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Why Not Buy an Inexpensive Acrobat Clone?

Why Not Buy an Inexpensive PDF Clone? (Summarized from the Acrobat for Legal Professionals Blog at <http://blogs.adobe.com/acrolaw/archives.html>):

Adobe spends millions of dollars developing and maintaining the Adobe Reader and gives it away free. Why?

Adobe decided at the beginning that PDF format would be an open specification. Whenever Adobe releases a new version of Acrobat, numerous documents are posted on the Adobe website documenting the structure of the PDF format. This openness is one of the reasons that the PDF is the standard it is today. Further, Adobe has released the full Portable Document Format (PDF) 1.7 specification to AIIIM, the Enterprise Content Management Association, for the purpose of publication by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and we will continue to help determine the structure and new features that are enabled with new versions of Acrobat and the PDF specification.

Some other reasons to consider investing in the Adobe Acrobat Product Family versus one of the over 350+ products that classify themselves as Acrobat clones include:

- Adobe is a Fortune 500 company with 6,000 employees, 200 Acrobat developers, and a long-term commitment to large law firms and to the Acrobat Product Family.
- Adobe supports PDF files opened in the free Adobe Reader only if the PDF was created by an Adobe product (<http://www.adobe.com/support/techdocs/328140.html>).
- Adobe offers Reader Enablement, so that Acrobat 8.0 Professional users can trigger four (4) hidden features for free Adobe Reader users:
 - Enable Adobe Reader users to fill and save PDF forms locally for offline use.
 - Enable Adobe Reader users to participate in reviews with complete commenting and markup tools.
 - Enable the Typewriter tool so users can type anywhere on a PDF document.
 - Enable Adobe Reader users to digitally sign PDF documents.
- Adobe drives PDF adoption in government bodies worldwide who demand quality, predictable documents that meet court standards. New standards around PDF will always appear in Adobe products first. One recent example: PDF/A (PDF for Archive), an ISO standard adopted by the US Federal Court system, the NARA (National Archive and Records Administration), and the Library of Congress as the standard format for archiving digital documents.
- Adobe offers [free deployment tools](#) like the [Adobe Customization Wizard 8](#) that helps organizations package and customize their deployment using industry-standard tools. In addition, Acrobat is supported to run on Citrix and Windows Terminal Services.

- Since Adobe Acrobat's introduction in 1993, the Adobe Acrobat Ecosystem has grown to support over 500 3rd-party Acrobat plug-ins, and 1,800 solution partners including Adobe Certified Trainers and Consultants.
- Adobe makes the best, most compact, most accepted PDF files. Clones often don't do everything necessary in all cases to meet court standards.
- Adobe offers the best QA'd, most reliable software. Acrobat is used by millions of users around the world to [deliver extraordinary results](#).
- Acrobat is the client for [Acrobat Connect](#) (\$39/month) derived from the product formerly known as Macromedia Breeze; a secure, flexible web communication system that enables IT professionals to support and extend the functionality of Acrobat to provide enterprise web communication solutions for training, marketing, enterprise web conferencing, and online collaboration.
- Adobe offers the most comprehensive security from simple usage restrictions to self-certifying documents which instantly alert you if a document has been changed. [Adobe Document Center](#) (\$19/month) goes one step further by allowing you to control who has access to your most important documents and what they can do with them — open, print, comment on, or copy. You can set protections for specific individuals or groups and set time limit access with the confidence in knowing you can change your controls at any time.
- Acrobat is the client for the [Adobe LiveCycle Enterprise Suite](#) that blends electronic forms, process management, document security, and document generation to help deliver rich and engaging applications that reduce paperwork, accelerate decision-making, and help ensure regulatory compliance.
- Adobe PDF is structured (tagged) allowing your firm to meet government Section 508 accessibility requirements. Acrobat is often the only way to produce a tagged PDF. Tagging is also critical for review workflows, accessibility, re-use, etc.
- Adobe offers redaction, bates numbering, hidden data removal, enhanced OCR, review, etc. all in one package; not spread across several packages or requiring additional products.