Adobe® Acrobat®

Internal Revenue Service

IRS deploys Adobe Acrobat to more than 100,000 staff members nationwide; clear, reliable tax documents in Adobe PDF benefit agency and public

ABOUT THE CUSTOMER

- The revenue collection branch of the United States Treasury
- Headquarters: Washington, D.C.
- Employees: approximately 100,000
- Online newsletter: *The Digital Daily*

BENEFITS SUMMARY

- The accuracy and reliability of Adobe PDF documents support consistent communications between IRS offices nationwide.
- The IRS saves considerable time and money by delivering tax materials to its staff in Adobe PDF.
- Tax materials that took weeks to deliver as hard copy can be downloaded instantly as online Adobe PDF files.
- Automatic population of Adobe PDF forms with database information speeds the creation of customized taxpayer letters.
- Easier information access and delivery allow the staff to focus more on taxpayer needs and less on administration.
- Quick online access to Adobe PDF files ensures that the staff work with the most current materials.
- The Adobe PDF versions of tax documents retain the exact look of the originals, ensuring consistency and accuracy in IRS communications with taxpayers.

www.irs.gov

Tax season is year-round at the Internal Revenue Service. In an unending cycle of delivering and receiving tax materials, IRS employees handle billions of documents as they review tax returns, issue refunds, process payments, and produce tax publications. For years the agency has been a leader in the implementation of new technologies to better manage information and become more responsive to taxpayer needs. Central to its efforts is the deployment of Adobe Acrobat software to reduce the inefficiencies—high printing and delivery costs and difficulties locating materials—of handling so much paper.

Since 1996, the IRS has offered taxpayers Web access to tax return forms and publications in Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF), a move that yielded impressive results: the agency saves millions of dollars annually by decreasing the money it spends on printing, storing, and mailing tax materials. Now the IRS is further streamlining operations by deploying Adobe Acrobat to more than 100,000 employees. From desktop or laptop computers, staff can use the agency's extranet to instantly access tax notification letters and publications in Adobe PDF.

RELIABLE DOCUMENTS WITH ADOBE PDF

One of the first groups to benefit from the internal deployment of Adobe Acrobat was Compliance. The group employs approximately 15,000 tax examiners, who work diligently to ensure that the taxes collected are indeed the taxes due.

Tax examiners nationwide are notified when individuals in their areas are scheduled for audits. Examiners used to sift through boxes of paper to find the IRS letters, publications, and tax forms they needed to send to those people. They then looked up tax return information in the agency's database and entered the data—by hand or typewriter—in blank

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>
> *Senior technical printing specialist*
> *Internal Revenue Service*

spaces in the letters. This inefficient process opened the door for errors, including the possible use of outdated letters and forms.

Says an IRS senior technical printing specialist, "Acrobat and Adobe PDF improved the consistency and reliability of the audit materials that we print and deliver. We know that the information in our communications with taxpayers is accurate, and that all offices are using current documents when distributing information to the public. This consistency minimizes taxpayer confusion and allows us to work faster because our staff has immediate access to the most up-to-date materials."

AUTOMATIC FORM COMPLETION WITH ADOBE ACROBAT

The Acrobat based workflow eliminates potential errors and time-consuming processes by supporting a digital process that includes electronic document retrieval and automatic completion of form fields created in Acrobat. Delivering materials in Adobe PDF also enables the IRS to meet the crucial requirement that all its documents have a consistent look and feel, regardless of what office sends them.

With the report generation software (RGS) that resides on agency desktop and laptop computers, tax examiners have extranet access to more than 1,500 tax documents in Adobe PDF—ranging from one-page audit notification letters to 100-page tax guides.

They can search an online repository to find materials and locate specific regulations in long documents. Because the Adobe PDF audit notification letters are forms with key fields linked to the IRS taxpayer database, they can be automatically populated with accurate tax return information.

"It's clear that Acrobat and Adobe PDF provide real returns to the agency and the people we serve."

Senior technical printing specialist Internal Revenue Service

Tax examiners can search the online repository to review allowable deductions and then produce printed materials to educate taxpayers. If they need letters with breakdowns of questionable tax return figures, they can locate the appropriate Adobe PDF forms and pull information from the database into fields in the letters. In the future, examiners will also be able to use the Web Capture feature in Acrobat to download company and financial information from the Web and store it on their personal computers for reference as audits progress.

Correspondence that previously took hours takes minutes with the RGS and Acrobat. The efficiencies benefit both the IRS and the public: IRS employees spend less time on administration and more time on taxpayer matters, and the public receives a steady flow of timely, accurate information.

REAL RETURNS

Delivering tax information and documents in Adobe PDF offers important advantages to the agency. Posting updated forms and letters online makes them available instantly to staff anywhere, ensuring everyone is working with current materials and eliminating the delays—sometimes as long as two weeks—of shipping paper copies to remote staff.

"In terms of employee satisfaction alone, Acrobat pays for itself," says an IRS official. "Add to that the benefits of easier document administration and less paper storage, and it's clear that Acrobat and Adobe PDF provide real returns to the agency and the people we serve."

TOOLKIT

Software
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