

# Acrobat<sup>®</sup> Insider for AEC Professionals

Tips and Tricks for **ADOBE<sup>®</sup> ACROBAT<sup>®</sup> 8**

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ENABLE

TEAM MEMBERS

to secure, save, and sign.

## Meet the Newest Member of the Team

### Adobe Reader 8 Enhances Online Collaboration in AEC Workflows

by **Michael Dakan**

In the past two issues of [Acrobat Insider](#) (#13 and 14), we looked at the new features of the latest version of Adobe<sup>®</sup> Acrobat<sup>®</sup> Professional software, including PDF packages, shared reviews, Web conferencing. In this issue, we take a tour of new Adobe Reader<sup>®</sup> 8 and explore how it can improve online collaboration for AEC professionals.

#### New Interface Gives Quick Access to Features

As soon as you download and start the new free [Adobe Reader 8](#) software, you'll see that, like other members of the Acrobat 8 family of products, Reader 8 has been given a streamlined user interface. The new startup control panel gives you direct access to many of the expanded features and capabilities of the product. These new features elevate Reader users to full participation in online collaboration processes, instead of the more limited viewer/observer role of users of previous versions.

MARCH 2007

#### **IN THIS ISSUE**

New Adobe Reader 8 can enable team members to save forms, create digital signatures, and more; also, how GPU support in Acrobat 8 and Reader 8 can save you time.

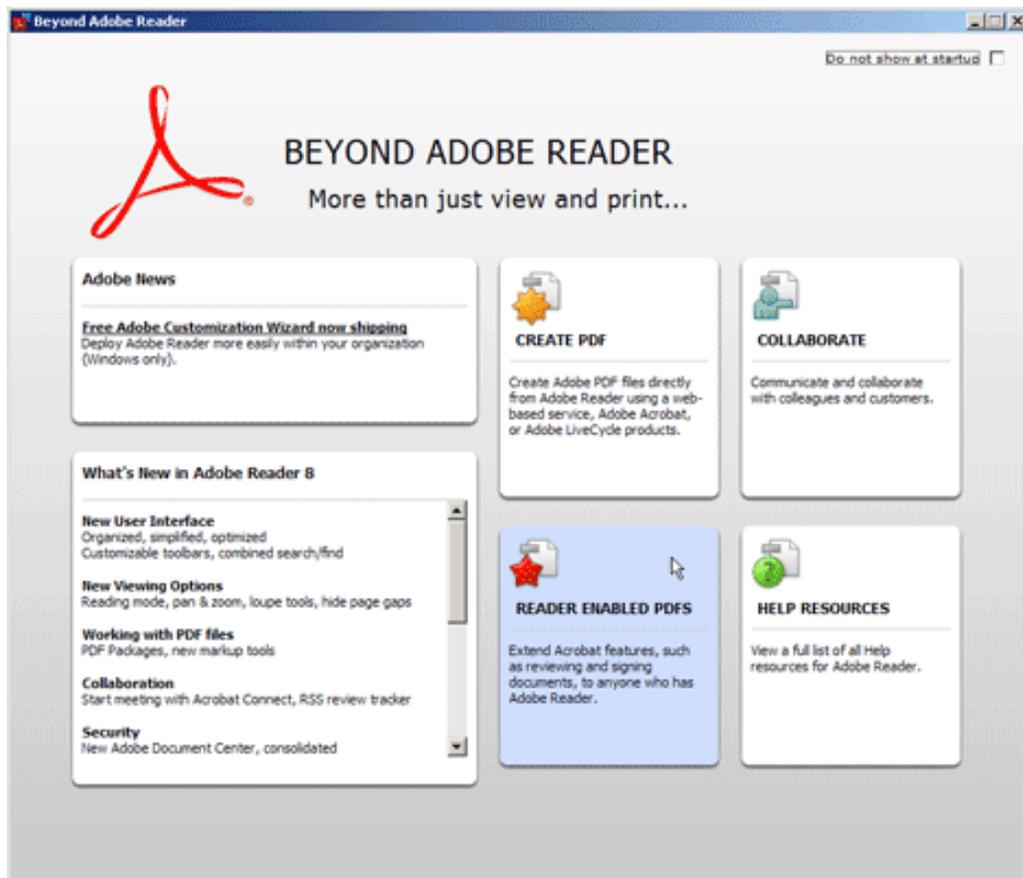
#### **SUCCESS STORY**

##### **WINNERS**

Congratulations to winners **Sherman O. Ferguson** and **Paul Getz**, who told us how Adobe Acrobat has helped their teams work together better. They each won a Sony PlayStation Portable and a \$100 gift card for telling us their success story.

#### **VIEW AN ONDEMAND ESEMINAR**

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



The new Getting Started page gives you quick access to the new features in Adobe Reader 8.

## Controlling PDF Creation

Using simple security settings, the creator of an Adobe PDF made with Adobe Acrobat can control what recipients can and cannot do with the PDF file, such as copying content and printing the document.

If the Adobe PDF creator toggles on the setting in Acrobat 8 Professional to enable usage rights by Reader users, users of Reader 8 can do more things with the file than users of previous versions. For instance, in addition to commenting and mark-up, they can save a filled-in version of a PDF form to their hard drive. They can also digitally sign PDF documents.

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### 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](#).

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### EXPERIENCE

#### ACROBAT 8 & ACROBAT 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.)

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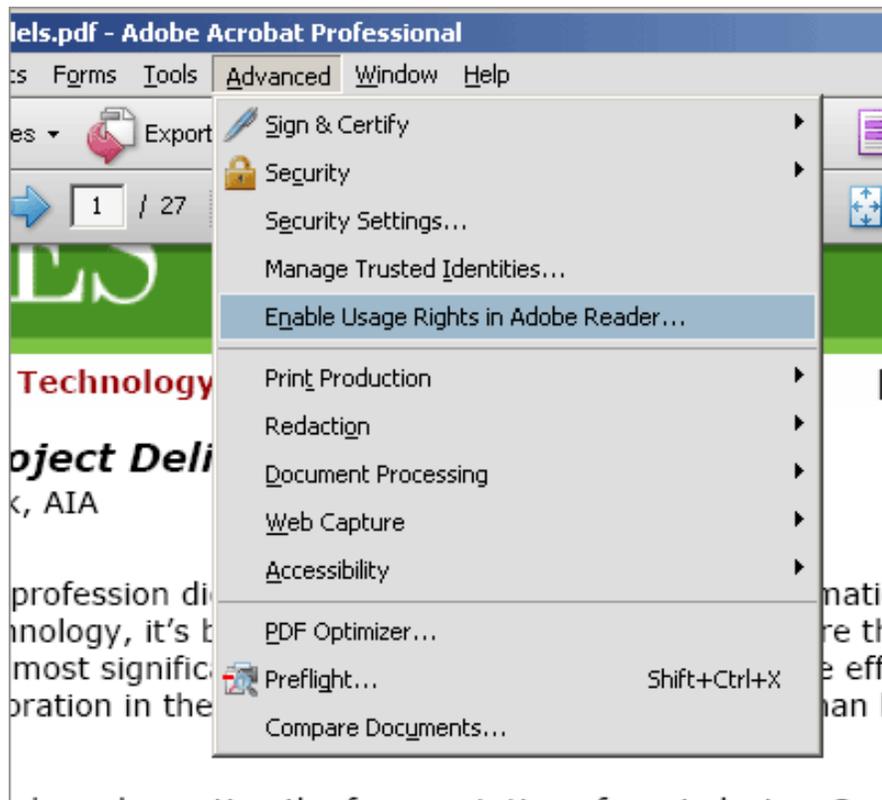
### GET MORE OUT OF ACROBAT!

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.

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In Adobe Acrobat 8, you can enable the use of Adobe Reader for a document from the Advanced menu. You can also enable Reader as a setting when you set up a Shared Review process.

## Saving PDF Forms

We looked at the use of PDF forms in Acrobat 7.0 Professional in *Acrobat Insider* #5. (For the complete archive of past versions of *Acrobat Insider* for AEC, go <http://aec.cadalyst.com/insiderarchives/>.) Without the use of Adobe server technology, Adobe Reader 7 limited what users could do with a PDF form. They could fill out and return the form data to the creator as part of an online review process, for instance, but they couldn't save the completed PDF file to their machine and keep a personal copy of the filled-in form for themselves without printing it.

Since it's essential that everyone involved in an AEC contract maintain records of all incoming and outgoing correspondence generated during a project, this limitation pretty much demoted Reader users in any project using PDF forms from active participants to mere observers. This restriction on the use of PDF forms has now been eliminated for forms that are enabled using Acrobat 8 Professional, and users of the free Reader 8 can participate fully in processes that benefit from the convenience and speed of Adobe PDF forms.

## Adding Digital Signatures

Another key benefit of Adobe Acrobat software in an AEC environment is that it enables you to easily authenticate and help secure your electronic documents. We examined these features in *Acrobat Insider* #7. In addition to controlling the access and use of electronic documents, you can affix digital signatures that help

## 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](#).

## YOUR AEC TIPS

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

Or if you have a question about Acrobat 8, ask us and we may address it in an upcoming issue.

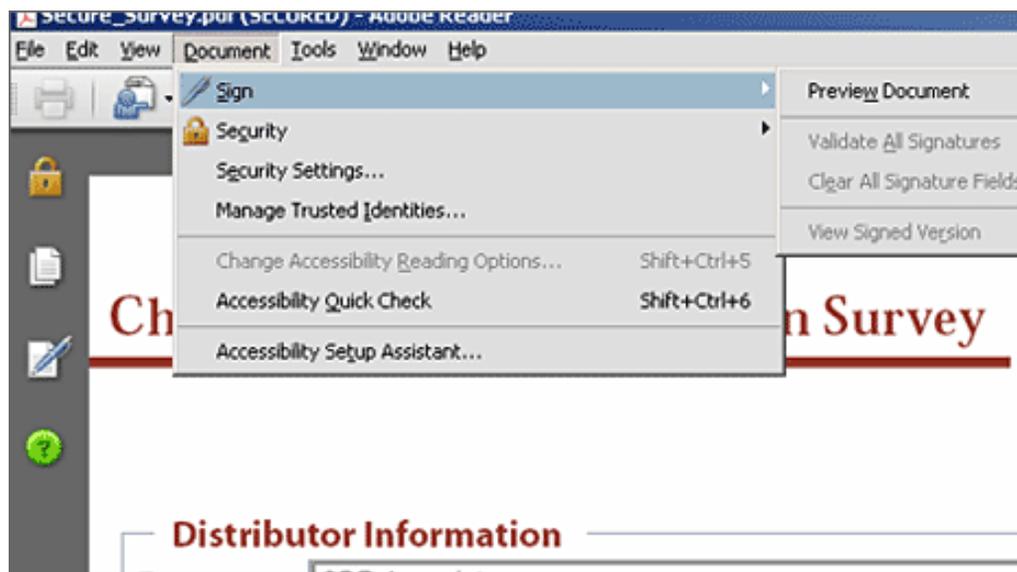
## RECENT ADOBE AWARDS

CONSTRUCTECH  
2006 | HOTTEST  
COMPANIES

2006 SIIA  
//CODiE//  
WINNER

ensure the documents are authentic and haven't been modified or tampered with since the electronic signature was applied.

With previous versions of Adobe Acrobat, a Reader user couldn't affix a digital signature to a PDF document and pass it on to other members of an AEC project without additional server technology. Of course, the authenticity and security of documents in any contractual process is essential. AEC projects typically involve large sums of money, and a legal paper trail is especially important — even more so with electronic documentation, which can be easily modified if the documents are not well secured. Now, thanks to their new ability to digitally sign PDF documents that have been enabled using Acrobat 8 Professional, users of Reader 8 can **fully** participate in processes requiring authentication at each step of the project.



Reader 8 users can digitally sign PDF files if the feature is enabled using Acrobat 8 Professional.

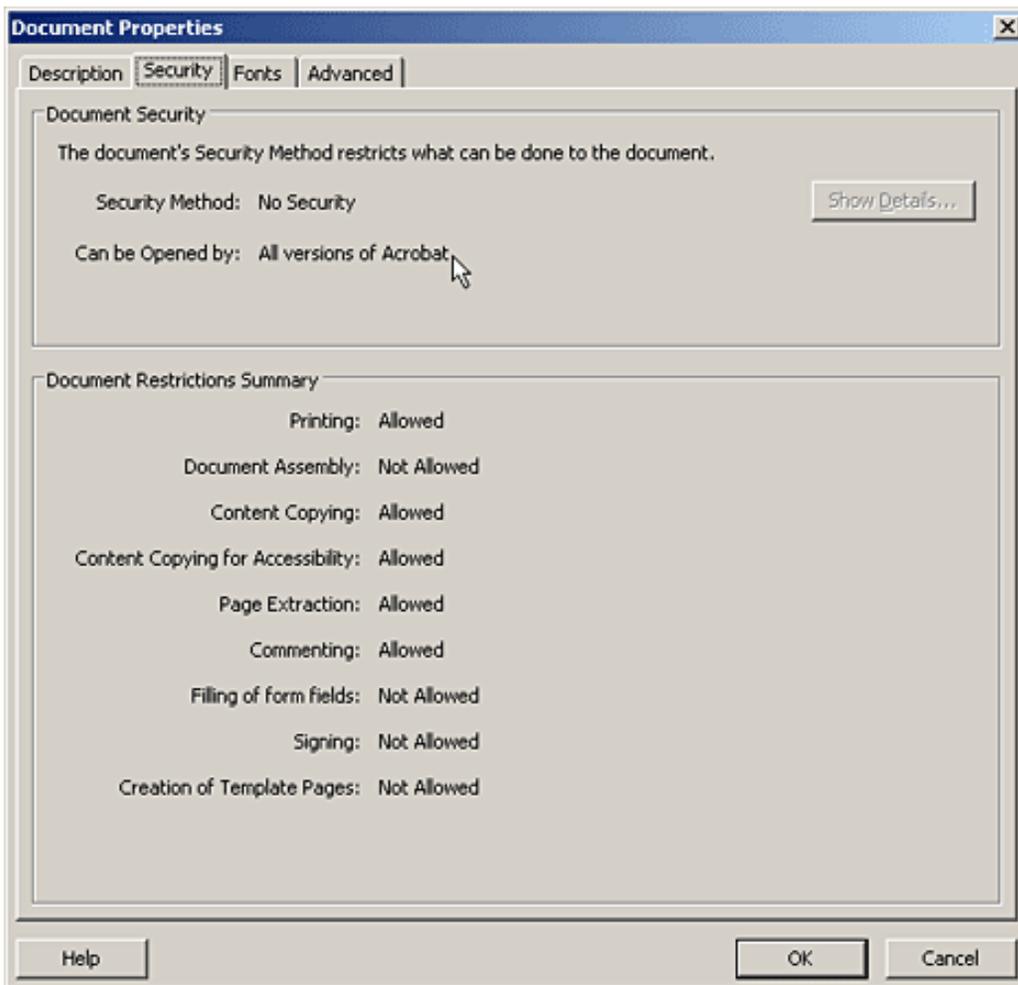
## A Typical Workflow with Reader 8 in AEC Projects

As an example of how these new Adobe Reader features might be applied in a typical AEC project, let's look at a common occurrence: During construction, a contractor seeking clarification of some of the construction documents issues a Request for Information (RFI), starting with an RFI form that has been created as a PDF form. The RFI is received by the architect, who either answers the question or passes it on to another member of the design team consultants.

When the RFI is answered, it goes back through the proper chain of team members until it is received by the contractor who initiated the request. A date stamp and signature are needed at each step to establish the timeline and authentication of information flow. When the RFI document is returned, the contractor may have the information needed to proceed, or may instead create a change order, along with a request for additional compensation. This initiates another standard set of procedures, which may well include additional PDF forms to be processed.

In this scenario, only the creator of the initial PDF must use the full Acrobat 8 program to create the PDF (in this case, the RFI can start as a standard predefined blank PDF form that was saved previously) and to enable necessary usage rights in the document for users of the free Reader. All other participants in the process only need the free Reader 8 to complete their part of the process. Previous versions of Acrobat Professional wouldn't have enabled team members to fill and save the form, and to affix their digital signatures using only the free Adobe Reader.

This scenario is also a good example of the possible use of the new combined-document package that we discussed in [Acrobat Insider #13](#). When multiple users are involved in a process, each user's part of the combined package can be maintained as a separate PDF, and changes made and a signature attached, without affecting the integrity and signatures attached to other parts of the package. When all portions of the combined package are complete, the architect, who has the primary responsibility for the overall design, can affix a signature to the "wrapper" PDF that contains all the separate parts of the PDF package and return the entire package to the contractor.



**The creator of a PDF document can determine what users can and can't do with the document using Reader 8 software.**

AEC projects entail many procedures such as responding to an RFI which involve standard forms that must be filled out, processed, and returned. Clearly, by

using standard PDF forms and electronic distribution, everyone in a design and construction project can save significant time and can help save money. With the new capabilities added to Adobe Reader 8, the entire project team can be fully involved in helping to maintain necessary legal and contractual procedures, promoting a smooth, speedy flow of information and the necessary authentication of responsibility and authority.

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## Tips and Tricks

### GPU Support in Acrobat 8 and Reader 8

Also common to all members of the Acrobat 8 family of products is support for a separate graphics processor unit (GPU) for workstations that have this capability. Computing and displaying graphics can take a very significant portion of your computer's resources. A GPU processes graphics separately in its own processor, relieving the main CPU from this burden and thus speeding up your machine and saving you significant time. Many higher-end workstations, such as those typically used for graphics-intensive applications, may come with a separate GPU. You can also upgrade your graphics card to add this capability to your workstation.

When you're working with Adobe PDF files, a separate GPU can speed up many graphics functions. It's especially helpful when you're displaying and manipulating 3D content in PDF documents. A software application must be specially designed to use a GPU if it's present, and now Adobe Acrobat 8 and Reader 8 can use a separate GPU like other high-end graphics programs.

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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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