

NovaPDF Professional V 5.4 Review

by Lynn Page

Introduction

novaPDF by Softland allows you to create documents in PDF file format, by simply selecting the Print command from nearly all applications. The novaPDF Printer is a virtual print driver for Windows that creates PDF files instead of printing on paper. This lets you share documents easily, independent of the application in which they were created. The documents can be opened and read in any PDF viewer.

novaPDF is available in three editions for desktop and server uses:

novaPDF Lite Desktop provides the functionality of a printer driver, for creation of searchable PDF files. It provides predefined or customize page settings and a resolution between 72 dpi to 2400 dpi.

novaPDF Standard Desktop adds options to compress graphics to reduce PDF file size, define and add watermarks, set page margins, zoom, embed fonts and create private profiles.

novaPDF Professional Desktop adds encryption and the ability to control what viewers can do with the PDF file. It also allows you to create PDF links and add bookmarks based on headings in the printed document. novaPdf can automatically send the PDF file via email.

The novaPDF Server editions add networking capabilities.

The novaPDF editions range from \$19.95 to \$39.95 and are available by download from the novapdf.com web site. Prior to licensing a "created with" notice is printed at the bottom of the PDF file.

Overview

novaPDF is one of the available PDF converters. I have used Adobe Acrobat 7, Microsoft Office 2007 publish to PDF and two other PDF applications, one of which is a PDF printer.

I have novaPDF Professional Version 5.4 and found it is a straightforward, reliable and economical way to produce PDF files. Downloading and installation are simple and quick. Figuring out how to enter my licensing data took longer. After purchasing novaPDF you receive a license key. To register the license you need to go to Control Panel and then Printers or directly to Printers in Vista. Right click on the novaPDF printer and select Properties. In the novaPDF Properties dialog box select the About tab and click the Register button. Then input your Registration name and key and click OK.

After installation you're ready to print/convert to PDF. Almost any program that can print through the Windows printer interface can print to PDF. This is how novaPDF converts your files to PDF. I printed from Microsoft Access, Excel, Outlook, PowerPoint, Word, Publisher, and Internet Explorer. I printed reports in Access, a selection from an Excel spreadsheet, mail messages and the list of contacts from

Outlook and complete files from PowerPoint, Word and Publisher as PDF files without any problems. It truly was as simple as using the Print command and selecting the novaPDF printer. Creating PDF files from Internet Explorer took a little time. The difficulty was not with novaPDF but with my security settings on Internet Explorer 7. To print with novaPDF, I had to turn protected Mode Off. I had no difficulty printing PDF files from Safari web browser. I also printed photos to a PDF file directly from Windows Explorer with Vista's print pictures function.

You will need a PDF viewer like Adobe's Reader to view your PDF files after conversion. novaPDF, as a printer, creates the files but does not display or read them.

Features

I looked at several of the features that make novaPDF more than a simple print/conversion tool. It really lets you take advantage of many features offered with PDF files. You can choose a default folder in which you save all of your PDFs or do as I do and specify a location for each individual file. After the PDF is created and saved, it opens in the default PDF viewer. novaPDF offers options for creating the PDF file, including predefined and custom paper size, resolution from 72 to 2400 dpi, portrait and landscape orientation, scale, image compression, font embedding and PDF security.

Searchable

Your PDF files are fully searchable. You can search and extract text from the files with Adobe Reader or another PDF viewer.

Bookmarks

novaPDF can detect headings in the document and add bookmarks in the PDF file. You have to define the text attributes for the document headings. This means that you need to define the font, size, style, and color. This might not seem difficult but with all of the neat themes in Office 2007 it was time consuming. With my older documents which used various sizes of Arial with bold and italic as headings it was easy to set bookmarks.

You select and set novaPDF's options/features in printer properties. To set bookmarks on the bookmarks tab check the Enable bookmark detection check box. Checking allow multiline bookmarks allows detection of bookmarks on consecutive lines. The list view shows predefined bookmarks. The Add button lets you define and add a new bookmark at the end of the list. This is where you need to define and add the text properties of your document headings. Modify an existing bookmark with the Edit button, the Copy button puts a copy of the selected definition at the end of the list and the Delete button removes the selected definition from the list.

Security

You can secure your PDF documents using 40-bit or 128-bit encryption and control access with passwords for opening, printing, copying text and graphics or editing the PDF files.

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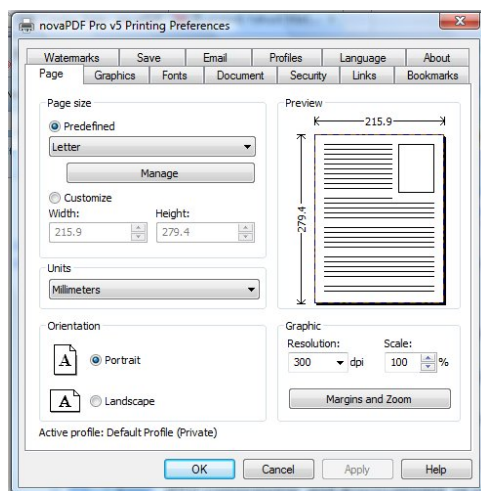
To ensure portability novaPDF can embed fonts in the PDF file. You can choose to embed only font subsets and reduce PDF file size. If you use characters not in the standard character set, this is an important step. That way special characters are included in the PDF file.

Compression

novaPDF can compress the generated PDF files with zip compression. Images can be compressed using JPEG compression, down sampled or converted to grayscale. You choose a compression level for all of the compression methods.

Print Preferences

The Printing Preferences dialog box is where you specify novaPDF settings. All of the options you need to control the features I have mentioned and all other novaPDF features are grouped on tabs.



On the Page tab you select a page size and orientation, set the resolution and scale. The Graphics tab lets you to compress, down sample or convert text and images to reduce the PDF file size. Use the Fonts tab to embed fonts in the PDF file. The Document tab controls settings for PDF document information and how the PDF document will be opened by the PDF viewer. On the Security tab you set a level of encryption protected by a password restricting document permissions. Set automatic detection of visible links and customize their appearance in the PDF file on the Links tab. The Bookmarks tab is where you enable and specify how to detection bookmarks in the original document. You can add image watermarks on the PDF pages on the Watermarks tab. The Save tab is where you define options for saving the PDF file. Choose where to save the PDF file and if all PDF files will be automatically saved to the location or if you will select a save location each time.

To send the PDF file via email when it is generated enable the option, select delivery method and configure the email on the Email tab. Specify if the PDF file will be first compressed and the zip file attached to the email. You can use your default email program or specify one to use to email the file and configure the email.

Conclusions

If you don't have a PDF creation application novaPDF is a good choice. You don't need to learn a complicated program. All you have to do is to click Print from an application and choose novaPDF to create PDF files. But if you need to use some of the features available for PDF files novaPDF can do that too. Add watermarks, set bookmarks, control file size with compression and set security parameters all within the print properties. You have options letting you modify paper size, print resolution, and page orientation. novaPDF's ability to automatically detect links in a document and include them as clickable links in the PDF file is a useful feature.

So for the price you can't beat novaPDF. Whether you just want to simply print/convert files to PDF or need more advanced features there is a version of novaPDF that should suit your needs. If you don't have a PDF creation application you really need to consider the benefits.

Adobe PDF is a universal file format that preserves the fonts, images, graphics, and layout of your document, regardless of the application, hardware and operating system. You don't have to worry about losing all of the work you have put into formatting a document when you share it with friends or family. Your PDF files can be shared, viewed, and printed by anyone with a PDF viewer. Another benefit is that PDF files are compact. I looked at the size of the Word document that I generated for my novaPDF review and the resulting PDF file. The PDF version is less than 20% of the size of the word document.