

GRAPHIC EXCHANGE

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Whatever gets you through the night, it's alright, and it's all right (almost)

Enfocus PitStop 4

BY LERRICK STARR

PREPRESS PEOPLE LOVE ANY FILE FORMAT WHERE EVERYTHING IS aboard — fonts, graphics and images. And ever since they made PDF a potential solution for prepress, Adobe's been scrambling to keep up with expanding high end printing requirements. PDF as conceived for prepress was not flexible enough for demanding digital workflows. The theory was to get the PDF right and make it bulletproof, so nothing could go wrong further down the workflow. But that philosophy meant you could not help a client save a job where a color, font or image was incorrect.

Early versions of Enfocus *PitStop* worked with *Exchange 3.0* and popularized post-PDF editing; now with the new version of *PitStop* for *Acrobat 4* and the new touchup tools



When installed, PitStop adds its tool and view sets to the Acrobat toolbar (which appear in purple). On the left you see icons for Select Objects, Move Selection, Edit Text Line, Edit Path and Copy and Paste. At the top are icons for View Annotations, View Page Boxes, View Wireframe and View Problems.

included in Adobe's latest release, we finally have the tools to deal with almost any PDF editing disaster.

MORE TOOLS IN ADOBE 4

Acrobat has had limited text editing since version 3, including strike-through and underline. You could draw lines and objects of uniform shape, and you could crop a page to any size, as long as it was smaller than the original. In *Acrobat 4*, Adobe has integrated object and picture editing functions utilizing *Photoshop* and *Illustrator* (it hides behind the text Touchup tool and looks like a little black pointer).

Using this tool, the option key (control key on PC) and a double click opens either *Photoshop* or *Illustrator* (depend-

ing on the object you are trying to edit).

If this doesn't work for you, check under File>Preferences> TouchUp where you will find an opportunity to name your image editor and your object editor. Browse until you find the appropriate choice.

Tip 1: If you double-click on an image with the Touchup tool and it opens *Illustrator* instead, go back to the preferences and point the object editor at *Photoshop* as well. Just remember to change it back when you finish the edit.

Tip 2: If after you've edited an image in *Photoshop* it refuses to resave itself back into the PDF then there's probably a PDF plug-in missing which you can manually place in the plug-ins folder.

When it works properly, you pop in and out of *Photoshop* and *Illustrator* as you edit images and alter graphics in piecemeal fashion. This is adequate for a small document, but what happens when you have a longer document and a color is incorrect throughout?

AND THEN CAME PITSTOP

The things that *Acrobat* lets you do to a PDF are limited and that's where Enfocus *PitStop* comes in. This PDF editing plug-in for Adobe *Acrobat* allows the user to globally fix many common errors in multi-page PDFs and is the key to a low tech PDF workflow.

What's a typical error? The client forgets to check off Embed Fonts in Distiller and you're worried about font substitution at the RIP. Or the client is working in a word processor, spreadsheet or presentation program and the color palette is only RGB. Or the line weight of rules and boxes used throughout was okay at 300 dpi but nearly invisible at image-setter resolution.

Pitstop has a tool set that addresses these issues and more. The *PitStop* plug-in adds new tools to the top and side tool bars in *Acrobat* (you have to open a file to see them).

Let's take a simple job through the *PitStop* correction process and see how it works.

THE JOB

Our PDF comes by e-mail from the business community. This job belongs to a stockbroker and is destined for distribution the next day. It was created in *Word*, with *Excel* imports in the form of pie charts and uses Palatino, Times and Helvetica; *Excel* brings Helvetica Neue Condensed along with them. The job is specified as black plus one spot color.

The client output to PostScript using a Laserwriter driver and distilled using the default settings in Distiller. The result is a document where no fonts are embedded, colors are RGB and unnamed, there's no trapping, and line weights of rules

ENFOCUS
PITSTOP 4.0

System

Requirements:

Acrobat 4.0

Mac OS 8.0 or later

Microsoft Windows 95,

Windows 98, Windows NT 4.0

Suggested retail price

\$295 (U.S.)

Enfocus Software

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and charts are a fraction of a point and too thin to print. And the client has gone home. All you have to work with is a set of lasers and the floppy.

In the good old days you'd lay the job up and shoot it on the camera. A few hours of additional ruby cutting and masking and the job would be on press.

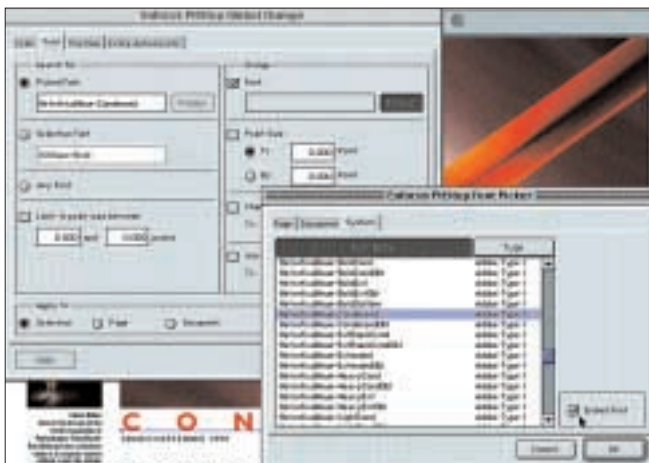
But today it's easier.

FONT EMBEDDING

Let's start with the fonts. Using Edit>PitStop Global Change we hit the File>Fonts tab, check off "Search for" and the Picked font button and then the "Picker button". Up pops a three tabbed dialogue box showing the fonts on the page, in the document and available in the system.

Starting with Helvetica Neue Condensed as the chosen document font, say OK to return to the main dialogue. On the right side of the dialogue box check Change Font, then Picker again; go to System fonts and select Helvetica Neue Condensed. Find the check box at the lower right that says "embed font" and use it. Say OK and return to the main dialogue.

Note the choices in the "Apply to" section at the bottom: Selection, Page and Document. Choose Document and the Apply button. After much grinding and effort the font is em-



Embedding Fonts. After selecting the font to be embedded using the PitStop Font Picker dialogue box, highlight the font on your font list and click the "Embed Font" check box at the lower right.

bedded in the document. You can do the same for the balance of the missing fonts.

Tip 3: If a font is not open in your font manager then it will not be available to embed.

RGB TO CMYK

Throughout the document is a recurring RGB mix of 100-2-48 (a bright pink on the monitor). It is the only other color in the job except black. Considering the issue of screen angle — you have to give the color an angle that won't moiré with the black — it's logical to want the spot color to appear on the cyan or magenta plate.

Going into *PitStop* Global Change we select one occur-

rence of the color, change it to its CMYK equivalent and then make the color 100% cyan. Apply this to the entire document and the job will print correctly anywhere. Be sure to advise your printer that the color plate is misnamed and tell him the spot color you want instead!

Unfortunately if shades of a single color exist throughout the document and are unnamed, you'll have to substitute for all of them individually. Blends are problematic as they are broken into a series of bands that defy this approach.



Spot Color Correction. To convert an RGB color to spot, change it to CMYK, make it cyan, then apply the change to the entire document.

SETTING A MINIMUM LINE WEIGHT

Often PC-originated files contain imported graphics where line weights are practically nonexistent. Chosen by relative size they are device dependent and look fine on 300 dpi laser output. At the imagesetter those lines can become one pixel wide at 2400 dpi.

Tip 4: You must make global adjustments to the minimum line weight in the document before you apply any traps or your trapping strokes will become whatever minimum you set.

To do this, go to Pit-Stop Global Change and choose the Extra Action Lists tab. Here you will find a button for Line



Setting Minimum Line Weight. In the "Extra Actions List" section in Global Change, we set a minimum for all line weights in the document.

Weight and a place to enter a value for "Force minimum line weight to:". Apply this to the entire document and the lines in the document including the graphics will now be right.

TRAPPING

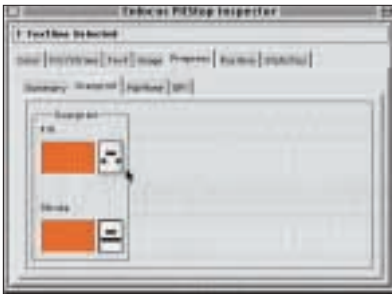
There are two approaches to trapping available. The first, through the touchup tool, uses *Illustrator* as the place to edit graphics. The drawback is that as soon as graphics — logos for example — are distilled to PDF, they lose their identity and become a series of separate objects. Selection of all the bits can be a challenge whether in *PitStop* or *Illustrator*.

Trapping in *PitStop* is straightforward in the traditional sense of overprinting or stroking objects and setting the stroke to overprint.

Global black overprinting (and global white knockout) is under the Extra Action list. Checking off either of these two



Overprinting. Set black to overprint globally under the Extra Action Lists.



Stroking and Overprinting an Object. In Inspector, go to Fill/Stroke and turn on Stroke (top). After matching the color of the fill, go to Inspector's Overprint settings and set Fill to knock out and Stroke to overprint (bottom).

choices and applying this change to the document settles this simple trapping problem.

Here's how to create an overprinting stroke in *PitStop*. First, choose the graphic or object you wish to trap and open the Inspector window. Look at the color of the fill under Color (and make any basic changes you have to), then save the adjusted fill color to the Repository. Now go to Fill/Stroke and turn Stroke on; set the weight (typically .2 - .4 pts), then flip back to Color. Click on stroke color and load the Repository colors. Then choose your saved color, and we're almost done.

Go to the Prepress tab and click the Overprint tab. Note the representations of the trapping state of the fill and stroke. A small floating line (the object) hovers over another longer line (the underlying object) if the object is set to overprint. Click on the lines to change their state. Then the fill should knock out and the stroke should overprint.

PREFLIGHT TOOL COMES CLOSE

If one area of this application holds tremendous promise it is its use of preflight profiles to not only assess the incoming PDF but also to effect changes to the PDF according to criteria the operator sets up. Running any of the default profiles generates a report that identifies problems with fonts, images or a number of other printing requirements. This can be particularly useful when exchanged with clients seeking to correct their errors.

The problems begin when you try to embed fonts with a profile. On small documents the attempt is usually successful, but on weightier files the substitution takes many times longer than to do the job manually.

Of course you have to know which fonts are missing in order to open them so that they can be embedded. Often the program crashes, leaving you where you started. On the up side, this feature didn't work at all in earlier releases but at

least now it comes close. If Enfocus gets this to work efficiently, prepress people will have a very powerful tool for ensuring the integrity of anyone's PDF workflow.

Throughout its development cycle *PitStop* has improved with each release, improving both in speed and functionality. However this plug-in seems to be quite the memory hog. Large documents strain anything less than a G3 and you better be prepared to allocate a lot of memory to *Acrobat*. On the PC version, font embedding bogs down a Compaq Pentium II with 96MB of RAM and ample drive space operating under WinNT. Sometimes things improve if you exit *Acrobat* and re-open it to finish embedding fonts.

IF I COULD MAKE A WISH

After a consultation with a couple of full-time *PitStop* users at Griffin House Graphics in Toronto, here are a few things we would wish for collectively:

1. The ability to delete fonts entirely from a PDF
2. A master page where a repeating graphic would only have to be placed once
3. All prepress tools in one dialogue box; fill and stroke color and overprint settings should all be visible in one window
4. Make the Inspector context-sensitive; click on a photo and get the info box automatically
5. If a file has been optimized, make changes to reference graphics apply globally throughout the document

INTO YOUR POSTSCRIPT 2 WORKFLOW

So now you're getting nothing but PDFs. What do you do with them?

In the absence of a PDF imposition solution try exporting the pages as EPS using *Acrobat's* File>Export>PS or EPS. Choose EPS with Preview TIFF, PostScript Option: Level 2, ASCII or Binary (your choice, if one doesn't work, the other will); pick your page range, and include all fonts, converting TrueType to Type 1; don't include the halftone screens unless they are embedded in the job.

An EPS generated from *Acrobat* is placeable in *QuarkX-Press* or *Pagemaker* (or any imposition program). Push Print and the imposed PDF goes to film or plates.

Enfocus has an offer that can't be beat. Visit their website at www.enfocus.com and download the 30 day working version. That's one month of experimentation with imaging client files before you make a commitment.

One last note: In the first quarter of next year Enfocus will release *PitStop 4.05*. The newest key feature of this product will be the "action-lists" that can be created and modified (scripted), to make repeatable corrections to your PDF documents. *

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