

eBooks: What's new in Adobe® InDesign® CS5 EPUB file export

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Adobe InDesign CS5 software includes new and enhanced EPUB file export features that improve production and provide greater control for creating compelling eBooks that can be read on a wide range of eBook reading devices, including the Apple iPad, Sony® Reader, Barnes & Noble nook, and various mobile phones. This white paper provides an overview of the new features and enhancements.

For basic information on how to set up a document in InDesign that can be successfully exported as an EPUB file, see the white paper “eBooks: Exporting EPUB files from Adobe InDesign” at www.adobe.com/products/indesign/epub/howto.

Modified menu command

The menu command that is used for exporting a document to EPUB has a new name and location. To export a document, open the document and choose File > Export For > EPUB. To export an entire book file, choose Export Book To EPUB from the Book panel menu.

Improved control over content reading order

InDesign CS5 makes it easier to control the reading order of text and graphics in an EPUB file. When you export a document to EPUB, you now have two options for controlling the reading order: Base On Page Layout and Same As XML Structure (see Figure 1). While both options are equally effective, the option you choose depends on how your document has been constructed.

If you select Base On Page Layout, the reading order is determined by the location of the text and graphics frames in the document. InDesign exports the content from left to right and then from the top down. This choice can cause unexpected results, especially in complex, multicolumn layouts. If the design elements don't appear in the desired reading order, you can extend or rearrange the various frames on each page, which can be time-consuming. Alternatively, you can set up one text frame per page, thread all the text frames together as a single story, and flow all the text within that story. Then anchor all the graphics and other design elements within the main body of text so that they travel with the text as it reflows. This method helps ensure that everything is exported in the same order in which it flows in your InDesign document. When working with complex layouts though, you might find it easier to base the content reading order on the XML structure instead.

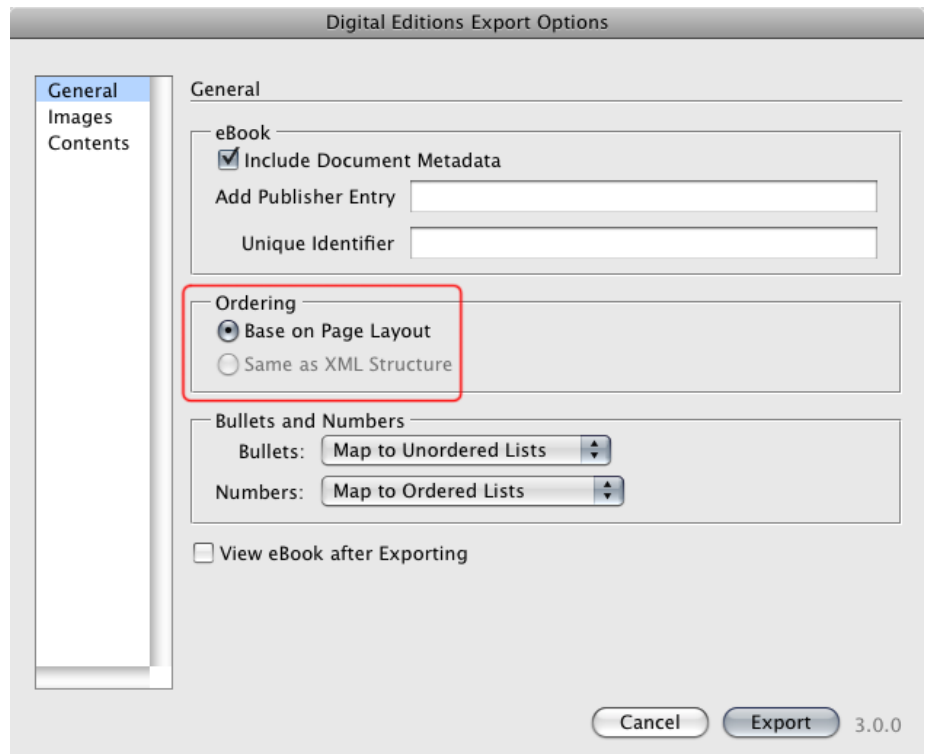


Figure 1. The General category of the Digital Editions Export Options dialog box.

Mapping styles to tags

To automate the tagging process, you can map styles to tags. After consistently applying styles to all the text in your document, choose Map Styles To Tags from the Tags panel menu. To map a style to a specific tag, click [Not Mapped] to the right of the style name and choose a tag name from the list. If the tags are named identically to the style names, click Map By Name, and InDesign will automatically match the style names to the tag names.

If you select Same As XML Structure, the order of the XML tags in the Structure pane determines the reading order of the text and graphics in the EPUB file. This method is useful for complex layouts because it allows you to control reading order without modifying your original layout. Before you can select this option though, your document must contain XML structure.

To create a structured document, you must first create XML tags (Window > Utilities > Tags). You can then apply the tags to the text and graphics in your layout to explicitly identify them. Items that have been tagged appear as elements in the Structure pane (see Figure 2). By dragging the elements, you can arrange them in the Structure pane to determine the reading order of the content in the EPUB file. For more information about tagging content and working with the Structure pane, search for “Tagging content for XML” and “Structuring documents for XML” in InDesign CS5 Help (Help > InDesign Help).

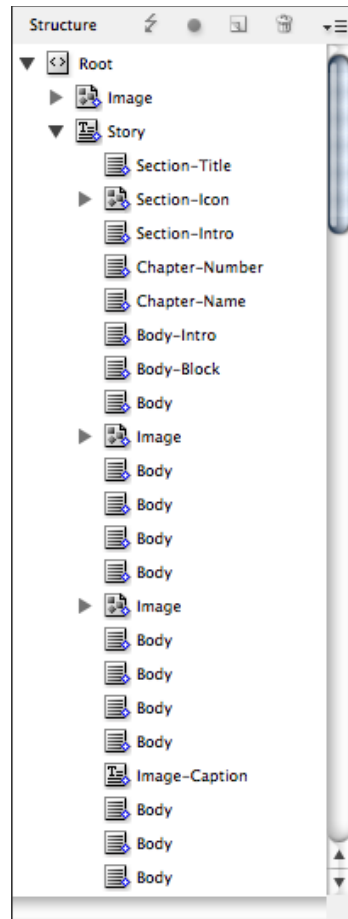


Figure 2. The Structure pane (View > Structure > Show Structure) displays the hierarchy and sequence of elements in a document. Parent elements contain child elements, and child elements can be parent elements to other child elements. For maximum control over reading order, apply tags to each heading, subheading, paragraph, and image in your document.

Automated chapter breaks

Since the EPUB file format does not define page structure, all the content flows together in one continuous stream unless an EPUB file is composed of multiple XHTML files—one for each chapter or logical segment. InDesign CS5 offers two ways to create chapter breaks in an EPUB file:

1. **Use first-level TOC entries as chapter breaks**—New to InDesign CS5, this feature allows you to automatically split an EPUB file into multiple XHTML files, with each file starting with the first-level TOC entry. If a file exceeds 260KB, a new file will begin at the start of a paragraph between first-level entries to keep the size of each file below 300KB. It is especially important to use this feature if all the content for your eBook is contained within a single InDesign document because pages render faster in an eBook reading device when an EPUB file is made up of multiple XHTML files.

To use this feature successfully, you must first apply a paragraph style to all the main headings in your document. Then you create a TOC style (Layout > Table of Contents Styles) that defines that paragraph style as a Level 1 entry. If necessary, you can define multiple paragraph styles as first-level entries.

When you export the EPUB file, select Include InDesign TOC Entries in the Contents category of the Digital Editions Export Options dialog box to generate a table of contents based on the TOC style that you choose from the TOC Style menu. Select Suppress Automatic Entries For Documents to prevent the InDesign document names from appearing in the generated table of contents. In addition, select Use First Level Entries As Chapter Breaks to split the EPUB file into multiple XHTML files (see Figure 3).

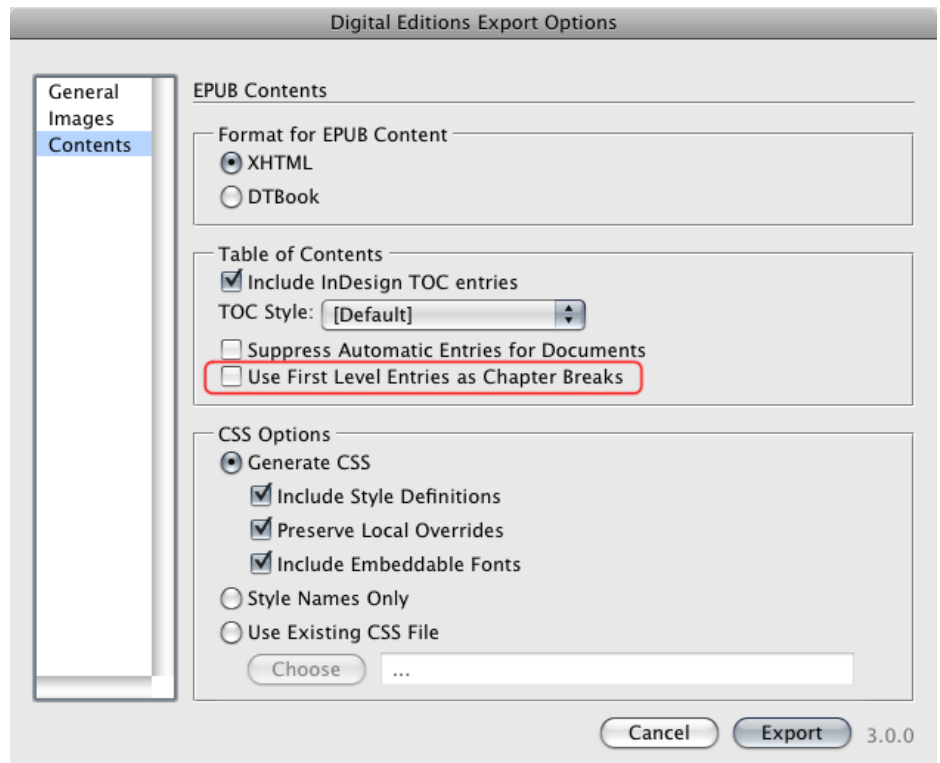


Figure 3. The Contents category of the Digital Editions Export Options dialog box.

2. **Use an InDesign book file**—Create a separate InDesign document for each chapter in your publication and then combine all the documents in an InDesign book file (File > New > Book). When you export the EPUB file from the Book panel menu, each chapter is converted into a separate XHTML file. This option is useful if you are working with a publication that is already composed of multiple InDesign documents. When using this method, it is likely not necessary to select the Use First Level Entries As Chapter Breaks option unless you want to further break up the content.

Renamed export options

Two options in the Contents category of the Digital Editions Export Options dialog box have been renamed in InDesign CS5: the Local Formatting option is now called Preserve Local Overrides and the Defined Styles option is called Include Style Definitions.

Support for prebuilt CSS files

Every EPUB file contains a CSS file, which determines the formatting of the content. InDesign CS5 provides a new CSS option that allows you to use your own prebuilt CSS file instead of having InDesign automatically create one for you. This gives you more control over the formatting of your eBooks and makes it easier to consistently format multiple publications that share the same design.

To specify a prebuilt CSS file, select Use Existing CSS File, which is located in the Contents category of the Digital Editions Export Options dialog box. Then click Choose and select a valid CSS file (see Figure 3). To use this feature successfully, the style names in your InDesign document must be named identically to the CSS style names.

Font subsetting

InDesign CS3, CS4, and CS5 include an option for embedding fonts into an EPUB file. So if your document uses a particular font, such as Minion® Pro, it can be copied into the EPUB file so that the text will continue to be displayed in that font. With InDesign CS5, only the font's characters that are used in the document are embedded, which significantly reduces the size of the EPUB file.

To embed the fonts into an EPUB file, select Include Embeddable Fonts, which is located in the Contents category of the Digital Editions Export Options dialog box (see Figure 3). InDesign

exports OpenType® fonts and most TrueType fonts, but PostScript® fonts are not embedded.

Note: A number of eBook readers do not support embedded fonts, including the iBooks app on the Apple iPad and the Amazon Kindle.

New metadata field: Unique Identifier

Every eBook requires a unique identifier. The most common identifier used for the eBook edition of a publication is its International Standard Book Number (ISBN). With InDesign CS5, you can enter the ISBN number of your publication into the new Unique Identifier field prior to exporting the EPUB file. The field is located in the General category of the Digital Editions Export Options dialog box (see Figure 1). If you leave this field empty, a unique identifier is automatically created for you, but this is most likely not the number you want to use. For more information on ISBN numbers, visit www.bowker.com or www.isbn-international.org.

Note: With InDesign CS3 and CS4, a unique identifier is automatically generated when you export an EPUB file.

Modified image export options

The Images category of the Digital Editions Export Options dialog box contains the same options that are available in InDesign CS3 and CS4 except for the Copy Images menu (see Figure 4). Consequently, it is no longer possible to export the original images to the EPUB file. Instead, InDesign CS5 automatically exports an optimized version of each image that displays well on most eBook readers and is small enough to avoid performance and memory issues. The images are converted to the RGB color mode and their resolution is changed to 72 ppi. If you select the Formatted option, InDesign also preserves formatting that you've applied to your image frames, such as stroke, fill, rotation, shear angle, and any cropping you've done. For information about the image export options, see the white paper "eBooks: Optimizing images for the EPUB file format" at www.adobe.com/products/indesign/epub/howto.

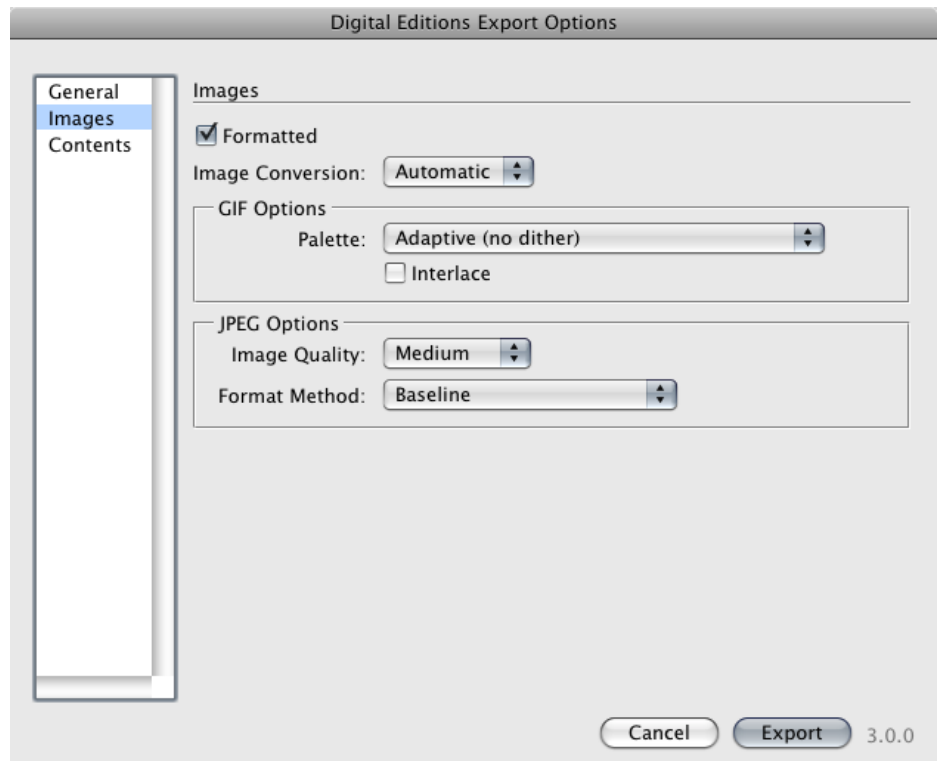


Figure 4. The Images category of the Digital Editions Export Options dialog box.



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