

## JUGGLING FILE FORMATS



By Martin Bailey  
Chief Technology Officer  
Global Graphics Software

▶ It's become a fact of modern office life that we all need to deal with a lot of information every day; a lot of "knowledge worker" jobs have evolved towards being able to acquire, process and make use of that information as quickly and efficiently as possible.

In principle that's fine. There are huge amounts of technology ready and waiting to serve up the information to us in a way that allows us to be productive and to concentrate on those parts of the process that require human judgement. In practice, however, the multiplicity of document formats from which the information must be gleaned, and a need to combine data from multiple documents together, can make the principle seem like an unattainable utopian vision.

Let's look at the costs of that gap between principle and practice, especially those caused by the need to deal with a multitude of different tools to process a multitude of document formats:

### **Frustration, low morale and low productivity**

When was the last time that a simple copy and paste from one document into another just worked for you? Or even when adding slides from one PowerPoint deck into another didn't re-flow text in a way that damaged diagrams or overflowed a page? How much time do you spend dealing with this kind of problem every day? Now factor in the extra time that breaking your concentration on the job you should really be thinking about is costing you.

### **Extra training and support**

Whenever there's a problem causing frustration for the users of an application or technology there's also an extra cost for training and/or the help-desk. Does your help-desk have to answer much the same question time and time again?

### **Application overload**

If users need to be provided with a variety of different software to handle different document formats then the total cost is likely to be quite high; much higher than if a single tool could be used. And it also increases the training and help-desk costs if multiple applications must be supported.

### **Liability to accidents**

If you're reading documents with a complete editing program (such as reading a Word file with Microsoft Word) then it's very easy to accidentally change the original file. That could have some serious implications in today's regulatory frameworks. Even if your content management system flags the file as changed, the amended file could be used in situations where the original was required.

### **Locked-in data**

In most document workflows you'll start by creating files in authoring formats (Word, PowerPoint or Excel for example), and later convert them to distribution formats (such as PDF or XPS) to ensure that all recipients see them in exactly the same way. Occasionally, however, you'll find that you need to edit a document ... and that the only version you have of it is in PDF or XPS so you can't make more than very minor edits without virtually re-creating the document from scratch.

## Aggregation aggravation

There are many occasions when pages from a variety of sources must be aggregated together into a single document. Some might be Excel spreadsheets, or diagrams drawn in PowerPoint that need to be inserted into Word documents and then merged with boilerplate legal pages in PDF or images in JPEG. While it's possible to do that, it usually requires multiple applications and is far from easy or fast.

So that's the reality of most offices today. But what if there were a single tool that could let you read most of the document formats that you use every day? What if that tool could convert between those formats? And what if it provided an easy way to construct aggregated documents from a variety of sources, even if they were in different formats, just by dragging and dropping pages in an intuitive way?

Just think of how much more productive everyone could be, and how much money and effort could be saved across your organization.

Make sure that you can work with your files in the way that you need to; visit Global Graphics' gDoc Fusion and take it for a test drive.

December 2009



[www.globalgraphics.com](http://www.globalgraphics.com)

### Global Graphics Software Inc.

31 Nagog Park, Suite 315, Acton  
MA 01720, USA  
Tel: +1-978-849-0011  
Fax: +1-978-849-0012

### Global Graphics Software Ltd

2nd Floor, Building 2030  
Cambourne Business Park  
Cambourne, Cambridge  
CB23 6DW UK  
Tel: +44 (0)1954 283100  
Fax: +44 (0)1954 283101

### Global Graphics KK

Level 14, Hibiya Central Building  
1-2-9 Nishi-Shimbashi, Minato-ku  
Tokyo 105-0003, Japan  
Tel: +81-3-5532-7340  
Fax: +81-3-5532-7373