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# PDF

## Background and rationale

MoinMoin pages can be converted to a PDF in several ways. There are existing plugin actions at <http://moinmo.in/ActionMarket>. Also, a PDF can be made by saving the print view from a browser as a PDF (under OS X) or using a PDF print driver in that other system. Under OS X, creating a PDF from Safari works moderately well, but not so for Firefox. The main constraint is that links within the page (e.g. as generated by TableOfContents macro) are directed back to the page URL with #target appended. So the PDF is not independent and is potentially annoying, especially if the source page is not publicly readable. This primary PDF could be printed again to create a secondary PDF, which removes these links. However, this is not a solution, it is just an avoidance mechanism.

The two plugin actions on offer, as of Feb 2013, at the [ActionMarket](http://moinmo.in/ActionMarket) have their merits, though these seem to be less than simple to install and have other constraints.

A method based on [wkhtmltopdf](#) would be relatively simple and provide a PDF of workable quality for most MoinMoin pages.

## Description

The PDF action allows the creation of a PDF version of a MoinMoin page using [wkhtmltopdf](#), a "simple shell utility to convert html to pdf using the WebKit rendering engine and qt."

As implemented here, the PDF created has headers and footers with page title, date-time, url and page numbers. Also the page is set to A4 with 20 mm margins. If other defaults are preferred, the code can be edited accordingly. A useful future enhancement would be to allow these settings to be specified on a system page and read in by the action code.


## Usage

The action can be called from the `More actions:` list or added to the page as `<<Action(PDF)>>`. However in the latter case, the link to the action will also appear in the generated PDF.

## Prerequisites


To allow PDF action to work [wkhtmltopdf](#) needs to be installed and the variable `app` within the action code set to the local path for `wkhtmltopdf`.


## Download & Release Notes

Download	Release Version	Moin Version	Release Notes
 PDF-1.0.py	1.0	1.9.2	


For installation, rename files to remove version number (e.g. -1.0).

## Examples

See  PDF.py action.pdf, for this page rendered as PDF by this action.

Compare it with  PDF.py safari.pdf, for this page saved as a PDF from Safari.





It is worth noting the difference in how links are handled and the inclusion of an PDF outline in the version created by this action. Also, margin width cannot be controlled when saving a PDF from Safari, and being narrower, the page layout is less visually appealing.

Alternatively, try it directly from the Action macro link:  PDF.

## History

See individual source files for details of version history.

Developed with inspiration and MoinMoin code from:

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GNU GPL, see COPYING for details.

## Known issues and limitations

- wkhtmltopdf 0.10.0 rc2 running under OS X constructs correct links to other pages from the same domain, but wkhtmltopdf 0.11.0 rc1 under GNU/Linux (this site) does not. For example, in the latter case a link <http://rileylink.net/moin.cgi/PDF.py> is constructed as the non-functional </moin.cgi/PDF.py>. See the  PDF.py action.pdf verses  PDF.py action osx.pdf and look at the links to these two files.
- Page breaking - "The current page breaking algorithm of WebKit leaves much to be desired. Basically WebKit will render everything into one long page, and then cut it up into pages. This means that if you have two columns of text where one is vertically shifted by half a line. Then WebKit will cut a line into to pieces display the top half on one page. And the bottom half on another page. It will also break image in two and so on. If you are using the patched version of QT you can use the CSS page-break-inside property to remedy this somewhat. There is no easy solution to this problem, until this is solved try organising your HTML documents such that it contains many lines on which pages can be cut cleanly." [from  wkhtmltopdf documentation]

- The output file created by wkhtmltopdf is currently place under `wiki/data`, so needs to be recreated every time the action is called. This reduces performance, and it might be better to place the file under `wiki/data/pages/[pagename]/cache`, and only recreate it if the cached version is older than the latest version of the page. This option would improve performance but, of course, increase storage requirements. It was not done initially because MoinMoin installed under the OS X WebServer (the development platform) doesn't provide read/write access to the wkhtmltopdf subprocess for that latter location. This could be solved by having the MoinMoin action decide if the file needs to be recreated and to move it to the storage location when updated.

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## Hits

11

PDF.py (last edited 2013-02-07 10:10:49 by IanRiley)