

June 1, 2004

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I'm looking for a way to convert some fairly visually complicated HTML to image or PDF. I've tried [HTMLDOC](#), [pdfcreator](#) and Adobe Acrobat Pro but they all have HTML rendering glitches that are hard to troubleshoot. I'd love to be able to use the Mozilla renderer for this. Any ideas?

posted by [frenetic](#) at 6:55 AM PST

If you want to convert it straight to a flat image format, just grab the screen, then stitch it back together in photoshop.

posted by [cheaily](#) at 7:01 AM PST on June 1

Guess I should have said I want to do a huge number of conversions in the post.

posted by [frenetic](#) at 7:03 AM PST on June 1

There are some programmatic solutions like [iText](#) or [FOP](#).

posted by [nims](#) at 7:28 AM PST on June 1

they all have HTML rendering glitches that are hard to troubleshoot

This just seems to be true in general. Think of the number of rendering bugs in our actual *browsers* and this starts to make sense.

I wonder, though, if you could potentially use a Moz-browser and either AppleScript or Windows Scripting to do a print-to-PDF kind of thing.

posted by [namespan](#) at 7:54 AM PST on June 1

You might try [OpenOffice](#). Not sure if it would do a better job or not, but it can import from HTML and export to PDF. Also, Adobe Acrobat comes with a printer driver (not sure exactly what it's called) that should work better than rendering the HTML. Use the PDF printer when you print the file in Mozilla and it should look exactly like it does when you print to a regular printer.

posted by **estey** at **7:55 AM** PST on June 1

Wait, if you have acrobat pro installed can't you open the page in Mozilla/Firefox/Whatever go to the print setup and turn off the header and footer so it doesn't display the url at the top of every page, and then print directly to DISTILLER? This is what I always do and I've never seen any glitches.

posted by **Grod** at **8:05 AM** PST on June 1

Ditto the faux-printer route. That seems to work really well for the stuff I do.

posted by **bonehead** at **8:07 AM** PST on June 1

Try **PDF995**. It's a faux-printer solution that's worked rather well for me to convert both HTML and MS Word docs to PDF. It's free. One tip (probably true for PDF creators everywhere): in the advanced printer settings, have the fonts set to "download as soft font" to avoid having them replaced with native PDF fonts.

posted by **ewagoner** at **8:15 AM** PST on June 1

The free version of **cutePDF** is another printer way of doing it, that I find superior to PDF995

Al

posted by **ajbatrick** at **8:32 AM** PST on June 1

OpenOffice is definitely worth a shot if you have a broadband connection.

posted by **yerfatma** at **8:37 AM** PST on June 1

Well I tried the printer suggestion with Adobe Acrobat (turns out pdfcreator and acrobat's printer devices don't like to co-exist) and the printing out of both IE and Mozilla was far worse than using the internal Acrobat webpage conversion.

I'll give these other PDF converters a shot but I'm not holding out much hope. This doesn't seem like it should be so hard what with a good open source renderer kicking around, and there seems to be a large demand for it from what I've seen while searching around.

posted by **frenetic** at **8:46 AM** PST on June 1

Print it to a Postscript file, and then zap it into a PDF with Ghostscript (using a

GUI like FreePDF). Works every time.

posted by **dayvin** at **9:17 AM** PST on June 1

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