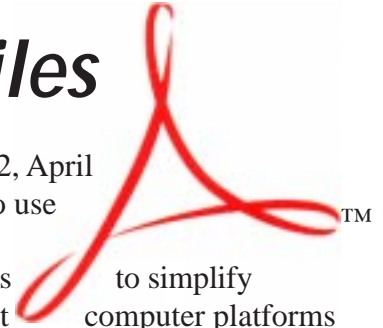


Adobe Acrobat

Part 2: Creating PDF Files



In a previous issue of *Occasional Downtime* (Volume 6, Issue 2, April 1998) we discussed the Adobe Acrobat PDF format and how to use the Acrobat Reader to read PDF documents. PDF stands for Portable Document Format and was developed by Adobe Systems to simplify distributing electronic documents among users of different computer platforms and software while maintaining the appearance of the original document. PDF is an ideal way to disseminate technical documents on the Web; several professors at HMC are already using PDF to distribute course notes and homework assignments on the Web.

In this article we will discuss how to create PDF documents yourself. To create PDF documents you need access to Adobe Acrobat 3.0. Acrobat is a commercial package which includes several components. In addition to the Acrobat Reader, it includes PDF Writer, Acrobat Distiller, Acrobat Exchange, Acrobat Catalog, and the Acrobat Capture plug-in. Adobe Acrobat 3.0 is available on the CIS file server, *Kato*, for both the Macintosh and Windows.

The easiest way to create simple PDF documents is with PDF Writer. PDF Writer allows you to create PDF documents from many popular applications including Microsoft Word and Microsoft Excel. Using it is as easy as printing your document. Instead of printing your document to a printer, PDF Writer creates a PDF file from your document. To use it on the Macintosh you would go to the Chooser and select the PDF Writer print driver icon. Close the Chooser and after returning to your document select File/Print. That's all there is to it. In Windows 95 you simply select PDF Writer from the printer name menu when printing your document.

PDF Writer works best for the quick conversion of simple documents to PDF. If you're not happy with the results you obtain with PDF Writer, then it's probably time to try creating the PDF file with Acrobat Distiller instead. Distiller should be used for large documents or documents that contain Encapsulated PostScript (EPS) graphics, complex blends, or gradient fills. It should also be used for documents that were produced from desktop publishing applications, such as QuarkXPress, Adobe PageMaker, and Adobe FrameMaker, that have been optimized to produce PostScript output. Distiller provides more control over file optimization and compression options than PDF Writer. Acrobat Distiller works a little differently from the PDF Writer. Distiller creates PDF files from PostScript files. Most applications will allow you to print your document to a PostScript file instead of to the printer. Distiller takes the PostScript file and converts it to a PDF file.

After you have created a basic PDF document, you can use Acrobat Exchange to enhance it. Many of the modifications Exchange can perform are designed to make navigating and reading your PDF document online easier and more pleasurable. You can enhance your PDF document in the following ways: *(continued on page 6)*



Writing as a Team Using CommonSpace



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using Common-
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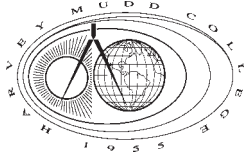
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Occasional Downtime is composed on a Power Computing PowerBase™ 180 using Aldus PageMaker 6.0 and Microsoft Excel 5.0. The primary typefaces used are Times and Optima. We wish to thank Sally Rich Arroyo of the HMC Office of College Relations for all her help.



Students, professors, and other HMC professionals often work together to write proposals, grant applications, and joint papers. Tracking multiple drafts and incorporating reviewers' comments can sometimes make this collaboration frustrating. CommonSpace, a software package available through CIS, is designed to facilitate collaborative writing and peer review by simplifying the exchange of drafts and comments.

CommonSpace allows users to create multiple workspaces, much like Excel worksheets, all within a single file. Each worksheet can have an infinite number of columns. These columns can be associated with a particular person or a specific writing task. For example, each member of a team can create a column to comment on the draft in progress. Or a writer could use different columns to work on different stages of the writing process, from notetaking to outlining to drafting. This tiered structure makes it easier to organize all the written materials associated with a project.

Authors can compose directly in CommonSpace or draft their document in another word processing program and import it into CommonSpace. CommonSpace reads many types of word processing files and is compatible across Windows and Macintosh platforms. The built-in word processing component, although very basic, contains most standard formatting options as well as a spell checker.

Reviewers can use the side-by-side column format in CommonSpace to provide feedback on the original draft, much like they would when writing comments in the

margins of a paper document. The linked comments feature lets reviewers make suggestions about specific paragraphs, phrases, words, or even punctuation marks within the text. Because the specific area is highlighted, the author can easily see what prompted the reviewer's comment. When the comments take up more vertical space than the original draft, CommonSpace automatically adds white space to keep the draft and the linked comments aligned. Because the comments appear in their own column, they do not alter the original document or interrupt the flow of the text itself.

Reviewers and co-authors may also choose to make their changes directly within the electronic copy. The original author can then use the Compare Columns function to quickly identify changes in the revised draft. Writers can also compare drafts of files that were created and revised in other word processing programs. Multiple drafts can be imported into CommonSpace, saved, and merged into a single file. Final drafts can be kept in CommonSpace or exported into a variety of desktop publishing programs for final formatting.

COMMONSPACE IN THE CLASSROOM

CommonSpace is a valuable tool for responding to student writing. Professors and peer reviewers can comment on a student's paper while leaving the original draft intact. In addition to regular linked comments, instructors can use CommonSpace to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of their comments. Instructors can create hypertext links to send students directly to the relevant sections of CommonSpace's

internal Writing Handbook, which can provide help not only with grammar and usage but also with the writing process, research and documentation, and ESL issues. Instructors can also create libraries of comments that they frequently make on student papers. These comments can then be dragged and dropped from the library into a comments column. Finally, instructors can record voice annotations if they would rather speak their comments.

Professors can also use CommonSpace to deepen students' thinking about a text or a draft. With the Question Set function, instructors can create a set of step-by-step prompts to guide students through a sequenced process. The student sees an instruction or prompt and responds to it before moving on to the next step in the process. These question sets can be used to structure peer reviews, critical reading, and student self-revision.

COMMONSPACE AT HMC

Several HMC professors are already using CommonSpace in their classes. Tad Beckman has used the program to give feedback on papers that students submitted electronically. Others are using CommonSpace to facilitate peer review. Jeff Groves, Darryl Wright, Jean Arnold, and Bill Alves have all taken their Humanities 1 and 2 classes to the computer lab on days that are dedicated to peer reviewing. In most cases, the instructors report that both the quality and quantity of comments increase when using CommonSpace.

The Writing Center is experimenting with an electronic consulting service. Students will be able to submit their drafts to a "virtual" consultant, who will use CommonSpace to provide feedback about ways to improve the paper. The service will be available soon from the Writing Center homepage (<http://www.hmc.edu/acad/Learning/Writing/>).

Because CommonSpace was designed to facilitate (continued on page 5)

ditor's Notes

One of our goals in publishing *Occasional Downtime* is to introduce tools and concepts that can be used by HMC faculty, staff and students to make their daily work easier and more productive. This month we are focusing on a couple of interesting tools.

CommonSpace has been available on *Kato* for several years now and has been used by various segments of the HMC community. It's still not as widely known as it should be, however, so we're hoping that this month's article will introduce more people to it's excellent qualities as a tool to assist collaborative writing of many types.

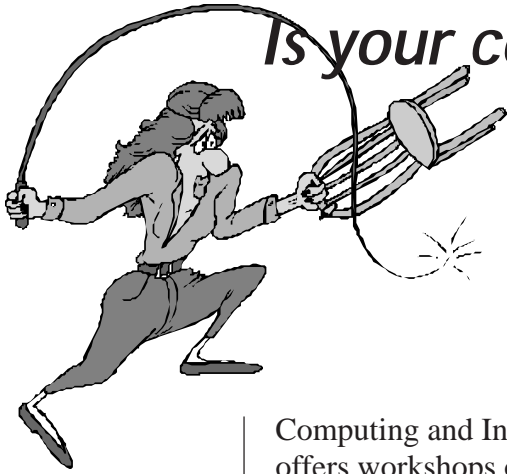
In part two of our miniseries on PDF we discuss how to create PDF documents yourself using PDF Writer and Distiller. PDF is a great way to distribute technical information on the Web, but its ability to create online forms and searchable indexes make it interesting even if you're not involved in Web development.

And, finally, we'd like to introduce our new line of workshop materials – CD-ROM based courses from Mastering Computers CBT. We will be very interested in hearing our users' reactions to this new resource.

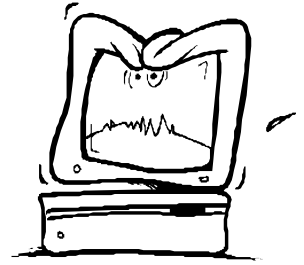
—Elizabeth Hodas

Occasional Downtime is published bimonthly by the Computing and Information Services Department at Harvey Mudd College. It is also available in a variety of formats on the HMC Web Server. Comments and questions can be directed to downtime@hmc.edu.

Is your computer getting the upper hand?



Try Mastering Computers CBT!



Computing and Information Services offers workshops on many popular software packages over the course of each semester and during the summer. Our workshops have been well-attended but we recognize that not everyone has the time to attend all of the workshops they would like. This semester we will be introducing a new resource to the HMC community which will allow users to take workshops on their own time and at their own pace.

We have purchased a set of CD-ROM-based instructional materials from Mastering Computers CBT, and have installed them on the CIS file server *Kato*. Users can access the courses over the network whenever it fits into their schedule. We will be offering hands-on workshops in our computer lab using these materials in order to introduce users to the course interface and to get them started on a particular course. Users will then be able to continue to work on the courses at their own pace on their desktop PC's.

Mastering Computers is a prominent provider of computer-based training in Microsoft, Novell and other operating system technologies. In addition to end-user training materials, they also develop certification and training materials for information technology professionals. You can visit their Web site at <http://www.masteringcomputers.com/> for more information.

CIS has purchased course modules for the HMC community on the following topics: Microsoft Windows 95, Microsoft Word 97,

Microsoft Excel 97, Microsoft Access 97, and Microsoft Powerpoint 97. A more detailed description of each course can be found on the next page. Despite their confusing name, the "Proficient User" courses are beginning courses designed to introduce basic concepts and help you become a proficient user of the software.

The courses are highly interactive and use a multi-media presentation to keep the user interested and involved. In addition to presenting textual information, there are many opportunities for the user to try out skills using real dialog boxes, windows and menus. Helpful hints are given when users make an incorrect choice so it's hard to get lost.

In addition to the courses themselves, the Mastering Computers package includes a component called the SkillVantage Manager. The SkillVantage Manager maintains a centralized database of courses and users. It will allow users to login and choose the courses they wish to take. Users will then be able to keep track of their progress through a course using a bookmark feature. Users can choose to take a preassessment exam and create what's called a Precision Learning Track. The Precision Learning Track is a customized lesson plan that allows users to avoid reviewing material they already know. Users can also choose to evaluate their progress and knowledge of the material through "mastery" tests.

We are planning on offering workshops in the CIS Pentium lab introducing these

materials this fall. Users can come to these workshops to learn how to use the course materials and get started on a course. They'll create a user profile for themselves to record progress they've made on a course. They'll then be able to go back to their office and continue where they left off at their own pace. Unfortunately, the courses are only available for Windows 95 and Windows NT. Macintosh users can attend the workshops on the Microsoft Office 97 suite and apply the skills they learn to Microsoft Office 98 for the Macintosh. But they will have to take the courses on a Windows machine.

We are looking forward to trying out this new resource and are interested in hearing your comments about the courses and their effectiveness. 🐾

CommonSpace continued from page 3

collaborative writing, many groups at HMC will find the program useful:

- ▼ Clinic teams
- ▼ E-4 teams
- ▼ Software documenters
- ▼ Proposal writers
- ▼ Professors who are authoring papers with colleagues
- ▼ Grant writers
- ▼ Administrators
- ▼ Anyone who writes documents that get reviewed by others

If you would like more information about CommonSpace, contact Elizabeth Hodas or Krista Caufman. 🐾

by Krista Caufman

COURSE TOPICS

- ▼ Microsoft Windows 95 Fundamentals:
Master the basics of Windows 95. Learn the components of the Windows 95 desktop. Master the elements of Explorer. Understand Windows 95 internal applications.
- ▼ Microsoft Windows 95 Advanced Topics:
Create a custom Windows 95 environment suited to your work processes. Back-up and restore files; find and repair problems; and double check disk storage. Use shortcuts and tips to place, find, access, format, associate, disassociate and link files. Move objects between applications. Install, connect, remove and change default printers. Create, format, send and receive a fax.
- ▼ Microsoft Word 97 Proficient User:
Create single and multiple page letters and memos. Create envelopes or mailing labels. Create Word documents for Intranet/Internet.
- ▼ Microsoft Word 97 Expert User:
Personalize form letters. Create formal reports, technical reports, proposals and studies. Create newsletters, brochures and manuals. Create forms.
- ▼ Microsoft Excel 97 Proficient User:
Create budgets and expense reports. Create marketing and sales reports. Create invoices and purchase orders. Create spreadsheet information for use on the Internet/Intranet.
- ▼ Microsoft Excel 97 Expert User:
Create accounting and financial statements. Create data analysis. Create statistical tables. Create amortization schedules. Create forecasts. Create personnel records. Create lists.
- ▼ Microsoft Access 97-Part 1:
Work with the components and objects of a Microsoft Access 97 database. Create a table, and manipulate its format and data. Locate and manipulate data.
- ▼ Microsoft Access 97-Part 2:
Create and customize a form to interact with the database. Present data in the form of reports, and utilize the web capability.
- ▼ Microsoft Powerpoint 97:
Create presentations that will be delivered over a variety of medium. Add textual information and visual elements. Bring in data from other sources. Modify a presentation. Customize a presentation. Deliver presentations.

- ▼ Add Bookmarks: Bookmarks to specific pages can be defined and a table of contents created to speed navigation through your document.
- ▼ Add Thumbnails: Thumbnails give a quick visual representation of each page in your document, also aiding in document navigation.
- ▼ Define Articles: Using the Article tool you can create “threaded” articles which allow the reader to jump from column to column or from page to page automatically as they read the article.
- ▼ Add Hypertext links: You can add hypertext links to your documents, which can take readers to another section of the same PDF document, to another PDF document entirely, or to a URL on the Web.
- ▼ Add Dynamic controls: Buttons or “live” areas can be added to your PDF document. They can perform a variety of actions, from navigation to playing movies or sounds.

Another feature of Acrobat Exchange is its ability to create online forms. If you have a form that was created in Microsoft Word or another word processor, or if you have a form on paper that can be scanned, you can convert it to a PDF document and then use Exchange to create an interactive, online form. With Exchange you can create single and multi-line text fields, list boxes, radio buttons, and checkboxes and buttons. Your PDF form can then be put on the Web where users can either print the form to be filled out on paper or fill out the form online. The form data can be submitted in HTML format to the Web server where a CGI can process the data. Processing the data might including emailing it to someone, entering the data in a database or text file, or sending it back to the Web browser for user confirmation. Forms are an exciting new feature of Acrobat and are just starting to be exploited on the Web.

Another option worth mentioning for creating PDF documents is the Acrobat Capture plug-in. The Acrobat Capture plug-in works in conjunction with Acrobat Exchange to convert color, grayscale, or black-and-white scanned TIFF images into PDF documents. It uses optical character recognition (OCR), font, and page recognition techniques to process the scanned TIFF images and create the PDF files. In other words you can scan a paper document, save it to a TIFF file and then use Exchange and the Acrobat Capture plug-in to import and convert the image to a PDF file. The plug-in can process English, French, German, Italian, Dutch, Swedish, or Spanish text. The Acrobat Capture plug-in is a scaled-down, personal version of Acrobat Capture, which is a stand-alone commercial product. Acrobat Capture is intended for high-volume, networked-based applications and has many more features.

Acrobat Catalog is the final component of Adobe Acrobat 3.0 that we'd like to mention. Acrobat Catalog is used for full-text indexing of your PDF files. A single document or a set of PDF files can be indexed. The user can then search on a keyword or phrase in Acrobat Exchange or Acrobat Reader using the Search command. Unfortunately, Acrobat Catalog and Search is only supported for documents located on your local machine, a file server or on CD-ROMs. It cannot be used for files that are located on the World Wide Web. There are several third-party Web search engines that can index and search PDF files, however. CIS is currently exploring the possibility of adding a search engine to our Web server, so the ability to search PDF files on the college Web may be possible in the near future.

If you'd like to see an example of a PDF file with thumbnails, bookmarks and threaded articles, check out the online version of *Occasional Downtime* at <http://www.hmc.edu/comp/occ-down/>.



EASY WAYS TO CREATE WEB PAGES

For most of us creating Web pages from scratch by writing HTML code is not exactly our idea of fun. There are many tools available now which make it easy to create Web pages without knowing much HTML, however. There are two main methods: converting an existing document into HTML or using a WYSIWYG (What You See Is What You Get) editor to create new Web documents.

If you have a Microsoft Word document you can use Microsoft's Save As HTML feature to quickly create a Web document. It's as easy as opening the document in Microsoft Word and selecting the "Save As HTML" command from the File menu. This feature is available in Microsoft Office 97 for Windows and Microsoft Office 98 for Macintosh.

Microsoft Word will do its best to create an HTML document that closely resembles the original word processing document. For example, graphics which have been inserted into the document will be converted to GIF files, tables will be converted to HTML tables, and lists to HTML lists. Equations are converted into GIF images as well. Some formatting features which have no HTML equivalent will be lost, however. Headers and footers, page numbers, newspaper columns, drop caps, page borders, and footnotes and endnotes are some of the Word features that are not converted into HTML.

Excel spreadsheets can easily be converted into HTML tables using the Save As HTML command. Even Powerpoint presentations can benefit from this feature. Using the Save As HTML command you can convert your Powerpoint presentation into a slide show on the Web.

Another program that can be used to convert existing documents to HTML is Myrmidon, a commercial program for the Macintosh. Myrmidon will convert any Macintosh document to HTML simply by

Tricks & Tips

selecting Myrmidon as your printer driver and, in general, does a very good job. It is a commercial product, however, and CIS does not currently own any copies. If you'd like to try out a demo version of it, you can check the Web site at <http://www.terrymorse.com/>

Converting existing documents into HTML is a quick and easy way to create Web pages and can save you the work of recreating the documents. Depending on the document, you might get mixed results, especially if the document has complex formatting. Converters are also best when you do not need to subsequently edit the Web page. This is because the HTML code that these converters produce is not at all "clean." If you do need to change the Web page it's best to edit the original document and reconvert it.

If you want to create new HTML documents specifically for the Web, you'll want to use a WYSIWYG editor. A WYSIWYG editor lets you view and edit your HTML document as it would appear on the Web without having to write HTML code. There are many WYSIWYG editors available. Computing and Information Services has one commercial package, Adobe PageMill, available on its Novell file server, *Kato*. It is available for both the Macintosh and Windows. PageMill for Windows is located in the directory `G:\APPS\NETAPPS\WIN\PAGEMILL\`. PageMill for Macintosh is located in `Kato.Mac:Utilities:Adobe PageMill 2.0`.

Other options include Netscape Composer, a module of Netscape Communicator, and Microsoft Word's WYSIWYG editor. Which one you use is a matter of personal choice. You can try each one out and decide which you prefer. 🐉

& Tricks

QUESTIONS *and* ANSWERS

Q: How do I create a shortcut/alias to an application on *Kato* or *Lurch*?

A: Shortcuts in Windows and aliases on the Macintosh are actually just another type of file. These shortcut/alias files are like pointers that point to an actual application, folder, or document. Double-clicking on a shortcut or alias opens the original application, folder or document, wherever it might be located. You can use them for items located on your local hard drive but they are also ideal for opening items located on the file servers *Kato* and *Lurch*. You can place the alias or shortcut on your computer's Desktop or in the Start menu in Windows or in the Apple menu on the Macintosh. Instead of navigating through your hard drive or a volume on *Kato* or *Lurch* you can access your shortcut/alias to quickly open the item you want.

To create a Windows shortcut to an application on *Kato* or *Lurch* first locate the executable file for the application you want. For example, if you wanted to create a shortcut to Photoshop for Windows on *Kato* you would need to login to *Kato* and then use Windows Explorer or open My Computer to explore the G: drive. The G: drive is mapped to the volume on *Kato* that contains all of the PC applications. Photoshop is located in the directory G:\APPS\GRAPHICS\WIN\PHOTOSH4\PHOTOSHP.EXE. Single-click with the right mouse button on the executable file and select "Create Shortcut" from the pop-up menu. You don't have write privileges to the PC volume on *Kato* so a dialog box will appear asking if you would

like the shortcut created on your Desktop. Click "Yes" and the shortcut will be created and placed on your Desktop.

To create an alias to an application on *Kato* on the Macintosh first login to *Kato* and open the volume Kato.Mac. Open Applications:Graphics/Design:Adobe Photoshop 4.0. Single-click on the icon labeled Adobe Photoshop 4.0.1 and select "Make Alias" from the File menu. You don't have write privileges to *Kato* so a dialog box will appear asking if you would like the alias created on your Desktop. Click "OK" and the shortcut will be created and placed on your Desktop.

Q: When I start up my Macintosh I get a message saying that there is a newer version of KeyAccess available and I should upgrade. How do I do this?

A: The most recent version of the KeyAccess extension is located on *Kato*. Login to *Kato* and open the Kato.Mac volume. Open the Communications Packages folder. The KeyAccess extension is located in this folder. Copy this extension to the Extensions folder in your System Folder and restart your computer.

If you're not sure if you have the most recent version of KeyAccess you can easily check. Open the Extensions folder in your System Folder and single-click on the KeyAccess icon. Select "Get Info" from the File menu and check the version number. The current version of KeyAccess is 4.2.1.1. 🐉