

Industrial Strength PDF & DWF

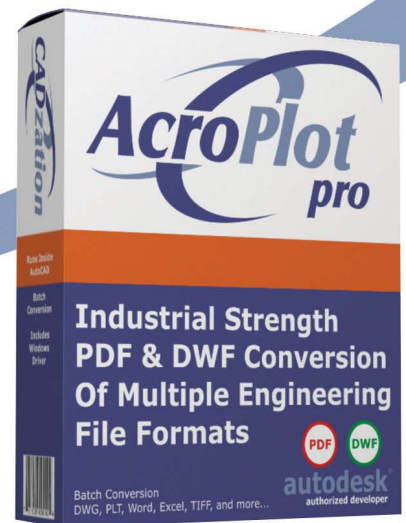
CADzation has provided a DWG to PDF conversion solution that more than satisfies the concerns of CAD professionals

What does the term 'Industrial Strength' imply to you? I ask this because the latest version of CADzation's AcroPlot Pro software for PDF and DWF conversion is being promoted with precisely that qualification.

Well, I suppose it can mean that the software has been developed to such a point where it can be kicked around on the shop floor by the most ham-fisted of operators without falling apart - no mean accomplishment for any piece of software - or that it performs with the precision that is demanded by the most punctilious engineers, architects and construction specialists. When it comes to converting a drawing into a PDF document,

that precision is exemplified in the accuracy with which the conversion takes place. Having spent considerable time creating a complex drawing or plan, the last thing that the professional artisan wishes to see in the PDF that he is sending to his clients, partners, collaborators, or whoever, is for his detail to be obliterated in the PDF conversion process. What they want is true 'What You See Is What You Print' from their DWG files. And this is what AcroPlot Pro delivers!

The principal example that CADzation provides is 'Lines Merge' support. This is the ability to display and print line work with overlapping intersection, translucently, in PDF files. Without this function, AutoCAD files converted to PDF don't print, or display, in the same way in the Acrobat Reader as they do in AutoCAD - a major prob-



lem that invalidates Adobe's claim to display and print perfect files outside of the application it came from! AcroPlot Pro, from CADzation, a leading supplier of PDF and DWF solutions to the global CAD marketplace, has been developed to convert an extensive list of file formats to either Portable Document Format (PDF) or Design Web Format (DWF).

It includes three components: converting from within AutoCAD, a separate Windows application and a Windows system printer driver. Unlike other applications that create PDF or DWF files, AcroPlot Pro also has advanced capabilities for creating both formats from one application.

Besides providing a high-fidelity print function, AcroPlot Pro has other tools that can substantially reduce the time taken to convert files, and to decrease the size of

the PDF files that are being created - both contentious issues used in the arguments for and against both formats. It can, for instance, convert a selected list of files to a multi-paged, text searchable, PDF or DWF file. The most time consuming part of creating PDF's from AutoCAD (DWG) files is creating the individual PDF's and then inserting each of them into a multi-paged file.

Thereafter, adding the associated bookmarks is a manual and tedious task. AcroPlot Pro automates all of this, adding bookmarks, watermarks, and stamping functions and providing PDF creation with precise output matching the user's needs. Add to this the ability for AEC users to include Microsoft Office Word & Excel, PLT, TIFF, CALS, GP4, JPEG and other formats in their batch, and communicating design data becomes a less daunting task. A system printer driver is also included for creating PDF's from any Windows application.

PDF file sizes are often prone to criticism - and rightly so, judging by the output coming from other DWG to PDF solutions. AcroPlot Pro conversions, however, can be up to 14 times smaller than the average output from the rest. It puts most of this down to the fact that True Type fonts are rendered from AutoCAD as searchable True Type text in the PDF files. Even when PDF files are created that contain pictures and scanned images, these are optimised and reduced in size with no sacrifice in quality.

Savings can also be made in terms of both money and conversion times. A single licence for AcroPlot Pro costs about one half of that for Adobe's Acrobat. It is more efficient as well, as Acrobat can only process single files inside, say, AutoCAD, with no batch mode facility, whereas AcroPlot Pro can group files from a range of applications and convert them to PDF with a single command. Paper space layouts can also be processed in any order or selection. Time taken to convert? One

quarter of that using Acrobat! This example came from an exercise that took all of the drawings in a sample AutoCAD 2002 folder, converting them and compiling them in a single PDF. Bookmarks and Watermarks were added individually to match the final PDF file that AcroPlot Pro was able to produce, automatically!

Other features? There's plenty! In addition to creating bookmarks from a documents' summary values (DOC, DWG or PDF), AcroPlot Pro can create a bookmark from any combination of DWG blocks that have attributes, or from a layout name, view name or the drawing properties in a DWG file. It can also create primary or nested bookmarks for layouts, views or layers from each DWG and can convert True Type text to hyperlinks with both colour and border styles. Watermarks can be provided for text and GIF images.

Maximum document sizes handled are 100 x 100 inches, and resolutions range from 150 to 1200 dpi. Security is provided with both 40 and 128 bit password protection, with controls applicable for both authors and users for opening, printing, copying and editing files - even batch processed files can be password protected.

The embedded viewer includes the ability to rotate PLT, graphics and larger format raster files to create a more suitable orientation in PDF or DWF files. Custom paper sizes can also be created with full justification and margin control, and Active X and Command Line interfaces can be used for integration within other plotting systems and workflows.

AcroPlot Pro is not restricted merely to AutoCAD. It can handle all Windows based CAD software with its PDF System Printer driver, including the Pro/E, SolidWorks, CATIA, Microstation and Solid-Edge. It can also handle a wide range of formats, besides DWG and Microsoft, which, include HPGL and its variants, TXT, TIFF, CALS, GP4, JPG, BMP, GIF and PNG. Networked AutoCAD settings, such as stb and ctb are also available, with direct colour/greyscale, mono output controls to override AutoCAD ctb files. And,

for those collaborating with manufacturers in the Far East, CJK fonts (Chinese, Japanese and Korean) can be handled.

CONCLUSION

AcroPlot Pro is great for converting large archives of AutoCAD R14 to the current release, AutoCAD LT, TIFF, CALS, GP4 and other engineering formats to PDF or DWF. The software uses AutoCAD to process the DWG file and can create PDF's that are fully text searchable, i.e. users can perform a Microsoft Windows to search for files containing a word or a phrase in a CAD file. Controls for extracting attribute data from any combination of blocks within AutoCAD files to the PDF "document summary" fields also allows auto-indexing into enterprise document management (EDM), web content management (WCM), digital asset management (DAM) and fixed content management (FCM) systems.

The last word comes from Rodney McManamy, President of CADzation. "We are pleased to provide AEC users with a high-end PDF and DWF solution that is simple and affordable. Having one application that can convert all the file types AEC professionals use on a daily basis, saves them time and money. We have implemented many of the requests of our current clients and as a result, AcroPlot Pro will quickly become the solution of choice for CAD and IT Managers in need of creating robust PDF and DWF files." **CU**

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