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Common PDF Issues and Their Solutions

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Common PDF Issues and Their Solutions

1. Page numbering: changing from roman numerals to Arabic numbers and restarting sequence with "1" at Chapter 1.

This is theoretically possible in Microsoft Word, but I have never been able to do it reliably.

Solution: Keep work in 2 separate files: one for roman numeral pages; one for Arabic-numbered pages. Convert them to PDF separately. Concatenate them (i.e., insert one into the other) with Adobe Acrobat.
The menu commands to do this are (with one file open)

Document >
Insert Pages > [browse to select the PDF file to be inserted] >
Location > [choose before or after] & [first, last, or specific page] >
OK (then save the new combined file)

2. Embedding your fonts.

Not only are there thousands of fonts, there are hundreds of different versions of most of them—your Times New Roman distributed with Windows Vista may not match my Times New Roman from MS Office 2007. "Embedding" your fonts attaches a version to the PDF file, so that the characters will always appear the same on every computer. Not embedding the fonts forces a computer to substitute its local version, which may be different enough to cause issues.

ProQuest's system will automatically check to see if fonts are embedded; if they are not it will reject your document and you will not be able to upload.

Check your PDF file to see if the fonts are embedded. Select File > Document Properties > Fonts. Every font listed should say (embedded) or (embedded subset) [an embedded subset includes only those characters actually used]. If they all say that, then you're fine; if any do not, then you need to try one or more of the following:

Solutions:

1. Change the settings on the software that generated the PDF file. Most programs have a box to select called "Embed all fonts." Sometimes, however, there is a further menu that includes "Never embed ..." and this overrides the first box. If you are using Adobe Acrobat, these are in the Preferences > Output module menus.

2. Re-distill the PDF file. With Adobe Acrobat (and its settings on "Embed all fonts" and the "Never embed .." list empty, and the fonts used available on the computer you are using) "print" the PDF file to a new PDF file. This will embed fonts that were previously not embedded.

3. Email me the file and I will email you back an embedded version. (Unless you have some weird character set that I don't have available.) email = proyster@unl.edu

Note: The leading cause of fonts not embedded—even though "Embed all fonts" is selected—is the presence of artwork (charts, graphs, etc.) containing type that was generated from a program other than MS Word (e.g., Excel), Word tends not to embed the fonts for those, and this often causes the problem.

3. Page numbers appearing on pages where they're not allowed.

Page numbers (known as "folios") should not appear on title pages or abstract pages. In MS Word, it is not always easy to prevent them from being there.

Solution:

1. Change the text color to white, which will make them disappear (in MS Word). Be careful that this does not affect pages where page numbers should appear.

2. Use the "Text Touch-up" tool in Adobe Acrobat (in a PDF file) to delete them or replace them with spaces.

3. Use the "Text box" tool in Adobe Acrobat (in a PDF file) to cover them with a white box. This tool may be found in the "Advanced editing" menu (depending on your version of Acrobat).

Other issues:

File too gigantic

If you have photos, size them to the approximate final size before you insert them in your Word file. Resolution higher than 300 dpi is just wasting bytes. Use files in .jpg format when possible; set the jpg compression on "high" (not "maximum").

Pagination reflows from MS Word to PDF version

Adobe and Microsoft do not agree on how to measure space, so sometimes what fits in Word does not fit in PDF, and this creates lines carried over which can accumulate to add (or reduce) pages. To help prevent this:

- Start new pages (such as chapter openings) with a "Start new page" command (Ctrl + Enter), not by adding multiple lines to the end of the preceding chapter.
- Place your pictures at the top of a new page (not in the middle), with a start new page command beforehand.
- Don't include every section subhead in the Table of Contents (unless you have to). This makes for messy problems if you do experience minor re-flow.

Acrobat vs. Reader

Adobe **Reader** is not the same as Adobe **Acrobat**. "Reader" will open, display, and copy from PDF files, but it will not create or manipulate them. Reader is a free product, downloadable from Adobe.

Adobe **Acrobat** is a software that will create, manipulate, and (to some extent) edit PDF files. It is sold by Adobe.

Where to find Adobe Acrobat

Adobe Acrobat is installed on computers in the Digital Media Lab in Love Library where it can be used on a walk-in basis.

The Love Library Digital Media Lab is open the same hours as Love Library (although it closes 15 minutes before the building does). Please check updates on Love Library hours for holidays and other closings.

Media Services, room 201 Hours
Monday - Thursday: 8 AM - 11:45 PM
Friday: 8 AM - 7:45 PM
Saturday: 9 AM - 4:45 PM
Sunday: 12 NOON - 11:45 PM

If all else fails …

Contact Paul Royster for help
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office: 306 Love Library

I will help generate a PDF from your file, embed your fonts, combine pages into correct order, eliminate unwanted page numbers, etc., etc., …