2.7 Creating and Editing PDF Tags

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Using the Reading Order Window

Managing the tag tree found in the **Tags** menu of Adobe Acrobat may be enough to properly arrange document tags in a relatively well-structured PDF document. However, you may often be unable to find the location of content within the tag tree, especially if the working document has tags that are missing or out of order. This is where the Acrobat 'Reading Order' feature becomes useful. It allows a user to efficiently find, select and tag PDF elements without having to open multiple expandable lists in the document's tag tree. To open the 'Reading Order' window, open 'Options' in the **Tags** menu and select 'Reading Order'.

Functions of the Reading Order Window

After the 'Reading Order' window has been opened, the mouse cursor icon will change to a precision crosshair. Text, images and content within the document viewing window can now be selected for tagging with this crosshair.

To Tag Content with Reading Order:

1. Use the crosshair selection tool to draw a rectangle around any text, single element or group of content.

2. In the top half of the 'Reading Order' window, find and select the tag button that pertains to the highlighted content (such as 'Heading 1', 'Figure' or 'Text').

3. Navigate to the **Tags** menu. The assigned tag will be placed within the tag tree based on the automatic reading order set by the document structure. The tag can be expanded to view and confirm the contents within the tag.

It is worth noting that not all tag types will be available to select within the 'Reading Order' window, such as 'List' or 'Table of Contents'. Nonetheless, content can still be pulled into the tag tree with a placeholder tag that can be later edited.

To Use Other Tags with Reading Order:

1. In the 'Reading Order' window, select and tag the working content with a placeholder tag, such as 'Figure'.

2. In the tag tree, find and right-click the placeholder tag. Select 'New Tag',

3. Use the 'New Tag' window to select the actual tag type. Press 'OK' to create a new tag in the same location as the placeholder.

4. In the tag tree, expand the placeholder tag and drag its contents into the newly created tag.

5. Delete the now empty placeholder tag.

By using the 'Reading Order' selection cursor and the placeholder method, the user can avoid having to manually create and drag every obscure tag type into the correct order in the tag tree.

Finding Tagged Elements

Any tagged PDF element can be quickly located within the tag tree using the 'Reading Order' option.

To Locate Content in the PDF Tag Tree:

1. Open the 'Reading Order' window. Use the selection tool to highlight the content to be located.

2. In the **Tags** menu, open the 'Options' window and select 'Find Tag from Selection'.

The content will be expanded out of its tag in the tags tree and highlighted. If groups of content were selected or the content was divided into multiple tags, multiple content items may be shown and highlighted in the tree.

Page Content Groups

The 'Reading Order' window displays a toggleable option called 'Show page content groups'. This option allows the user to see all tagged content which will be highlighted in the viewing window. Pressing the 'Page content order' option will display the reading order numbers for the highlighted content (which restarts on each page). Selecting 'Structure types' instead will show the tag type of each highlighted element.

Special Scenarios for Creating and Editing PDF Tags

Later modules that focus on tables, forms and lists will feature tagging procedures. Aside from tagging those PDF elements, there are other special scenarios that may arise during the tagging process.

Retagging a PDF Element

If a tag needs to be rearranged or replaced for content that has been already tagged, the contents can always be transferred to a newly created tag of the correct type and location. However, using the 'Reading Order' window can fast track this process if all content within the preexisting tag is selected.

To Efficiently Retag Content with Reading Order:

1. Locate and view the content that is being retagged in the tag tree.

2. Open the 'Reading Order' window in the **Tags** 'Options' menu. Highlight all content within the tag. Select a new tag type within the 'Reading Order' window.

3. To confirm that the tag type has changed, select anywhere within the **Tags** menu. The content should now reflect the new tag name.

Remember that if only parts of the content are selected during this process, the existing tag will stay in its place while the new content will be separated into a new tag.

Tagging Smart Art

In many instances, groups of images should be individually tagged so alternative text can be added to each. Microsoft Office based Smart Art and some other image content, however, will translate to a single diagram or collection of shapes and text that will appear as multiple taggable elements in Acrobat. In this case, the diagram will only be accessible if it is grouped into one tag. Use the 'Reading Order' selection tool to drag a rectangle over the Smart Art elements and select the 'Figure' button to tag the group as a single image.

Conclusion

This module has covered the basics and some special cases of creating and editing tags in a document with the 'Reading Order' window. In the next module, we'll be moving on to embedding fonts in a PDF document.