Lync Wealth Management

How to edit a PDF file

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What is a PDF?

A PDF, short for Portable Document Format, is a file format typically used when you need to preserve a document for easy sharing without allowing easy modification. By its very nature, a PDF is designed to be portable rather than editable.

Unlike word processors like Microsoft Word or Google Docs, it offers the original author the assurance that, regardless of the device the recipient uses to open the document, the original content and formatting will remain unaltered.

However, despite the initial intention of an un-editable document, practical situations may arise where minor adjustments become necessary in the future. This concise guide aims to introduce you to some of the key PDF editors and quickly equip you with the skills needed to make these changes efficiently.

Why use a PDF editor?

If you have a scanned document that you wish to preserve or amend digitally, a PDF editor will contain within it a tool called an Optical Character Recognition (OCR) feature, this will allow you to edit the document directly within the PDF editing software interface, before saving and storing.

A PDF editor will also allow you to export it to a separate word processor or presentation tool (like Microsoft Word or PowerPoint), if you had some larger changes you wish to make that couldn't be done as easily from within the PDF editor, or if you wanted to convert the document into something that could be used for presentation purposes.

Where do I start?

It's very likely that you already have some form of PDF viewer on your laptop, PC, tablet or phone, but in order to edit a PDF you may need additional software or to obtain a pro license for the software you already have.
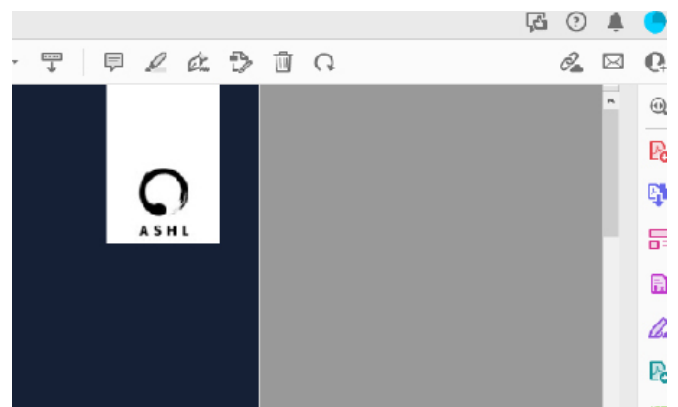
There are a few free options available, but they are typically only free of charge on a trial basis or offer limited functionality. Without paying, you run the risk of the demo period ending at an inconvenient time.

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Below are two examples of how useful a PDF editor can be and a few examples of the choice of software available, their pricing, pros and cons.

Although all of these PDF editors allow you to do broadly the same things, some have added functionality thrown in, and some are only suitable for specific operating systems (Mac OS, Microsoft Windows etc.). For our picks, we have only reviewed software which is available on multiple operating systems.

Editing images and text

Let's say you wanted to amend one of our client guides to align it with your company branding. First you would remove our ASHL logo and replace it with your own.
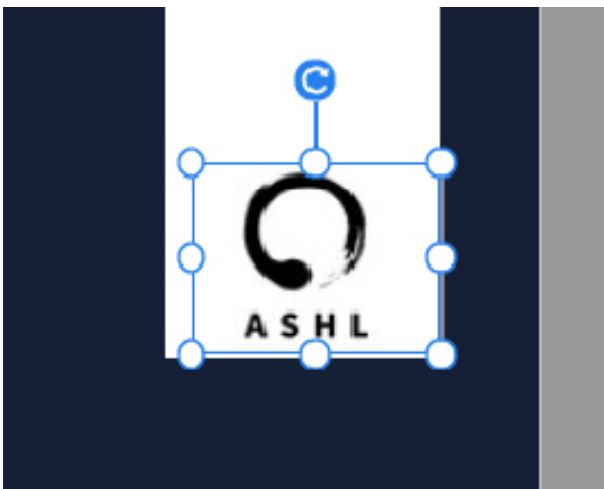

First, locate the "Edit PDF" button on the right-hand toolbar.

When you click this, the software analyses the document and gives you the ability to add, remove and amend elements of the PDF.

You'll be able to tell because the elements of the document will have handles and editable elements, like the image below.
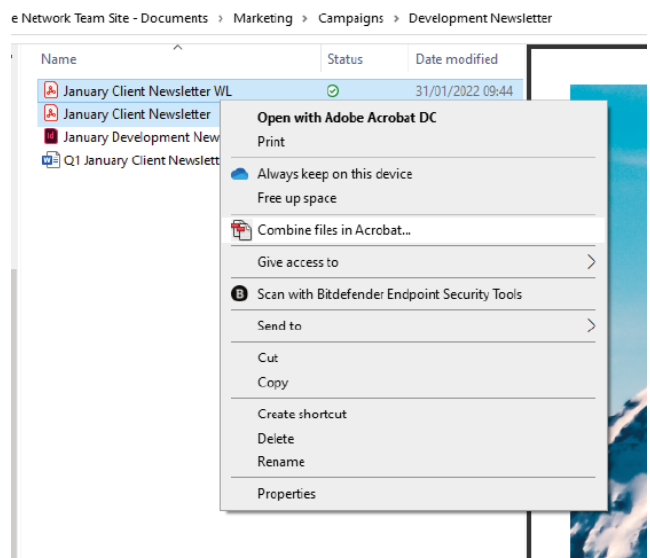

Combining documents into one PDF

There are many examples where you would want to combine documents in to one "Binder" (a collection of documents imported to one PDF file).

Whether it's for compliance and audit record keeping, merging correspondence into one convenient document, or combining documents from multiple sources for a presentation, the ability to merge and organise documents into a single PDF binder enhances accessibility and facilities collaboration.

To combine documents into a binder simply select the documents you want to combine, right click and (in the case of the example below), click "combine with Adobe Acrobat"

Our top choices

Our Pick

Adobe Acrobat

Cost: from £13.14/month

Excellent OCR

Great editing and annotation tools

Adobe Acrobat is a fully fledged PDF editor, designed by the creators of the PDF file itself Adobe Systems. It is designed to work with Mac and PC.

Note: Adobe Acrobat require subscription

A great option

Nitro PDF Pro

Cost: from £140.00

Easy to use

Perfect for one time usage

Excellent interface, E-signature tool included and cheaper than Adobe Acrobat. Nitro Pro works on all platforms and has an excellent and easy to use interface.

Note: Nitro Pro integrates well with Microsoft 365

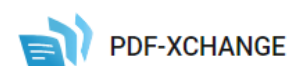### A cheaper option

Tracker PDF-XChange Editor

Cost: from £34.00

Very inexpensive option

Solid range of functionality for the price

Powerful PDF editing features at a fraction of the cost compared to other business-oriented PDF editors. Limitations without paid subscription.

Note: Requires additional purchase to edit scanned documents

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