PDF Compare User Guide

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Overview

PDF Compare is a Creo plug-in to Adobe® Acrobat® that enables you to compare two PDF files. For example, suppose that you receive and trap a PDF file. You then receive a revised version of the file, which also needs to be trapped. However, you want to avoid having to retrap objects that haven't changed between the original PDF and the revised PDF. In this case, you can use PDF Compare to identify which objects have and haven't changed between versions. Once you know which objects haven't changed, you can retain the traps for those objects from the original PDF.

Other situations in which you might want to compare two PDF files include when you want to check text differences between files (for example, to proofread changes made to the revised PDF) and when you want to check ink differences between files. Checking ink differences is useful when you need to remake plates. By using PDF Compare to check ink differences, you can determine which color separations have changed so that you only need to remake the plates for those separations rather than for all separations.

When using PDF Compare, be aware of the following restrictions:

- PDF Compare enables you to compare PDF to PDF only. You cannot compare other file types.
- PDF Compare can compare two files only if their media boxes are the same size.
- When comparing two files for ink differences, PDF Compare can only handle files that do not contain any RGB images.

Starting PDF Compare

1. Start Adobe Acrobat.
2. Start the PDF Compare toolbar by taking either of the following actions:
   - Select **Tools > Creo Tools > Show Creo Tools Toolbar**.
   - Select **View > Toolbars > Creo Tools**.

   Figure 1: PDF Compare toolbar
3. Move the toolbar to the desired position, for example, to the top or side of the Adobe Acrobat window.

Comparing PDF Files

1. Click the **PDF Compare** toolbar button.
2. In the Prinergy Compare Documents dialog box, click **Browse** next to the **Compare Document** box to locate and select the original PDF file.

   The two documents that you compare can be single-page or multi-page PDF files, as long as both documents have the same number of pages.
3. Click **Browse** next to the **To Document** box to locate and select the revised PDF file that you want to compare to the original.

   Tip: If you already have multiple files open in Adobe Acrobat, PDF Compare populates the **Compare Document** and **To Document** boxes with the names of the open files, and you can select a file from each list without having to click **Browse**. If you have only two files open in Adobe Acrobat, PDF Compare automatically enters one file name in the **Compare Document** box and the other file name in the **To Document** box.
4. Select **Ignore Creo generated traps** if you do not want trap differences to be included in the comparison.

   You might not want to include traps, for example, if you already know that there are many traps in the original file and none in the revised file. In this case, seeing every trap as unique to the original file would be of little interest to you, especially if you plan to trap the new file and don't care about the traps in the original file.

5. Select **Ignore paint-order differences** if you do not want stack order differences to be included in the comparison.

   For example, if you clear this check box, and an object in the original file is exactly the same as an object in the revised file except for the order in which it is stacked among other objects, the objects appear in the unique layers but with no apparent differences.

6. In the **Highlight Types** area, select one of the two options. To highlight differences between:

   - The *objects* in the two files, select **Object differences**.
   - The *color separations* of the two files, select **Ink differences**.

7. The **Highlight color** box indicates the color in which object or ink differences will be highlighted. By default, the highlight color is red, but you can change it. To do so, click the **Highlight color** box. In the Color dialog box, select the desired highlight color and click **OK**.

   The new color appears in the Prinergy Compare Documents dialog box.

8. Click **Compare**.

   PDF Compare displays the results of the comparison in a .tmp file.

Viewing Comparison Results

The comparison results that PDF Compare displays depend on what you selected in the Prinergy Compare Documents dialog box—specifically, whether you specified that *object differences* or *ink differences* should be highlighted.

Using Object Difference Highlighting

When you compare two PDF files for the purpose of highlighting the object differences between them, PDF Compare creates a temporary comparison file and opens it in Adobe Acrobat.

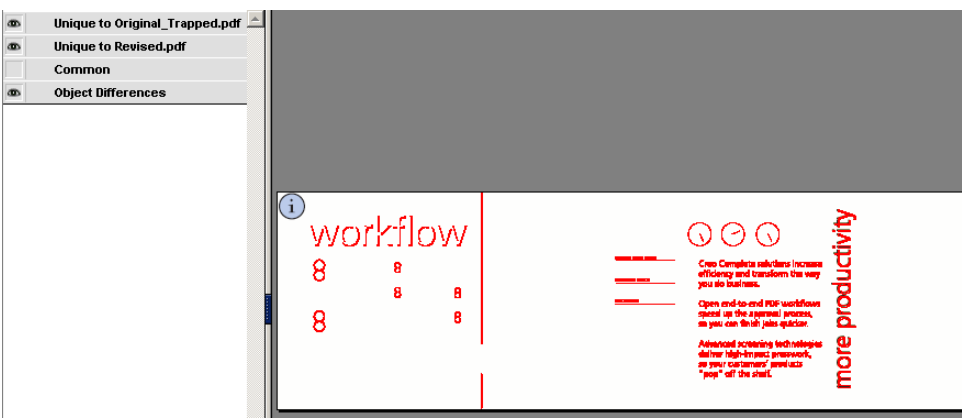


Figure 2: Sample comparison file highlighting object differences

This comparison file includes four layers:

- Objects that are unique to the original PDF file
- Objects that are unique to the revised PDF file
- Objects that are common to both files
- Objects that are different between the two files, highlighted in the highlight color that you specified in the Prinergy Compare Documents dialog box

The **Layers** tab to the left of the comparison file lists each of these four layers.

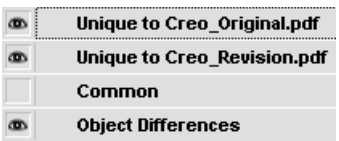


Figure 3: Comparison layers on the Layers tab

By default, the two unique object layers (**Unique to <file>**) and the layer that highlights object differences (**Object Differences**) are displayed, while the common objects layer (**Common**) is hidden. However, you can switch the layers on and off by clicking the eye icon next to each layer ( ). A layer with an eye next to it is displayed; a layer with no eye is hidden.

By switching layers on and off, you can make unique and common objects visible and easier to see. For example, Figure 4 shows a comparison file for the PDF files **Creo_Original** and **Creo_Revision**. While the text `Prepress solutions for packaging` is common to both files, because it is white, it is only visible when you display both the **Common** layer *and* one or both of the **Unique** layers.

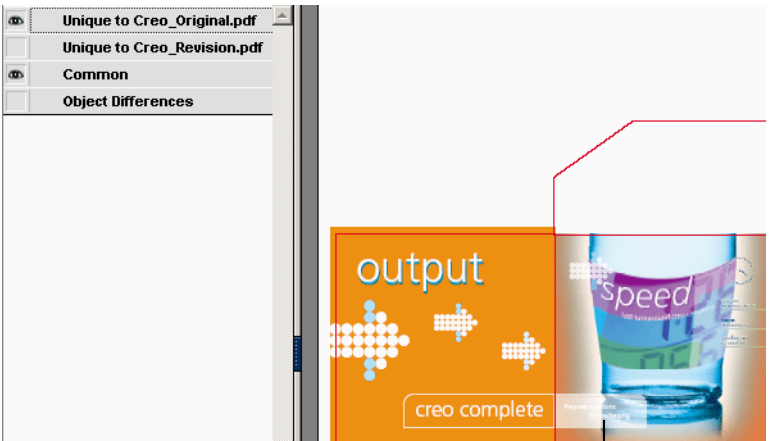


Figure 4: Switching layers to view hard-to-see text

Differences between the two files that you might want to view can include colors, objects and object positions, fonts, overprint states, and anything else that would create a visible difference.

To see only objects that are different between the two files, hide the first three layers and display only the **Object Differences** layer, as shown in Figure 5.

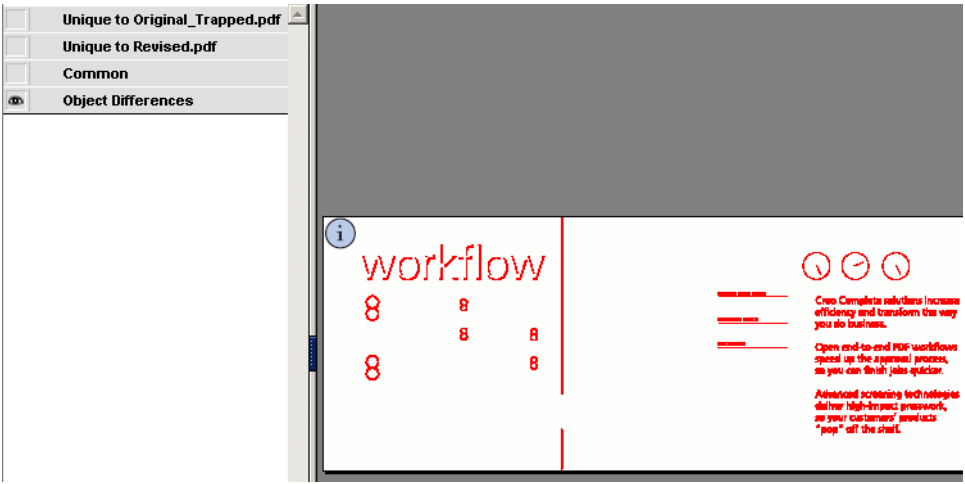


Figure 5: Viewing only object differences

Using Ink Difference Highlighting

As with object difference highlighting, when you compare two PDF files to highlight the ink differences between them, PDF Compare creates a temporary comparison file and opens it in Adobe Acrobat.

Again, the comparison file includes layers for objects that are unique to the original PDF file, unique to the revised PDF file, and common to both files. However, instead of a layer highlighting the object differences between the two files, the fourth layer (and its associated sublayers) highlights *ink differences*—changes to color separations—between the two files.

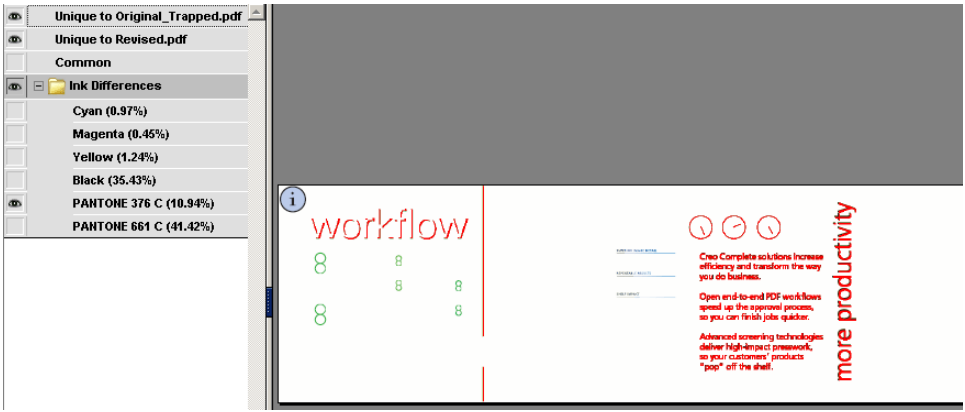


Figure 6: Sample comparison file highlighting ink differences

By default, the two unique object layers (**Unique to <file>**) and the layer that highlights ink differences (**Ink Differences**) are displayed, while the common objects layer (**Common**) is hidden.

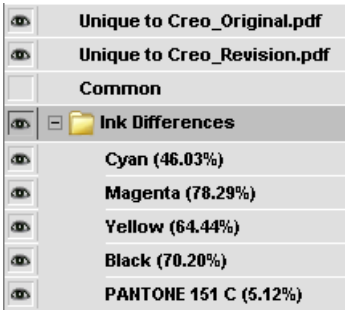


Figure 7: Comparison layers in the Options pane

Again, you can switch the layers on and off by clicking the eye icon next to each layer ( ).

The **Ink Differences** layer has one or more associated sublayers, each of which represent a color separation that has changed between the original PDF file and the revised PDF file. The number next to each separation name indicates the percentage of pixels that changed for that separation. If a color separation is not listed, it did not change between the original and revised PDF.

Tip: The **Ink Differences** layer lists only separations that have changed between PDF files. However, you can click the **Information** icon in the upper-left corner of the comparison file to display a dialog box containing more details about each of the PDF files, including those separations that did not change between the original and revised PDF. Such separations are listed with a **Difference** of **Identical**. For more information, see About Information and Error Messages on page 12.

A separation layer with a change percentage of 100 percent usually indicates that the separation was contained in the original PDF file but does not exist in the revised PDF file, or vice versa. Alternatively, a change percentage of 100 percent could indicate that the separation exists in both PDF files, but is blank in one of the PDFs.

You can hide and display individual separation layers only when the main **Ink Differences** layer is displayed (switched 'on').

When the **Ink Differences** layer is displayed, separation differences between PDF files are highlighted in the highlight color that you specified in the Prinergy Compare Documents dialog box (rather than in the actual color of the separation). For example, in Figure 6 on page 9, those objects unique to each PDF file are displayed. Changes to the color separation **PANTONE 376 C** are also displayed, highlighted in red.

Displaying only the **Ink Differences** layer and its sublayers is useful when you need to remake plates and want to know which separations have changed so that you can remake plates only for those separations.

About Information and Error Messages

If PDF Compare encounters a problem during the compare process, one of the following messages may appear:

Error Message	Possible Causes
You have selected a file to be compared against itself, please select two unique files.	The files that you selected for comparison may have the same file name and location. You *can* select two files with the same file name. but one file must be in a different folder. Select two files with unique file names and/or unique locations.
PDF Compare failed to create a temporary file to store the output document.	The workstation may not have enough available memory to generate the temporary comparison file, or available disk space may be low. Free up some memory and/or disk space on the workstation and try the compare again.
PDF Compare encountered an error while opening the file: <file name>	The file specified in the error message may be corrupt, locked, or already in use. Alternatively, the selected file may not be a PDF file. PDF Compare can only compare PDF files.

Error Message	Possible Causes
The selected input documents do not have the same number of pages.	The two PDF files that you have selected for comparison do not have the same number of printed pages. Select two files with the same number of printed pages.
PDF Compare could not successfully match the separated pages in the selected input documents.	If you are comparing two separated PDF files, the separation order in one file may not match the separation order in the other file. If this is the case, PDF Compare cannot compare the two files. Alternatively, one file may be a separated PDF while the other is a composite PDF. PDF Compare can only compare separated with separated, or composite with composite.
PDF Compare has encountered an unexpected error while processing your documents: CSEP_DeviceRGB Converter can't separate images yet.	One or both of the selected files contains RGB images. PDF Compare does not support RGB images. Refine the files with color convert ON to convert any RGB images and then try the compare again.

Error Message	Possible Causes
PDF Compare has encountered an unexpected error while processing your documents: Failed to load the required CMap <file name> for CID font <font name>: Failed to locate CMAP <file name> on resource search path: Font Search Path	Some font resources may not have been properly installed or removed from the Adobe Acrobat folder, or permissions may have been set such that the required file cannot be read. Install the required resource (as indicated by <file name> in the error message) or alter the permissions of the required file so that it can be read.
No licenses for PDF Compare are available.	There may be no PDF Compare licenses installed on any of your servers, or the network cable may be unplugged from the workstation.

Once PDF Compare completes the comparison process and generates the temporary comparison file, the comparison file appears in the Adobe Acrobat window. In the upper-left corner of the file, an **Information ()** or **Error ()** icon appears.

Information icons appear when the comparison was successful and no problems were encountered. Error icons appear when the comparison encountered a problem.

When an **Information** icon is visible, you can click it to open a dialog box that displays details about each of the PDF files being compared. (Note that you must select the Adobe Acrobat **Hand** tool before you can click the icon to open the dialog box.)

The details of the dialog box include the number of objects that are unique to the original PDF file, unique to the revised PDF file, and common to both. If you chose to highlight ink differences instead of object differences when comparing the files, the dialog box also provides details about the separations that make up each file and the percentage of change for each separation. Separations that remain unchanged between PDF files are listed with a **Difference** of **Identical**. As well, if you chose to ignore Creo-generated traps when comparing the files, the dialog box indicates that traps were ignored.

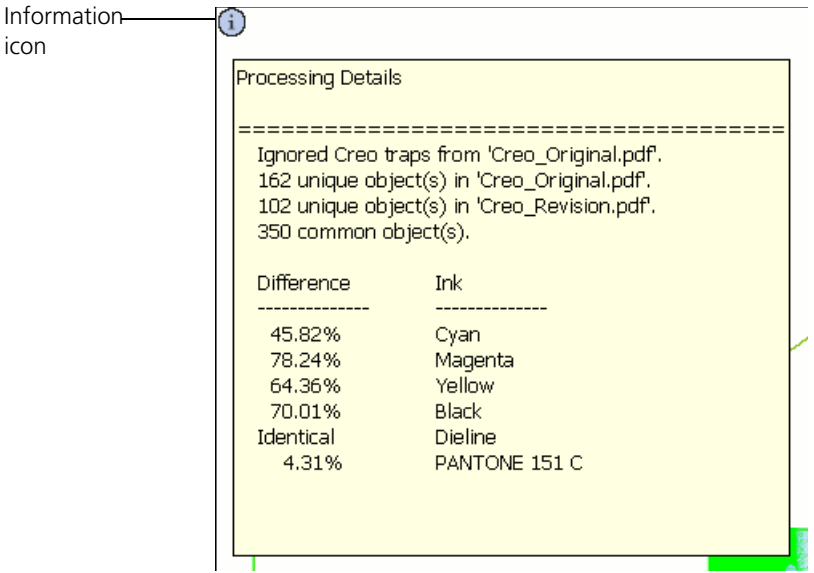


Figure 8: Processing Details dialog box



Tip: If the **Information** icon is not visible, Adobe Acrobat comments may be hidden. To display comments, select **View > Comments > Show All Comments**.

In addition, the dialog box may also contain the following messages:

Information Message	Meaning
Inputs print different inks.	The same separations are not contained in both PDF files. For example, the original PDF file might have CMYK separations only while the revised PDF file also has spot colors.
Failed to locate unembedded font <font name>.	One of the PDF files is missing the font specified in the information message.
All objects are unique.	There are no objects common between the two PDF files.
All objects are common.	There are no object differences between the two PDF files. The revised PDF file may not actually have been changed from the original.
Ignored Creo traps from <file name>.	When specifying the two PDF files to compare in the Prinergy Compare Documents dialog box, you selected **Ignore Creo generated traps**.

When an **Error** icon is visible instead of an **Information** icon, the dialog box opens automatically to display details about the problems that PDF Compare encountered. One or more of the following error messages may appear:

Error Message	Meaning
Pages with different media boxes cannot be compared.	The page sizes of the two PDF files are different. Only PDF files with the same page size can be compared.
Insufficient available memory to compare pages.	The workstation may not have enough available memory to generate the temporary comparison file. Free up some memory on the workstation and try the compare again.

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