

Acrobat External Scripting

- Robert Anderson - Publishing Technologist Emeritus
- BobAnderson@meganet.net

External Scripting

- Uses Inter Application Communication
 - AppleScript/AppleEvents on Mac
 - Visual Basic/OLE on Windows
- Layered over API in SDK Toolkit
- Enables one application to control others

Reasons for external scripting

- Rapid application development
- Automate a manual process
- Link multiple programs together
- Add graphical interface

Programmer levels

- Beginner
- Production support
- Developer of commercial applications

Acrobat Scripting Examples

- View PDF in web browser
- Check cropped page sizes
- Demand print at Compaq
 - AppleScript, Acrobat 4, & Perl
 - Check PDF files
 - Perform impositions
 - Upload to library

Getting Started

- Get a beginners book
- Download SDK documentation
- Start with examples

What you need for Visual Basic

- Windows Scripting Host
or
- MS Office VBA
or
- Visual Basic 6 Learning Edition

What you need for AppleScript

- Basic “Script Editor” included with Mac OS
or
“Script Debugger”
- Graphic Interface Builder
 - Dialog Director is shareware
 - FaceSpan for OS-9
 - AppleScript Studio for OS-X

Adobe Documentation & Samples

- <http://partners.adobe.com>
- Acrobat 4.0
 - IACREF.PDF Tech Note 5165
- Acrobat 5.0
 - IACOverview Tech Note 5164
 - IACReference.pdf Tech Note 5465
 - VBJavaScript.pdf Tech Note 5417

Many changes in Acrobat 5.0

- Save to PS, EPS, RTF
- External JavaScript
- 4.0 scripts may not work

Combined Script for 4.0 & 5.0

```
-- this returns true/false
set acro5 to version div (256 * 256) = 5

if acro5 then
  -- execute external JavaScript for 5.0
  do script ("
    var mergeDoc = app.newDoc();
    mergeDoc.path.split("\").pop();;
  ")
else
  -- execute AppleScript for 4.0
  set newdoc to make new document
end if
```

JavaScript “disclosed”


- New doc property in 5.05 upgrade
- Discussed in ReadMe.html
- Hides doc object when files are opened in JS
- Default value is "false"

Workaround for JS “disclosed”

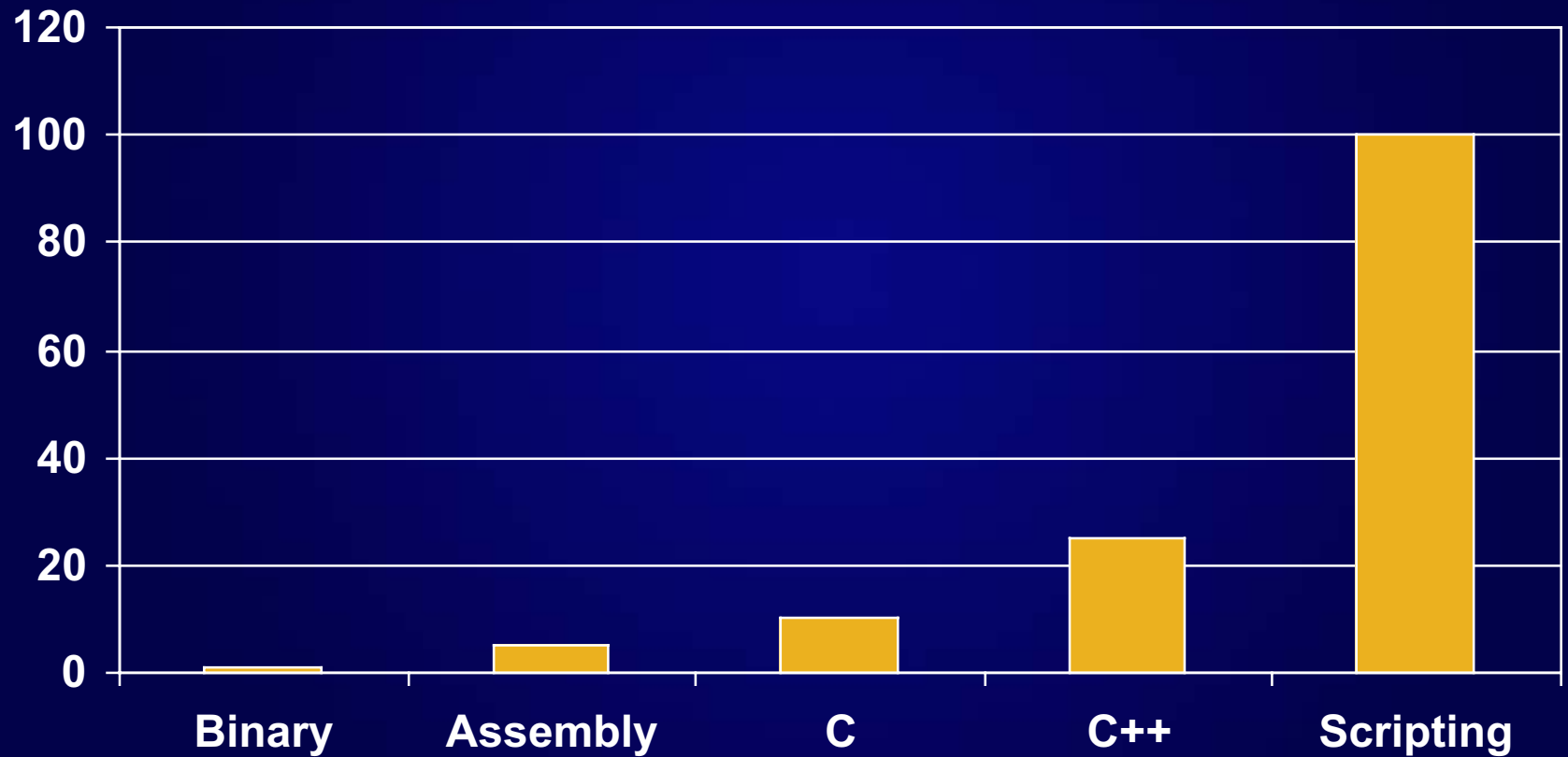
```
set f to choose file with prompt "Pick PDF file" of type {"PDF "}
open f
```

```
do script ("
    this.getPageBox(); // get the crop box for this document
")
```

PDF Merge Sample

- AppleScript 
(source embedded in text note)
- Visual Basic
(Request via email)

The next wave



Script speed no longer an issue

- Ghz processors
- Cheap memory
- Faster than manual operation
- Limiting factor is component speed

COMPAQ