

Adobe Acrobat Pro XI question

I'm trying to create some fillable pdf questionnaires, both for my website, but also for clients to complete as a download.

I see the pro version of acrobat has some allegedly simple templates to use to create them.

Is it worth the \$450 (approximately) to buy the entire program? I see a monthly version of it for about \$15/month with a 1-year commitment. If either will save me a few hours in creating the forms I desire, it's worth the money to me.

But has anyone found it as easy to use as they claim? And are there any less expensive alternatives I should investigate that will do the same thing?

As always, thank you all in advance for your counsel and advice.

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When you say for "your website" what do you mean?

I rarely believe that the full priced Adobe is worth it - you can use less expensive programs, such as NitroPDF for most things pdf... and I almost never recommend software that you must pay for monthly as it ends up being far more expensive than a desktop program, and almost inevitably far less functional.

If you want to clarify - on or off list (or give me a call)... hopefully I can help.

Andrea Cannavina, not an attorney

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Seconded. There is virtually no reason to pay for Acrobat Pro if you're an attorney. What you want to do can be done by a myriad of programs that are much cheaper.

I have experience with Nitro and FoxIt Phantom. Nitro has a more user-friendly interface and is a more stable, polished program. Phantom is cheaper and does the same things, runs faster, and does a better job with OCR (conversion to searchable PDF), but that comes at the cost of less stability. If you're pretty tech-savvy, then go for Phantom. If not, Nitro is the better bet. Also look online because there are usually coupons available for Nitro that can make it cheaper than FoxIt.

Respectfully yours,

Kirby G. Smith, Georgia

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But can everything be done as easy as with Acrobat?

In my litigation practice, virtually every document I generate or receive becomes a pdf. I OCR, bookmark, bates stamp, redact, combine into one, stamp signatures or exhibit numbers, comment, insert text, fill online forms, among the things I can think of right now. I e-file pdfs in about 8 different courts, each with slightly different standards.

While I am not one for wasting money unnecessarily, it seems like \$400-\$500 is hardly a waste for a program that is so completely central to everything I do, and is the de facto standard for all of that stuff.

So I guess the somewhat rhetorical question is whether Nitro and/or Foxit is like buying a BMW instead of a Mercedes (or a Chrysler instead of a Ford, if you prefer), or if it's more like taking the bus instead of driving.

I don't envision switching in either case. I guess I'd be surprised if these cheaper programs do everything that Acrobat Pro does, with equal ease, for substantially less. I would imagine that you'd be losing features, or ease of use, or perhaps some compatibility.

So perhaps it's the case that an attorney doesn't need Acrobat if he is willing to take the time to learn a possibly less user-friendly interface, or doesn't mind having multiple programs to do what a single program does. But it hardly seems correct to make a categorical statement that no lawyer should pay for Acrobat

Patrick W. Begos, New York

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I second what Patrick said. If you shop around, you can usually find a full version of XI pro fairly cheap (but be sure to make certain of the vendor). If working with PDFs is an integral part of your practice, even paying full price isn't that much of an investment.

FWIW, Acrobat was one of the products that Ross Kodner unequivocally recommended instead of a cheaper substitute.

\*Kevin W. Grierson, Virginia

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Patrick's analogs are great. How about the fact that abode acrobat pro XI may be like "flying" while the free pdf programs may be like

"walking at a clipped rate" --- the difference can be that large. The portfolio feature is wonderful (all by itself). If you fully utilize adobe acrobat pro, the price becomes cheap.

Roberta Fay, California

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Thank you everyone who responded to my inquiry about using Acrobat Pro XI.

And a special shout-out to Roger Traversa with his reminder that one can buy a new ScanSnap scanner (which I've been wanting to do) and upgrade to Adobe Pro XI for just \$199 more.

While some of you were kind to recommend some less expensive alternatives, since this is something I'm hoping to create both forms on my website (or at least downloadable from my website) as well as other pdf with fill-in blanks, to me, it makes sense to bite the bullet and spend some extra money on the STANDARD, and reduce the chance of a client not being able to use the form. At least I know that anyone can get acrobat reader and be able to open and use the pdf forms I'll be creating.

Hopefully the learning process will be easier, too. If I can save just a couple of hours in learning to use it and creating forms, it will have paid for itself!

Next question....what's the most current model number of the ScanSnap I should be looking to buy?

Thanks again, everyone!

Sincerely,

Jerry Slutzky, Florida

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Back in April Robert Ambrogi gave a generally positive review to Nuance

Power PDF:

<http://www.lawsitesblog.com/2014/04/nuance-takes-acrobat-pro-one-third-price.html>

Hope this helps.

Dave Rakowski, Pennsylvania

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I concur with Patrick and Roberta. Moved to "paperless" (sort of) 7 years ago and could not do it without Adobe Pro. I have an active litigation practice and regularly use Adobe when producing documents (as scanned images) and reviewing scanned images of documents produced by others. The Bates numbering function is easy to learn and easy to undo/correct. Also when you encounter a "how do I do this with Adobe" question there usually are answers to be found in Adobe user forums and/or by Google search.

Michael L. Boli, California

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I am regularly amazed by lawyers who are looking for a cheap substitute for the tools needed to effectively practice law. How would you feel if your physician, CPA, architect, etc., used cheap tools in providing services to you?

An adding machine and ledger books are less than expensive accounting software. They both do the same job, but I want my accountant using the latest and best software.

David Masters, Colorado

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I object to the term "cheap tools. That which is most popular and/or most expensive is not necessarily the best. I do use Acrobat Pro (version 9), but use Sage instead of QuickBooks, WordPerfect instead of Word, and Android instead of iPhone.

I do not think that using any of these products makes me smarter than those who choose to use different ones. It is the finished product that counts, not how you got there.

Michael A. Koenecke, Texas

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Error message reads that a problem has caused the program to stop working correctly. Windows will close the program and notify me if a solution is available.

Have you encountered this problem? Do you have any suggestions to remedy the situation?

Pablo Uresti, Texas

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Generally I don't look for a solution unless the issue arises frequently. Having a program that hangs occasionally is not unusual, and may not be a program issue but rather a corrupt file that is trying to be opened. Running some Google searches will show support discussions and perhaps lead to a solution. However, sometimes one has to wait on an update if it is a program issue. My bet would be that it is not the program, but rather a file, that is causing the problem.

Darrell G. Stewart, Texas

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If the problem persists and you can't get Acrobat to open, consider doing a System Restore on Windows back to a date before the problem began.

System restore only resets settings and applications; it won't touch your data, and it can be easily undone if you don't like the results.

Disclaimer: Still not an attorney; not even at 37,000 feet.

Ben M. Schorr

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