
A Quick Guide: Converting Print to Online

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About This Book

A Quick Guide: Converting Print to Online will help you understand the procedures for converting print documents to online documents. We don't make you read long and confusing user guides or reference manuals to find the information you need. We explain things using simple, step-by-step procedures. This book is not intended to represent theory of hard copy or online design—it is instead a practical guide to the technical knowledge you will be required to know in your job as a technical writer, editor, or graphic designer.

As a practising professional in the field of technical communication, you will face an enormous variety of document formats in your daily work environment. The information you receive will often be in a different format from what you need it to be in. As a result, you must convert your documents into the format that is most useful to you; then convert them back again. *A Quick Guide: Converting Print to Online* was written with that challenge in mind and it helps you find the easiest solution for your particular situation, when converting print documents to online documents.

We do not recommend a particular software for your documentation, but instead tell you how to use the various software you already have. This guide shows you the following:

- how to prepare your print documents for conversion to online
- how to prepare your graphics for conversion to online

- the proper procedures to use in order to get the best results
- actual examples of what the documents look like in print and online.

How This Book Is Organized

The various chapters included in this book are described below:

- Chapter 1, “Introduction,” provides a description of what this book covers.
- Chapter 2, “Preparing Print Documents for Online Use,” covers the proper procedures for converting print documents to online use and includes step-by-step procedures.
- Chapter 3, “Preparing Graphics for Online Use,” covers the proper procedures for converting graphics to online use and includes step-by-step procedures.

Conventions Used In This Book

This book used several conventions that are designed to make the book easier to follow:

- Bulleted lists indicate a non-sequential order.
- Numbered lists mean that the steps should be followed in sequential order.

Preparing Print Documents for Online Use

What Software Format Is Your Document In?

Many different types of software programs exist to produce your print documentation. For long technical documents, two of the most frequently used software programs are Microsoft Word and Adobe FrameMaker, which are the programs we chose to focus on in this *Quick Guide*. However, many other software programs exist for creating documentation including QuarkXPress, Adobe PageMaker, and Interleaf to name a few.

To prepare your print document for online use:

1. What software format is your print document in currently?
2. Which online format do you want to convert it to? Refer to Table 2.1.

Table 2. Print vs. Online Formats

PRINT FORMAT	ONLINE FORMAT	WEBSITE SOFTWARE
Microsoft Word 97 or later	HTML, XML, PDF	Macromedia DreamWeaver 4, Microsoft FrontPage 2000, HTML
Microsoft Excel 97 or later	HTML, XML, PDF	
FrameMaker 5.5.6 or later	HTML, XML, PDF	

3. Refer to the procedures that follow for the exact steps. The steps depend on which software program your print document is currently in and which software format you are converting it to.

Microsoft Word to HTML

Fortunately, converting a Microsoft Word document to HTML is simple, because it includes a “Save as Type” menu option in the software.

To convert a print document in Microsoft Word to HTML:

1. Open your Microsoft Word file.
2. Choose File, then Save as HTML.
3. You can create a new file name or use the current file name.
4. In Save as Type, select HTML document.
5. Click Save to save your printed document to HTML.

Microsoft Excel to HTML

Fortunately, converting a Microsoft Excel document to HTML is simple, because it has a “Save as Type” menu option in the software.

To convert a print document in Microsoft Excel to HTML:

1. Open your Microsoft Excel file.
2. Choose File, then Save as HTML.
3. You can create a new file name or use the current file name.
4. In Save as Type, select HTML document.
5. Click Save to save your printed document to HTML.

Adobe FrameMaker to HTML

You know that HTML describes a set of elements that describe how each part of a document is used. HTML elements are actually similar to FrameMaker formats. However, there are some differences:

- HTML documents use standard html formats. While FrameMaker documents contain any number of formats, non-html formats.
- HTML elements describe the structure of a document, not its format. Therefore, web browsers, such as Netscape Navigator and Microsoft Internet Explorer display the same elements in different ways.
- HTML won't easily display a two-column format.¹

You can write one version of the Adobe FrameMaker print document and then use that version to create HTML and PDF documents to produce web pages. However, you cannot expect your HTML document to look exactly like your Adobe FrameMaker print document. You can also use supplied Adobe FrameMaker templates for your print documents, which will minimize the fine tuning necessary. If you need to use elements that are not available in HTML, you should probably convert your file to PDF instead.

1. Adobe FrameMaker Online Help.

To convert a print document in Adobe FrameMaker to HTML:

1. Using Adobe FrameMaker 5.5.6 or later, open the document you want to convert to HTML.
2. Choose File, select Save As.
3. Then in the Save as type drop-down box, choose HTML.
4. Give the file an extension of .html, specify a file location, and click Save.
5. Open the HTML file in a web browser to examine the converted file.
6. Examine the converted HTML file:
 - a. If you are happy with the results, you are done.
 - b. If you are unhappy with the results, you must fine-tune the automatic mappings in your HTML document (see below).

Adjusting the HTML Mappings

To set up or modify HTML mappings:

1. Using Adobe FrameMaker 5.5.6 or later, open the document you want to modify the HTML.
2. Choose File, then Utilities, and then HTML Setup.
3. From the Map pop-up menu, choose the type of formats to map (paragraph, character, or cross-reference).

Sometimes the formats used in a Adobe FrameMaker print document cannot be preserved by using only straight HTML. Then the Cascading Styles Sheets (CSS) must be applied to your HTML document.

To use an HTML stylesheet:

1. Save your document as HTML. A .css file is automatically created in the same folder as the HTML file.
2. Copy the HTML stylesheet (.css file) to the Web server in the same folder as your HTML files.

Adobe FrameMaker to PDF

To convert an Adobe FrameMaker print document to PDF:

NOTE: You must have Adobe Acrobat 3.0 or later installed on your PC in order to convert to PDF.

1. Using Adobe FrameMaker 5.5.6 or later, open the document you want to convert to PDF.
2. Choose File, select Save As.
3. Then in the Save as type drop-down box, choose PDF.
4. Give the file an extension of .pdf, specify a file location, and click Save.
5. Open the PDF file using Acrobat Reader 4.0 to examine the converted file.

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Preparing Graphics for Online Use

What Graphic Formats Are You Using?

Many different formats are available for you to create your graphics in. Some graphics formats are compatible with specific website site creation software.

To prepare your graphics for online use:

1. What format are your graphics in currently?
2. What online format do you want to convert your graphics to? Refer to Table 3.1.

Table 3. Graphic Formats and Website Software

GRAPHIC FORMAT	WEBSITE SOFTWARE
Adobe PhotoShop (*.PSD)	Microsoft FrontPage 2000
Altamira Composer (*.ACC)—open only	
CompuServe (*.GIF)	
FlashPix (*.FPX)	
JPEG (*.JPG)	
Microsoft Picture It! (*.MIX)	
Portable Network Graphics (*.PNG)	
Tagged Image Format File (*.TIF,*.TIFF)	
Targa (*.TGA)	
Windows Bitmap (*.BMP, *.DIB)—.DB open only ^a	Macromedia DreamWeaver 4 HTML

a. Martin S. Matthews and Erick B. Poulsen. *FrontPage 2000: The Complete Reference*. San Francisco: 1999.