

Larkware

We get up early so that you don't have to.

Review: novaPDF

novaPDF v2, starting at \$19.95

Softland

Cluj-Napoca, Romania

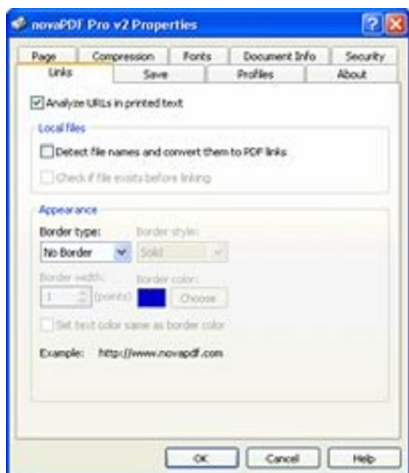
0040-364-401337

<http://www.novapdf.com/index.php>

novaPDF is a product that allows you to create Adobe Acrobat files (OK, PDF files) the easy way: by just printing from any application. That is, it installs a printer driver that intercepts the output from your applications, converts it to PDF format, and redirects it to a file. It's far from the only product to take this approach (indeed, I've linked to others from time to time), but after working with it for a while, I think that Softland did a pretty good job of hitting the sweet spot: novaPDF produces reasonable-quality output, has a good (but not overwhelming) number of options, and best of all for developers, it can be controlled via COM so you can use it as part of a larger solution.

The \$19.95 Lite edition has all the basic features: adjustable page sizes, resolution from 72dpi to 2400dpi, document scaling, the ability to set the PDF document properties, and image embedding. Step up to the \$29.95 Standard edition and you also get text and graphics compression plus font embedding. The \$39.95 Professional edition adds encryption, document security, and the ability to auto-detect URLs in your document and turn them into PDF Links - something I haven't seen in many other products.

In addition, there's the novaPDF SDK. This is a free download that adds the COM interface as well as a "silent" installer, so you can piggyback novaPDF along with your own applications. It also includes code samples in C#, C++, and Delphi. The licensing for the SDK is unique: if you're only using it to drive other licensed copies of novaPDF, there's no charge for the SDK. Otherwise, you can buy a \$499 application license that lets you distribute the works to an unlimited number of users as part of a single application; additional applications can be added to your license at a discounted rate.



All in all, it's a good bit of functionality at a good price - and the downloads are under 1.5MB for the product and about 3MB for the SDK, so you can try it out with little effort - trial versions are available at the Web site.

[Mike Gunderloy](#) is the lead developer for LarkWare and author of numerous books and articles on programming topics.

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