# Adobe®
# Solutions
# Reliable Distribution of Official Documents

Government agencies are under pressure to move the business of government online so they can better serve citizens, industry, and others in government. This is no small feat given the number of paper-based processes in place today and government's unique challenge of protecting privacy and providing access to all constituents, including citizens with disabilities. To accomplish their mission, government agencies are looking for tools that will improve efficiency and also cut costs. Adobe Acrobat® and Portable Document Format (PDF) provide a powerful framework for distributing official documents reliably, giving constituents easy access to information while simultaneously reducing printing, mailing, and warehousing costs.

## The Challenge

Government is one of the largest information publishers. The mission to communicate effectively with all their constituents is no small task—especially when you consider the interoperability challenges. Citizens use every conceivable form of computer device, from early PCs to mobile devices. And different software, platforms, and back-end systems within government itself make for a complex working environment. And because not everyone has computer access, information provided electronically must also be provided in print, which is itself a cumbersome process.

The challenges don't stop there. Regulations such as Section 508 of the U.S. Rehabilitation Act require agencies to make electronic documents accessible to users with disabilities such as blindness, low vision, and motor impairments. Furthermore agencies need tools that enable them to respond quickly to information requests such as U.S. Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)
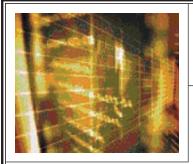
inquiries. And because the documents being distributed are official, agencies must be able to prevent constituents from changing them and also control access to sensitive information.

## The Solution

PDF is an ideal format for delivering electronic documents. Government and commercial organizations worldwide have embraced PDF, a publicly available file format specification and standard for reliable delivery of documents and forms online. 66% of nonprofit organizations and government Web sites include PDF content, and more than 18 million PDF files are available to the public on the internet.

Government agencies can turn any document or form—electronic or paper—into a PDF file that can be read across a broad range of hardware, software, and software versions. PDF files also look just like the original documents both onscreen and in print, allowing agencies to take advantage of electronic distribution while still providing printed versions to constituents without computer access.

Additionally, PDF files can be tagged so that people with disabilities such as blindness and motor impairment can access them. PDF files can be archived using industry-leading document management tools. And PDF archives simplify the process of finding information by letting government employees use keywords to quickly locate specific records. In addition, industry-leading redaction tools from vendors like Appligent enable users to permanently hide confidential information located in the document. A solution with all these components decreases the time and effort it takes to respond to information requests.

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## Products

**Adobe Acrobat 5.0**

View, print, and create PDF files; collaborate effectively; build interactive electronic files; and more with the Acrobat flagship product.

**Acrobat Capture 3.0**

Bring important paper documents on-line quickly with powerful high-volume scanning automation tools.

**Acrobat Reader® 5.0**

View and print PDF files.

## How Adobe Can Help

Acrobat 5.0 and Adobe PDF can play a critical role in helping government agencies distribute official documents reliably and securely. Only Acrobat 5.0 creates tagged Adobe PDF files. This coupled with the Acrobat 5.0 reflow feature, which automatically reflows text when the user zooms in and out, makes it easier for people with low vision to read electronic files. Tagged PDF files also make it possible for screen readers and other assistive technology to properly read electronic files so blind people can access them.

The flexible security capabilities and timesaving features of Acrobat 5.0 further enhance PDF files. 128-bit encryption allows government employees to restrict access to sensitive information and limit editing, printing, and repurposing content. Submitting files to production using PDF/X, which is an ISO standard, simplifies large print jobs and enables on-demand printing. Use Adobe Acrobat Capture® 3.0 to turn volumes of paper documents into searchable, accessible Adobe PDF files.

## The Results

Government agencies are providing constituents with better access to information while simultaneously reducing printing, mailing, and warehousing costs. Here are just a few examples of how Acrobat is improving document distribution.

### Board of Commissioners—Hillsborough County, Florida

Every other Wednesday, the Board of Commissioners for Florida's Hillsborough County holds public meetings to discuss county issues ranging from healthcare to land use. In the past, the county produced 30 copies of the agenda and supporting documents, usually around 500 pages in length, hand delivering binders to commissioners and other key staff the Friday before each meeting. Hillsborough County has dramatically improved convenience for county employees, officials, and citizens—and cut costs in the process—by distributing county meeting agendas and related materials as Adobe PDF files that can be e-mailed to commissioners and posted to the Web for the public.

### Internal Revenue Service (IRS)

Since 1996, the IRS has offered taxpayers Web access to tax return forms and publications in Adobe PDF, a move that has yielded impressive results. The agency saves millions of dollars annually by decreasing the money it spends on printing, storing, and mailing tax materials. Tax materials that took weeks to deliver as hard copies can be downloaded instantly as Adobe PDF files from the IRS Web Site, which has reduced the IRS's per-transaction cost from $3 to one cent per thousand files downloaded and cut phone center inquiries by 6%. Because Adobe PDF versions of tax documents retain the exact look of the originals, the IRS ensures consistency and accuracy in communications with taxpayers.

### United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

Eradicating world hunger requires innovations in food production in remote communities, which in turn requires information. Rapid distribution of data is critical, as soil maps, remote sensing data, and other information can mean the difference between a record harvest and an insufficient yield. But getting agricultural data to remote areas is challenging. Thanks to Acrobat 5.0 features that allow Adobe PDF documents to be read on wireless devices, agricultural producers in isolated areas without access to computers may soon be able to access the FAO's vital information. The plan is to allow them to use a cell phone or other handheld device to access information beamed worldwide via a wireless network or satellite. With a wireless network and Adobe technologies, the FAO could set the stage for substantial increases in agricultural efficiency in rural areas.

## For More Information

To learn more about Adobe Acrobat solutions, visit *www.adobe.com/government*.

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