

**NovaPDF Pro**  
**<http://www.novapdf.com>**  
***Reviewed December 2006***

### What's it do?

NovaPDF is a PDF creator for Windows that allows you to easily create professional quality documents in industry-standard PDF file format. It enables use of PDF bookmarks, PDF links, shared network printing, public profiles, PDF resolution, PDF information, compression, security, private profiles, and more.

### Does it Do What It Promises?

**Reviewer 1:** This program has been installed on my computer for several months. To my computer, it appears as another printer. You will find it in the Start Menu > Settings > Printers and Faxes, or Control Panel > Printers and Faxes. When I print a document from any application, novaPDF Pro appears as one of the printers that I can select. If I choose novaPDF, a dialog box appears asking me to give the file a name. NovaPDF suggests a possible name, based on the content of the file or on the application itself. When I save the file, the default pdf reader installed on my computer (e.g. Adobe Acrobat Reader, or Foxit Reader) opens, and the file is displayed. From there, I use it as any other pdf file; for example, as an email attachment, requiring only that the recipient have a pdf reader.

**Reviewer 2:** Yes. On the Web site, the program is advertised as being a "PDF creator". The program does a lot, but it doesn't create PDF files from scratch. It converts other file formats to PDF instead. In my book that's not what creation is. Otherwise, what the Web site promises, you get.

**Reviewer 3:** Yes. NovaPDF works as a virtual printer and allows you to convert to, save, and print in PDF (Adobe Acrobat or Portable Document Format) format any Windows application that supports printing. You can easily create industry standard PDF files from any printable document, including emails, MS Office and Word documents, web pages, text, and so on.

**Reviewer 4:** Yes, it does. NovaPDF promises to convert window files to PDF format, enabling manipulation and easy reading. Think of NovaPDF as intercepting and converting a file intended for printing (whether to a printer or a file) to the PDF format, thereby making it readable by a wide array of recipients, using this universally-accepted format.

### Was It Easy To Install?

**Reviewer 1.** Yes, the installation followed the standard Windows installation either in a default location or a folder of your choice. You can select it as your default printer. You can also choose to install it in 14 different languages. Installation took less than one minute on a Pentium 4, with 512 MB RAM. The EULA (End User's Licence Agreement) grants use on only one computer. You have an unlimited period of time to evaluate it, but a note will be placed on any document you print. Some fonts may not get "embedded" without a license from the font owner; to embed these fonts, the user would have to contact the font owner, and purchase a license for those particular fonts. The prices for all license types of the novaPDF program are on the Web site.

**Reviewer 2:** Installation was easy., but I had to look around in order to register the program. It's well-hidden in the properties menu for the printer driver. This information I found after looking in the help file.

**Reviewer 3:** Yes. The very small 3.90MB program downloads and installs quickly and uneventfully using its own, but typical, Windows-type installation wizard with the standard choices as to location, etc.

**Reviewer 4:** Yes, installation was flawless. It is a small (~3 MB), quick download, taking up about 10 MB drive space. I experienced no problems with any aspect of the installation process.

### Good Points.

**Reviewer 1:** NovaPDF has successfully printed every kind of document that I have sent its way, from dozens of different applications and programs, including documents, spreadsheets, graphics, photos, screen-captures, and many other specialized programs. In a couple of cases, it produced results when other print-spooler programs failed to work properly. I have found only one program that did not work, and that is a very old one. It is extremely fussy anyway, so I do not fault novaPDF at all for this particular hiccup. One of the great advantages of the files created by novaPDF, unlike some other pdf converters that I have used, is that the documents are "searchable." I have a desktop search program installed on my computer and it indexes the pdf documents created by novaPDF. The support is excellent. In the rare instances that I sent in a support request, I received a quick response, and they dealt with any questions that I had. In fact, I did not need any real technical aid, as the program did not create any particular problems. In addition, (to quote from the Web site): "As a novaPDF user you are entitled to free customer support, even if you are using the unregistered version." This suggests that the authors really do believe in their product.

**Reviewer 2:** NovaPDF is one of many converters on the market. I've tried quite a few over the last few years and NovaPDF is one of the better ones. Since I live outside the US, it is not unusual to encounter problems with this kind of application as far as converting text from languages that use diacritical marks in the alphabet. NovaPDF doesn't seem to have any problems with non-US characters. You can select text in the converted PDF document and copy it to clipboard, as in an unprotected PDF document from Acrobat. The help file is excellent and I found answers to almost all my questions there. Since NovaPDF is geared to converting MSOffice documents, I tried it using all the applications I had access to: (1) In a Word document, I printed (converted) a Word 2003 document consisting of tables, picture, graphic (logo in jpg) and a WordArt picture. The document converted OK with the exception of the WordArt document (see Weak Points below.) Tables and borders printed well, but the border shading looked strange in the converted PDF document on the screen. A Word document with a logo printed well as did a document with tables containing images. Large graphics in a Word document printed well and shrunk considerably to almost a tenth of the size. (2) Using PowerPoint, I converted an extremely large file 1,85 MB (280 slides) perfectly, but grew considerably in size to 5.8 MB. Some slides needed a little adjusting before converting (text was a little off after conversion, but only in very few places). It was easy to fix this and convert again. (3) With Publisher, I tried several documents, both one-page and documents of considerable length. There was no problem at all. (4) For Excel documents, I converted several and only one with radio buttons didn't convert or print properly. (5) With regard to Firefox and Internet Explorer, see weak points about printing Web pages, especially frames. If the page is optimized for printing, NovaPDF will convert it correctly. (6) Using Visio, I was able to convert a complicated drawing without any problems. (7) With MS Office 2007 documents, I encountered no problems at all.

**Reviewer 3:** Let's start with saving \$409.05! Instead of paying \$449.00 for Acrobat Reader Professional, you can pay \$39.95 for the Pro version of Nova PDF and do nearly everything the Adobe product will do and you can do it with a 3.90 MB download rather than the massive 273MB download, and with approximately 90% less computer resources. Nova PDF Pro has all of the standard features you would expect from such an application: creation of standard PDF files, searchable files, security and document protection through passwords and encryption, network printer sharing, PDF bookmarks, and so on. Additionally, PDF Pro supports both True Type and

Open Type fonts, and embedding of those fonts (which means you do not need to distribute your font separately) and supports Jpeg and Zip compression to allow you to generate smaller files. A few features that I thought were especially useful and not always found on these non-Adobe PDF applications were the number of options that allow you to modify paper size, print resolution, and page orientation. I was especially pleased with its ability to automatically detect links in a document and include them as clickable links. PDF Pro simply sits silently as a device driver or additional printer in your print applet, consuming zero resources until you decide to use it. It does not lodge itself in your auto start, it does not insinuate itself in your system tray, it doesn't install a running process to constantly call home for updates. It simply remains silent and unobtrusive until called upon. Then, when put into action, it still uses very few resources-so few in fact that you will notice no effect on your system whatsoever. Nova PDF Pro supports seventeen languages, comes in three flavors, Lite, Pro, and SDK-a server edition upgrade. It's EULA (End User License Agreement), while limiting you to one license per computer, is one of the most straightforward agreements I have seen. You can actually read it and understand it without need of a corporate attorney. While at first glance, support seems to be lacking in that it is only available through email with no turn around time indicated; however, I contacted support on two separate occasions and in each instance I received a response within two hours. If that is a standard response time, then their support is phenomenal. Both responses were to the point, easily understood, and addressed the issue with no need for follow up. In addition, there is an adequate help file that you can access through the application as well as a very thorough FAQ on the Web site. Because of this and my two direct experiences, I have no qualms about support for this product and, in fact, give support high praise. Overall, Nova PDF Pro performed flawlessly for me and produced more than reasonable quality output for every document type I through at it. Because of this, its excellent feature set, ease of use, and support allows me to recommend this product without hesitation.

**Reviewer 4:** I found this program easy to pick up and apply. Though having many diverse capabilities, finding the way around was not difficult. This application enables you to easily convert files to the common PDF format for a wide variety of files. I found this most helpful for those I commonly use or soon will: ebook to email (including their attachments) and for use in Web pages or for downloads from Firefox, Windows Explorer, and programs such as Open Office and Microsoft Word. It was also useful in every other Windows application I tried and it provided ZIP and JPG compression as well. Destination files can be further labeled with date and time, so it is easy to tell similar or identical files apart. An effective search tool is provided, to help quickly find files, and a bookmark system provide additional ease of use. For the security conscious, passwording is a nice feature (128 bit, the highest commonly available and equal to present DOD standards, I believe). You may also forbid users to perform specific tasks with a file, such as reading, amending or copying it. I detected no discernible slowing of my system. This appears to be an efficient and economical program considering the variety of well-written features. For creation functions, novaPDF will perform many of the chores of Adobe (but a smaller variety available, with much less bulk, clunkyness and expense.) This application runs quietly in the background until evoked. You should bear in mind though that no Reader is provided, so you will need Adobe Reader, Foxit Reader (my preference) or another program for this purpose. The use can control the expanded array of printer settings and select and save many printer settings such as margins, size, color, quality of print, etc. As well as the more esoteric ones, there are various profiles for different applications. Multiple settings can be saved by profile, making short work of recall and re-use of the settings that will vary by uses and users. These properties can be applied to multiple (but not shared) printers. Many common languages are available (the developer claims 17).

### Weak Points.

**Reviewer 1.** As the program appears to the computer as a printer, it is not obvious where you can access all the advanced functions, such as fonts, compression, setting passwords, enabling bookmarks, and so on. To do this, you have to go to Printers and Faxes in the Start Menu or to

the Control Panel > Printers and Faxes. Once you have found the novaPDF Printer, you have to right-click on it, and select Properties. From there, you have to click on the Advanced tab, then Printing Defaults. You will find the Help button under the About Tab in the same Properties Dialog box. Because these options are not really readily available, I did not notice two different upgrades to the program in the past few months. I saw the upgrades when I was on the Web site, but otherwise would not have known of them at all. As it would be quite difficult to include an upgrade function in the program itself, perhaps the developers could send an email notification to all registered users when any update becomes available.

**Reviewer 2:** In a WordArt document, every letter was covered by a blue square, rendering the document unusable. I sent an email to the company and received a prompt reply explaining that MS Word sends multiple images that override each other and that NovaPDF cannot combine these images. After installing Version 4 of the application, some WordArt came out OK, but far from everything. This is a weak point considering that other competing products can convert WordArt without any problem. Some dialog windows are cut off at the bottom, making the lower portion unreadable. This could be my graphics card, but I doubt it, since the problem occurred on both my computers.

**Reviewer 3:** There are no serious glitches or "bugs" that I found in the program. In fact, there really were no weaknesses of any kind. It did exactly what it said it would do and did it consistently time after time. I would suggest only one improvement and this may be more a matter of user subjectivity or taste than anything else, but I would really like to see the program install an icon which would allow opening the GUI (graphic user interface) and setting options without opening up the Windows printer applet, and then right clicking on the device driver to open the necessary applet for options. Even more convenient would be for Nova PDF to provide the option to install a separate print key on the toolbar to allow for the above. It just seems an unnecessary (and somewhat cumbersome) procedure to make the user go through to access the excellent features of the program. I would also like to see a bit more leniency in the licensing agreement as today many if not most users have both a desktop PC and a laptop. Thus, allowing a purchaser to install and use the program on two computers if registered under the same name seems appropriate.

**Reviewer 4:** Neither of the following would even nearly cause me to have reservations about this program: Although there is a forum available, no postings have been made as of this writing. There is no FTP reader and this seems to be the norm for similar products; but I think this would be a nice addition for inbound files. I found the written help area somewhat lacking; for example, I think a "quick-start" section would be helpful.

#### Other Comments.

**Reviewer 1:** This is a very good product, The three editions: lite, standard and professional make it available to different users, based on their own particular needs. Even the advanced professional version is priced reasonably. For reasons that have to do with my own specific needs, I use one of the "competition" almost all the time. If that were not the case, though, this program would become my pdf creator of choice. And on occasion, I do turn to novaPDF over the other program, when some of the advanced functions offered here are not available in the other one.

**Reviewer 2:** If a Web page is optimized for printing, Nova PDF will convert and print it correctly. NovaPDF is one of many similar products on the market. It does the job well. The program is stable and doesn't seem to conflict with other applications.

**Reviewer 3:** Nova PDF is manufactured by Softland, a privately-held software development company founded in 1999 and located in Romania. Softland has an excellent reputation in the field of software development-attested to in part by their having survived in a highly competitive

market for over seven years-and is the same company that produced the excellent Backup4All backup program just recently reviewed by Neat Net Tricks. Their products are not the flashiest products on the market but they do seem, at least based on these two most recent products we have tested, to be rock-solid and well designed programs at a very fair price. And besides, as I said above, when you can save over \$400.00 what is there not to like?

**Reviewer 4:** Trial and registered versions seem identical, and both are supported by a help desk. This program is definitely worth at least a trial, then registration. NovaPDF is compatible with all Windows versions from Win 2000 and up, but to my knowledge, no Mac version is available. The product is well-behaved, versatile and effective, with good fidelity in conversions. What so clearly stood out to me was the support and seemingly interested concern the developer had in presenting a good product dedicated to future improvement. I received a response to my support request within two days, unusual in my experience. The developer actively solicits new ideas and improvements to his product and provides a link for input. That too is unusual. This is a quality product, reasonably priced, with terrific support, and I recommend it for novice and expert alike.

### Will You Continue To Use It?

**Reviewer 1:** Yes, I will, as a back-up to my regular pdf creator program.

**Reviewer 2:** Maybe once in a while, but probably not often. There are other applications (i.e. Nitro PDF) which offer many more options and features, (albeit at a higher price). For a good basic converter from MS Office documents to PDF, NovaPDF is as good if not better than most I've tried.

**Reviewer 3:** Yes. This has replaced another Adobe Acrobat clone that I had been using for several years.

**Reviewer 4:** Yes. NovaPDF's small footprint, ease of use, and accuracy make that an easy decision.

### OPERATING SYSTEMS USED IN THIS REVIEW Windows XP Pro, XP Home, XP Media Center

<http://www.neatnettricks.com>