

Adobe® Digital Publishing Suite and ePub3®

Frequently Asked Questions

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InDesign CC is a robust document creation tool that can produce a wide range of outputs, ranging from traditional print to PDF to interactive digital experiences. For the purposes of this paper, digital experiences include .folios delivered through Adobe® Digital Publishing Suite and ePub3. This document compares DPS .folios and ePub3 from the business perspective.

ePub3 is the latest evolution in the ePub standard developed and maintained by the International Digital Publishing Forum (IDPF), a standards organization for the digital publishing industry. Adobe is a member of IDPF and participates in the development of the ePub standards. ePub files can be viewed in any number of eReading applications that support the standard, but support for the standard is incomplete for many eReaders. Adobe supports the Adobe Reader Mobile SDK, which is a technology that developers can license as a rendering engine for ePub content, including ePub3. ePub3 is based on XHTML and XML and includes support for HTML5 content. It supports reflowable content such as what you would find in a traditional ebook, and fixed layout content similar to what you would expect in a magazine. ePub files encapsulate all of the images, words, and interactive code required to render the ePub. InDesign can produce both reflowable and fixed layout ePub documents. Learn more at <http://idpf.org/epub/30>.

The .folio file type used with DPS is an Adobe-defined file format based on XML that supports both HTML5 and .folio-native interactive objects. The native interactive objects include but are not limited to videos, slide shows, MP3 audio, buttons, and HTML-based web content. These are supported by any Viewer that plays .folios, which are typically the Adobe Content Viewer and Custom Viewers made by DPS customers using the DPS App Builder. .folios can be a mixture of HTML5 and native .folio code, and the specification supports both online and offline content. .folios encapsulate all of the images, words, and interactive code required to render the .folio. It is possible to create .folios using content management systems such as Adobe Experience Manager, Drupal and Wordpress, as well as Microsoft® PowerPoint®. The .folio specification is available to developers via a click-through EULA at https://www.adobe.com/cfusion/entitlement/index.cfm?e=dps_folio.

ePub3 Use Cases

ePub3 is for documents that will be delivered either by a marketplace to a marketplace-branded client application, or for documents that will be distributed by the Enterprise to a generic client application such as iBooks. Content built using ePub3 typically includes books and book-like content that stands on its own and may be loosely bound to other titles. For instance, you might purchase a number of eBooks by a specific author in a series, and the eReading application might display those books to you as a stack of books rather than showing each title. In a commercial setting, ePubs are sold as standalone units by a marketplace, and there is typically no subscription available. Some marketplaces offer short-term rental and perpetual purchases managed through their Digital Rights Management (DRM) provider.

ePub and ePub2, or Reflowable ePub, focus the reader on the content rather than on a pre-defined presentation of that content. Print books, for instance, have text and images and footnotes all on the same page, and the design only changes if a specific edition requires it. That same book content viewed as a Reflowable ePub allows the reader to customize the text size and font, for instance, while presenting the content in an intended reading order but without contextual relationships that would be readily understood in print due to the layout of the page. Fixed Layout ePub3 allows a publisher to include design intent as well as reading order intent when publishing an ePub. In addition, when a designer adds in HTML5 content to the document, ePub 3 can present a very rich reading experience to the reader.

ePub distribution methodologies vary according to use case. If the publisher wishes to deliver ePub content into a defined marketplace such as Kobo or iTunes, then the Enterprise must depend on that marketplace to distribute content to readers. If the Enterprise wishes to control the distribution of their ePub content to select individuals or groups, then it must construct an infrastructure to manage access to that content. Once the infrastructure is in place, ePubs can be deployed via an on-premise architecture. ePubs do require third party DRM solutions such as Adobe Content Server to manage access to encrypted (DRM) content. eReader apps often provide search, annotation and other reading features familiar to anyone who has read a book on a tablet or smartphone.

eReaders offer no analytics about ePub consumption patterns, although it is possible to track delivery of an ePub using standard Web analytics methods. It is possible for a developer to build an eReader application that incorporates analytics, but there are no examples of this available for demonstration.

eReader apps are inconsistent in their support for content, and with so many reading clients, there is no way to guarantee that an eReader will have any success when opening a fixed layout ePub3, however most eReader apps support reflowable ePub2. The client app landscape is improving rapidly, though, but it is still more inconsistent than viewing HTML5 on a range of browsers.

DPS Use Cases

DPS is for publishers and Enterprises who want to control the distribution of their content and to brand the Viewer application in which that content will be consumed. DPS supports delivery of apps through public and private distribution, including popular Mobile Device Management solutions such as AirWatch and MobileIron. It allows customers to deliver either .folios from InDesign or .folios made using HTML5, which means that all of the interactive HTML5 content that can be in an ePub (with some platform specific exceptions) can also be in a .folio. Since there are a wide array of tools and CMS systems that can make HTML (and by extension .folio), Enterprises have many choices with respect to creating .folios.

DPS allows a publisher or Enterprise to operate its own marketplace within the context of the Viewer application and includes in-app purchase integration with iTunes, Google Play and Microsoft. DPS Viewers can also leverage custom Entitlement solutions that allow the Publisher or Enterprise to entitle users to content outside of the application. This is common with publishers who want to include digital editions for their print subscribers, and for Enterprises who want to deliver regional sales enablement content to specific sales people. DPS Viewers have a Reading and Library SDK that allow publishers and Enterprises to extend the functionality of the Viewer.

DPS Viewer Apps offer robust analytics about consumption patterns and content delivery using Adobe Analytics. In addition, it is possible to extend the report data using custom eVar and Prop values in the .folio content. DPS Viewers can also connect to Customer Relationship Management (CRM) solutions such as Salesforce.com to provide additional business value and ROI analytics to the Enterprise.

FAQ

Is ePub3 appropriate for magazines? ePub marketplaces lack subscription services, and since many magazines depend on subscription to retain readership and for advertising metrics, ePub3 may not be appropriate for some magazines. For magazines that publish occasionally and that do not depend on subscriptions, ePub may be a reasonable distribution method.

Is DPS appropriate for eBooks? Device manufacturers that control their content marketplaces have decided that books should be distributed in their eBook specific marketplaces or in custom Viewer apps that do not offer in-app purchases. As a result, publishers who wish to sell books on the device must use the device's dedicated book marketplace. DPS .folios cannot be delivered through those dedicated book marketplaces.

Is ePub a sales enablement tool? No, but it is possible to use ePubs as part of a larger sales enablement strategy, just like it is possible to use PDF or PowerPoint. Since analytics is often critical to successful digital sales enablement, ePub will likely not meet all of the business requirements for sales enablement use cases.

Is ePub appropriate for educational publishers? Book publishers, and specifically educational publishers, have been using ePub and PDF to distribute digital replicas since the advent of the CD ROM. As educational content evolved to include more interactive features, publishers first moved to the Internet and to Web technologies for content delivery to connected readers on a desktop. This usually meant that the interactive

learning content would be based on Flash, which presented a problem for consumers using tablets. Offline reading is also a problem for many educational publishers. ePub3 offers a way to combine rich, engaging HTML5 content with offline reading for their customers. Educational publishers also depend on DRM technologies to protect their valuable intellectual property, and ePub is easily integrated with common DRM technologies. ePub readers also offer features such as annotations, built-in reference materials, and features to support accessibility.

Is DPS appropriate for educational publishers? DPS supports content from a variety of sources, including InDesign, PowerPoint, HTML5 and popular CMS systems such as Adobe Experience Manager, Drupal and Wordpress. As many educational publishers leverage CMS systems for content management, DPS is attractive as it allows a publisher to leverage much of the work it has done to bring interactive content to the Web as HTML5. DPS provides controlled access to this content, so that educational publishers can issue credentials to school systems or to students based on their direct relationship with their customer. End users can log into a DPS application with those credentials and view their entitled content. While in-app purchase could be excluded based on the content, publishers can use DPS Entitlement without needing to set up a DRM system for their content and sell that content directly to their end users.

Is ePub appropriate for educational institutions? Educational institutions have a range of publishing requirements that include but are not limited to curriculum material such as text books. Educational institutions also publish sports programs, newsletters, alumni magazines, recruiting content, and more. As most educational institutions want to limit access to their content to enrolled students or alumni, they require controlled distribution. As they become more sophisticated as marketers, analytics becomes more important to the success of their campaigns to external readers such as sports fans and potential students. ePub3 on its own lacks controlled access or analytics, so the institution would need to engage with a DRM provider or create a custom ePub Reader.

Is DPS appropriate for educational institutions? Educational institutions can leverage the built-in content distribution system that DPS offers to control access to students or alumni groups. In addition, it can use DPS Analytics to measure how readers engage with their content, whether internal or external. In addition, as DPS supports content from a variety of sources, including InDesign, PowerPoint, HTML5 and popular CMS systems such as Adobe Experience Manager, Drupal and Wordpress, content creation can be democratized within the institution.

Can ePub be given away on a web site? Yes, it is possible to provide a link on a web site for a reader to download an ePub to their computer or tablet.

Can DPS .folios be given away on a web site? While it is not possible to view a folio outside of a DPS rendering environment, Adobe provides an iframe-based reading environment for .folios. As a result, it is possible to embed .folio content on a web site for reading directly in a browser. In order to read a .folio offline, the reader would need to have a custom DPS Viewer app designed to read that specific content.

For more information

Solution details: www.adobe.com/go/digitalpublishing

Program details: www.adobe.com/solutions/ebook/digital-editions.html

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