

Using CutePDF for Small Business

Preach What We Practice

The third installment of our new blog series, "[Preach what we Practice](#)" where we'll give fellow small business owners a back-stage pass to how we do business. This week I'm digging into our file management practices.

– Nate –

Background

Since we pride ourselves on a 100% paperless office, we don't own a printer. But that also means we don't have a scanner for receipts, order confirmations, signed documents, etc... CutePDF is a fantastically lean, little tool.



[Direct Download Link for Windows 7+](#)

Package / Cost / Setup

We just use the the free version of [CutePDF](#).

The setup is pretty easy, but usage can be a little tricky – CutePDF adds a feature to the Print to File feature in

Windows. This screenshot shows the basics. I press Ctrl-P to print (fairly standard in Windows), and get this dialog box.



“Change Printer to CutePDF >
PRINT”

And after you hit print, you need to wait a few seconds (there’s no hourglass or status bar unfortunately) until you get this dialog. Just select a folder, rename the file and click Save.



What our business uses CutePDF for:

When we send the final version of a contract or proposal (anything that needs to be signed) we’ll either use the “Save As > PDF” option if our laptop is rocking the latest version of Microsoft Word (2007 ->), or we’ll print to file using CutePDF.

Also, we use CutePDF with [Google Chrome](#) & Firefox to print Order Confirmation, receipts, password pages, etc... and save them to the appropriate folder in our shared [Dropbox](#) account.

What we *DON'T* use CutePDF for:

Well, anything that doesn’t NEED to be saved to PDF, such as documents best handled in [Google Docs](#).

Naming Files

CutePDF will automatically clone the current filename – so *ClientName – Marketing Agreement – 092013.doc* will become *ClientName – Marketing Agreement – 092013.pdf*.

Uncommon Uses:

- Poor man print prep – often printers will require a high resolution PDF to get your business cards, flyers, brochures, etc... printed. So we'll mock it up in [GIMP](#) or a JPG, and use CutePDF to print it to file. An imperfect solution, but a way to avoid additional graphics production fees.
- [PDFBinder](#) is another free tool that we use when printing graphics heavy, high resolution pages that CutePDF will have trouble chewing through. We'll print-to-pdf the pages individually then use PDFBinder to fuse the pages into a single PDF file. Not ideal, but it has saved our ass on more than one project (electronic press kits (EPK's) come to mind).
- A Ridiculously Insecure, but still effective “digital” signature – to avoid going to the Fedex or Kinkos to print and sign an agreement, we've used tools such as RightSignature (which syncs with Dropbox as well, which is clutch), or we just snap a photo of our signature with our phone, and paste it into the document, then print to file using CutePDF. It looks just like a scanned version, but keeps the whole process electronic. To be clear it is still a duct tape solution, but a solution nonetheless.

Starting this Fall, we'll be sharing our favorite templates,

check-lists, tutorials, etc... to our email subscribers. That includes everything from marketing checklists to finance spreadsheets to comprehensive how-to guides for tools such as CutePDF, and sales funnels.

Launches in early October 2013. [Sign-up here](#) to be notified of the release date and details.