# Keep PDF file size small

When scanning or preparing documents which will be saved as PDF files and placed on MyUni or a web site for download it is important to keep the size of your file small. Small PDF files take up less storage space and will download and display more efficiently. This guide provides some tips to achieve small files.

## Scanning Documents

Whether you are scanning documents from original or photocopied sources it is recommended that you use the services of the *Digital Resources Management Centre* (DRMC). The DRMC, based in the Barr Smith Library, has the facilities and expertise to prepare optimised digital copies of the documents you require while also maintaining the integrity of the University's copyright records.

Consult the DRMC web site at http://www.adelaide.edu.au/library/drmc/

## Scanning Images

The use of images from books, journals, newspapers etc. may be restricted by copyright laws—if you are unsure of the copyright status for the copying of an image consult the DRMC for advice or the University Copyright web site for information http://www.adelaide.edu.au/copyright/.

When scanning images for use in 'online' documents which may be downloaded, the following points should be considered:

- Scan the image to the size it will be used at, avoid simply resizing a large image file.
- Save 'photographic' and 'greyscale' type images in JPG format.
- Save 'flat colour area' (e.g. screen captures) or 'clipart' type images in GIF or PNG format.

## MS Word to PDF

When preparing Word documents which will be saved/converted as PDF files keep the following points in mind:

- Keep the number of fonts to a minimum and preferably use the 'standard' fonts found on most computers (e.g. Arial, Arial Narrow, Helvetica, Times New Roman, Times, Symbol).
- Use only those images that relate to the document; avoid 'colourful' backgrounds.
- Large files that are shrunk down to fit, despite looking smaller, are still the same size in KB/MB as the original. Resize images to the size required in an external editor, and then insert in Word.
- Do not have images repeat on each page in the header or footer.
- Prepare the document according to its final use: with higher resolution images (200dpi/300dpi) for a PDF for printing, or with lower resolution images (72ppi) for a PDF for viewing on screen.
- Always 'Save As...' before converting to PDF, to force the file to be rewritten and compacted after making any edits/changes.
- When creating a PDF file directly from Word using the Save As > PDF or XPS option, you can choose 'standard' for print and online publishing or 'minimum size' for optimised online publishing. The 'minimum size' setting will increase the pixellation of any embedded images.
- Split large documents into smaller parts and convert each part as a separate PDF file.
- Check that your PDF 'conversion settings' are the ones you want—they stay as they were set when last used.

## PowerPoint to PDF

When saving/converting PowerPoint presentations to PDF keep the following points in mind:

- Avoid using pictorial or shaded backgrounds for all slides. In PowerPoint this image is stored once and 'used' for all slides—when converted to PDF this image is 'printed' to every page and costs KB of space each time. (This is true of the University logo when displayed on each page of a PowerPoint presentation—use it only once and you will see a dramatic reduction in file size.)
  To avoid any problems, keep the logo and any background visuals to the 'title' slide and revert to simpler, plainer backgrounds for the remaining slides.
- Resize images, to the size they will be used at, before inserting them into your PowerPoint document.
- Reduce image resolution: 150ppi or 72ppi for colour and greyscale images; 300ppi for bitmap or 'line art' images.
- Avoid using lots of bitmapped images.
- Reduce the colour depth of your images e.g. from millions of colours to a 256 palette.
- Avoid lots of transitions in your slide show.
- If saving 'notes' or 'handouts' to a PDF file try the settings for both greyscale and B&W to see which option reduces the file size the most.
- Avoid the use of animated GIFs and other clever devices unless they are relevant to the document.
- Avoid embedded multimedia (audio/video)—instead add a link and provide it separately.

## Optimizing your PDF files

Links to information on how to optimise your PDF files to reduce their file size.

Reduce file size by saving. Adobe Acrobat 9 Standard (Help)
http://help.adobe.com/en_US/Acrobat/9.0/Standard/WS65C0A053-BC7C-49a2-88F1-B1BCD2524B68.w.html

PDF Optimizer. Adobe Acrobat 9 Pro (Help)
http://help.adobe.com/en_US/Acrobat/9.0/Professional/WS58a04a822e3e50102bd615109794195ff-7c87.w.html

Reducing file size. Acrobat User Community. http://acrobatusers.com/tutorials/reducing-file-size

Optimizing large PDF files. http://lane.stanford.edu/classes-consult/tutorials/graphical/pdf-optimize.html

Optimizing PDF files. http://www.geekinspired.com/computer-software/optimizing-pdf-files/

How to reduce the size of a pdf document in OS X. *Macintosh How To* (blog)
http://macintoshhowto.com/software/how-to-reduce-the-size-of-a-pdf-document-in-os-x.html

Preparing Images for PowerPoint, the Web, and Publication.
http://www.lib.umich.edu/files/services/exploratory/pdfs/preparingimages.pdf

## PDF Help online

Acrobat Help and Support. http://www.adobe.com/support/acrobat/

Adobe Forums > Acrobat. http://forums.adobe.com/community/acrobat

AcrobatUsers.com Adobe Acrobat User Community. http://acrobatusers.com/

## See also...

Other Doc Design Guides include:

- Screen Capture
- Image Editors
- Cropping & Resizing Images
- Creating Accessible PDFs