PDF files – How do I create one?

It's becoming more and more common these days to email digital versions of drawings.   Some firms are now sending .PDF (Adobe Acrobat) versions of drawings to Lawyers and other non technical clients. This is good because the recipient (i.e. lawyer) doesn't need to have any CAD software. Also, all of the line and text weights are retained as in the original hard copy, paper version. The .PDF format can be viewed using the Acrobat Reader program, which can be downloaded free from the internet by anyone. You can download a free copy from this link, if you do not already have it: http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html?promoid=BUIGO. Your client can even print the document on his local printer, if required, and get the exact same printed copy as you could have supplied him (without any stamps or signatures of course). So how do we get our programs to create a .PDF file?

Some of you may have located a command under the File menu called Export to File. This does have an option to export to a PDF file format BUT it does NOT maintain the correct lineweights for the entities, compared to the paper prints you have created. This is not the best way to create a PDF file, and not really recommended by us.

There is a **MUCH** better way to accomplish this task. To get a PDF file to look exactly the same as your printed output – we need to print the drawing to a PDF file. This way you are doing exactly the same steps as you would to print to paper, you just need to choose a printer driver that creates a PDF file, instead of the normal printer you would send it to.
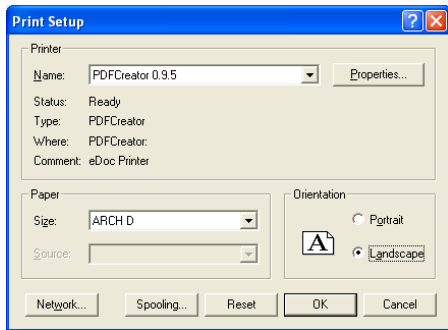
There are many free printer drivers out on the internet that will generate a PDF file for you instead of printing to paper. Some of the drivers you may find are; PDF995, CutePDF, PrimoPDF, PDFCreator and many others. The driver that we tend to currently recommend to our users is called PDFCreator. PDFCreator can be downloaded from the following web-site: http://www.pdfforge.org/products/pdfcreator.

From the above web-site, follow the options and prompts to Download the driver, and then follow their instructions to install the driver on your computer.
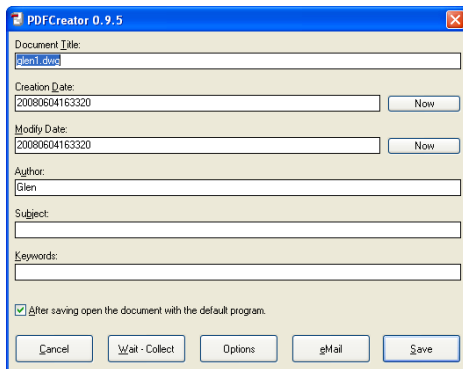
Key Features of PDFCreator:

- Create PDFs from any program that is able to print
- Security: Encrypt PDFs and protect them from being opened, printed etc.
- Send generated files via eMail
- Create more than just PDFs: PNG, JPG, TIFF, BMP, PCX, PS, EPS
- AutoSave files to folders and filenames based on Tags like Username, Computername, Date, Time etc.
- Merge multiple files into one PDF
- Easy Install: Just say what you want and everything is installed
- Terminal Server: PDFCreator also runs on Terminal Servers without problems
- And the best: PDFCreator is free, even for commercial use! It is Open Source and released under the Terms of the GNU General Public License.

Once the PDFCreator Driver is installed you can print to it just like you would to your local printer/plotter, from any program, including MicroSurvey CAD and MapScenes (any version of either program). From inside our MicroSurvey CAD or MapScenes program, run the print command as you normally would, picking the portion of the drawing to print, set your drawing scale, set the .CTB file to control the line weights, and so on. Basically do exactly what you would do, to print a copy to paper – **with 1 exception**. We need to tell it to use the PDFCreator driver instead of the print/plot driver you would normally use to go to paper. You need to go to the Printer Setup button and select the PDFCreator driver beside the Name option (as seen below)(the version number may change over time).
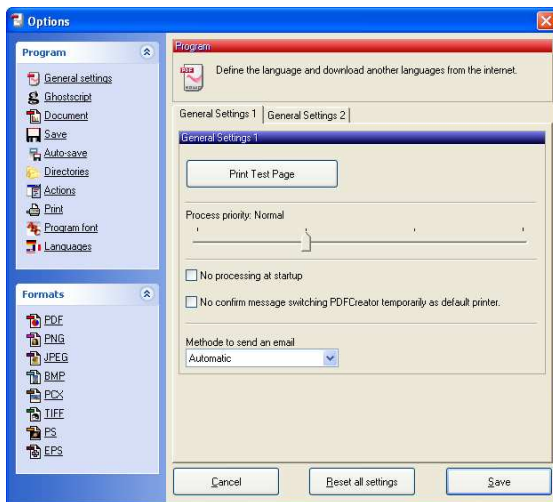
Then you can select the desired Paper size and Orientation. Pick OK to return to the print dialog, and complete the print as normal.

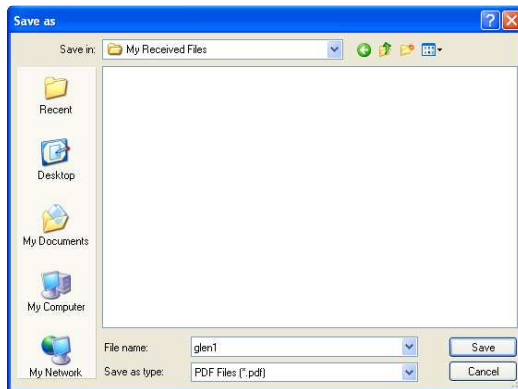You will then see the following dialog come up.

If you pick on the Options dialog you will see the dialog shown below.

For normal operation of the driver to create a PDF file you do <u>NOT</u> need to pick on the options button. But if you do go in there, it will provide you with the ability to save your file to other formats as well as PDF (which is the default), along with many other options (see the manufacturer's web-site for FAQ and other information options). Feel free to experiment, when you have time.

For simple PDF file creation (Typical normal operation), just pick on the SAVE button and give it the desired folder to save the PDF file to and a file name to give it and pick Save again.

Then you are done! It is that easy!

You now have a PDF file on your hard drive, in the folder you specified, with the name you provided.

If you have a copy of Adobe Acrobat Reader already installed on your computer, the document will automatically open in the reader, so you can see and inspect your final output!

Your PDF file can then be attached to an email or copied to a CD or USB Drive, etc., and provided to your client.

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