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Acrobat 3D Corner

Creating and validating PDF/A files
by Kurt Foss, Editor, AcrobatUsers.com

As Diana Helander, Group Manager for Worldwide Standards at Adobe Systems, mentions in her recent interview with AcrobatUsers.com, companies that participate in the standards-development process can begin introducing relevant capabilities in their products based on preliminary specification drafts.

PDF for Archiving (PDF/A), a subset of the official PDF specification, defines an archival profile that is amenable to long-term preservation. The PDF/A specification outlines features that are required, restricted or prohibited. For example, document-level metadata and the use of fonts that can be legally embedded into the document are required; embedded files and encryption are prohibited.

Before PDF/A received final approval in May 2005, Adobe introduced the ability to create and validate PDF/A-compliant files in Acrobat Professional 7.0 based on the draft specification. Adobe added support for the final specification in Acrobat 3D, released in January 2006. Recently Adobe released a patch to upgrade Acrobat Professional to version 7.0.7 (now to 7.0.8) — the Adobe PDF settings now support the final published ISO version of the PDF/A-1b standard. In addition, Acrobat Professional 7.0.7's (or later) Preflight tool now supports validation against the final published ISO version.

PDF/A Creation

With Acrobat Distiller in Acrobat 7.0.7 Professional, you can check document content in the PostScript file to make sure it meets standard PDF/A (or PDF/X1-a and PDF/X-3) criteria before creating a PDF file. In Distiller:

Figure 1: Adobe PDF Settings > PDF/A-1b
Choose either the RGB or CMYK options

Figure 2: Distiller > Adobe PDF Settings > Compatibility
Explains that the chosen settings will produce PDF/A-1b-compliant files suitable for long-term preservation.
Zoom imageSee larger image

In Acrobat Professional 7.0.7 or later (or Acrobat 3D):

PDF/A Validation

Figure 3: Advanced > Preflight
The validation functionality is part of the preflighting feature.

Figure 4: Preflight > Profiles
Select the PDF/A-1b profile for preflighting the current PDF

Figure 5: Preflight > Edit Profile > Custom checks
You can review the custom checks that are part of the PDF/A-1b preflight module.
Zoom imageSee larger image

Figure 6: Preflight > Droplet setup
You can automate the creation of a summary report listing errors or warnings.
Zoom imageSee larger image

Figure 7: Preflight > Validation results
No errors were found in a PDF file produced using the PDF/A-1b settings in Acrobat Distiller.

Resources

Adobe Acrobat 7.0.7 Standard and Professional update release information
Webwww.adobe.com/support/techdocs/332877.html

New Standard Addresses Long-term Preservation of Electronic Documents
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