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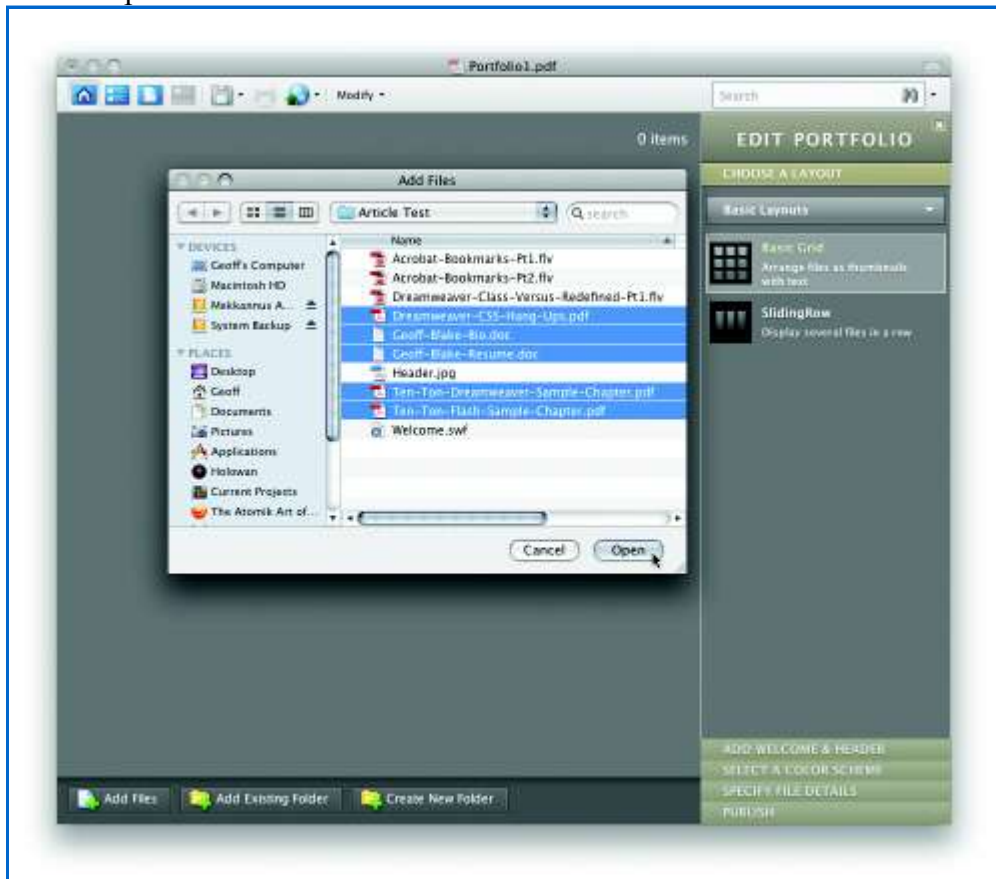# Use Acrobat 9 to create an interactive portfolio

by Steve Jenkins

SO WHAT DOES Acrobat 9 boast? How about the ability to create a fully interactive portfolio CV, complete with multiple documents in a variety of file formats, and the ability to handle full-on Flash Video? Sound good? Well, that's what we'll be looking at here. You'll see how to put together the entire package using Acrobat's new Portfolio features, including how to add and sort files in a portfolio, insert a Flash welcome screen and add a header and a colour scheme. What's more, you'll also see how to edit files in their native software application, and have Acrobat automatically update the portfolio on the fly! And we'll also check out Acrobat 9's crown jewel: the ability to insert Flash Video directly into any PDF file using the Flash tool on Acrobat's new Multimedia toolbar. Finally, you'll see how you can go about sharing your work with others. It's a whole lot of Acrobat goodness, so let's check it out!
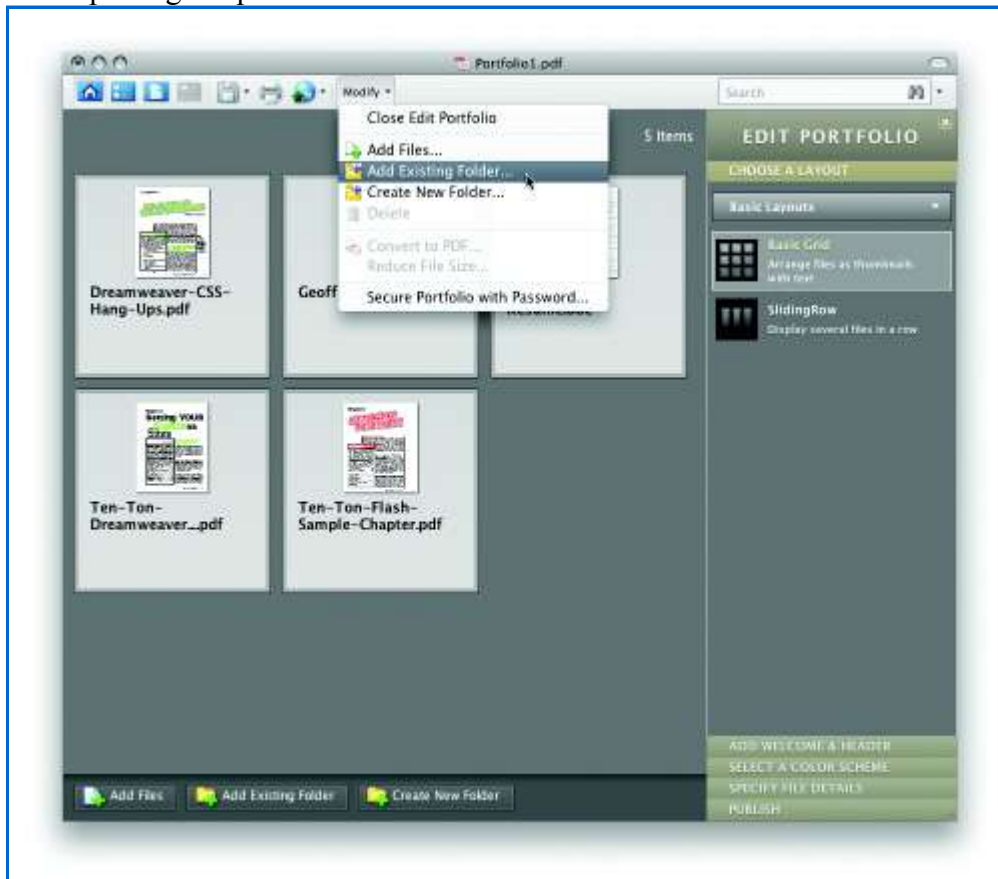
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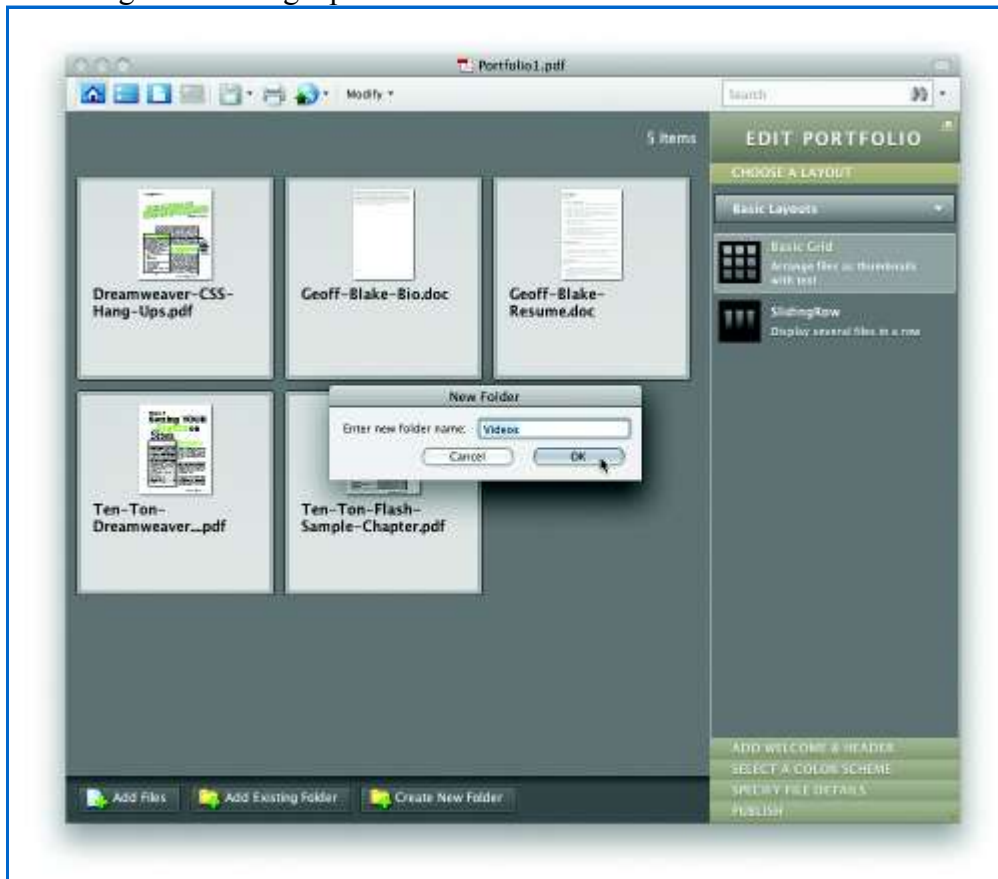
01 Basic portfolio creation

Choose File>Create PDF Portfolio. In the Portfolio window that appears, you can drag the files that you'd like to add from your desktop directly onto the window to add them to the portfolio, or you can click the Add Files button in the bottom-left of the window and browse for the files that way. You can add practically any file format you'd like to your portfolio, including other PDFs, images and even video files. Here, we're adding in Ten-Ton-Dreamweaver- Sample-Chapter.pdf, Ten-Ton-Flash-Sample-Chapter.pdf, Dreamweaver-CSS-Hang-Ups.pdf, Geoff-Blake-Bio.doc and Geoff-Blake-Resume.doc.
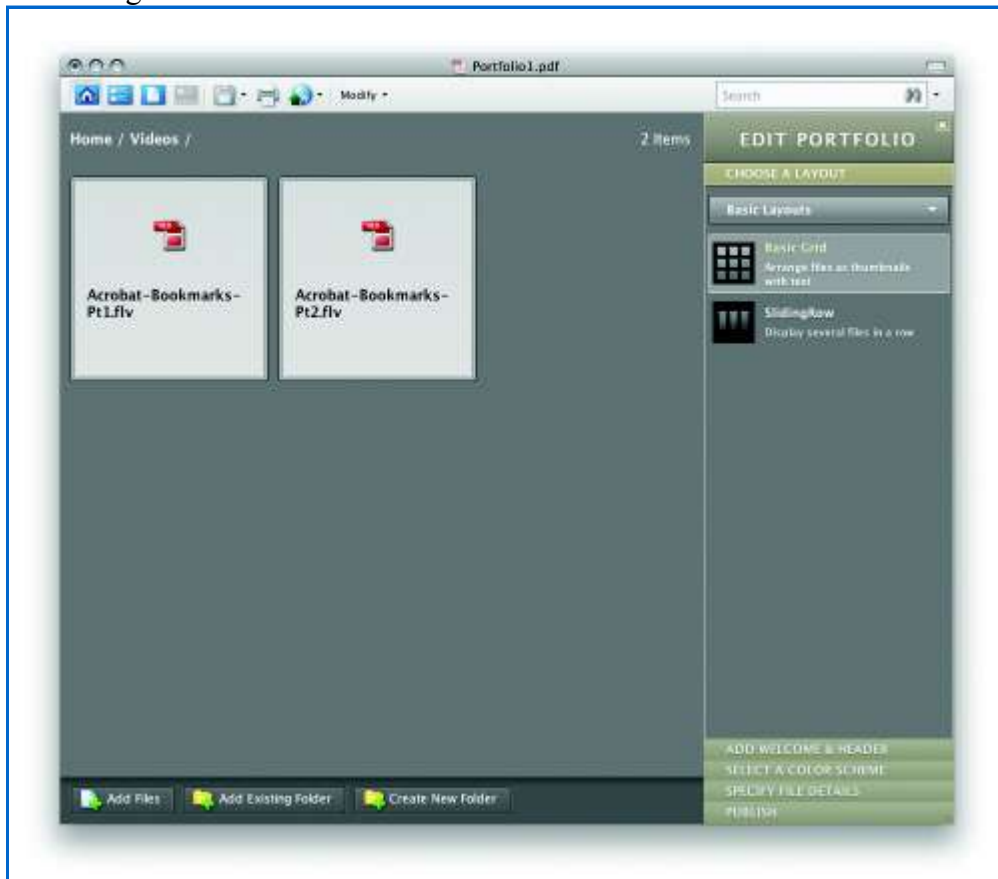
02 Exploring the portfolio window

Portfolios are brand-new to Acrobat 9, so we should take a moment to explore the portfolio interface and see how things work. The first three buttons in the top-left corner control how files are displayed in the main window. The Home button allows you to view files visually, List View opens the files in a detailed list and Preview opens the selected file. You can also double-click a file to open it in Preview mode. You'll notice some additional buttons along the top for saving, sharing and modifying the portfolio, as well as an editing area over on the right. Click on the Home button when you're done exploring.

03 Saving and creating a portfolio folder

Before going any further, we should save our portfolio. Choose File>Save Portfolio As, then in the Save As dialog box that appears, navigate to where you'd like to save your portfolio, give it a name and click Save. Next, we'll create a subfolder within the portfolio to store some video tutorial files. At the bottom of the Portfolio window, click Create New Folder. In the New Folder window that appears, name the new folder 'Videos', then click OK.

04 Adding in Flash Video

Now we'll add in the video files. Doubleclick on the new Videos folder that you just created. This opens the folder. Notice at the top of the Portfolio window, the navigation path indicates Home / Videos. Next, drag and drop the files you'd like to add, or click on Add Files at the bottom of the window to browse for your files. Here, we're adding Acrobat-Bookmarks-Pt1.flv and Acrobat-Bookmarks-Pt2.flv. When you're done, navigate back to the portfolio's home by clicking on the Home button on the navigation bar at the top.
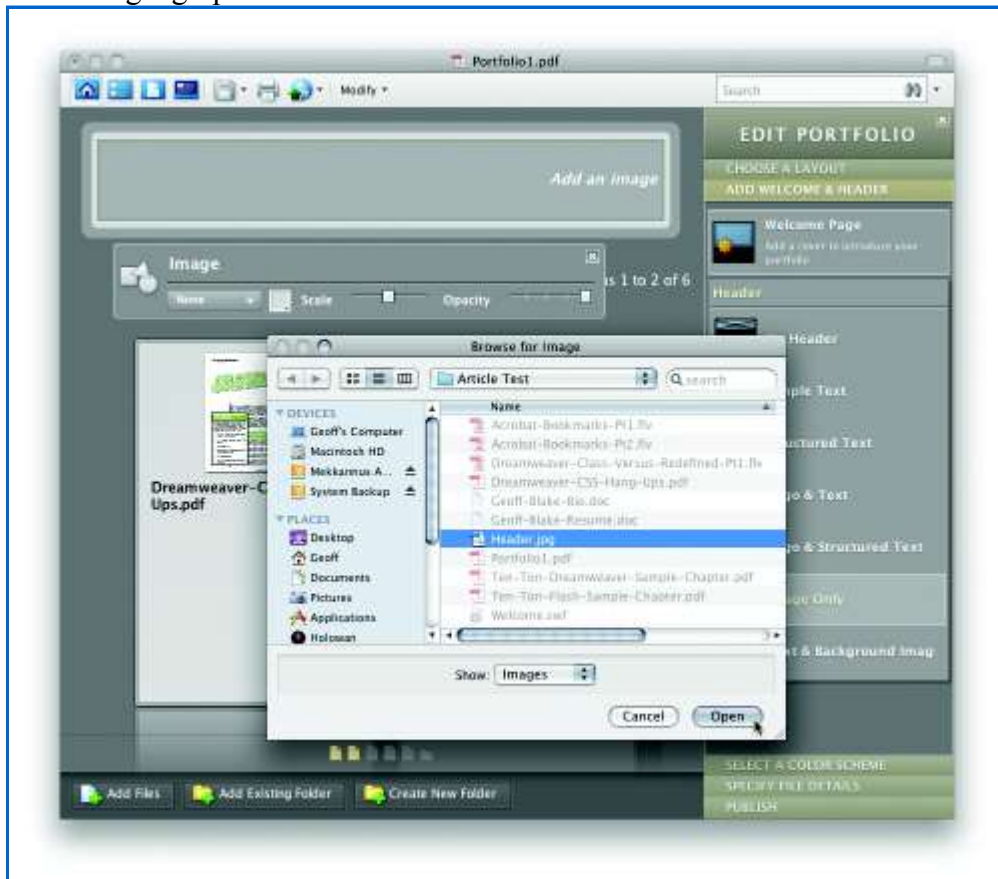
05 Changing the portfolio's layout

Now we're ready to begin customising our Portfolio. In the Edit Portfolio area on the right-hand side, click on the Basic Layouts category if it isn't already open, then choose SlidingRow. This gives your portfolio a sliding interface, which is very slick. To test it out, try clicking on the navigation arrows that appear in the portfolio's main window.

06 Adding a Flash welcome screen

Now we'll add a custom welcome page and a header. A welcome page will appear as soon as a viewer opens your portfolio, and a header will appear above your portfolio's contents. In the Edit Portfolio area, click on the Add Welcome & Header category, then click on Welcome Page. Underneath Welcome Page, click on Flash Movie. In the screen that appears, click on Add A Flash File, then select the Flash file that you'd like to use for your welcome page. Here, we're using Welcome. swf. Once your Flash file is added, you can use the options at the bottom of the screen to change the background colour, set the scale and adjust the opacity. When you're finished here, click Done.

07 Adding a graphical header

Next, on the right click Header, then underneath Header, choose Image Only. In the area that appears at the top, click on Add An Image and navigate to your image. Here, we've selected Header. jpg. Once again, use the settings at the bottom to change the background colour, set the scale and adjust the opacity for your header image. It may take a bit of fiddling to get your header graphic just right.
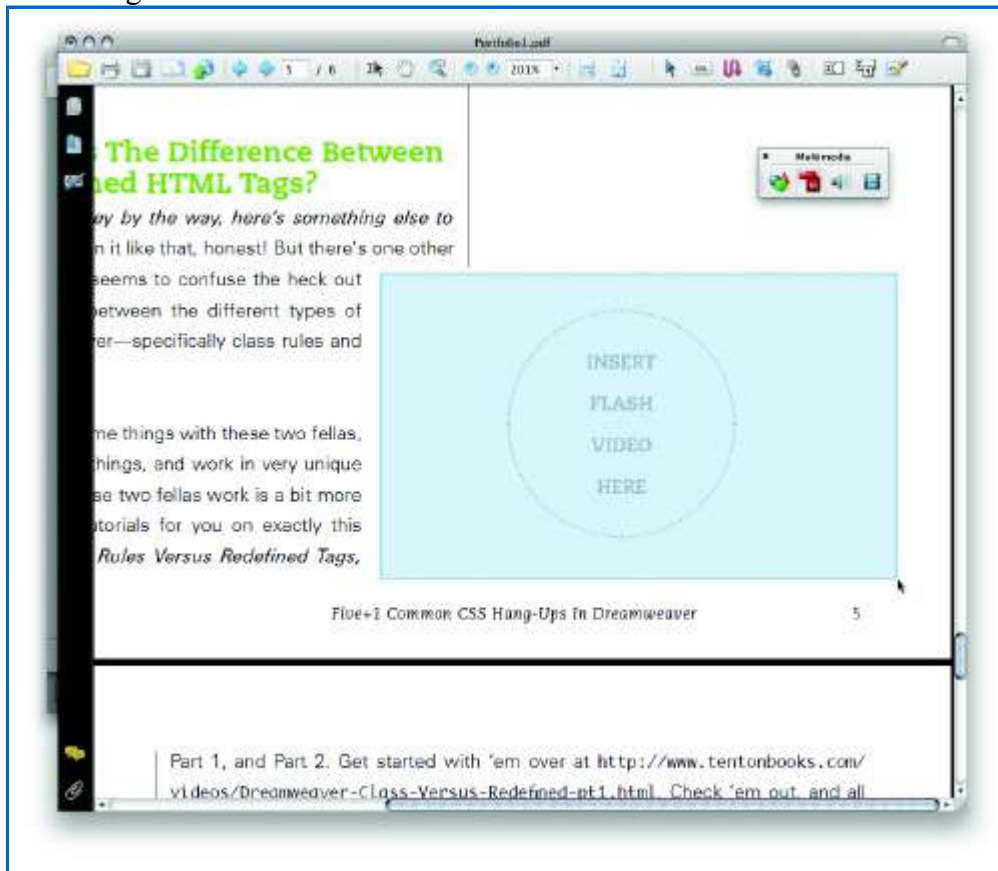
08 Setting a colour scheme

Portfolios in Acrobat 9 also let you customise the colour scheme being used. To do that, click Select A Color Scheme from the category list on the left, then choose a colour that you'd like to use from the previously created colour swatches. Set a custom colour by clicking in the Customize Color Scheme Area.

09 Editing files in their native application

Now we'll make adjustments to one of the Word files in its native application, and have Acrobat automatically update the portfolio. Right-click (Windows) or Ctrl+click (Mac) on the Geoff- Blake-Bio.doc file in the portfolio, and choose Open File In Native Application. The file opens in Word. Make whatever changes you'd like to the file, including content changes and formatting. When you're done, save and close the file, then head back to your portfolio in Acrobat where you'll find it automatically updates. This will work with any kind of file that you've added to your portfolio, including images, PDFs and so on.

10 Adding Flash Video to a PDF

Next up, we'll add a video to a PDF within our portfolio using Acrobat 9's new Flash movie tool. Right-click or Ctrl+click on Dreamweaver-CSS-Hang-Ups.pdf and choose Open File. Then, once the file is open in Acrobat, navigate down to the bottom-right corner of page five. This is where we'll insert a Flash Video. Next up, open Acrobat's new Multimedia toolbar by choosing View>Toolbars>Multimedia. On the toolbar, select the Flash tool, then drag a box around the area indicated on the PDF. In the Insert Flash dialog box that appears, click Choose, then navigate to Dreamweaver-Class- Versus-Redefined-Pt1.flv and click OK. Once Acrobat inserts the video, click on it with the Hand tool to play it. Once you're finished here, save and close the PDF and go back to the portfolio.

11 Sharing your completed portfolio

With our portfolio complete, we're now ready to share it with others. First, close the Edit Portfolio pane on the right by opening the Modify menu at the top, then choosing Close Edit Portfolio. This is how the portfolio will look for viewers. Next, from the Share menu at the top of the portfolio interface, you can choose to either share your portfolio on the new www.acrobat.com website, or you can simply share your portfolio by emailing it. Choosing Email from the Share menu will launch your default email client. That's all there is to it!

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