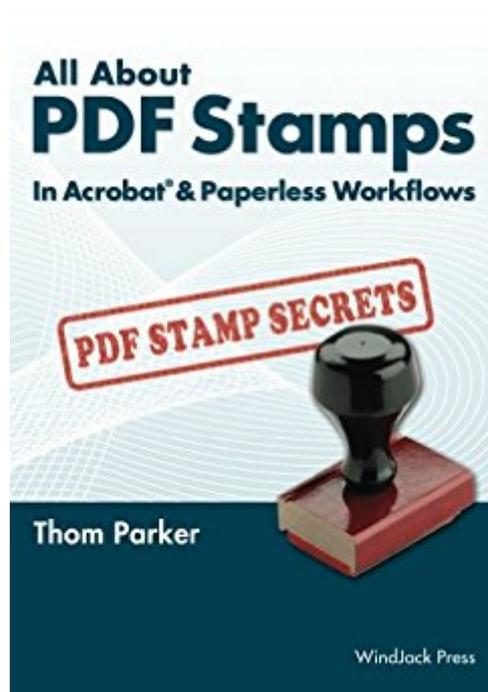


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All About PDF Stamps In Acrobat® & Paperless Workflows



Synopsis

Going Paperless? Already using PDF and need more? Need a better way to do things? PDF stamps are not just helpful; they are a necessary component of almost any paperless document process. This book reveals all the techniques and secrets for creating and using custom PDF stamps in Acrobat so you can use less paper, produce better-looking documents, reduce data entry errors, and increase efficiency for many basic business processes. A PDF stamp is a bit like an old style rubber stamp, in that it is one of the primary ways to add extra (custom) information to a document as it moves through a process (i.e., a document workflow). Like a rubber stamp, a PDF stamp is a custom graphic, but a PDF stamp is much more than a rubber ink stamp could ever be. A PDF stamp is like an old-style rubber ink stamp on super steroids. Not regular steroids, but super steroids. Because, a PDF is an electronic document, so a PDF stamp is about as close to a rubber ink stamp as the map Columbus used to cross the Atlantic is to a GPS. Your rubber ink stamp doesn't automatically acquire data from the document and then send it to a database. A PDF stamp assisted workflow can do that because a PDF stamp can contain active code that dynamically modifies the stamp graphic, accesses the document being stamped, and communicates with other scripts. Of course, a PDF stamp can also be just like a rubber ink stamp if it needs to be. Hence, anytime there is a need to "stamp" something onto a PDF document, it is the PDF stamp that comes to the rescue. Stamps have been a part of Acrobat and PDF for a long time. As you might imagine, they are a popular feature of PDF, so stamp creation and workflows have developed into their own specialties. To explain what they are and how they are used the book is divided into three parts, where each part delves progressively deeper into the details of PDF stamps and how they are used in paperless workflows in the Acrobat environment. Part I provides a general "how and why" discussion on PDF stamps. The first chapter explains everything there is to know about PDF stamps qualitatively. It is an outline of all the material in the book. Chapter 2 explains the role of PDF stamps within a paperless workflow and presents several examples (in a variety of industries) where PDF stamps solve real world document processing issues. Part I is not just an introduction to stamps. It also provides important information to managers and others who will be developing and/or overseeing document processes. Part II eases into the technical details of PDF stamps. It begins with material appropriate for the novice and non-technical user, such as the menus and tools in Acrobat for working with stamps. It then progresses into increasingly advanced topics: creating custom stamps, the internal details of the stamp file, and protecting stamps from unauthorized usage. This part of the book is for anyone who needs to know how you actually use and manage custom stamps. It includes some expert tidbits and JavaScript examples for more

advanced readers, but you do not need to know anything about programming to understand the topics. Part III is for programmers. It covers the two areas of the Acrobat scripting model that involve stamps: dynamic stamp scripts and workflow automation. The ability to alter the stamp appearance dynamically and use stamps within an Acrobat automation script provides two very powerful tools for processing documents. Nevertheless, even non-programmers will find a great deal of valuable and usable information in this portion of the book. While Part III contains some deep and complex material, all the concepts are accessible to the novice, and there are scripting examples that anyone can use.

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Customer Reviews

I found the book to be a great resource. I am confused as to what another reviewer stated in reference to the book not having specific instructions. The book is very clear and concise. It has screenshots for each step of the process and could even be considered too basic for intermediate/advanced users. It really holds your hand from start to finish in most of the beginning chapters. I would recommend this book for beginners, intermediate users and advanced Adobe scripters who want to save money with electronic workflows. It is not a theoretical exercise in PDF

philosophy, but a practical and complete "How-to" guide. You can put the book beside your computer and follow along step-by-step. If you are responsible for implementing workflows at your business/company it is an essential "must have" reference. This book will pay for itself in the cost savings after the first case of paper. And that won't take very long.

I agree with one of the other reviewers that the book talks a lot about the history and general usage (work flows) of PDF stamps, but does little to actually teach you how to make (program) custom dynamic stamps with more than a single text box for user input. If you are looking to create advanced PDF stamps that have multiple types of user inputs (radio buttons, drop-down lists, multi-input dialog boxes, etc.) look elsewhere. I spent 2 solid days trying to create a stamp that had a drop-down list for user input that would then set the state of radio buttons on the stamp to no avail. I read this book over and over, along with using the java-script code samples in the back of the book, but could never get it fully working. I would even use his code verbatim and it still would not work. Frustrating!! I am not a java-script programmer but have programmed in several other languages. I found another PDF java-script programming guide on the web, for free mind you, and within 30 minutes I had my stamp fully working. What a complete waste of my time trying to use this book as a resource for programming advanced PDF stamps. I should give it 1 star, but for those who know nothing about PDF stamps this book should give you a little bit of value in the general overview of PDF stamps and what you can do with them. You might even be able to make a dynamic date and signature stamp if you are lucky.

This book is by far the best and most comprehensive resource for information on PDF stamps available anywhere. No one is more knowledgeable about the subject than Thom, but after reading this book, you can come close. It is very well organized and written, and is an absolute bargain at \$25. It will pay for itself several times over with just your first project. After learning the amazing things that can be done with stamps, the practical and time saving applications become endless.

Thom has delivered a great and much needed resource for PDF stamps. From the simple stamp, all the way up to dynamic stamps that can populate based on user data or user actions. The book is clearly laid out and will lead you through the steps for you to successfully create your very own stamp. As you deploy your stamps across your organisation/business, the many benefits will become apparent.

It's an excellent book to start helping you understand how PDF stamps integrate into or replace your existing workflows. However, if you're looking for a comprehensive book on the technical aspects such as developing/programming complex dynamic stamps it may not contain enough detail on what you need exactly. For example, javascript dialog boxes, it provided very useful examples of complex functions (such as connecting to external data), but missing simple items such as alignment formatting etc. Minor, but ultimately, you'll require other sources to fill in those gaps.

The book shows how typical stamps are made then it has you jumping all around the place trying to solve a puzzle if your trying to create a custom stamp with fill-in the blanks. My opinion is that it's just a book titled exactly what it says. The history and what goes into making a stamp. Sure it has examples, but no sequence steps that have you test then get an insight of how to put it to use for a custom stamp. Books that teach show many sequenced examples having you create them and test them then gives some creative examples on some what if's. Writing the author and actually giving him my situation lead to this report. He responded quickly, just did not provide an easy solution. \$25.00 down the drain. I'm still trying to make sense to this day of how to create a fill-in the blank custom stamp reading the book several times.

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