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Linux Commando

Initially a Linux command-line interface blog, it has evolved to cover increasingly more GUI app topics. Instead of just giving you information like some man page, I illustrate their usage in real-life scenarios.

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Saturday, February 23, 2013

Splitting up is easy for a PDF file

Occasionally, I needed to extract some pages from a multi-page pdf document. Suppose you have a 6-page pdf document named myoldfile.pdf. You want to extract into a new pdf file mynewfile.pdf containing only pages 1 and 2, 4 and 5 from myoldfile.pdf

I did exactly that using pdktk, a command-line tool.

If pdftk is not already installed, install it like this on a Debian or Ubuntu-based computer.

- \$ sudo apt-get update
- \$ sudo apt-get install pdftk

Then, to make a new pdf with just pages 1, 2, 4, and 5 from the old pdf, do this:

\$ pdftk myoldfile.pdf cat 1 2 4 5 output mynewfile.pdf

Note that cat and output are special pdftk keywords. cat specifies the operation to perform on the input file. output signals that what follows is the name of the output pdf file.

You can specify page ranges like this:

\$ pdftk myoldfile.pdf cat 1-2 4-5 output mynewfile.pdf

pdftk has a few more tricks in its back pocket. For example, you can specify a burst operation to split each page in the input file into a separate output file.

\$ pdftk myoldfile.pdf burst

By default, the output files are named pg_0001.pdf, pg_0002.pdf, etc.

pdftk is also capable of merging multiple pdf files into one pdf.

 $\ pdftk\ pg_0001.pdf\ pg_0002.pdf\ pg_0004.pdf\ pg_0005.pdf\ output\ mynewfile.pdf$

That would merge the files corresponding to the first, second, fourth and fifth pages into a single output pdf.

If you know of another easy way to split up pages from a pdf file, please tell us in a comment.

Two updates (part 2, part 3) are available for this post.







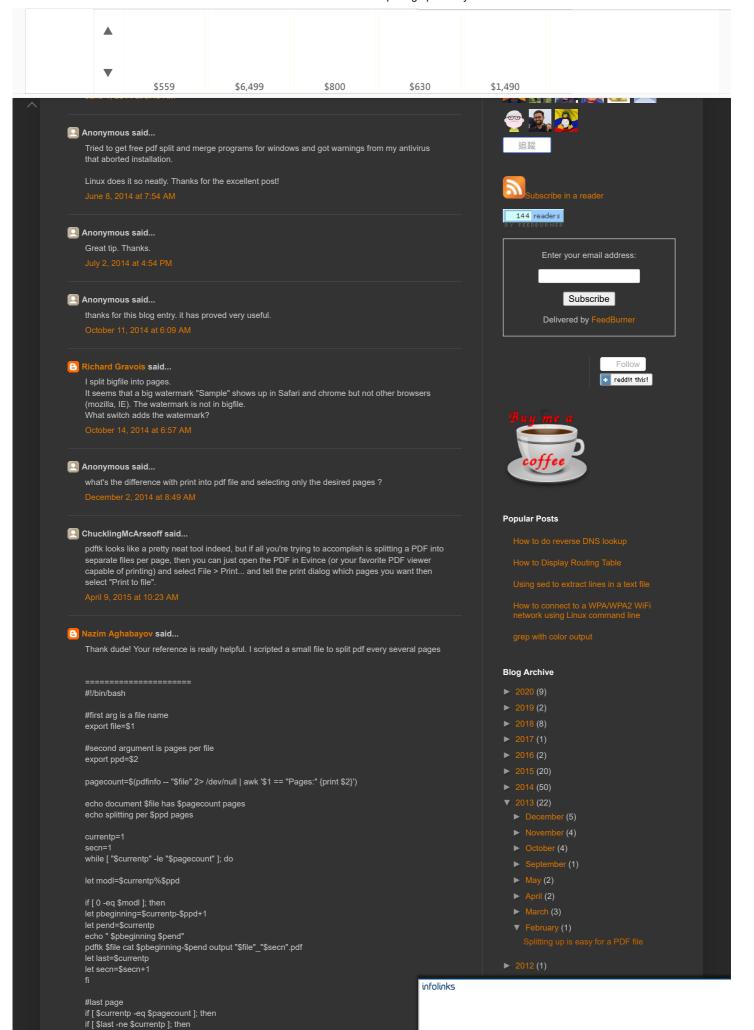


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