

Redacting In a PDF Document

I don't know if there is a sub forum for tech questions or not. If this is not the appropriate place for a tech question, I apologize. Wondering, though, if anyone can help me out.

I have a .pdf document. In the past, if I did not want some information to appear in the document, I would print it out, use a black marker and redact by hand and then re-create the document.

Recently, I saw a document where it looked like the redaction was done in adobe. The redaction was perfectly aligned. I tried fooling around and could not get there by hi-light text because the color of the hi-light is always yellow. Cannot change it to black. Tried using the text tool and typing XXXXX but it does not create a solid redaction.

So, does anyone know how to do this trick? If not, I was thinking of buying a program online to convert .pdf to word and then using the highlight tool in word in black. But, that may compromise the quality of the original document.

Any and all suggestions are appreciated. Thank you and good night.

There is a redaction feature in the full version of adobe x

Erin Schmidt

Sorry had to get it.

In the full version you can change the highlight color to black and it will autoselect the text and black it out

Erin Schmidt

Nitro pdf really cheap on ebay. I use it all the time to highlight, redact, move pages around, combine documents, water mark, type in text, etc. They have a trial version online.

Sandy Van, Nevada

SoloSez Popular Threads, August 2012

I am not sitting in front of Adobe right now but there is a submenu under one of the headings toward the right side of the menu bar called "redaction tools" -- you mark them, then apply them. Unless the document is very large, it's faster to MARK all your redactions and then APPLY them all at once. If you're still having difficulty in the morning, feel free to call me at 216-288-6009.

Best,
Kathleen Havener

I type double XX and then double MM over the area I want to redact. I move the lines of Xes and Ms as needed to cover the entire area. I don't think this can be removed by the recipient. I haven't sent anything sensitive that way. There is probably a way to lock the redacted document in paid versions of FoxIt and in Adobe.

We could try sending a sample short document with redactions marked that way, and see if you can remove or see through the redaction.

Miriam N. Jacobson, Pennsylvania

Okay, ya'll are scaring me.

The redaction tool is really the only way to do this right.

Highlighting in black DOES NOT REDACT. It just covers the text in black. You can still, click/drag over the area/copy/paste to get the underlying text. That text is also still searchable/findable. When I do paperless office CLE's I demonstrate how this very process is an example of how NOT to do redaction.

All that XXXing and MMMing is also not getting rid of the underlying text.

You can try what we call Poor Man's Redaction, where you highlight in black and then flatten the image, but really if you are going to be a lawyer working with digital documents, use the proper tool for the job.

Adobe Acrobat X Pro is the gold standard. Think about it, you are a professional wordsmith, you need professional tools for your documents. I would have no problem testifying against you for malpractice if you did the highlight in black thing. There have been many public examples of folks screwing that up over the years. You should be on notice that it is insufficient by now.

Nancy Duhon, Georgia

SoloSez Popular Threads, August 2012

"I would have no problem testifying against you for malpractice if you did the highlight in black thing. There have been many public examples of folks screwing that up over the years. You should be on notice that it is insufficient by now."

Got it. And, I will be purchasing Adobe X Pro as I start to do litigation in my practice and need redaction.

Jaconda Wagner, Maryland

Here is just a quick sample of a redaction error I got from Goggle:

<http://news.softpedia.com/news/Simple-Redaction-Error-Exposes-Nuclear-Submarine-Secrets-195695.shtml>

I think there was a notable one from the CIA/FBI in the recent past.

Jim Pardue, North Carolina

Not all redaction is meant for computer files. Highlighting in black and printing will perform redaction properly.

As I stated in the email before that, adobe x has a redaction tool.

Erin Schmidt

Did you read his initial post?

He specifically was talking about redacting in a PDF, which was what my response was directed towards.

Naturally, all the physical paper redaction techniques would still apply.

Nancy Duhon

Redacting IN a pdf does not necessarily mean that the redacted version you are going to produce will be in PDF form. You can redact IN PDF and then print it out.

It is actually a better redaction to do it that way then to print it out and then redact.

Erin M. Schmidt

SoloSez Popular Threads, August 2012

Thank you all. Sounds like a whole seminar could be done on this topic.
Wow!!!!

I'll try different suggestions and report back.

Regards to all,

The Redaction tool works well in Adobe. It is simplest if you're redacting a text PDF (i.e. one which was generated from Word, using Acrobat) because that permits you to select text easily.

If you're redacting a scan or other document, you need to manually draw redaction boxes. It's OK if they overlap, just so you know; Adobe won't care if you "double-redact."

You can set the redaction background to any color you like. If you want to highlight the fact that you redacted then use black. If you don't want to flag the existence or location of your redactions, then you should generally use white. I normally use white. If I'm redacting it, I don't want to draw attention to it.

White redactions are also handy for removing scanning/copying marks, unwanted fax headers, and the like.

Acrobat can also auto-redact using word searches or pattern matching. This is helpful, but SHOULD NOT be relied on: typos will prevent redaction.

Erik Hammarlund, Massachusetts

I use PDF X-Change Viewer, which I learned about through this list. It is free and much simpler than Adobe.

I keep the "Comment and Markup Toolbar" open at all times. To add text to PDFs, I use the Typewriter function. To redact, I draw a straight line over the text I want to redact. My default is that the line is white and 8 point wide.

This program is free and very easy to use.

Monica Elkinton, Alaska

SoloSez Popular Threads, August 2012

Nancy - thank you for those words of warning. I haven't used the X-M method for any legal documents, just, for example, sending itinerary info to family members where I didn't want to disclose what I paid.

But I will keep your suggestion in mind for when I do need redaction for legal/professional docs.

Miriam N. Jacobson

Monica, if you would like to make a remote appointment with me, I will be happy to show you how your line drawing is not redacting anything, but just hiding it under a white rectangle.

Nancy Duhon

You might find my CLE materials on PDFing to be useful - there's a section about secure redaction with Acrobat. There is NO WAY TO SECURELY REDACT in Word, period (there are unofficial ways - see: http://www.pcmag.com/slideshow_viewer/0,3253,1%253D250955%2526a%253D250958%2526po%253D2,00.asp?p=n).

Acrobat's redaction is secure because it irrevocably removes the underlying text - there's nothing to worry about exposing to some prying eyes - it's gone.

My materials are here and they're current: <http://tinyurl.com/Kodner-on-PDF>

HTH,

Ross

Ross L. Kodner, Wisconsin

Just one point regarding the Acrobat tips you received. I believe the Redact function is only available in Pro, though this might have changed in different versions)

Patrick W. Begos, Connecticut

I find that just deleting the text you want to redact in word works best. You can then put whatever you want in the empty space (black box, xxxx, or nothing)

Erin M. Schmidt, Ohio

SoloSez Popular Threads, August 2012

I don't use Acrobat because I consider it overpriced and overblown. In PaperPort, ImageView I create a duplicate, then delete as needed to redact. Very sure this works, even if you have to transmit the redacted pdf. Wouldn't trust highlight to redact even if file was to be printed.

COPY THAT?

John Page, Florida
