PDF Portfolios & ColdFusion 9

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I think that one of the coolest features in **ColdFusion 9** is the ability to create PDF Portfolios. But this feature isn't one that I hear anyone talking about. Why? Well, I find that most ColdFusion developers--and I've talked to a whole lot about this--have never heard of PDF Portfolios. So what I need to do here first is point you to some info about PDF Portfolios themselves.

The best place to start is **with this Adobe Acrobat 9 help documentation**. Check out all those cool features!

Let's say you need **ColdFusion 9** to send multiple pieces of content via email. Your options:

1. **Attach all the items to the email.** This is messy.
2. **Put the items in a ZIP file and attach it to the email.** Good luck getting this through email filters!
3. **Put the items in a PDF Package and attach it to the email.** Your user gets a single attached file, opens it with **Adobe Acrobat 9** or **Adobe Reader 9** and browses through the content, even previewing it directly within **Adobe Acrobat 9** or **Adobe Reader 9**!

Let's say you need a user to be able to get multiple logically connected pieces of content from your **ColdFusion 9** web app; perhaps you even need to allow the user to select the pieces of content himself/herself. Your options:

1. **Display links to all the content; have your user click the link for each piece of content he/she wants.** This is messy, plus the user has to do the work to keep the content logically connected when saving the content locally.
2. **Put the items in a ZIP file and display a link to it.** This works and in certain situations may be the best approach, however the display of a ZIP file is rather bland.
3. **Put the items in a PDF Package and display a link to it.** Your user gets a single file and, in many browsers, this file will open automatically for viewing with **Adobe Acrobat 9** or **Adobe Reader 9**.

Starting to see how cool and useful PDF Packages can be? Want to see their use in action? Check out the related post linked below: you'll see that I have provided a link to the code for the PresentasticPlus app (and yes, that code is in a ZIP file but that's because ZIP files make sense for code) and in that app there is functionality for dynamically creating a PDF Package based on a user's selection(s).

I should point out that **ColdFusion 9** creates a sub-type of a PDF Portfolio known as a PDF Package. Really, the main difference is that PDF Portfolios can have a custom user interface and PDF Packages can't (for more information on this, see **this blog post from the LiveCycle Doc team**). This is a cool feature and I recommend you learn more about how you can use it with **Adobe Acrobat 9** (**see Joel Geraci on Adobe TV**).