

Acrobat Insider for AEC Professionals

Tips and Tricks for Adobe Acrobat 8.0

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The architect,
the engineer,
the builder,
flow as one.

Introducing Adobe Acrobat 8 Professional

Combine and package multiple files from multiple sources

by Michael Dakan

This edition of *Acrobat Insider for AEC* marks the beginning of our new series on Adobe® Acrobat® 8 software, the latest addition to the Acrobat family of products. For an overview of some of the new features in Acrobat 8, see *Cadalyst* magazine's [AEC Tech News #177](#) (published September 21, 2006).

As with past editions of the *Acrobat Insider* e-newsletter series, here we'll be looking primarily at features of the Professional version of the product. Adobe Acrobat 8 comes in several versions: Elements, Standard, Professional, and Acrobat 3D. Adobe Acrobat 8 Professional is the version most suitable for use by most AEC professionals for day-to-day work. Some of the procedures and features we'll discuss are also included in the Standard version of the software, and even in Adobe Acrobat 8 Elements, but the Professional version has several capabilities that were designed specifically with the AEC professional in mind.

We'll also look at changes in the free Adobe Reader® 8, so remind your users and viewers of Acrobat 8 files to get the free upgrade to Reader 8 so they can take advantage of the significant improvements and additional features in this new version. Adobe Reader 8 should be available on the [Adobe website](#) soon after Adobe Acrobat 8 starts shipping.

Combine and Package Documents

We'll begin our series on Acrobat 8 by talking about ways to combine, package, and distribute complete sets of documents as Adobe PDF files, including those created by different authoring applications, such as CAD programs, Microsoft Office applications (such as Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint), and raster and vector graphics programs. Most of the information about combining multiple files that we discussed for Acrobat 7 in [Acrobat Insider #3](#) is still applicable, but

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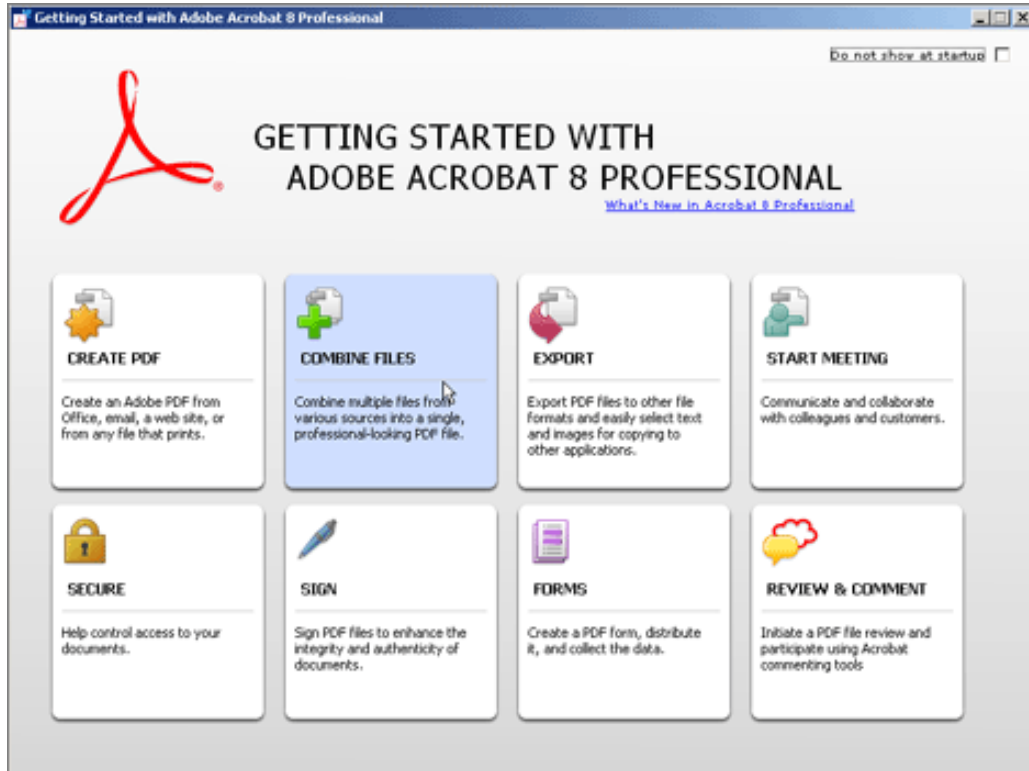
Congratulations to **Sherman O. Ferguson**, Adobe's Summer Contest winner. Submit your Success Story today about how Adobe Acrobat has helped you and your team work together better. You'll be entered into the Fall Contest for a chance to win a Sony PlayStation Portable and a \$100 gift card.

[IN THIS ISSUE](#)

Adobe Acrobat 8 Professional simplifies and

the user interface and procedures have been streamlined in Acrobat 8.

When you start Adobe Acrobat 8, you'll discover the **new user interface** and **Getting Started page**. This control panel gives you quick access to the most common tasks you may want to accomplish with Acrobat, such as creating a new PDF, combing files, and reviewing and marking up files. After you select the operation you want to perform in Acrobat, you're taken step by step through each action and presented with choices for various options, in wizard-like fashion.



The new Getting Started page gives you quick access to common tasks in Acrobat 8 Professional.

To combine multiple files and different file types into one multi-page Adobe PDF file, click the Combine Files panel. In the next file list selection box, click the Add Files button. Select the files you want to add, put them in the order you want them to appear in the PDF, and then click Next.

At this point, you can choose to combine the files into one PDF file or keep them separate in a PDF Package. (More about packages in a minute.) To combine files into one PDF, select Merge files into a single PDF. When you're ready, click the Create button. Conversion of common file types into PDF files happens automatically in most cases. For file types that aren't automatically converted, you may need to convert them into PDF files separately beforehand, using the Adobe PDF printer driver, or add them into the combined PDF file later, after conversion. That's it. Each individual file starts on a new page in the combined file, and a bookmark is automatically created for each one. (You can customize the bookmarks before the combined file is created.)

streamlines tasks with a new interface.

SUBMIT A TIP

At *Cadalyst*, we welcome your tips for AEC-specific uses of Acrobat 8 Professional. If your tip is published, you'll receive a *Cadalyst* t-shirt.*

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Have a question about Adobe Acrobat 8.0? A suggestion for a future edition of *Acrobat Insider*? Send it in; we'll address the most popular requests in upcoming issues.

LEARN MORE

Find out more about how the Adobe Acrobat family of products can streamline processes, help improve document security and more at the Adobe [AEC Web site](#).

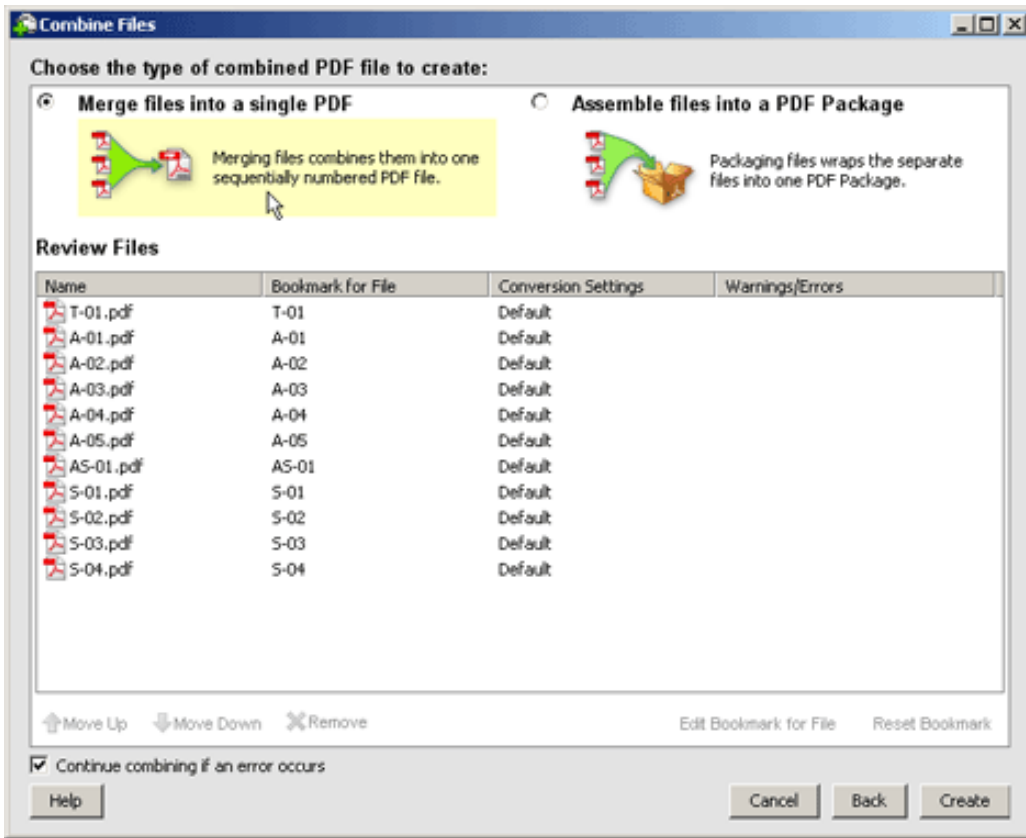
EXPERIENCE

ACROBAT 8

Learn how Acrobat 8 Professional can help you communicate and collaborate with confidence by visiting the [interactive demo](#). (Requires a high-speed connection.)



ACROBAT TIPS &



You can easily combine multiple files into a single PDF file.

Packages

One of the nice features in Adobe Acrobat 8 is a new Adobe PDF type called a **package**, which builds on the capabilities of attachments in previous versions. A package is essentially a PDF “wrapper” file that contains other files, preserving the integrity of each while enabling you to view, search, and print all the PDF files in the package. This can be especially useful for managing files from various sources — such as multiple consulting engineers who supply different parts of a document set — and keeping them in the original form in which they arrived in your office. And just like merged PDF files in previous versions of Acrobat, a package can maintain a file in its original file format if necessary, without converting it to PDF.

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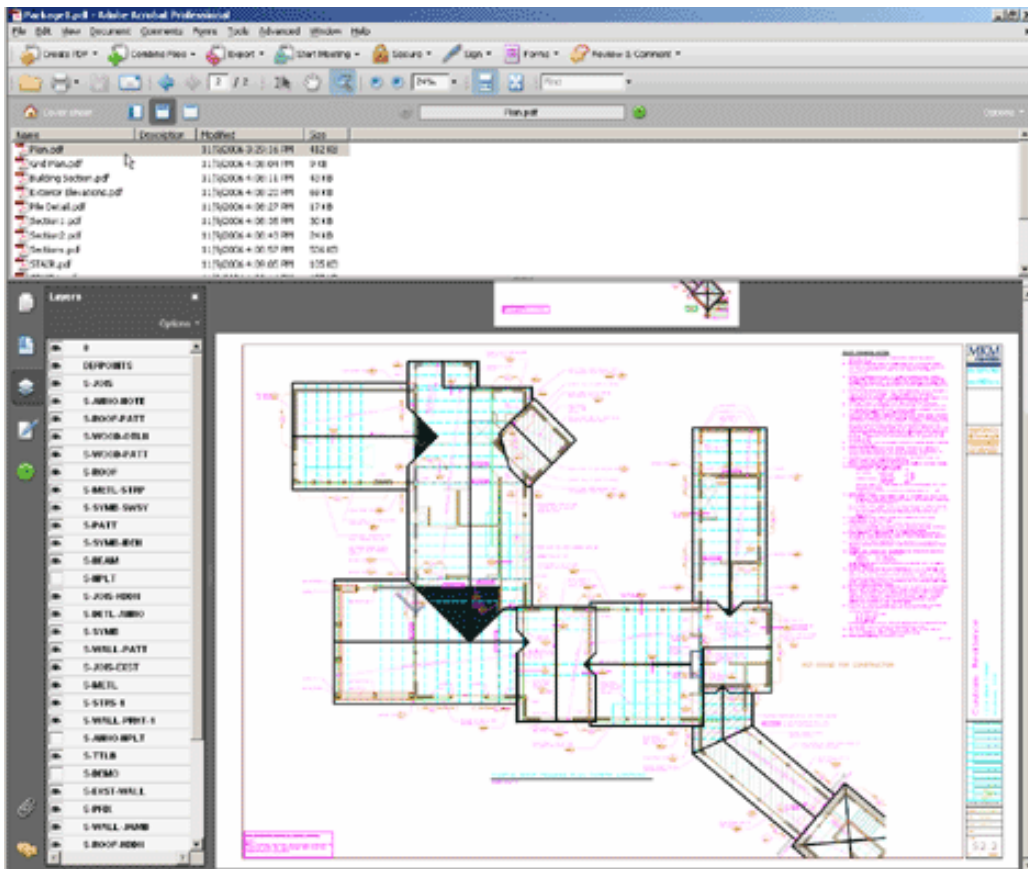
Bookmark [AcrobatUsers.com](#) and benefit from the insights and opinions of leading Acrobat and PDF experts.

And don't miss the [Acrobat for AEC blog](#). Product Manager Michael Folker discusses how to solve real-world workflow problems using Acrobat.

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A PDF package combines multiple files into a searchable, sortable PDF that maintains the individual security settings and digital signatures of each included PDF document.

Previously, you would have to wait until you assembled a complete set of documents from all originators before digitally signing each sheet and adding a digital signature on the overall set. Adding, deleting, or modifying any one sheet from a set would invalidate the digital signature for the overall set, because you would have to re-generate the PDF when all changes were made, resulting in a brand-new PDF file. But thanks to packages in Acrobat 8, this problem is now solved. If the files in a package are individually digitally signed by each consultant, for example, the individual PDF files will maintain their valid digital signatures without modifying the individual PDF files in any way.

Another very useful aspect of a PDF package is that it allows the viewer to see a list of the individual files in the package and navigate through the set quickly and easily. Package properties are displayed that provide additional information about each file in the set. The standard package properties include:

- File name
- Description
- Last modified date
- File size

An especially nice feature is that you can add your own fields to this set and

then sort the file list by that field or search for contents that have a certain property associated with them. For example, you might want to add a Discipline description, Creator's name, Responsible party, or some other information to allow you to search and sort a set of documents by that information. Also, if the file you click in the list is a drawing file, the layer listing appears along the left panel, enabling you to control the visibility of individual layers.

You'll discover many new features in Adobe Acrobat 8 Professional, and you'll find it to be a very worthwhile upgrade if you're using a previous version of Acrobat software. And new Acrobat users will especially appreciate the new user interface because it simplifies and streamlines many of the tasks they can accomplish with Adobe Acrobat. We'll be examining some of these features in future editions of *Acrobat Insider*.

About the Author

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Details and Availability

For a full list of [features and system requirements for Adobe Acrobat 8.0](#), visit the Adobe Web site. Windows® 2000 with Service Pack 2, Windows® XP Professional or Home Edition, or Windows XP Tablet PC Edition is required for use with Adobe Acrobat 8.0. Adobe Acrobat 8.0 Professional for Windows, available on CD-ROM or by download, is US\$449**.

For a full list of [features and system requirements for Acrobat 3D](#), visit the Adobe Web site. Windows 2000 with Service Pack 2, Windows XP Professional or Home Edition, or Windows XP Tablet PC Edition is required for use with Acrobat 3D. Acrobat 3D for Windows, available on CD-ROM or by download, is \$995. **

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