

PDF History

Pre-History

- Xerox PARC
- Laser Printer
- 1982: Adobe founded
- Postscript - page description language (PDL)
 - describes what to print
 - full programming language
- The desktop publishing revolution is born
- An [interesting read](#) on this period

Early History: Camelot Project (1990)

- PDF conceived
- Goal: to exchange formatted documents between computers
 - "...to view a file precisely—down to the pixel, essentially, of what the author had intended" - John Wulff, Adobe
- Why not use PostScript?
 - It is too resource-consumptive for the typical 90s personal computer!
- [Reference](#) John Warnock's project description
- [Beyond Camelot: The Story of PDF](#) is an upcoming documentary

PDF vs. PostScript

- All PDFs are PostScript files
 - Not all PostScript files are PDFs
- Simpler (i.e., constrained) form
- Easier (i.e., less costly to process)

PDF Released!

- Version 1.0 released in 1993
 - Initial adoption was slow
 - Acrobat Reader costs \$50 a copy!
- Version 1.1 released in 1994
 - Acrobat Reader becomes free

PDF's Adolescence

- 1996-2004
- PDF becomes a de facto web standard
- Versions 1.2-1.6 released

PDF's Adulthood

- 2005: PDF/A-1, version of PDF for archiving
- 2008: PDF becomes an ISO standard (ISO 32000)
 - ISO: International Organization for Standardization
- 2017: Version 2.0 released
- 2020: Version 2.0 updated

PDF Standards

- [Version 2.0](#): 2020, 1003 pages, registration required
- [Version 1.7](#): 2008, 756 pages