word document, but because it does this based on text formatting (such as Arial 12-point bold) rather than styles or other features that Word uses to create tables of contents, the feature works within other programs.

After you print to pdfFactory, a dialog box lets you preview your PDF file, add bookmarks, and choose options such as preventing other users from printing your file. You can then save the file or start an e-mail message with the PDF file attached. You can also print multiple documents to pdfFactory before saving or sending, joining them into a single PDF file.

In our testing, pdfFactory generally performed well. For example, it successfully converted the external links in our Word file. But there were some minor glitches: pdfFactory added a margin to a CorelDraw file formatted to print edge to edge, and with a Photoshop file, its compression produced undesirable artifacts. Such aggressive compression did, however, result in some of the smallest PDF files on our tests; the PDF version of the Photoshop file was just two-thirds the size of the one Acrobat 6.0 created.

4. Jaws PDF Creator 3 0

Title: Jaws PDF Creator 3.0 review by PC Magazine

URL: <http://www.pcmag.com/article2/0,1759,1190648,00.asp>

- Price: \$79 list
- Company Info: Global Graphics Software, <http://www.jawspdf.com/>

Editor Rating: ●●●●○

Global Graphics Software's Jaws PDF Creator 3.0 produced uniformly high-quality PDF files on our tests with no notable problems. Jaws doesn't have as many features as FinePrint pdfFactory PRO 1.57, but it did a better job creating PDF files with graphics. If you can live without features such as the ability to combine multiple files into a single file, you should take a close look at this tool.

Jaws offers much more than just the basics, including the ability to prevent users from copying, editing, and printing your PDF files. But more important, Jaws did a superb job creating PDF files from our test documents. Jaws automatically created a table of contents based on our Word styles, and it converted all three of the external links in our Word document to live links in the PDF file.

Like most of the programs in this roundup, Jaws creates PDF files significantly larger than those that Acrobat 6.0 makes. But Jaws closely matched Acrobat's quality when converting CorelDraw, Excel, and PowerPoint files.

The Web pages Jaws converted into PDF files looked good, but Jaws didn't convert the links. It compressed the Photoshop test file to an impressively small 98K—an important advantage for sending files by e-mail. Jaws' compression degrades photo quality, but you have the option of changing the level of compression or turning the feature off entirely.

Bibliography

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