

Distributing PDF and DWF Drawings without Embedding “All Used Fonts” Spells Trouble!

Why Fonts Need to be Embedded

PDF and DWF files have the ability to reference the fonts installed on a computer when being viewed, edited, or printed. The fonts you use when creating the original document or drawing are indexed as a part of the PDF file. Most PDF conversion software applications have settings for how fonts are managed when creating the PDF file. For example, if a PDF is created and all the fonts used in the original document or drawings are not embedded, then it may not view and print exactly the same on a different computer that doesn't have the same fonts installed. A PDF viewing or printing application will attempt to locate the same fonts used for the PDF and if they are not available it will substitute a similar font. Embedding the fonts used when creating the PDF will prevent font substitution and help maintain the viewing and printing fidelity for other users of the file.

Are the Fonts Embedded?

As the use of PDF files become more prevalent so will the need to determine if the PDF you are working with has embedded fonts. In Acrobat Reader go to **File** and select **Properties** to open the **Document Properties** dialogue box, and select the **Fonts** tab. The fonts which are embedded in the PDF file will contain the text “(Embedded Subset)” under their description (See Figure 1). If a font listed does

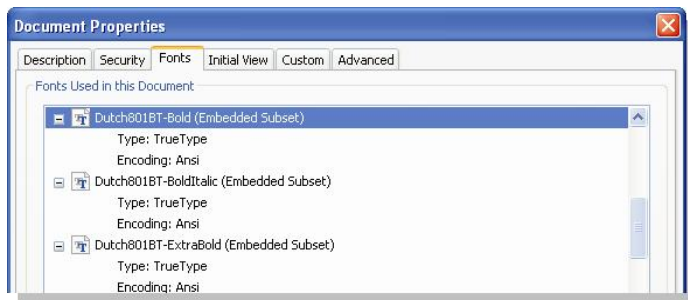


Figure 1. Embedded Fonts in PDF shown as “Embedded Subset”

not contain “Embedded” in the description and shows “Adobe Sans MM” for the actual font used, then not only is the font not embedded but it is also not installed on your computer and is being substituted (See Figure 2). The “Adobe Sans MM” font is an Adobe multiple master (MM) font. In some instances when the font is not embedded in a PDF the Adobe MM font is the substitution font and sometimes provides similar viewing of a PDF. However, printing the same PDF almost always results in incorrect output. There are two ways to address a PDF that does not have fonts embedded. The first way is to re-create the PDF with the “Embed All Used Fonts” option selected. The second way is to install the missing fonts on your

computer and re-open the PDF. By installing the missing or non-embedded font(s) on your computer the PDF will view and print correctly when it searches and finds the fonts it needs.

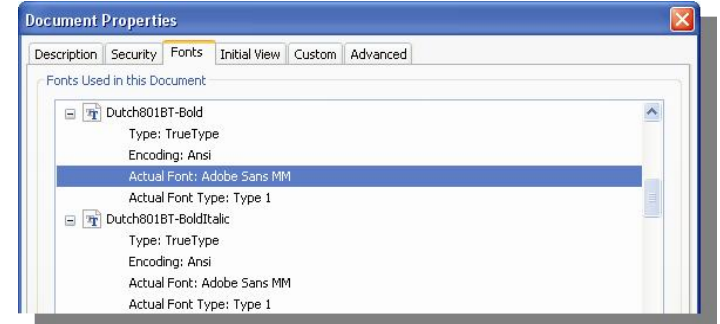


Figure 2. Embedded Fonts are not embedded in the PDF file.

How to Embed Fonts in a PDF File

Most PDF creation software applications have various settings for embedding fonts which to be selected before a PDF is made. The most common setting is “Embed All Used Fonts” when creating a PDF file. This setting will embed the fonts in the PDF so that it will view and print exactly as you want it to even if the actual font(s) used is not installed on the other computers. Embedding fonts will make the PDF more reliable, but it also tends to increase the file size. The increase in PDF file size can vary greatly from one PDF creation software program to the next because not all applications manage fonts efficiently or the same way. When choosing the options for embedding fonts there are some additional settings that need to be addressed. If the “Embed All Used Fonts” is selected, then all fonts will be embedded in the PDF file. This is the safest setting to ensure the PDF can stand on its own. If the “Never Embed Fonts” list is selected, then the fonts referenced in the list will never be embedded. The fonts listed in the “Never Embed Fonts” area are those that are included with the installation of Microsoft Windows and the free Acrobat Reader. However, please note that Acrobat 8.0 no longer includes Times, Helvetica, and ZapfDingbats fonts that were included in earlier versions. So, be sure to embed these fonts.

Proper PDF Creation & Usage

When creating PDF files to share your documents and drawings it is important to take into consideration what the file will be used for and who will be working with it. By taking the necessary steps to ensure the associated fonts used in the original source document or drawing are properly embedded in the PDF, you can share information accurately and reliably for both viewing and printing.