

# **The Radio Hotel** - Tools for the Antenna Information Junkie by Rick Hiller – W5RH

Used to be for saving good ham radio information, you cut articles out of a physical magazine, like 73 or Ham Radio and placed them in a manilla folder or 3-ring-binder. You can still do that, but there is a better way and one that saves physical space too -- by using the PDF file format. With PDF you can save any type of document...., and with the proliferation of antenna system information on the web it is perfect for saving those nuggets of information. This article is about **How to do that.**

**First** -- Absolutely necessary is the first step -- a way to produce PDF. Easiest and free is **PrimoPDF**. Primo PDF is a Windows printer driver that prints/saves to a PDF file, anything that you can print. Articles, web sites, scanned items, photos, etc. literally anything. Google it, download and install.

**Second** -- decide where and how you are going to store all of these new found items of interest. Set up a directory(s) on D drive, for example, -- **D:/Ham radio/Antennas/Yagi-Uda**. Make a separate directory for the different categories of antenna information you wish to store -- Yagi-Uda, Theory, Transmission Lines, Dipoles, Loops, etc. Group all files of similar subject together. Title the files like this -- the article name, call of the author, magazine and date. i.e. "Antennas for the Rag Chew Net-K5LKJ -BVARC -Jan 2017.pdf"

Now...go out into the virtual world and find some articles. The **BVARC Tech Articles** web site or the **BVARC monthly newsletter** has some great stuff. **ARRL QST Search Engine** is a great place too. The older QST magazines have been scanned and will download as a PDF file, with a cover sheet. [Note: That cover sheet can be eliminated by "printing to PDF" using **Primo PDF** and selecting only page 2 thru the end sheet.] The new **QST**'s can be viewed and the appropriate pages can be printed directly to PDF.

My personal preference is to store, not only the article, but also the referenced articles in the bibliography. I group them all together. You can store them separately. However, I store them all under one file name, usually the main article title name. With **PrimoPDF** this is easy to do.....Store the first article under the name you want, then as you "print out" the other articles use the "append" function to add them to the existing main file. This way all the articles are grouped in the same PDF file. I know it seems like a lot of work, but 3 years from now when you come back to it, they will all be in the same place. Once you do this a few times it will become second nature and easy to perform.

After saving articles for awhile, you will be pleased that your antenna information library has expanded quite significantly. Lots of topics, from lots of different places. I've been doing this for over 15 years and I have well over a Gig of articles. In the efficient PDF format, that is a significant amount of articles. I find it very easy to research something now; just use File Explorer. Each month, with the new **QST**, I easily add a few more files and it takes less than 10 minutes to do. Don't forget to back it all up too.

One other PDF facility I use is **Kindle**. Not the device and books, but the free service. I can send pdf and other format articles to my **Kindle** account "docs" and then read them on my free iPhone or iPad **Kindle** app. If I am going on a trip, I just e-mail the articles I am interested in reading to my **Kindle** account, download to my device and I have instant trip reading library.

I am sure there are other ways to do any of this, but one fact of the above method is that besides the computer and "i" devices, which I already have, I have spent no money. **Primo PDF** is free. (*Adobe Acrobat is \$\$*).

GL and enjoy your hobby..... 73...Rick W5RH

**Next time.... Dissecting Series #2 – That Cushcraft Vertical Black Box.**

*The purpose of **The Radio Hotel** is to give you a practical kickstart into exploring the workings of antenna systems. Google the buzz words and find out what they mean. Read up on antenna system theory to see how it all works together. You will be glad you did.*