

Overlay PDF

Description

The app *Overlay PDF* places one or multiple PDFs on top of one, or multiple, other PDFs in a very wide variety of ways.

Compatibility

Switch 2021 Fall release. Windows or Mac OSX.

Compatibility third-party applications

This app relies on the presence of PitStop Server 2020 or higher. The presence of PitStop Server is automatically detected and the app will fail when the version number is too low.

Connections

Overlay PDF accepts a single incoming PDF or a folder with multiple PDFs that have to be placed on top of each other.

The app has outgoing traffic-light connections: Success and Error. The error connection is used when you have defined an error situation that is matched (see the corresponding property below).

Concepts and terminology

The app uses two basically different strategies for combining one or more master files with one or more overlay files.

The first strategy is to merge all master files into one, all overlay files into one, and then place the overlay file on top of the master file. There is a variation of this strategy to place the overlay underneath the master. Depending on how the files are delivered and named this may be more convenient.

The second strategy is to place all overlay files on top of each other on top of the master. If there are multiple master files they will be merged, but the overlay files will not. Here there is no choice to place the overlays underneath the master.

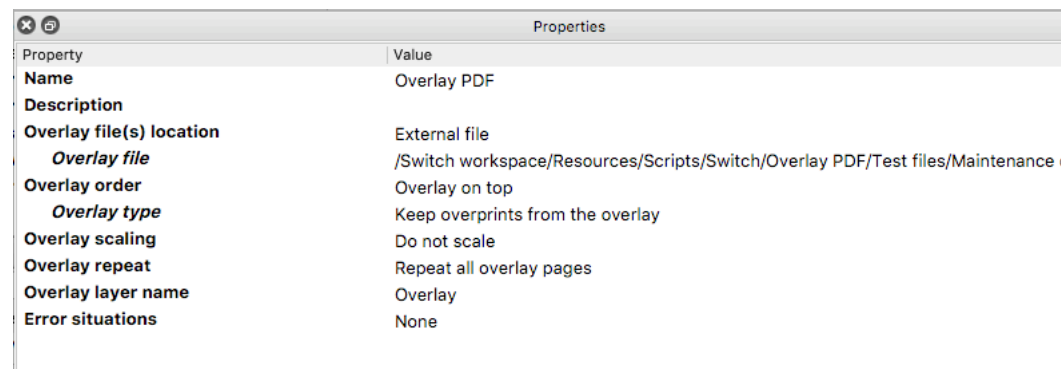
In many cases the app will be required to combine multiple files with each other, but even in the simplest case where you just want to place B.pdf on top of A.pdf you will have to configure the app, so it knows to place B.pdf on top of A.pdf and not the other way around.

As all files are PDF files (non-PDF files are silently ignored), this can only be done on the basis of the file names. The app offers different strategies for this, explained in the properties below.

When there is a single master file, the output PDF will be named after the master file. When there are multiple master files, the name will be that of the job folder.

As this is an app for overlaying PDF files, any other file types inside the job folder are ignored, and as the output is always a single PDF, note that the whole content of the input job folder is lost.

Properties detailed info



| Property | Value |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Name | Overlay PDF |
| Description | |
| Overlay file(s) location | External file |
| <i>Overlay file</i> | /Switch workspace/Resources/Scripts/Switch/Overlay PDF/Test files/Maintenance |
| Overlay order | Overlay on top |
| <i>Overlay type</i> | Keep overprints from the overlay |
| Overlay scaling | Do not scale |
| Overlay repeat | Repeat all overlay pages |
| Overlay layer name | Overlay |
| Error situations | None |

Flow element properties

- **Overlay file(s) location:** a drop-down list with two values
 - **External file**
This option requires the input job to be a file. This choice opens up an extra property
 - **Overlay file:** the path to the file for the overlay
 - **Inside the job folder**
This option requires the input job to be a folder. This option opens up 3 more properties
 - **Master file specification**
 - **Alphabetically first in root folder:** the first PDF in the root folder is taken as the master file. All other files are ignored.
 - **Alphabetically last in root folder:** the last PDF in the root folder is taken as the master file. All other files are ignored.
 - **File pattern in all folders:** the file pattern using wildcards to define which files constitute the master. This searches for all

- matching files in all subfolders of the job.
- **Regular expression in all folders:** the regular expression to define which files constitute the master. This searches for all matching files in all subfolders of the job.
- **Master file page selection:** the page range onto which the overlay will be placed. The syntax is that of page ranges in PitStop.
- **Overlay file specification:** the properties are the same as for the Master file specification, except that there is an additional one
 - **All non-master files:** all PDFs that are not selected with the master file specification are taken to be the overlay
- **Overlay order:** here you have a choice of placing the “Overlay on top” or “Overlay on bottom” or “All overlays on top (1 master, multiple overlays)”. These different strategies for combining the master with the overlay were explained above. When the overlay will be placed on top of the master there is an additional property
 - **Overlay type:** this property has two options, “Keep overprints from the overlay” and “Put the overlay in an isolated group”. PDF-technically speaking the overlay is placed in a so-called transparency group. The difference between the two settings is that in one case it is a non-isolated group, meaning that the overprints and transparencies from the overlay mix with the objects in the master underneath. In the other case, the overlay is placed in an isolated group meaning that any overprint and transparency settings only apply within the group, but everything in the master underneath is knocked out (more info in the section Advanced Topics further down).

When the overlay is placed underneath the master, the master is not placed in a transparency group and the interaction of objects from the master with objects from the overlay will be as is.

- **Overlay scaling:** the five options are the same as those in the PitStop action and they are self-explanatory: “Do not scale”, “Scale to fit”, “Scale to fit, preserving aspect ratio”, “Fit width, preserving aspect ratio”, “Fit height, preserving aspect ratio”, “Scale to fill, preserving aspect ratio”. The overlay is always centered on the master and the scaling is always from the center in or out.
- **Overlay repeat:** the three options are the same as in the PitStop action: “Stop after the last overlay page”, “Repeat the last overlay page”, “Repeat all overlay pages”. When placing one file on top of another one, this is straightforward, but it can become pretty complex when there is more than one overlay file being combined with one or more master files in combination with a page selection.
- **Overlay layer name:** if “None” the overlays are not placed in a layer. In the case of “Automatic” the name proper of the overlay file will be used. There is a dependent property that allows the use of a regular expression to extract just a part of the

filename. The “Default” option just uses the name as is. When a variable is used all overlays will be in a layer with the same name.

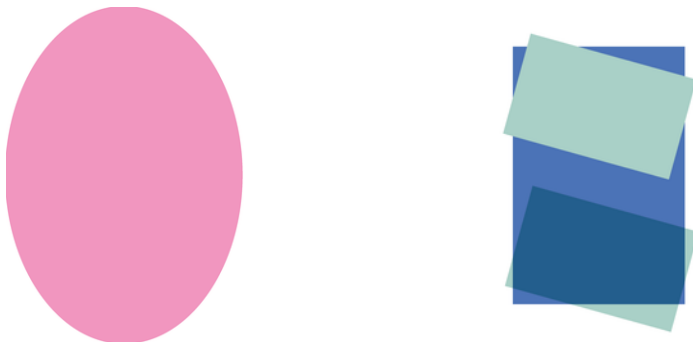
- **Error situations:** this property allows you to choose one or more situations that you consider to be a problem for a particular use case. These situations are:
 - The fact that the page sizes of the master and the overlay are different, and you do not want to apply any scaling
 - The fact that the number of pages from the master and the overlay do not match.
 - The fact that there is more than 1 master file or more than 1 overlay file as a result of the search for files as defined in the corresponding properties.

Advanced topics

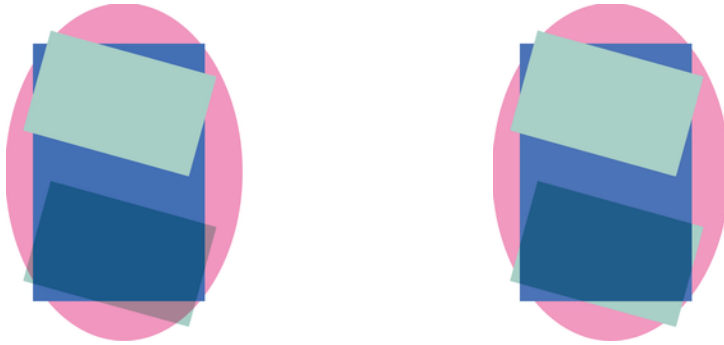
What file is the master and what file is the overlay? In most cases it will not matter if you place the overlay on top of the master, or the master underneath the overlay. But there are cases where it does matter. Consider the case where one of the two files is a PDF/X file with an output intent, and the other one isn't. In such a case it will be necessary to make sure the non-PDF/X file is defined as the overlay, and the PDF/X file as the master. Similarly, when multiple PDFs are being merged into a single one the output intent for the whole document will be that of the first file.

When the documents do not have the same size, it is of course also important to make sure that the file with the right size is defined as the master file and the other one(s) as the overlay file.

What is the difference between an isolated and a non-isolated transparency group? The images below illustrate that. On the left is the master background and on the right the overlay. The blue background is in knockout, the top rectangle too and the bottom one is in overprint.

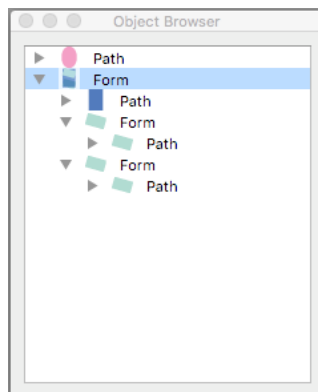


These are the two combinations, the non-isolated (default) one on the left, the isolated one on the right:



You can see that on the left in the non-isolated group the bottom rectangle overprints with the magenta background. On the right in the isolated group it does not, but it does keep the overprint with the blue background.

In the Object Browser the transparency group (it is also a so-called form) is selected:



And in the Inspector you can see if that form/group is isolated or not.

