Nuance PDF or Acrobat?

My new Scansnap came with Nuance Power PDF and Acrobat Pro DC.

Which one works better? Pros or cons?

I've become a much bigger fan of Acrobat DC when I realized it had the ability to send documents for electronic signature built in. I am sure it was there for a while and I just never used it, but for me, I've found Acrobat DC is a strong program for all your PDF needs (and since I think Adobe created the PDF format back in the day, I imagine it's probably a good choice for you).

Andrew M. Ayers, New York

When my aging copy of Acrobat could no longer do some of the things I wanted it to, I bought Power PDF to replace it. I'm very happy with it - particularly since it's a one-time purchase and not a subscription. Also, it features a digital signature service integration, though since I use a different service I can't comment on how well it works.

Andrew C. McDannold

If you have to end up paying for either one after a trial period, don't. At least not yet.

Instead, try Foxit PhantomPDF Business. It's a GREAT PDF program. It does everything I've asked of it, and not once have I ever missed not having Acrobat. It simply works, and it's a fraction of the cost of Acrobat. And, they have local (as in California) tech support.

I think they offer a free trial period. You should definitely download and try it before committing to the other two.

YMMV. HTH.

Scott I. Barer, California

I'll second Scott's vote for Foxit Phantom PDF. Another huge plus: you pay a one-time fee for the license, unlike Acrobat, which is trying to force everyone onto a monthly subscription model. @Ben M. Schorr <beschorr@microsoft.com> can correct me on this, but we were told that MS actually uses Foxit's product internally. It does, in any event, play well with the MS Office suite.

Kevin Grierson, Virginia

Acrobat is a subscription. Nuance is not, unless something has changed. I dislike subscription models, preferring one-time license purchase as more economical over time. The only Acrobat you can purchase outright is the 2017 version, to my knowledge. Nuance has been purchased by Kofax and if you buy retail you could get either box. I have a lot of licenses for Nuance, and if given a choice it would be an easy decision here.

If I were looking to purchase PDF software outright, I would look at Nuance/Kofax, Foxit and Nitro as to leading contenders. I will not purchase Acrobat because of the subscription model, and the alternatives do everything I need.   When I last was needing to purchase some software, I ended up with Nuance/Kofax, placing one order for multiple items that ended up being a mix of retail packaging with the same software other than branding.

Darrell G. Stewart, Texas

FWIW, you can still buy Acrobat Pro 2017 as a one-time purchase. It can be hard to find, because Adobe no longer offers it on its website.

David Masters, Colorado

I understand you're thinking about subscription vs. ownership, but going to subscription-based software in inevitable. I was getting all kinds of funky errors in the Massachusetts Probate Court forms, i.e. data not printing, etc. in an up to date version of Acrobat Pro. I finally had to "suck it up buttercup" and subscribe to Acrobat DC Pro in order to make all these problems go away. The lack of frustration is worth the subscription price. I pay for it annually (rather than monthly. The breakeven point on Acrobat Pro is about 2 1/2 years, so at least this way I always have the "bestest" version .... it's just another cost of doing business.

Peter T. Clark, Masswachusetts

As David Masters noted, one can purchase Acrobat 2017 Pro. I upgraded my Acrobat XI Pro to 2017 Pro in late 2017 through cdw.com, and it seems it can still be bought there:

https://www.cdw.com/search/?key=Acrobat%202017%20Pro&searchscope=all&sr=1.

The program received an update last evening, so Adobe continues to support it. For how long, I cannot say.

If I had to do it again, I would not buy Acrobat 2017 (or the DC subscription).

I think it is inferior to Acrobat XI Pro. The interface is so different that, even after a couple of years of daily use, I continue to hunt for options I used regularly in XI Pro. Some options from XI Pro just don't seem to exist anymore so I quit looking for them. It frustrates me each time I use 2017 Pro. (Maybe I'm just not technologically adept enough for the "latest and greatest.")

I cannot speak for the other PDF programs.

Mark E. Peneguy, Louisiana

The move to subscription is probably inevitable, I would agree. It has several aspects, not just costs, that I don't like. I will hold out, until I decide to capitulate. Your position is widely held, but I am not there yet.

One has to determine how far to go in holding out. I still play with Linux variants, and try to stay current there. I have deployed Linux servers for production before, but not Linux desktops. Depending on the day, it would not take too much to go all Linux, but for now I am running closer to the mainstream.

Darrell G. Stewart

Totally agree. My fundamental problem with subscriptions is being out of control of what I need to do business. It's similar to trusting one's data to "the cloud" versus being self-reliant via local backups and mirrors. It's not just Acrobat, of course: it's (1) your computer operating system (e.g., Windows), (2) your accounting software (e.g., Mint or Sage Accounting), (3) your basic production software (e.g., Microsoft Office), (4) your billing software, (5) your practice management software... and so on, and so on. All that can add up to a significant monthly expense. Any one of these things could be shut off by the vendor (e.g., after a billing dispute), leaving one crippled.

Yeah, I know: we pay subscription fees for our cell phones and Internet service. The difference is that those are ongoing services being provided, versus just being allowed to run a piece of software, which has not materially improved in terms of productivity since 1995 (although there have been three separate interface reworks since then).

I do not mind paying for I did buy the WordPerfect XX upgrade, even though the differences between it and the previous three versions are trivial, just to support the product. I wish I could go back to Timeslips 1995 (and, for that matter, InfoCentral and a few other nifty pieces of software).

Michael Koenecke, Texas

I've been using LibreOffice <https://www.libreoffice.org/> for about two years after I got tired of paying for Office 360.

Never going back.

D. Mathew Blackburn, Colorado

I have a copy of LibreOffice on my computer that I use to break security locks on Word documents occasionally, but it is simply not up to handling complex documents being marked up by multiple parties--more to the point, it could probably do a decent job if everyone was using LibreOffice, but that's never the case. Edit a document in LibreOffice and send it off to someone using Word and you never can be sure whether the formatting, etc. will remain as intended.

Nuance, Acrobat and Foxit are more or less interchangeable, in part because the PDF format was never really intended for extensive editing. For better or worse, Word is the *lingua franca *of business documents.

Kevin Grierson

This was my problem and why I switched.

I used LibreOffice or OpenOffice for years. I was happy with it. I liked sticking it to the man and supporting open source software.

Then I realized I was getting corrupted documents when I had to exchange versions with multiple parties (who were, of course, using Word). The amount of time spent having to un-f**k and/or re-create a license agreement *once* convinced me and I think I bought Office within the week.

Tim Ackermann, Texas