

# Acrobat Forms Tips and Techniques

## 1 Copying Fields

It often takes some intense manipulation of fields to get things just right on a form. Proper coloring, sizing, actions and JavaScripts all make up a field. It is often the case that you need to make a copy of a field within a form but did you know that you can save your form fields to a separate file and copy and paste them for later use? This tip shows you the three different forms of copying that are available in Acrobat Forms Author version 3.5.

### **Control-Drag Copy**

The *Control-Drag Copy* allows you to copy fields within the same page within a document.

- 1) Open this [sample file](#) (FrmTnT01.pdf).
- 2) Select the form tool so that you can edit the form fields on the page.
- 3) Select a field by clicking inside the field rectangle.
- 4) Click within the field and drag the field to a new location while holding down the *Control* key. Notice how the cursor changes with the addition of a plus sign (“+”) to indicate that you are copying. You can hold down the Shift key to constrain the dragging of your field in the horizontal or vertical direction.
- 5) Switch back to the hand tool, notice how your new field is exactly the same as the old one.

### **Clipboard Copy**

The *Clipboard Copy* allows you to copy fields across pages and across documents.

- 1) Continue using the sample file from the previous step.
- 2) Select the form tool so that you can edit the form fields on the page.
- 3) Select the two fields on the page by holding down the *Control* key and doing a **marquee select** on both fields. Notice how the cursor changes to the selection cursor when you hold down the *Control* key.
- 4) Type Control-C or select **Edit⇒Copy** from the menu bar. Your fields have now been copied to the clipboard.
- 5) Turn to page 2 in your sample document and type Control-V or select **Edit⇒Paste** from the menu bar. Your fields are now pasted into the center of your current view on the second page.

### **Duplicate Fields**

The *Duplicate Fields* feature allows you to duplicate a selection of fields on many pages in a document automatically. This special feature tries to share properties and field data between fields in order to reduce file size.

- 1) Continue using the sample file from the previous step but return to the first page.
- 2) Select the form tool so that you can edit the form fields on the page.
- 3) Select the two fields on the page by clicking on the first field and then Shift-clicking on the second field. You can extend a multiple selection at any time by Shift-clicking on additional fields. This is more precise than marquee selection but can be more time consuming. Using a combination of the two techniques is usually your best bet.
- 4) Select **Edit⇒Fields⇒Duplicate...** from the menu bar. The page selection dialog will appear. Select the *all pages* radio button and click Ok. Notice the progress bar in the lower left-hand corner of the document, it's showing you how far along in the copying process you've gone.

### **Summary**

In this technique you have learned all about the three ways to copy a field or fields within and across pages and documents. You've also learned about multiple selection using the marquee select and Shift-Click methods.

You might want to keep a special document with all of your favorite fields inside as palette to copy from to make it easier when you want to author a form. Feel free to copy fields from some of the sample files that came with your Acrobat Forms Maker version 3.5 CD and use them in your own forms.