# PBS Tips and Tricks #19 – More on PDFs

Passport Software, Inc. has worked for many years to include and enhance the creation and use of PDF print files throughout the PBS accounting system.

In the previous installment we covered a few of the basic uses and tips for creating PDFs and printing them. These tips were designed to reduce paper usage, save time and increase flexibility in storing and using your print-type documents. Tips and Tricks #19 touches on two additional features, extending the basic uses.

PDF File management

If you are regularly using the -PDF- or the -PDFP- printing options to create PDF forms (Invoices, Statements, Purchase Orders etc.), the number of PDFs will likely rapidly grow, i.e. 200 invoices per day printed as PDFs is 1,000 per week and 4,000 per month.

All form-type PDFs are stored in the PDFFIL folder structure located in the top-level PBS directory. Each form type has its own sub-folder underneath:
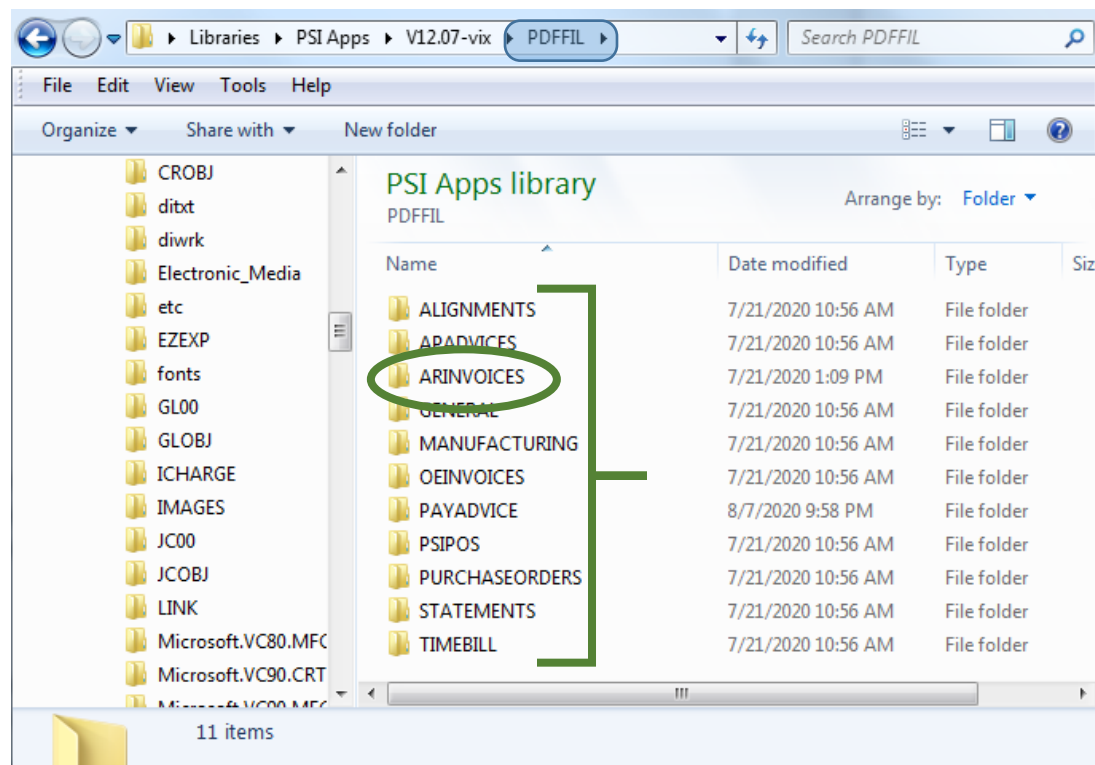

In our example we are looking to "archive" i.e. remove from PBS (but not destroy) some of the accumulation of invoice documents produced out of AR Invoicing. Double click the ARINVOICES folder to navigate to this area.

Here are the steps:

- Determine which PDFs or what range of PDF dates you plan to move from the active area in PBS (this folder) to an archive area – one which is not part of the PBS system but where you can still access the PDFs. In this example we want to archive all July invoices:
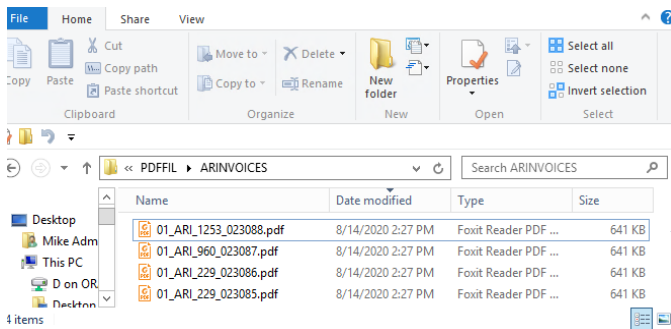
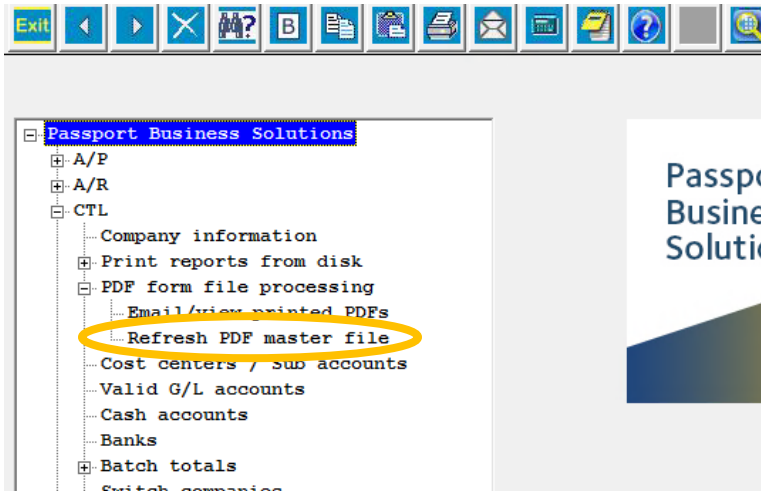- Move these PDFs to an alternate area – in this case "Invoice Backup/Aug 2020"
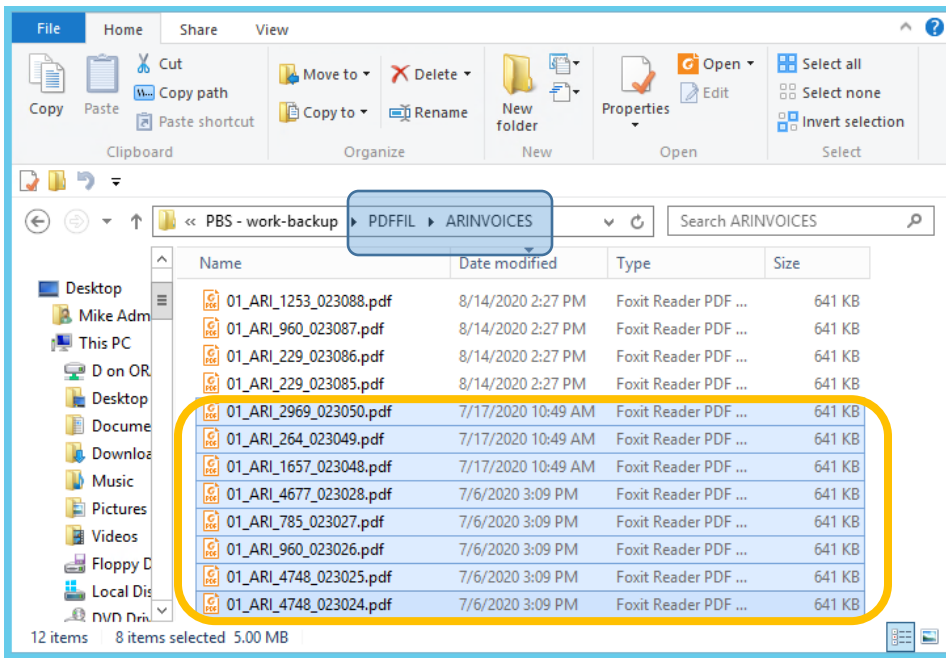
Move these items to the new folder
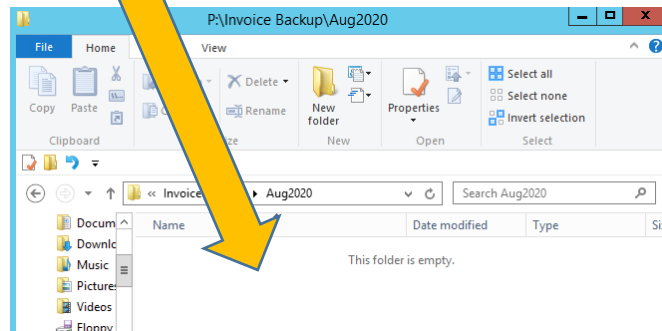
Leaving these items in the PDFFIL folder

- Rebuild the PBS index so it now shows only the active files - use "CTL/PDF form file processing/Refresh PDF master file" feature in the Control Module of PBS:

(Note: This function may be restricted to admin users or may not be available to you until you are given the right to this menu item by your administrator).

Having selected the "refresh" option, the index that PBS uses to keep track of the files in the PDFIL area will be rebuilt based on the files present at the time of the run. A printed report result shows the Adds and Deletes that have taken place. In this case we would see something like this that shows the removal of July items:

```
                           P D F   R E F R E S H   L I S T

--------------------------------------------------------------------------------
  PDF Name                                                    Message
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------

PDFFIL\ARINVOICES\01_ARI_264_023049.pdf                    PDF Index Record deleted
PDFFIL\ARINVOICES\01_ARI_785_023027.pdf                    PDF Index Record deleted
PDFFIL\ARINVOICES\01_ARI_960_023026.pdf                    PDF Index Record deleted
PDFFIL\ARINVOICES\01_ARI_1657_023048.pdf                   PDF Index Record deleted
PDFFIL\ARINVOICES\01_ARI_2969_023050.pdf                   PDF Index Record deleted
PDFFIL\ARINVOICES\01_ARI_4677_023028.pdf                   PDF Index Record deleted
PDFFIL\ARINVOICES\01_ARI_4748_023024.pdf                   PDF Index Record deleted
PDFFIL\ARINVOICES\01_ARI_4748_023025.pdf                   PDF Index Record deleted


        Total records added:        0        Total records deleted:      8
```

- The older items have been purged but are still individually available for email and printing in the archive folder. These PDFs are now not actively available within PBS.
- You can also restore files to the PBS active area and rebuild the index if you want to later use these items from within PBS. To do this simply move the archive back into the appropriate folder under PDFFIL and re-run the "refresh" program.
- Note that the naming convention for the files indicates much of the information needed about what is in the file without using the PBS index or seeing it in PBS. For example:

  01_ARI_264_023049.pdf

- 01 = Company ID
- ARI = A/R Invoicing – the program/function that produced this PDF; another example might be POW which designates that a PDF is a neW PO.
- 264 = Customer number. Depending on the module that produced this, this data element may be different e.g. for AP and PO it will be the vendor ID.
- 023049 = document number. In this case understanding that "ARI" is AR invoicing, means this has to be the invoice number. For a PO, for example, this would be PO number.

- Not all documents are restorable to the PBS active PDF area. If the naming convention of the file is not correctly followed, the file, although added to the PDFFIL folder structure, will not be included in the PBS PDF index, resulting in exclusion in the list of documents when you go into the PBS Email/view function. Naming convention is extremely important.

Unlocking PDFs

PDFs, as produced by the PBS accounting system, use the system of restraints/locks that Adobe (the developer of the PDF standard) provides for protecting the documents from alteration. Since PBS reports and forms have some legal and accounting status as being representative of what the value of a printed Invoice is, or what the Open Accounts receivable numbers on the AR Aging are, these locks are designed to protect you from having data in PBS that differs from the PDFs that the system produces because of after-the-fact alteration.

Here is the "lock status" of a typical form or report out of PBS - an Invoice or PO for example:
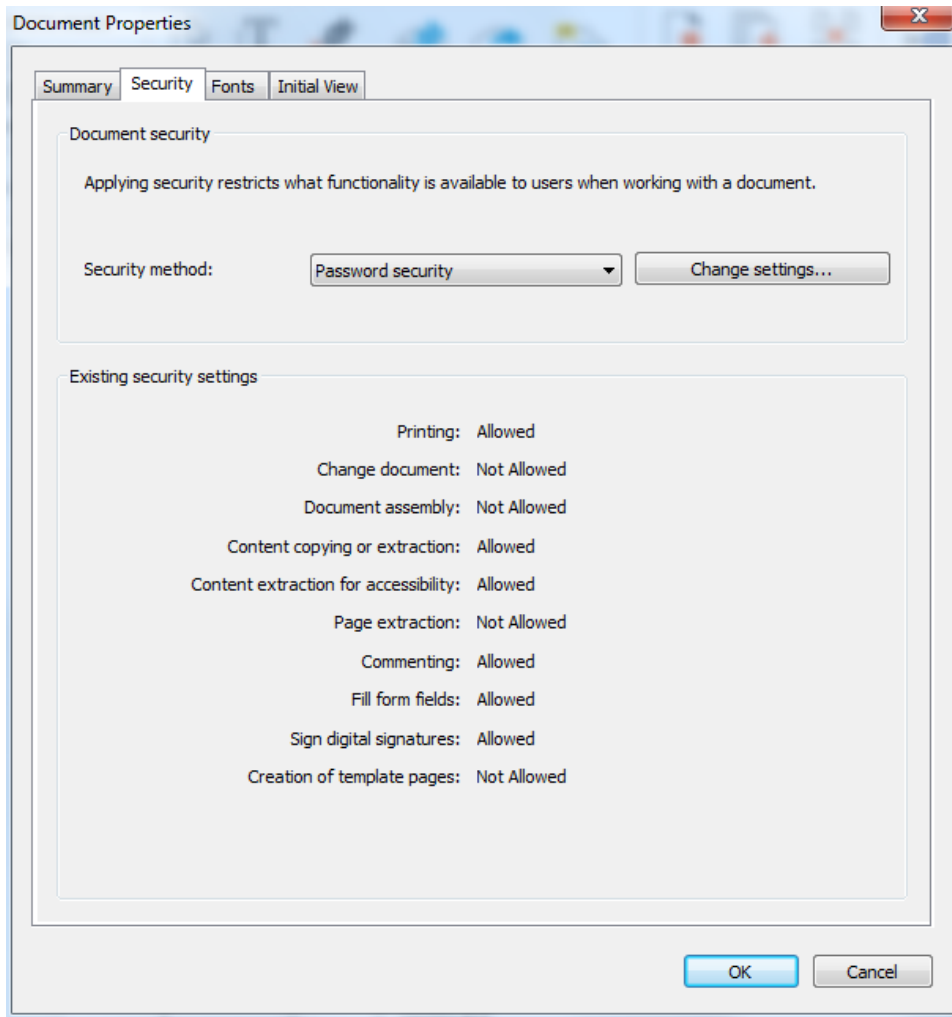
These specific properties are designed to allow you to print, use and extract information from the document but not alter it.

One exception is the signature and form fill locks which allow specific, designed-in information to be added to the document. This function is used in PBS to fill in the 941 documents with information created by the 941 Prep program.

For most companies, leaving these locks protected is safe and useful. An exception which may occur, is if you are invoicing a number of companies and emailing the invoices as PDFs. Some of your clients may be using that PDF data more or less directly to feed their accounting system or, they may need to add additional information for their own internal use to document or otherwise process the invoice. The restrictions on "Document assembly" includes adding pages. These are cases where you may want to send them unlocked PDF's.

Leaving this protected zone should be a matter for senior management to decide. But if it turns out to be necessary and management has approved this, you can contact your Passport Partner or Passport Support to get help with making the changes to the lock status of the PDF documents so that you control the degree to which the PDF can be manipulated.