

Computer Assisted Instruction (CAI): Adobe Acrobat Professional

Why did I choose Adobe Acrobat?

I chose **Adobe Acrobat Professional** to learn more about converting documents into PDF, adding bookmarks and the creation of accessible files. I am also curious about the creation of form fillable documents, adding video within the document and using stamps and anchors within the various pages.

For each step of the process I created a Captivate video to show how I enhanced the booklet. The Captivate videos are a bit grainy, as I had to rescale a bit to fit in the window.

Adobe Acrobat Professional has the capacity to add/create:

1. [bookmarks](#),
2. video,
3. audio,
4. comments,
5. [stamps](#),
6. anchors,
7. print/email functionality,
8. forms,
9. images, and
10. tagging

My current working knowledge of PDF's (portable document format) is rather simple; I use the "print" function (from within Word), to create a PDF, save then post to a website.

Project Details

For this assignment, I am going to convert a paper that I wrote in MDDE604 and then start adding to it based on the functionality found within Acrobat. The document is called the "Transnational Immigration Funding Proposal" and it contains 14 pages.

The Process

The first step was to convert my document from a Word file to a PDF. The process was simple, after opening the Adobe Acrobat software I selected:

- create » PDF from file
- browsed to the file that I wanted to convert, and
- clicked Open

PDF can be used to convert images, PowerPoint presentations, Excel spreadsheets and HTML documents.

Bookmarking and Links

The first step was to **create bookmarks** within the document.

A **bookmark** is an anchor or placeholder within the document that allows users to select a link and jump to that page. It can also act as a Table of Contents for the PDF.

[Steps to creating a bookmark](#)

With my newly converted PDF open, I went into the **View Menu, Navigation Panels** and selected **Bookmarks**. A side panel opened up and there were 5 icons:

1. pages
2. bookmarks
3. signatures
4. comments
5. attachments

Hovering over each of the icons found in the tabs, one said bookmark. There are two ways to create bookmarks. The first is to select the New Bookmark icon in the navigation window and type in a name. The second is to change your cursor to the Select tool, highlight the text, right mouse click and select Add Bookmark.

Remember, you will need to make sure that the page you want to create a bookmark for is viewable in your workspace area. If you create a bookmark and the wrong page is open you will have to go in and change this.

After repeating this process for the whole booklet, I selected the first bookmark to see what happened. Sure enough, the link went to the page that I had bookmarked. I then went through all of the other bookmarks, adjusted as necessary and saved my document.

Tips

- You can resize your page to 150% or 200%, create a bookmark and when selected the page will enlarge from normal size to the size that you viewed it at.
- Creates an excellent Table of Contents

Sticky Notes and Stamps

A **comment** is where a user can insert suggestions or notes that can be sent back to the originator (of the file) for review.

[Steps to inserting comments](#)

Within the **Comment and Markup** toolbar, I selected **Add Sticky Note** (these are defined as comments) and a yellow comment box appeared. I typed in my comments and once finished, clicked outside of the comment box and moved the small yellow comments tag to the place where I needed the comment to be found.

After inserting a few comments, I also played around with the **Cloud tool, Stamps, Callout tool, Rectangle tool,** and **Text box tool**. I also highlighted some text within the document and inserted an **Audio comment**. This feature only shows up within the **Comments Menu** under:

- Comment and Markup Tools »
- Record Audio Comment

It does not appear as an icon on the toolbar.

If you want to **view all of your comments**, there is a icon within your **left hand navigational pane** that looks like two talking bubbles. If you click once on this, it will open up to **view all of your comments, audio and text**.

Adding Graphics and a Video

I was completely amazed at Acrobat's ability to **add video** and graphics without having to link the video to an outside source such as a web server. All images, video and audio are **directly embedded** within the document; this is ideal especially if you do not have web server space or understand how to use a content management system.

[Steps to adding graphics](#)

In order to **insert a graphic** you need to open up the Advanced editing toolbar and select the **Touch up Object Tool**. Place your cursor over your document and right mouse click. This will bring up a menu that allows you to “**place [an] image**”. Select this and you can now browse for your image and insert it. It’s really that simple!

This tool will also **delete graphics** that are within the document.

Steps to adding a video

To add an **embedded video**, you will need to open Tools » Multimedia » and select 1 of the four options given:

1. 3D Tool
2. Flash Tool
3. Sound Tool
4. **Video Tool**

With the Video Tool selected, you can either **double click or draw a marquee** on your document to insert a video. Once you have created a space to insert your video, a dialogue box will open up asking you to browse for your video file. You can add **.avi files** or if you have a Flash video, select the Flash Tool instead and insert a **.swf or .flv**.

I inserted a small video that I made using my webcam – it’s rather hilarious!

I also inserted a Flash file that had an **embedded player** attached to it. Not only did the video play, but the player itself worked directly inside the PDF, amazing!

Adding Articles

Adding an Article is a bit misleading as the tool does not directly allow you to add an article, but instead **link from one paragraph section** to another. This is helpful when you have a booklet that has an article that carries over to another page; one that is not directly located on the next page but instead 3 or 4 pages later.

The article tool also **zooms in on the section** that you are reading. I had the document at 66.7%, when I clicked on the section that I had linked, it zoomed out to 188%. Once I was finished reading the article

and “jumping” to the other articles, it reduces back to 100% and allows you to continue viewing the rest of the document.

I have made links to 2 articles.

[Steps to adding article links](#)

Within your Advanced editing toolbar select the **Article tool** that looks like a red squiggle with an arrow at the bottom. Zoom out on your document and find a section that you want to have the user read first, **drag and create a marquee around the paragraph** and scroll down to find another section. I chose 2 separate pages to show the jumping feature.

Once you have **finished joining up your articles**, press the **Enter key**. You will then be prompted to label this article otherwise it will call it untitled.

You can also add the article icon to your left navigation pane along with your bookmarks and comments.

I have created 2 links, one called Pre-screen and the other is called Evaluation. By selecting one or the other it will automatically enlarge the paragraph and allow you to read it. At the bottom of the section if you click on it, it will jump to the other section that is connected to it so that you can read more!

Creating Forms

Since I did not have a form within the booklet that I have been working in, I [created a form](#) that asks users to send me an email submission.

The form has 4 text areas that a user can fill out, they are:

1. Name,
2. Email address,
3. Subject, and
4. Message

I also created a **print button**; however an email button could just as easily been inserted.

Each button, text box, check box, radio button, list box, and combo box has an area that allows for the designer to **insert a tooltip** and create a label for those **users with disabilities**. In fact, if you have a

Word document that has been created, and you convert it to a form, it will find the fields for you automatically!

There is one bit of information that I found invaluable. Let's say you want to create a form and want the user to be able to save their information within the form for later use. You need to select:

- The Advanced menu
- Extend features in Adobe Reader

Once you turn this feature on, your user can save and print off at a later time.

Critique of the Adobe Acrobat Computer Assisted Instruction (CAI) from StudioEworks

This critique will be on StudioEworks, a software training company dedicated to providing learners with comprehensive coaching through Computer Assisted Instruction (CAI). Their software can be viewed on both Macintosh and Personal Computer (PC) and range from basic to advanced techniques. Their website is located at: <http://studioeworks.com/>.

The software that I trained on was entitled Adobe Acrobat Professional 8, a tool that allows users to turn files such as a PowerPoint, Word or Excel into documents that retain their formatting, functionality and integrity – thus allowing for extensive document reviews, booklet creation and form management.

Benefits

The benefits of learning from a CAI are unique; it allows the user the ability to review, rewind and replay sections of the tutorial as needed. If a user is hesitant in learning a software program this type of instruction is beneficial as it allows the learner to see and work through all of the functionality *first* without fumbling through or working within the program cold turkey.

Another benefit is that if the learner requires more instruction on a specific technique within the software program they can jump to the section immediately, they do not have to wait for the CD-Rom to work its way through until that section appears. While a search function was not apparent, there is an index page within the CD-Rom that lists all of the keywords that the learner can scroll through.

Detriments

The detriments of learning via CIA are that there is no way for the learner to ask questions or safely “play” in the environment to practice what they have just been taught. While the understanding is to download and install the software (if the user has not done so) after the CAI is finished, if the learner wants to learn and watch at the same time, toggling between two software programs on a single monitor can be extremely frustrating if not time consuming. It also does not go beyond the functionality of the software, such as *why is the program important*, which for some learners is just as important as the learning itself.

My Thoughts

Initially I just wanted to jump right in and start using the program; however I noticed quickly that there were gaps in my own learning such as understanding the full menu system and all of Adobe Acrobat’s editing features. I very rarely learn via CAI, I prefer to install software and start immediately by clicking on all of the menus and testing each function thoroughly. I find that using a CAI is restrictive to my learning and thinking process; if I need to access or find more information on a specific technique, I usually just Google™ it. For me finding information on a blog or listserv where users have experienced a similar problem or workaround is much more beneficial than having the blanket “this will work if you...” approach.

After putting the CD-Rom into the computer, the show began and immediately I was distracted by the commenter’s voice. I was not comfortable listening to him, nor did I like the pace of the instruction. However, after a few minutes I began to dull out his voice and really listen to what he was saying and soon realized that the slow pace was very necessary in order for me to wrap my head around the concepts that he was explaining. I found it beneficial to rewind parts of the CD-Rom if I was confused or needed to listen again as I went through it a few times.

The CD-Rom was broken up in small modules and within those modules, sectioned to refer to specific techniques. This was useful since I can become bored quickly and skip ahead. The timing of the modules was short enough to keep my interest, however I did not see any timing mechanism attached. After I had finished the CAI, I went through the quiz (which was good) but noticed that there were words that I was not sure of, like stemming.

All in all, I believe that using a CAI can be beneficial to learners especially those who like to see how things are done first before they jump into the software and start working on a project. A good CAI needs to anticipate the learner's next steps so that as they are learning about the process, learners are asking themselves questions and having them answered.