

# Acrobat Insider for AEC Professionals

Tips and Tricks for Adobe® Acrobat® 8

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## Come Together Right Now

Acrobat 8 Professional enhances online collaboration with shared reviews and Web conferencing

by Michael Dakan

In last month's *Acrobat Insider* ([Issue #13](#)), we took a first look at the newest version of Adobe® Acrobat® — Acrobat 8 Professional — and learned about PDF Packages, which make it easier than ever to combine multiple files into a single PDF document. In this issue, we explore online collaboration.

With the release of Acrobat 8, Adobe has made big strides toward improving and shortening the time lag inherent in most forms of electronic collaboration among team members. In fact, with Acrobat 8, you can **collaborate in real time and share reviews, discussions, and decision-making instantaneously** thanks to the new document Shared Review tools and the integration of Adobe Acrobat Connect™ software.

### Saving Time and Effort with Shared Reviews

Previous versions of Acrobat offered an email-based document review process (see [Acrobat Insider #2](#)) in which all comments and markups are sent via email back to the review initiator, who can then incorporate the comments back into the original document. An updated version of the file containing feedback and action items can be distributed and shared with the other reviewers. This process can be fast and is certainly better than the now-archaic exchange of paper copies and hand-drawn red-line markups.

But shared reviews in Acrobat 8 are even faster. Comments and redlines can be stored in a common shared location, and they appear right away along with the original documents as soon as they are posted and another reviewer or team member looks at the files. The review initiator doesn't have to go through the extra step of incorporating comments back into the originals before they can be seen by others. This makes the process almost real-time (truly real-time if both the initiator and reviewers happen to be online at the same time).

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#### IN THIS ISSUE

Using shared reviews and Acrobat Connect to make online collaboration with Acrobat 8 software easier than ever.

#### [VIEW AN ONDEMAND ESEMINAR](#)

Experience the power of Adobe Acrobat 8 Professional by viewing this [60-minute onDemand eSeminar](#) designed for AEC professionals.

#### 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.\*

#### REQUEST A TIP

Have a question about Adobe Acrobat 8? A suggestion for a future edition of *Acrobat Insider*? Send it in; we'll

Shared Review	PDF Review Options																		
 Store your comments centrally and in real time in a shared network folder, SharePoint workspace, or WebDAV folder.	 This chart can help you decide which review is right for your specific needs.																		
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 <a href="#">Learn how to start a review</a>																			

Start a shared review by clicking the option on the Getting Started page or selecting the command on the Review & Comment menu. This displays the Review & Comment page, shown above.

And shared reviews can save reviewers time as well. Because they can see everyone else's feedback, reviewers needn't repeat comments and markups if they see that another team member has already noted a discrepancy or error. They can simply add a note concurring with a previous comment or mention disagreements with previous comments to foster further discussion.

You can set up a shared review on a location accessible to team members such as a shared network folder, a SharePoint workspace, or a WebDAV server. To start a shared review, choose the Review & Comment option on the Getting Started page or use the command on the Review & Comment menu.

## Web Conferencing with Adobe Connect

A really valuable and significant addition to the Acrobat 8 family that offers readily available real-time collaboration to Acrobat users is Adobe Acrobat Connect. Acrobat Connect and Acrobat Connect Professional are re-branded versions of Macromedia® Breeze®, which Adobe gained in its merger with Macromedia. Adobe has lowered the price of admission to Web-conferencing collaboration and brought the solution into the Acrobat family of products. Connect is now integrated into the entire Acrobat family, including the upcoming release of Adobe Reader® 8.

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 & CONNECT

Watch two new interactive demos from Adobe:

Learn how Acrobat 8 Professional can help you [communicate and collaborate with confidence](#).

See how Acrobat Connect makes [web conferencing easy](#).

(Requires a high-speed connection.)

### GET MORE OUT OF ACROBAT!

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 Folkers discusses how to solve real-world workflow problems using Acrobat.

## Start Meeting Now

 To Start Meeting directly from Acrobat, click here.

 [Start Meeting now](#)

## Features of Adobe® Acrobat® Connect™



Accessing your personal web-conference from within Acrobat is the easy way to begin communicating and collaborating with colleagues and customers.



Screen-share documents and presentations with the click of a button.



Your personal Meeting URL lets you communicate virtually anytime, anywhere.



Conduct web conferences on-the-fly without any scheduling or setup in advance.



No software downloads means easier participation for your attendees.



[Start Meeting now](#)

In a Web meeting, you invite attendees to your personal meeting room, where you can share your computer screen or an application. You can also turn over control to an attendee to share their screen, admit or deny others attempting to join your meeting, and more. To start a meeting, use the Start Meeting page, shown above.

### What is Acrobat Connect?

Connect is both a product and a service that can enable you to share your screen or a specific application with team members and clients. You can present designs, gather feedback, provide training and support, and do almost anything you can do together in front of a computer.

### How does it work?

To have your own personal Web meeting room, you just have to establish an Adobe Connect account for a monthly or annual fee. Thereafter, you have access to your own personal Web address for a meeting room that's available 24/7 with no prior setup necessary to reserve a meeting room or pre-schedule a meeting. And Acrobat Connect uses the ubiquitous Reader and Flash® Player, so your team members and clients don't need any additional software or plug-ins. The address is readily available at the click of a button for ad-hoc, spontaneous Web conferencing to discuss a design or construction detail, specification section, or project schedule.

You can begin a Web conference while you're already on the phone with a client, consultant, colleague, or contractor. Or you can prearrange a group meeting at your convenience. You can also connect a webcam to your online session for more personalized face-to-face meetings. Users can initiate an Acrobat Connect Web meeting with just one click, or join in an ongoing meeting at any time, using only a Web browser and Flash® Player software.



### ACROBAT TIPS & TRICKS EBOOK

Get all of the first 10 issues of *Acrobat Insider for AEC Professionals* in the complimentary *Acrobat Insider eBook!* (Registration required)

### ACROBAT 3D

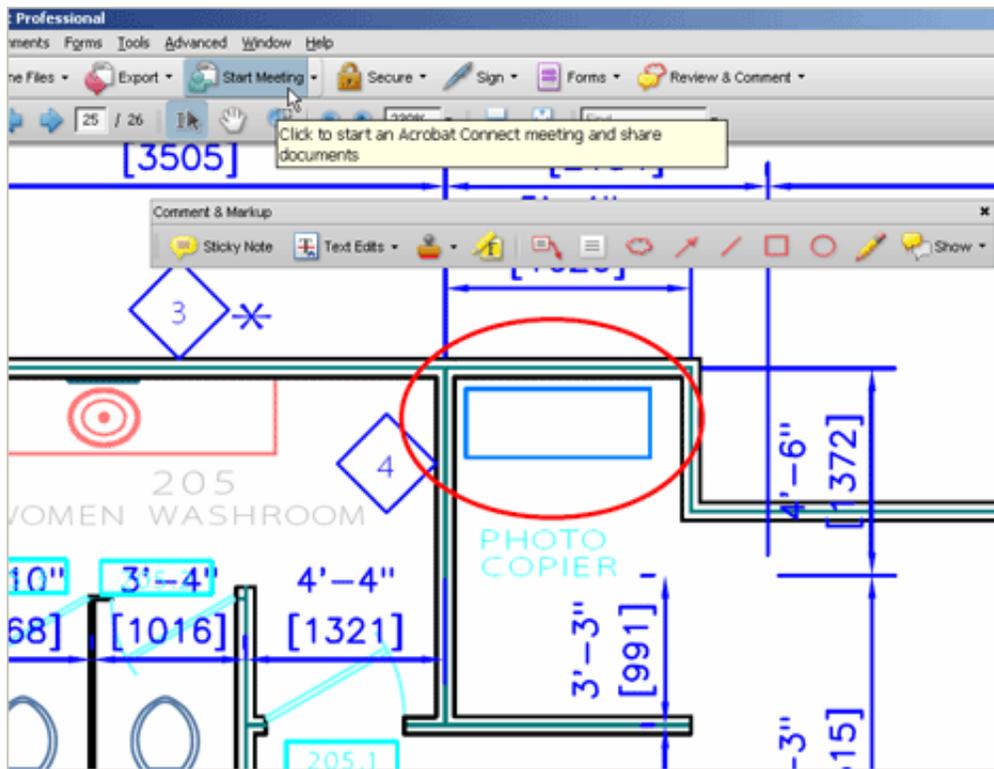
Learn more about [Acrobat 3D](#). Enrich collaboration by enabling extended teams to more securely and reliably communicate 3D design intent.

Download the latest whitepaper about [how Acrobat 3D powers collaboration](#).

### RECENT ADOBE AWARDS

CONSTRUCTECH  
2006 | HOTTEST  
COMPANIES

2006 SIA  
//CODiE//  
WINNER



You can start an Acrobat Connect meeting from within Acrobat or any Microsoft Office application by clicking the Start Meeting button on the Acrobat toolbar.

### Is it expensive?

When I was doing a lot of software training and support consulting for architectural firms, Acrobat Connect could have saved me and my clients considerable time and travel expense for meetings, training sessions, ongoing lunch-time seminars, and more. A basic Acrobat Connect account costs only \$39 per month or \$395 per year. That's less than an hour per month of billable time, or less than a single plane ticket per year for an out-of-town on-site meeting. For this price, you get your own private Web meeting room with capacity for 15 participants at once, a whiteboard, a chat window, a notes window, screen or application sharing, and integrated video. This is all hosted on Adobe servers, so there's no user IT or network administration expense. And because Connect is easy to set up and use, there's minimal user training. (For more information on Connect, including pricing, visit the [Adobe Connect website](#).)

If you plan to host larger Web meetings or want more customization options, Adobe offers **Acrobat Connect Professional**, the enterprise-level scalable version of Connect. It includes an unlimited number of meeting rooms with a capacity of up to 2500 participants at a time, integrated audio and VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol), the ability to record sessions for on-demand playback, custom window layouts, and a custom collaboration application software developer kit (SDK). Connect Professional can be hosted by Adobe or licensed and hosted on your own Web servers.

I think the integration of Acrobat Connect with Acrobat 8 is one of the most exciting and cost-effective new features to appear in recent upgrades to the Adobe Acrobat family of products. You will undoubtedly find many ways to quickly get a payback on the modest investment and minimal setup.

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## Tips and Tricks

### Converting DWG files to PDF format without AutoCAD

Using Adobe Acrobat 8 Professional, you can convert AutoCAD® DWG files to Acrobat PDF files from a workstation that doesn't have AutoCAD installed. You can do this one at a time by dragging and dropping each DWG file into Acrobat Professional. Or you can select multiple DWG files at once, select Combine supported files in Acrobat, and directly create a merged PDF file or a PDF Package from your selected DWGs.

A limitation to this functionality is AutoCAD ARX (AutoCAD Runtime Extension) applications, such as Autodesk® Architectural Desktop, which must be running in AutoCAD to properly display the ARX objects. To convert these types of files without the ARX application, you can save the files to straight AutoCAD files, such as R14 format, which converts ARX objects to AutoCAD primitives.

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### About the Author

*Michael L. Dakan, AIA, is an architect, author and independent AEC technology consultant. Twice monthly he writes Cadalyst's [AEC Tech News](#) e-mail newsletter. Contact him at [michael.dakan@cadalyst.com](mailto:michael.dakan@cadalyst.com).*

### 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.\*\*

For a full list of [features and system requirements for Acrobat Connect](#), visit the Adobe Web site. Service subscription, broadband internet connection, and an approved Web browser and Adobe Flash Player version are required. Use subject to a separate Service Agreement. Service available for \$39\*\* monthly or \$395\*\* annually.

\*Supplies are limited. Limited to one shirt per person. Subject to change without notice.

\*\*Price listed is the Adobe Store direct price, and is listed in U.S. dollars. Reseller prices may vary. Price valid in the U.S. and Canada only. Applicable local sales tax and shipping may apply.

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