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Convert HTML and CSS page to PDF and send in email attachment in PHP

I am mainting one web based product in php. Application is about hotel management for tariff calculation and all. My client has requested to email invoice as pdf generated by php based software.

I have divided process in two steps.

1. Dynamically Generate PDF file some where on the server using html css produces by php
2. Attach this generated pdf invoice in email

First of all I did tried using dompdf famous php library to generate HTML css invoice but due to incompatibility with tables i did not get accurate invoice pdf as i want. So i started searching on google and also posted on google+. Finally from my [google+ php community post](https://plus.google.com/+ahesanalisuthar/posts/jWuf8ubjNZZ) (<https://plus.google.com/+ahesanalisuthar/posts/jWuf8ubjNZZ>) i came across [wkhtmltopdf](http://wkhtmltopdf.org/) (<http://wkhtmltopdf.org/>) which is really nice tool and solve my problem.

Wkhtmltopdf

Wkhtmltopdf is a command line utility that has nothing to do with php. But we can call this utility to generate pdf file from html.

Todo so first of all we have to download wkhtmltox from it's website suitable for our OS. And than have to install it. In windows we will have exe where as in linux we have tar.gz.zip file which we have to extract. Once we have setup ready of wkhtmltox we can convert HTML+Css Page to pdf from command line

```
"C:/Program Files/wkhtmltopdf/bin/wkhtmltopdf.exe" D:/wamp/wamp64/www/php-playground/html-pdf/dom-pdf-example/dom-pdf-bill.html D:/wamp/wamp64/www/php-playground/html-pdf/dom-pdf-example/dom-pdf-bill.pdf
```

You can see in above command line first is wkhtmltopdf binary file path, second argument is html+css file which we want to convert in PDF and third argument is output file. Please note that here we have used full path. I am using windows so i have take an example of windows but on linux you can setup

wkhtmltox inside your home folder by just copying the folder and give proper permissions.

But we need this utility to access from php . Below code will help us to achieve our goal.

```
htmltopdf.exe" D:/wamp/wamp64/www/php-playground/html-pdf/dom-pdf-example/dom-pdf-bill.html
```

[view raw wkhtmltopdf_example1.php](#) hosted with ❤ by [GitHub](#)

In above example we have used PHP function `shell_exec` to execute binary file. By running above file from browser we have PDF file in defined location if error will not occur.

`shell_exec` is a good function to run binary file from PHP, but php have package `wkhtmltopdf` which is good and have provide good object oriented interface. To install [phpwkhtmltopdf](https://github.com/mikehaertl/phpwkhtmltopdf) (<https://github.com/mikehaertl/phpwkhtmltopdf>) we have to run below command from command prompt

```
composer require mikehaertl/phpwkhtmltopdf
```

Once we installed `phpwkhtmltopdf` successfully we have to use this package. Below code will help us to understand usage of `phpwkhtmltopdf`

1	<?php
2	require "vendor/autoload.php";
3	
4	use mikehaertl\wkhtmlto\Pdf;
5	
6	// You can pass a filename, a HTML string, an URL or an options array to the constructor
7	\$pdf = new Pdf([
8	'commandOptions' => [
9	'useExec' => false,
10	'escapeArgs' => false,
11	'procOptions' => array(
12	// This will bypass the cmd.exe which seems to be recommended on Windows
13	'bypass_shell' => true,
14	// Also worth a try if you get unexplainable errors
15	'suppress_errors' => true,
16),

17],
18]);
19	\$globalOptions = array(
20	'no-outline'
21);
22	
23	\$pdf->setOptions(\$globalOptions);
24	\$pdf->addPage('./dom-pdf-bill.html');
25	//for Windows
26	\$pdf->binary = "C:/Program Files/wkhtmltopdf/bin/wkhtmltopdf.exe";
27	// for linux
28	//\$pdf->binary = './wkhtmltox/bin/wkhtmltopdf';
29	if (!\$pdf->saveAs('./dom-pdf-bill.pdf')) {
30	throw new Exception('Could not create PDF: '.\$pdf->getError());
31	}

view raw wkhtmltopdf_example2.php hosted with ❤ by **GitHub**

You can see we have pass few options in PDF class. The important line in above code line no 26 which sets the wkhtmltopdf.exe path from our installation directory. Set your own installation path for wkhtmltopdf.

But above example has fixed static html file and we need this convert dynamic PHP file which generates invoice for each customer. So how to achive this let see an example.

1	<?php
2	function sendInvoiceInEmail(\$html_string, \$email_id)
3	{
4	//create mailer class
5	\$mail = new PHPMailer;
6	//remove old invoice file if exist at public/doc
7	if(file_exists(__DIR__.'../../public/docs/invoice.pdf')){
8	unlink(__DIR__.'../../public/docs/invoice.pdf');
9	}
10	
11	// You can pass a filename, a HTML string, an URL or an options array to the constructor
12	\$pdf = new Pdf([
13	'commandOptions' => [
14	'useExec' => false,
15	'escapeArgs' => false,
16	'procOptions' => array(
17	// This will bypass the cmd.exe which seems to be recommended on Windows
18	'bypass_shell' => true,
19	// Also worth a try if you get unexplainable errors
20	'suppress_errors' => true,

21),
22	l,
23]);
24	\$globalOptions = array(
25	'no-outline'
26);
27	
28	\$pdf->setOptions(\$globalOptions);
29	
30	\$pdf->addPage(\$html_string);
31	//for Windows
32	\$pdf->binary = "C:/Program Files/wkhtmltopdf/bin/wkhtmltopdf.exe";
33	// for linux
34	//\$pdf->binary = '/home/inspiqig/public_html/wkhtmltox/bin/wkhtmltopdf';
35	if (!\$pdf->saveAs(__DIR__.'/../public/docs/invoice.pdf')) {
36	throw new Exception('Could not create PDF: '.\$pdf->getError());
37	}
38	//now send email and attach invoice.pdf file from public/doc/invoice.pdf
39	
40	
41	
42	//\$mail->SMTPDebug = 3; // Enable verbose debug output
43	\$mail->isSMTP(); // Set mailer to use SMTP
44	\$mail->Host = 'host name'; // Specify main and backup SMTP servers
45	\$mail->SMTPAuth = true; // Enable SMTP authentication
46	\$mail->Username = 'username'; // SMTP username
47	\$mail->Password = 'password'; // SMTP password
48	\$mail->SMTPSecure = 'tls'; // Enable TLS encryption, `ssl` also accepted
49	\$mail->Port = 587; // TCP port to connect to
50	\$mail->setFrom('from email id', 'From Name',FALSE);
51	\$mail->addAddress(to email id); // Add a recipient
52	
53	\$mail->addAttachment(__DIR__.'/../public/docs/invoice.pdf'); // Add attachments
54	
55	\$mail->isHTML(true); // Set email format to HTML
56	
57	\$mail->Subject = 'subject';
58	\$mail->Body = 'message body';
59	
60	\$is_email_sent = false;
61	if(!\$mail->send()) {
62	// echo 'Message could not be sent.';

63	// echo 'Mailer Error: ' . \$mail->ErrorInfo;
64	\$is_email_sent = false;
65	} else {
66	// echo 'Message has been sent';
67	\$is_email_sent = true;
68	}
69	
70	return true;
71	}
72	//start output buffering
73	ob_start();
74	?>
75	
76	// All PHP code which contains dynamic invoice genration based database values and paramaters
77	<?php
78	\$invoice_html = ob_get_contents();
79	ob_end_clean();
80	
81	
82	\$is_mail_sent = sendInvoiceInEmail(\$invoice_html,\$guest_email_id);
83	if(\$is_mail_sent)
84	echo "Email has been sent";
85	else
86	echo "Error occured while sending email";
87	
88	?>
89	

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We have used PHP [ob_start](http://php.net/manual/en/function.ob-start.php) (<http://php.net/manual/en/function.ob-start.php>) and [ob_get_content](http://php.net/manual/en/function.ob-get-contents.php) (<http://php.net/manual/en/function.ob-get-contents.php>) to get HTML and CSS generated by PHP. [ob_start](#) function process php but does not print response in browser. To send an email we have used [PHPMailer](https://github.com/PHPMailer/PHPMailer) (<https://github.com/PHPMailer/PHPMailer>) package. Properly configure PHPMailer paramters will help you send email with attachment.

In conclusion wkhtmltopdf has done nice job for building this utility. It creates nice and perfect PDF file for HTML based contents.

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email,
invoice,
pdf,
PHP

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2 thoughts on “Convert HTML and CSS page to PDF and send in email attachment in PHP”

John Miller says:

February 3, 2018 at 11:32 am

Ahesanali , thank you for great tutorial!

I recommend also <http://www.ZetPDF.com>

☐ Reply

Ahesanali Suthar says:

February 3, 2018 at 11:44 am

You'r wellcome. I see zetpdf is only meant for .NET framework. Is there any other programming platform is available in zetpdf?

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