PDF Placer

**Place multiple PDF pages
into an InDesign® document**

Another freeware script brought to you by Lonely Tree Software

PDF Placer 1.0

for Adobe® InDesign® CS2 and CS3

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Introduction

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Purpose

The purpose of this JavaScript is to allow PDF pages to be placed into an Adobe® InDesign® CS2 or CS3 document while allowing the user to chose from several positioning and cropping options.

Possible Issues

The PDF Placer script does not require a document to be opened in order to run. If there is no document open, the script will attempt to extract the page size from the PDF file's trim or media box entries. If this cannot be done, the script will display an error stating that it could not determine the PDF's size. To use the script with a PDF where to page size cannot be determined, simply open a new document and try again. (Every PDF actually has a media box, but there are certain versions or creators of PDF files that stick this entry in non-standard locations. In the name of efficiency, I have chosen not to scan the entire PDF looking for the non-standard media box entry.)

This script has not been tested in and is NOT intended for InDesign CS1. If you are using CS1 or earlier, UPGRADE!

Installation

Move or copy the script to the following location depending on your platform and version of InDesign®:

<u>CS2</u>
Mac OSX:

Applications\Adobe InDesign CS2\Presets\Scripts

PC:

C:\Program Files\Adobe\InDesign CS2\Presets\Scripts (this can depend on where your Application is located)

<u>CS3</u>
Mac OSX:

Applications\Adobe InDesign CS3\Scripts\Scripts Panel

PC:

C:\Program Files\Adobe\InDesign CS3\Scripts\Scripts Panel (this can depend on where your Application is located)

Script Operation

Script Operation

After launching the script, the PDF Placer dialog box is shown (see Figure 1). This dialog box allows several options to be set prior to the PDF being placed into a document. The following sections describe each option.
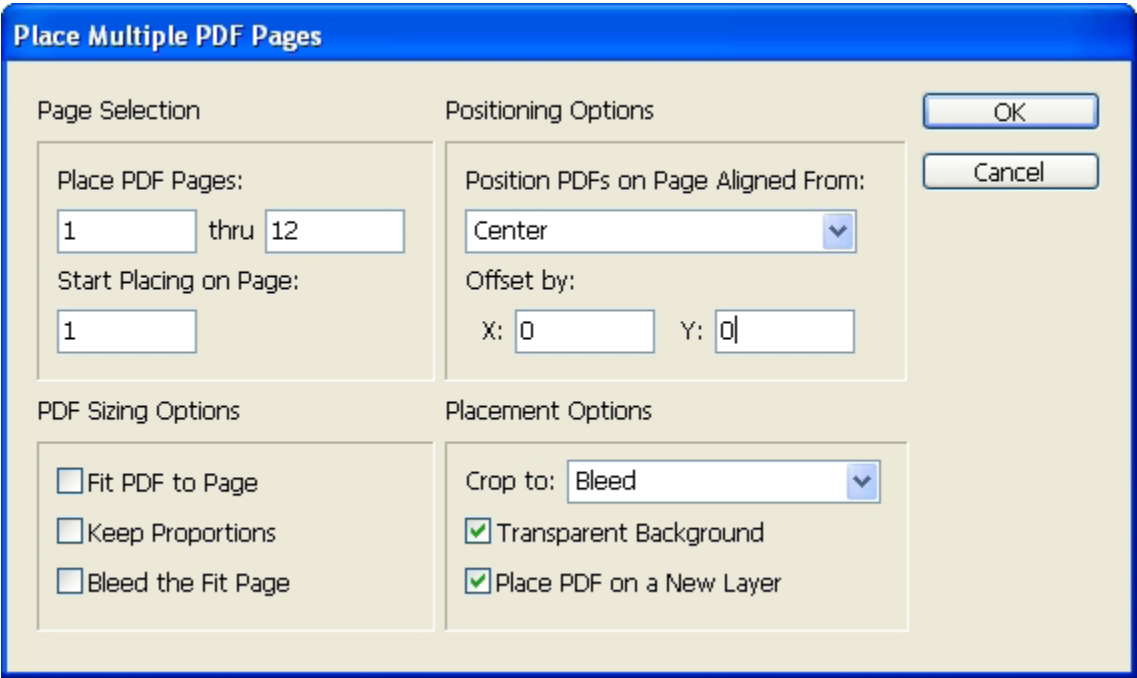

Figure 1. The dialog box for the PDF Placer script.

Page Selection

The Page Selection section allows the user to choose which PDF pages will be placed and on what document page they will start to be added from. PDF pages are added one per document page. The up and down arrow keys can be used to increment or decrement the page numbers by one page. Using the shift key in conjunction with the up and down arrow keys will change the page number by a value of ten.

Place PDF Pages

These two boxes allow the PDF's start and finish pages to be entered. Initially, the right-hand box contains the number of total pages in the PDF file. Pages will be added starting from and including the page in the left-hand box up to and including the page in the right-hand box.

Start Placing on Page

This box is used to enter the document page where the PDF pages will start to be placed. If there are not enough pages in the document to place all the PDF pages, additional pages are automatically added.

PDF Sizing Options

This section allows the user to scale the PDF pages to fit onto the document page, control the proportions of this scaling and to bleed the scaled page.

Fit PDF to Page

Selecting this check box will scale the placed PDF up or down to fit the document page size.

When using the 'Fit PDF to Page' option, any entered offset values are ignored.

Keep Proportions

If this check box is selected, the X and Y scale of the PDF page are kept the same. When unchecked, the PDF pages will be squeezed or expanded independently to fill the page.

This option is ignored if 'Fit PDF to Page' is not checked on.

Bleed the Fit Page

When this option is checked, the size of the placed PDF file is increased to extend to the bleed size of the document. The bleed size is read from the document and if it is set to zero, this option will have no effect.

If the script creates a new document, it uses the default bleed size of the InDesign® application. Please see the InDesign documentation on how to set default application and document bleed sizes.

This option is ignored if the 'Fit PDF to Page' option is not checked.

Positioning Options

This section allows the PDF pages' placement on the document page to be customized.

Position PDFs on Page Aligned From

This option allows precise positioning of PDF pages as they are placed in to the document. The pop-up menu contains nine choices for how the PDF pages are to be placed. The selected position is the spot on the document page where the corresponding spot of the PDF page will be placed. For example, selecting 'Top Left' will place the PDF page into the top left of the document page and will use the top left of the PDF page as the zero point.

Offset by

The offset values entered in the X and Y boxes will move the placed PDF page by the specified amounts (values can be either positive or negative). The units for the offset values are the same as the document units.

Be aware that there is no limit placed on the offsets, so one could offset the placed PDF off the page or pasteboard. There is no limit placed because the offsets are saved in a preference file. Due to how the limiting was implemented, there could be a situation where the last document's units were in points and the offsets were say 24 points. The next document has units of inches. When the script tries to load, the former 24 points are seen as 24 inches and thus the script wouldn't load because 24 inches is larger than the maximum value allowed (this actually occurred during testing and thus the limit was removed).

Placement Options

The placement options section allows the user to choose how the placed PDF pages are cropped, whether they are placed with a transparent background and whether the PDF pages are placed on a new layer.

Crop to

The Crop to pop-up menu allows the choice of how the PDF pages are cropped when they are placed.

Not every PDF file will have all five crop type entries (Art, Crop, Trim, Bleed and Media). If the script gives a PDF Placement Error, it means that the PDF file being placed does not have the crop type chosen in the 'Crop to:' pop-up menu. This can be corrected by either choosing a different crop type or opening the PDF in Acrobat and performing a Save As...

Transparent Background

Selecting this check box places the PDF page into the document with a transparent background. This allows any background elements to show through the "empty" areas of the PDF page. If unchecked, the PDF pages are placed with their default opaque white background.

Place PDF on a New Layer

With this check box selected, the PDF pages are placed on a new layer. The new layer is named with the name of the PDF file being placed and a random number under 1000. The random number is used to help prevent duplicate layer names.

If this option is unchecked, the PDF pages are placed as follows:

In InDesign® CS3, the PDF pages are placed on the current active layer.

In InDesign CS2, the PDF pages are placed on the top-most layer (there is no "active layer" property in the CS2 version of the JavaScript language).

History

History

1.0   Initial project released. (11 JAN 2008)

0.6   Added support for Media Box being located in the root node of the page tree. (11 JAN 2008)

0.5   Debugging and testing version. Myriad interpretations of the PDF specs were accommodated for. Thanks to all vendors who don't follow the PDF specification. You know who you are you hacks. (10 JAN 2008)

0.4   Began reading PDF specs to figure out how to extract page count, page sizes and rotation without having to "scan" the entire PDF document. A stand-alone script was created to implement and test this. It was then incorporated into the main script. With being able to determine page size, the script no longer requires a document to be opened. The script will make a new document to add the PDF pages to. (06 JAN 2008)

0.3   Added ability to choose what document page to start adding PDF pages to and to also choose what PDF pages to add to the document. If the document doesn't have enough pages to accommodate the added pages, more are added.

0.2   Created dialog for choosing positioning, offsets and transparent backgrounds. (04 JAN 2008)

0.1   Concept version. Placed PDFs in open document. (03 JAN 2008)

As Edsger W. Dijkstra put it:

"Program testing can be used to show the presence of bugs, but never to show their absence!"

"We must not put mistakes into programs because of sloppiness, we have to do it systematically and with care."

"If debugging is the process of removing bugs, then programming must be the process of putting them in."