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Ghostscript is a suite of software based on an interpreter for Adobe Systems' PostScript and Portable Document Format (PDF) page description languages. Its main purposes are the rasterization or rendering of such page description language files, for the display or printing of document pages, and the conversion between PostScript and PDF files.

Ghostscript can be used as a raster image processor (RIP) for raster computer printers -for instance, as an input filter of line printer daemon - or as the RIP engine behind PostScript and PDF viewers.

Ghostscript can also be used as a file format converter, such as PostScript to PDF converter. The ps2pdf conversion program, which comes with the ghostscript distribution, is described by its documentation as a "work-alike for nearly all the functionality (but not the user interface) of Adobe's Acrobat Distiller product". This converter is basically a thin wrapper around ghostscript's pdfwrite output device, which supports PDF/A-1 and PDF/A-2 as well as PDF/X-3 output.

Ghostscript can also serve as the back-end for PDF to raster image (png, tiff, jpeg, etc.) converter; this is often combined with a PostScript printer driver in "virtual printer" PDF creators.

As it takes the form of a language interpreter, Ghostscript can also be used as a general purpose programming environment.

Ghostscript has been ported to many operating systems, including Unix, Linux, Mac OS, OpenVMS, Microsoft Windows, Plan 9, MS-DOS, FreeDOS, OS/2, Atari TOS and AmigaOS.