



Acrobat 9 moves into mass media market

computer notes from the road

by WILMA MELOT

Looking at the new Acrobat 9 is a lot like looking at Acrobat 8 – with a few new wonderful bells and whistles added.

Acrobat is really moving into the mass media market and away from the print world. That's why it is much more important to set standards for your incoming PDFs that come from a variety of places. We do not need embedded video files in a PDF that we want to rip to the press, although it's cool that you can do it.

For the first time, PDFs will play movies. Acrobat users can convert MOV and WMV files to Flash content that can be embedded within PDFs alongside audio content and even 3D models. The free Acrobat Reader 9 will play the movies and

eliminate the need to open other media players.

The new PDF portfolios featured in Acrobat 9 lets users drag and drop content into a portfolio and then choose from a myriad of layout and presentation options. Adobe has also tried to make it easier for companies to make pages match visually with themes and custom logos, and has improved the tools for comparing documents. Mapping features, only in Acrobat Pro Extended 9, preserve geospatial coordinates and lets users mark locations and measure distances. The new Acrobat will take snapshots of Web pages and convert entire pages or chunks of them to a PDF that preserves links and animation.

For creating online forms, Acrobat 9 adds intelligence to recognize content for conversion to fillable fields. For instance, a forms-tracking dashboard can show the status of responses to a mass party invitation e-mail and let a user send reminders to

guests. Responses can be sorted, filtered, and exported to spreadsheets.

Acrobat 9's security enhancements enable users to add 256-bit encryption — used by banks online — to PDFs. Business users could opt to access documents at Acrobat Online or via SharePoint workspaces, network folders or WebDAV.

Redaction tools, a key selling point of Acrobat 8, searches for numeric patterns, in addition to multiple words and phrases. A company could, for example, find every accidental mention of a Social Security number or top-secret product being developed and black out the potential leaks from a PDF with one stroke.

If you get a copy, look at the document menu and at the ways you can create single page documents from a big file. And look at the reduce file size features for simplifying PDFs. Advanced Print production contains most of the things newspapers will want to learn first. More on this later.

Using programs to solve font problems on OSX

So you got that new OSX Macintosh but it doesn't have a fonts folder in the system folder like your old OS9 machine.

In fact, you've probably noticed that there are many font folders on your new computer — some in the Applications folder and some in folders called Libraries, which there seems to be several of. What's the deal?

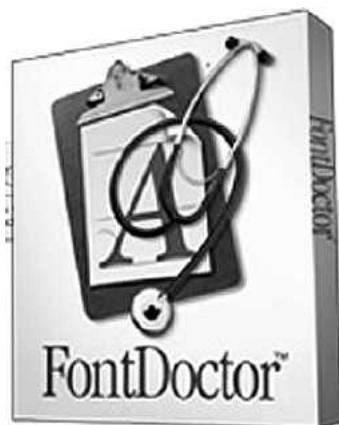
When it comes to fonts, you need a plan. Many small papers often have more than 1,000 fonts on a drive. However, fonts that worked on OS9 sometimes don't work like you want them to in OSX.

The easiest way to handle potential problems is to buy a font management program. This little program places your fonts in a consolidated folder, then does them out as needed. This works very well and is a great plan — if you afford it. The catch is that you have to buy a copy for each computer.

Apple gives you an application for working on fonts called FontDoctor. It seems to work fairly well on OS 10.5.

Another good program is Insider's Font-Agent Pro 4, which retails for \$99. Server and Windows editions are also available.

The auto activation of fonts is the main reason to have a font management program



— and Windows' users would will love it as well.

Another font handling program available is Lintype FontExplorer X. The download is free and works well with OSX 10.5.

Extensis Suitcase Fusion (\$99 retail), which has been around a long time, is the one I see most often at newspapers. It works well and has stayed the test through many versions. A

Windows version is also available.

But what if you just can't afford to pay \$99 per computer? The best do-it-yourself solution is to get a program called FontDoctor for \$69.95. Use it to work over your old fonts from OS9, then move the good font folder to OSX. Many users pare down their font collection at this point.

FontDoctor will diagnose fonts that have gone bad by being copied from one drive to another over the years. In many cases, it will repair fonts and make a sound set of fonts for you to use. Merge this set with the OSX fonts in a way that all programs can use them together.

Adobe programs have their own font folder. I use InDesign's font folder to put several merged fonts into this one location. Apple came up with their own set of fonts in OSX and we have to put the two families together.

The folder to look at is in the Library Font folder. Apple used common fonts

when they named their new fonts, which all end in ".dfont". These are used by the system to make menus, but they often conflict with old OS9 fonts.

Generally speaking, replace your old fonts with new fonts if they have similar names such as 'Times' because the system has its own version. Of course, you'll notice right away if your fonts don't act right.

The user library font folder can keep system and user fonts apart instead of just merging them all together and expecting the right fonts overwrite.

It's a two-step program: 1) use FontDoctor on your old fonts; 2) copy the fonts to the User library font folder. Now launch your applications and see if all the fonts work.

If you don't get what you expect, search the hard drive and find all the font folders. Then put all fonts from other programs into the user font folder leaving the system fonts where they are.

DO NOT move the Library fonts out of their folder.

Remove duplicate-named fonts, leaving the .dfonts alone — or trust FontDoctor to do this for you. It takes some time, but if you get one master font folder with good fonts, you'll sleep well knowing your fonts work.

It goes without saying but I'm going to say it anyway — back up the font folder once you get it in place. If for some reason you have to replace the user, you'll need a copy of it.

PLUGGED IN

Crossing the bridge

If you've read much about Adobe's Creative Suite 3, you've probably seen lots of references to the Adobe bridge.

The bridge is Adobe's answer to workflow management. You need to know that the bridge can take control of some of the things we used to manage individually in each Adobe program. Take color management, for instance. The bridge will control all color profiles for all Adobe programs — if you tell it to.

The bridge helps you keep projects under control. Take a look at it if you own the whole Creative Suite.

Print screen/keyboard shortcuts

I have to dust off some seldom used brain cells to remember how the "print screen" works on a PC.

In case it slows you down, here's the scoop. To print the screen, hit that handy "print screen" button plus the alt key. This snaps a pic of the current window. If you want the whole screen, just hit the print screen button. Now remind yourself that all you've done is copy the screen to the clipboard. Open Word, Photoshop or some other photo editor program and paste the screen shot into the document and then print.

When you use the screen shot on an Apple computer, it directly makes a picture file on your desktop. This file can be opened and printed in picture viewer.

Screen shots are a great way to make instructions for new hires that will be using your computers. It's also the best way to record settings for things like routers and e-mail. But don't forget to write down the password on the paper instead of all those dots in the password line.

Command+Shift+4 lets you choose just the area of the screen you want to select for the picture. Just drag the crosshair across the screen to select the preferred area, or use the copy to clipboard process, like on a PC.

One of the problems I have encountered while installing Adobe products on Macintosh computers is that often the system keyboard shortcuts conflict with Adobe keyboard shortcuts. The trick to fixing this is to go to system preferences under the blue apple (upper left side of your monitor). Go to keyboard and mouse, then click the keyboard shortcuts tab.

Notice the little blue lines or check marks next to the Apple keyboard shortcuts. I leave the screen shots checked and uncheck the rest, but you may have some you like so look through the list and see what is there.

