

PDF instructions for ONPA contests

When you register for the 2015 Better Newspaper Contest, Associate Member Publications Contest, and Best Ad Ideas Contest, entries in most categories *must* be submitted as PDF files. Those categories are specified in the contest rules, which were sent to your newspaper in January and are available on the [ONPA contest page](#).

To assist those who haven't yet used our online contest registration facility, ONPA has provided the following answers to the most obvious questions. If you have questions, not answered below, please contact us at 503-624-6397 or onpa@orenews.com.

- [How will PDF files be submitted?](#)
- [What are the requirements for PDF entry files?](#)
- [How do I create PDF files?](#)
- [How can I make my PDF files smaller?](#)
- [What is the most efficient way to collect entry files?](#)
- [How do I extract pages from a full-issue or full-section PDF?](#)
- [How do I combine PDF pages or files into a single entry?](#)
- [What settings should I use in the Distiller?](#)
- [How will you prevent fraud?](#)
- [Where can I get help with this process?](#)

How will PDF files be submitted?

You'll submit PDF entries by uploading the files from within the online contest registration system. You will **NOT** submit them separately (*e.g.*, via email or on a CD).

The registration system for ONPA contests is hosted on the web servers of SmallTownPapers in Washington.

What are the requirements for PDF entry files?

You must submit PDFs of complete newspaper pages, even if the entry-related content doesn't fill the page.

Given that general guideline, we will impose only two requirements on the PDF files you submit as contest entries.

1. Only submit pages that contain entry-related content. Many categories require more than one item per entry. For example, a single entry in the "Best Headline Writing" category may include six headlines written by the same person. For each headline, the entire article (including jump pages) must be included for judging. You can now upload either one PDF file that contains all items in the entry, or one PDF file for each item.

2. Make PDF files as small as possible. See below for specific instructions. Because the contest judges will access these PDFs over the internet, excessively large PDF files will take longer to become visible. The more time judges must spend waiting, the less time they will have to evaluate your entry content and the more impatient they will be when they do so. Smaller files will also upload more quickly when you submit your entries.

How do I create PDF files?

If your newspaper has purchased and installed the Adobe Acrobat software (other than Adobe Reader), you already have the tools for creating a PDF because that program includes the **Acrobat Distiller**, which is the PDF-creation engine. Use [the settings provided below](#) in the Acrobat Distiller to create PDF entries for the contest.

Free or open-source PDF software works quite differently from Adobe Acrobat but can be used for creating PDF entries while avoiding the expense of Adobe Acrobat software. **Ghostscript** is the most comprehensive open-source effort to provide a free replacement for Adobe Acrobat. Its learning curve can be steeper than for other Acrobat replacements, but it is a mature product and continually under improvement. **CutePDF Writer** is free PDF-creation software that installs as a printer whose output is a PDF file. It is based on Ghostscript but offers a much simpler user experience. You can [download CutePDF here](#) online (includes help facility) and [see the FAQ here](#), which includes information on configuration. (For PDF contest entries, use the "/screen" configuration option.)

How can I make my PDF files smaller?

Most newspaper PDFs include high-resolution (200-300dpi) grayscale or CMYK images for printing. However, PDF contest entries will be viewed and judged on a computer monitor, which displays at low resolution (72-96dpi) in RGB color. Changes in the resolution and color mode of images are the most effective ways to reduce file size.

1. RESOLUTION. In PDFs, text is always clear regardless of resolution: resolution relates only to photos and rasterized graphics. Reducing resolution by half reduces image file size by 75%. The **recommended maximum resolution of 96dpi** can be enforced by Distiller settings, which are [specified below](#).

2. COLOR MODE. Converting from CMYK to RGB color will reduce image file size by another 25%. This color conversion can again be enforced by Distiller settings, which are [specified below](#).

If you reduce image resolution and/or convert color mode in your entry PDFs with a PDF editor (e.g., Enfocus Pitstop or Quite A Box Of Tricks) or use the native editing tools in later versions of Adobe Acrobat, **YOU WILL NOT GAIN THE EXPECTED REDUCTION IN FILE SIZE** unless you redistill the PDF afterward. As [explained below](#), it is more efficient and effective to use Distiller settings to make these changes.

What is the most efficient way to collect entry files?

Collect copies of all PDF files that contain entry-related pages into one place. These may be full-issue, full-section, or individual-page PDFs that you sent to your printer or that you saved from your page layout program for other reasons. The sizes, resolutions, color modes, and other characteristics of those PDF files can be ignored at this point.

Extract entry-related pages from any multi-page PDFs, or delete non-entry pages. Giving each resulting file a clearly descriptive name.

Combine into a single PDF file the pages that comprise each entry. Instructions for extracting and combining PDFs are provided below.

Distill. Once you've created all your entry PDFs, redistill each one as explained below to reduce it to the smallest practical size. It is not productive to try to reduce the sizes of individual files before

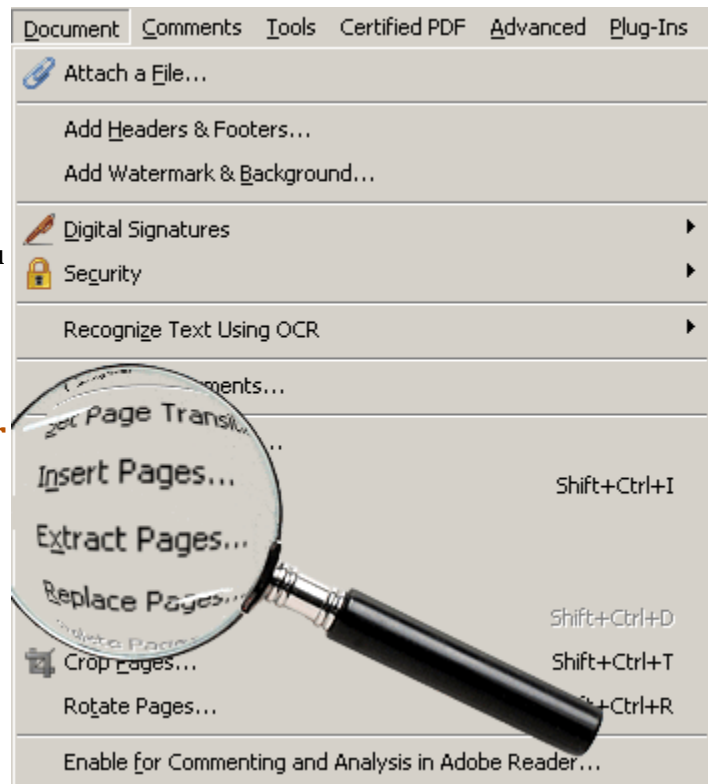
combining them into complete entries. Like all changes, combining pages can increase overall PDF file size.

How do I extract pages from a full-issue or full-section PDF?

In Acrobat, open the PDF file, then choose "Extract Pages..." from the Document menu and follow the instructions. This will allow you to save individual or sequential pages in separate files anywhere on your system.

How do I combine PDF pages or files into a single entry?

Open the PDF file that is to appear first in the entry, choose "Save As..." from the File menu, and save that file with the name you'd like to give the final PDF entry. Choose "Insert Pages..." from the Document menu, choose the file that is to appear next in the entry, then specify where that file should be inserted. When all insertions have been made, save and close the PDF file. You'll need to redistill the final PDFs.



What settings should I use in the Distiller?

The easiest way to set up Acrobat Distiller for contest entries is to change the "Default settings" (the dropdown list that displays when you open the Distiller) to "Smallest File Size". That setting is also available from within InDesign as one of the "Adobe PDF Presets" under the File menu. If you're creating your PDFs by printing to the Adobe PDF (or Acrobat Distiller) printer, you can open that printer's options/preferences and set its Default Settings to "Smallest File Size". **IN ALL OF THESE CASES, HOWEVER,** you must then change the Fonts settings to "Embed All Fonts".

If you prefer to create and save your own Distiller settings for creating contest PDFs, you can enter the following manually into your Distiller, ignoring any settings not mentioned here:

General:

Optimize for web view: yes (allows the first page to be viewed while the rest are downloading)

Compatibility: Acrobat 5.0 (PDF 1.4)

Images:

Color and grayscale: Bicubic downsampling to 96dpi for images greater than 96dpi; JPEG compression, medium quality

Monochrome: Bicubic downsampling to 400dpi for images greater than 400dpi; CCITT Group 4 compression

Color: Convert all to sRGB color; rendering intent=perceptual; working profile=Adobe RGB (1998)

Advanced: Preserve Level 2 copypage semantics (UNcheck everything else)
Standards: None

How will you prevent fraud?

ONPA members have pointed out in the past that electronic contest entries will not necessarily represent published pages because they can be changed before submission.

It is true that articles can be re-edited, photos can be retouched or replaced, and page layouts can be changed. However, major deception probably would be noticed, if only because winning PDFs will be available to the public in perpetuity on the ONPA web site. And if a typo is repaired on a story before submission, the degree of harm and the effect on the judging outcome is negligible.

We prefer to trust our member publishers not to submit embellished entries.

Where can I get help with this process?

We no longer have an in-house graphics person. Hopefully these instructions will help you create the PDF's you need. If you have questions you can call 503-624-6397 or email onpa@orenews.com and we will do our best to help.