



# PDFs in Drupal

Making PDFs work well in Drupal 8  
Presented by Dan Hansen - Sevaa Group, Inc.

@DanAtSevaa @Sevaa #DrupalConNA



# Introduction - Who Am I?

Dan Hansen

Lead Developer at Sevaa Group, Inc.

Worked with Drupal for 7 years

Acquia Certified and generally pretty cool



# You Came Here to Hear About PDFs in Drupal





# The Importance of PDFs in Drupal

PDFs are universal as a document format, but can feel left behind in support

Previously a closed format

Previously an expensive format

Move to make PDF handling as ubiquitous in web as image handling is.

PDFs in core!



# Let's talk about PDFs

Based on Postscript, a language used to format for printers.

Proprietary format from Adobe in 1993

ISO standardized in 2008 (ISO 32000-1)

Designed to bring together document layout with font embedding and data storage with available compression.



## What Makes PDFs Special?

- Rich Media
- Security
- Standardization



# PDF Rendering Libraries



# Print-to-PDF

Important consideration: Do you actually need to generate PDFs in code?

Modern browsers offer effective Print-to-PDF built in, with easy control via print style sheets.

Generate PDFs if:

- You require precision layouts (forms are a good example)
- You need to implement a template
- You need to implement security features





# Rendering Libraries: jsPDF

Client-side rendering library

Can be used to render HTML with the addition of `html2canvas` or `rasterizeHTML`

<https://github.com/MrRio/jsPDF>

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# Rendering Libraries: FPDF

Server-side, 100% PHP based

<http://www.fpdf.org/>

No updates since 2015





# Rendering Libraries: mPDF

Server-side, 100% PHP based

Based on FPDF & HTML2FPDF

Offers improved language and UTF-8 handling

Noted in it's own docs as slower than the original tools!

<https://mpdf.github.io/>



# Rendering Libraries: TCPDF

Server-side, 100% PHP based

New version being worked on, which means the current functional version is considered 'obsolete' and will no longer get updates.

Old version does not work on PHP 7.2+ without patching

<https://github.com/tecnickcom/tc-lib-pdf/issues/18>

<https://github.com/tecnickcom/tcpdf>



# Rendering Libraries: FPDF

Server-side bonus library for FPDF; Also works for TCPDF

Allows the use of PDF files as templates (kind of)

An extension library can also encrypt PDFs

<https://www.setasign.com/products/fpdf/about/>

Builder Beware! Support for versions of PDFs above 1.4 costs money!



# Rendering Libraries: DOMPDF

Server-side; 100% PHP Based

Back to active development after a long, static stint in Google Code. Also now cooperates well with package management solutions like Composer

Powerful and widely-used, but with known issues (Render loop on large tables, no float support)

Only officially supports CSS 2.1 and HTML 5

<http://dompdf.github.io/>



# Rendering Libraries: Wkhtmltopdf

Server-side; Software Binary

Uses an interface like PHP Wkhtmltopdf to interface with Drupal and other PHP applications

Most predictable rendering--uses the WebKit engine

This is more than likely your best option--if you can get it work



# Rendering Libraries: PDFtk

Server-side; Software Binary

More of a PDF manipulation tool:

- Add/remove pages
- Combine PDFs
- Fill PDF templates with data





# Rendering Libraries: Lightning Round!

- `html2ps/html2pdf`
- AdobeFOB
- PDFLib
- `Zend_Pdf`
- XSL:FO
- And Many More!

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# Drupal PDF Modules



# PDF Drupal Modules

Printer, email and PDF versions for Drupal 8 <https://www.drupal.org/project/printable>

- Stable as of the end of last year
- Relies on PDF API module, which is not stable
- PDF API does not install without older version of DCOMP

Entity Print [https://www.drupal.org/project/entity\\_print](https://www.drupal.org/project/entity_print)

- Flexible library selection
- No version issues; can use current branches
- Best replacement for old Print module.



# PDF Drupal Modules

FillPDF <https://www.drupal.org/project/fillpdf>

- Fills PDF templates with data
- Uses PDFtk or a Third-Party Service (paid)
- Can GREATLY reduce the overhead of rendering your PDFs

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# Stupid PDF Tricks





# Make a PDF from HTML

Use Entity Print with Wkhtmltopdf or DOMPDF

But what if you don't want to build based off an entity?

DEMO TIME!



# Combine Two PDFs

Use PDFtk and a wrapper like [mikehaertl/php-pdftk](#)

DEMO TIME!



# Dump a Generated PDF into A File Field

Use Drupal 8's awesome entity handling

DEMO TIME!





# Fill in a PDF Template

Use FillPDF to do this!

Wanna do it programmatically? Use PDFtk and a wrapper like [mikehaertl/php-pdftk](#)

DEMO TIME!



# Generate a PDF with a Password on It

Leverage FPDF and its extensions

DEMO TIME!

**Questions?**



# Thank You!



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