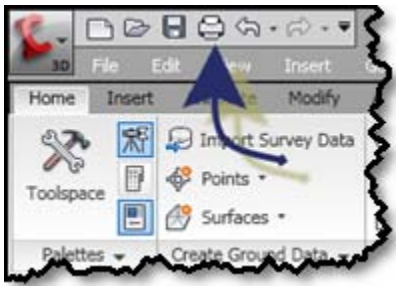
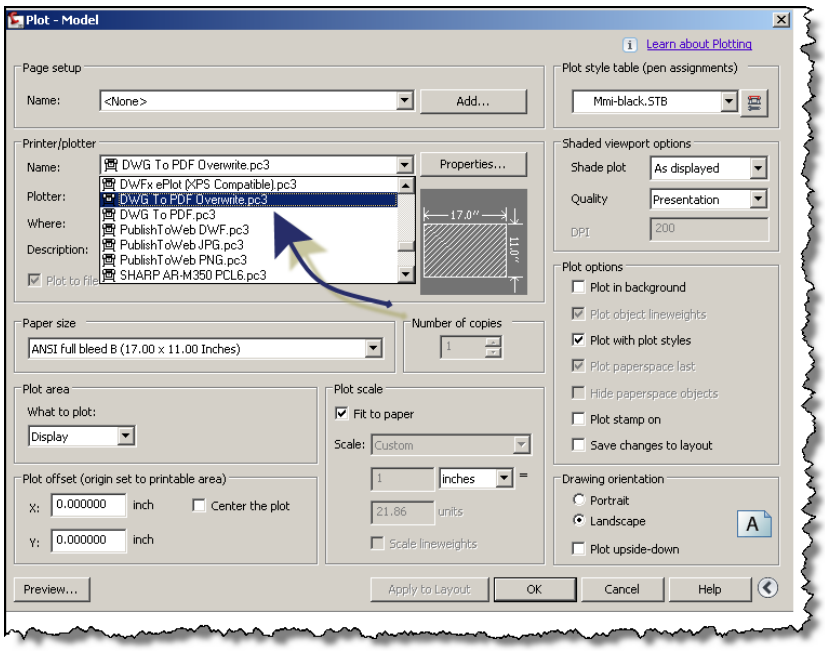
Plotting a Drawing to a good JPEG:

First open your drawing and set it to the layout or model space view you wish to plot. Be sure that your layer settings are set they way you want them.

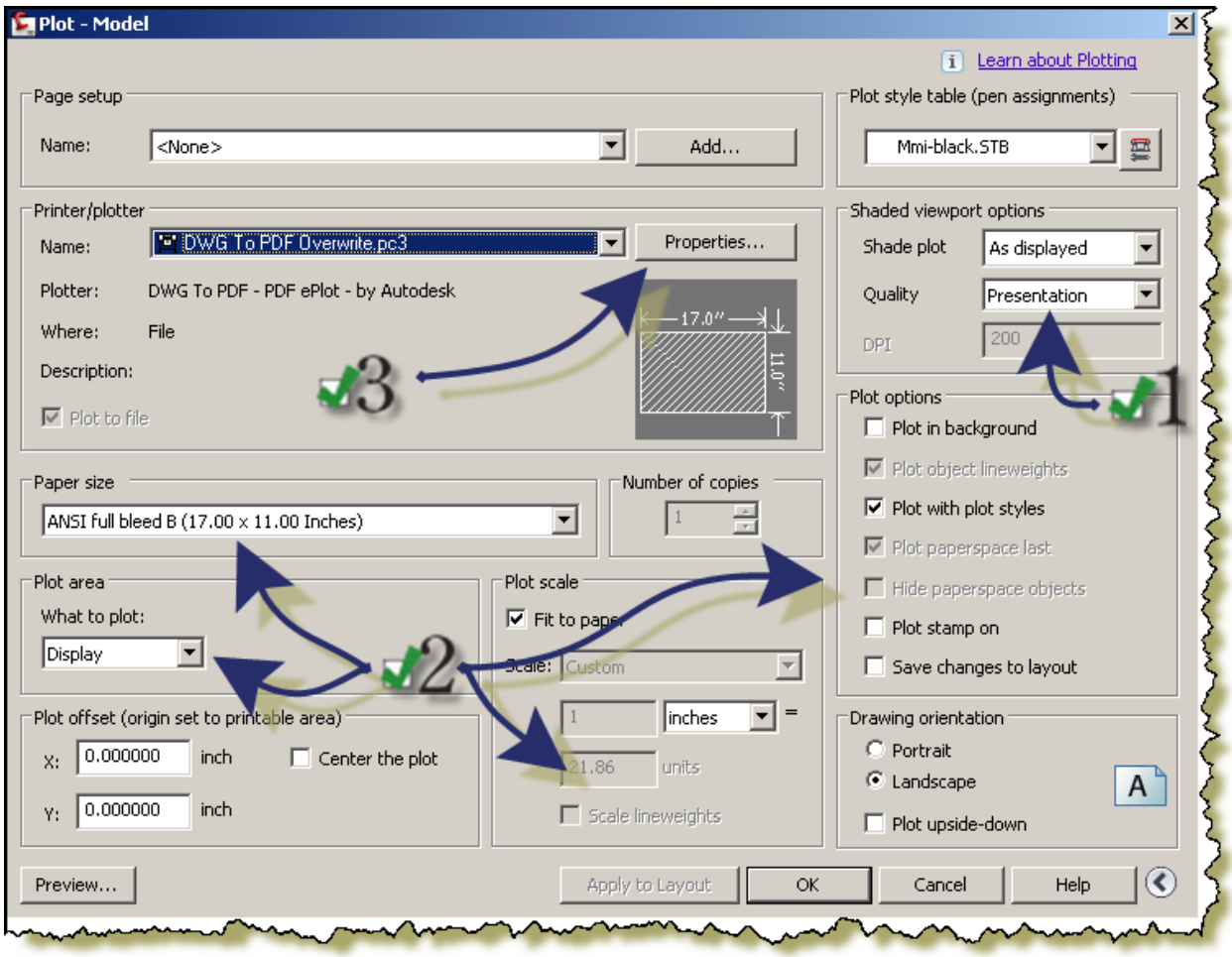
First start the plot



Select the “DWG To PDF Overwrite.pc3” this is a PC3 file that come with AutoCAD based products. This particular has been modified to print with the Line overwrite settings on. Which helps when printing a image with linework showing on top of it.



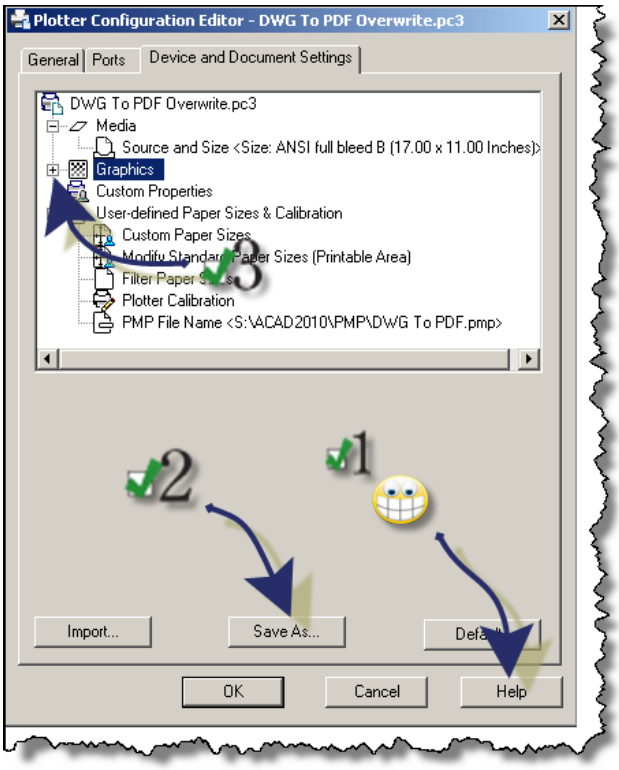
Once selected complete the following three steps:



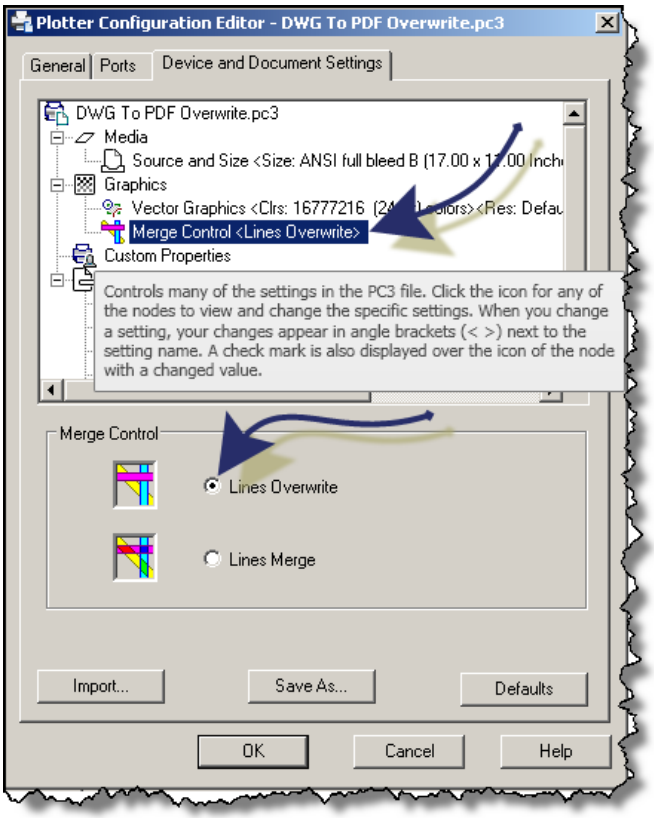
1. Set the Shaded viewport options “Quality” to Presentation. In most case this will really not come into play unless you are using Shaded viewports, in your layout. I just want it set here now so that I can save this set of settings for future use when printing a JPG file.
2. Make all other plot settings like page size, scale and things like that just as you would if you were plotting to a printer.
3. Select Properties…..

In the properties dialogue box we are going to make a view changes to, but keep in mind there are many other settings here explore and use the help menu to gain knowledge of the other settings available to you.

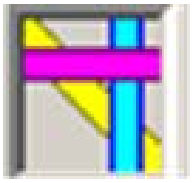
1. Location of the help. This help button will take you right to the help for this dialogue box. The in CAD is great and very useful.
2. You may want to Save As… to create a new PC3 file of the new settings for future use.
3. Select the ⊞ plus next to Graphics.



In here is where you can find the Lines Overwrite setting I spoke of earlier. You can see that it is currently set to Lines Overwrite.

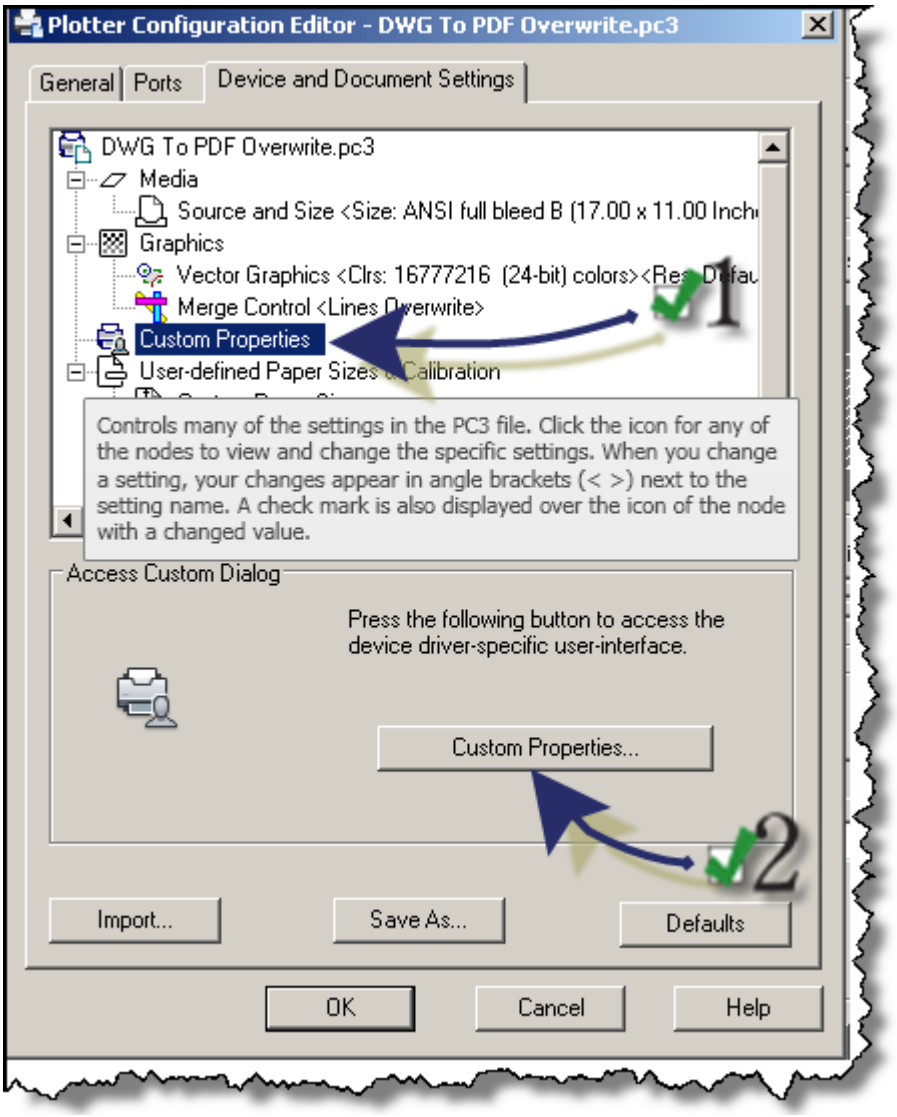


When the setting Lines Overwrite is set the display order of CAD objects matters a lot. See the examples here:

 ***With Lines Overwrite on***

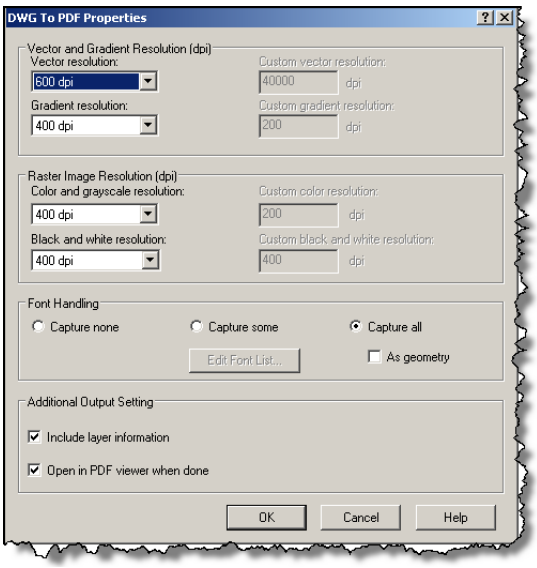
 ***With Lines Merge on (or Lines Overwrite off).*** Note how the colors of the objects blend together.

Now select Custom Properties

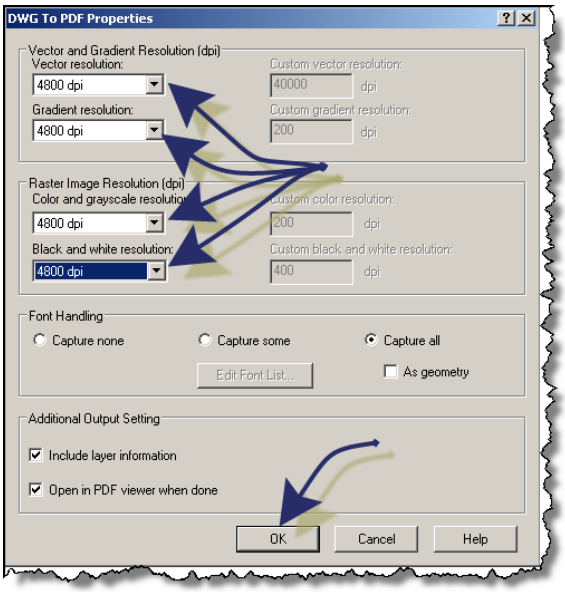


In this Dialogue box you can change the settings that pertains to the printer this PC3 file controls. This might be a good time to define a PC3 file.

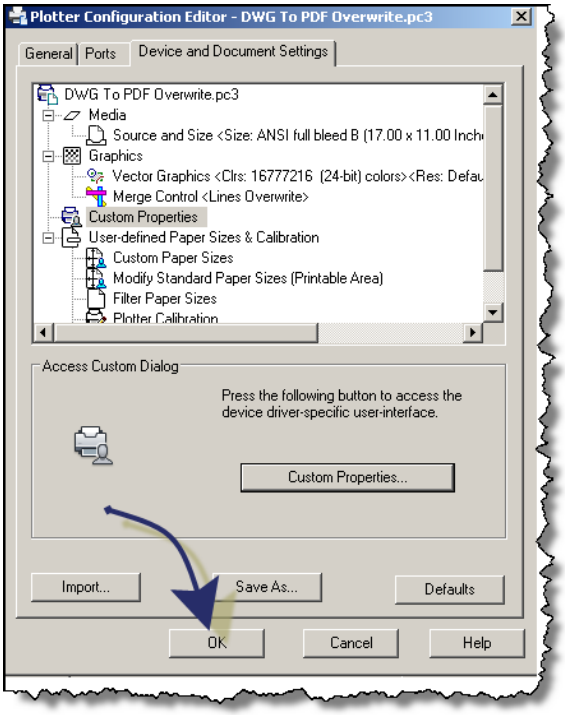
The Plotter Manager is a window that lists plotter configuration (PC3) files for every non-system printer that you install. Plotter configuration files can also be created for Windows® system printers if you want to use default properties different from those used by Windows. Plotter configuration settings specify port information, raster and vector graphics quality, paper sizes, and custom properties that depend on the plotter type.



In here I for this particular printer/plotter (the DWG To PDF.PC3 that comes with the AutoCAD products) you can adjust a few things such as whether it opens the PDF viewer when complete or includes the layer from the drawing. What I want to change here is the resolutions. For this example I am going to change them to what is shown in the next image. You will need to play with these to adjust them to suit your needs.
After setting the resolutions select OK.



Then select OK on the Plot Configuration Editor Dialogue box.

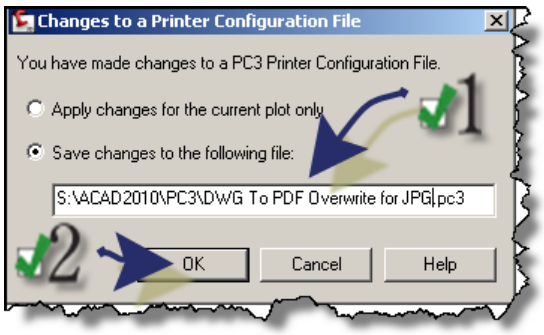


You will be prompted then to either one of the following;

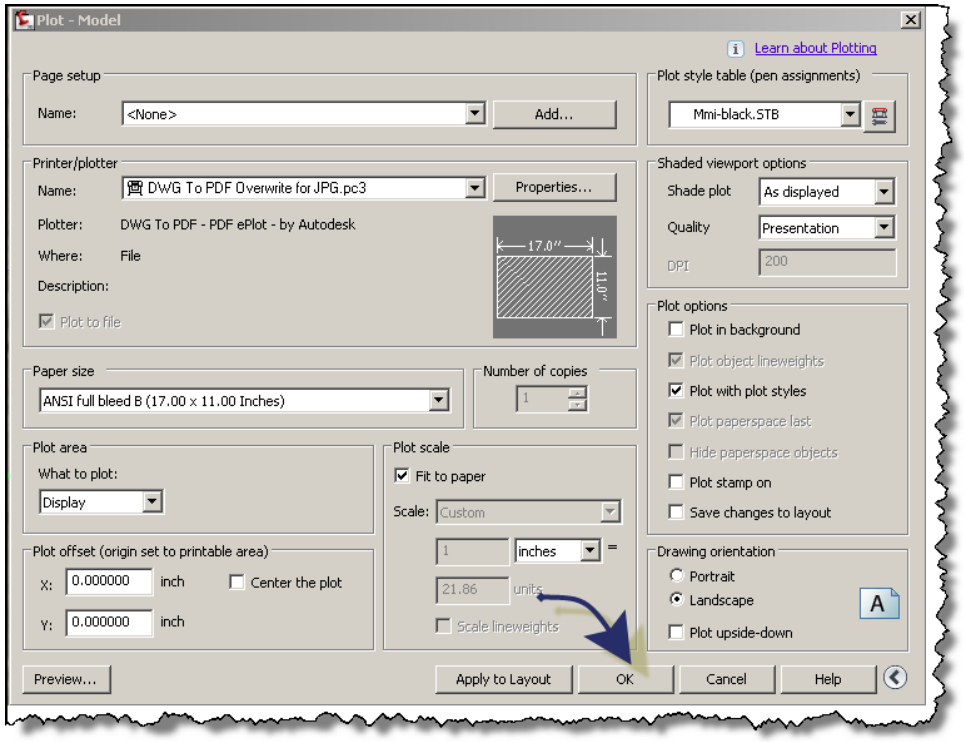
- ***Apply changes for the current plot only***. It does just what it says. It will not save any of the made changes once you complete this plot.
- ***Save change to the following file***. You can either overwrite the current file or give it a new name here (basically doing a save as). Note if you overwrite this will affect any drawing using this PC3 file for its plot settings well take on these changes.

In this example I am going to name it as shown so that I can use these setting again when printing a PDF to convert to a JPG.

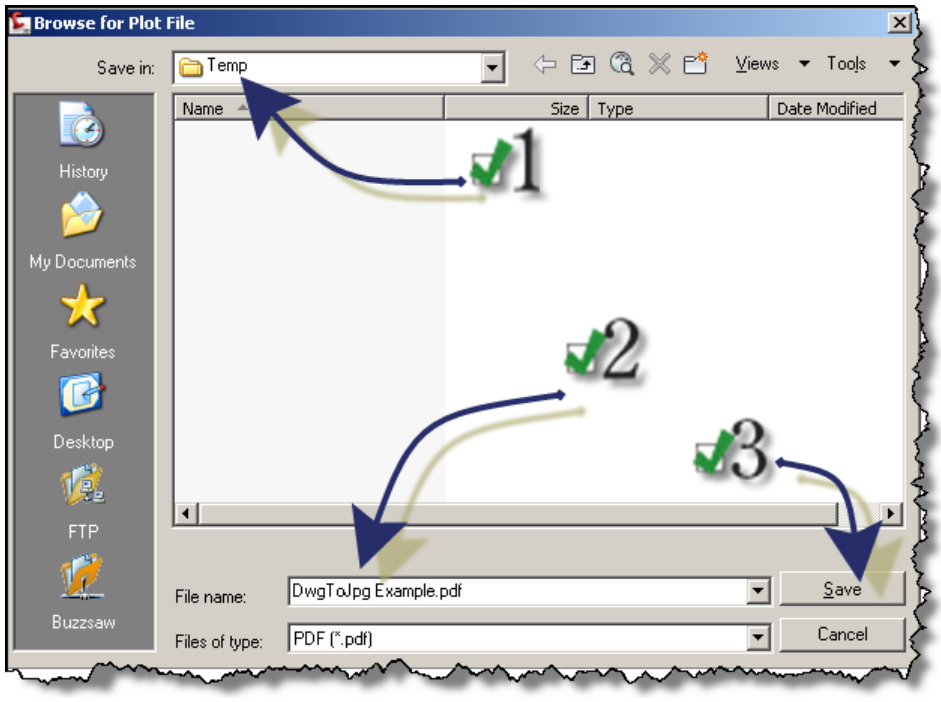
Once you selected the setting you want select OK.



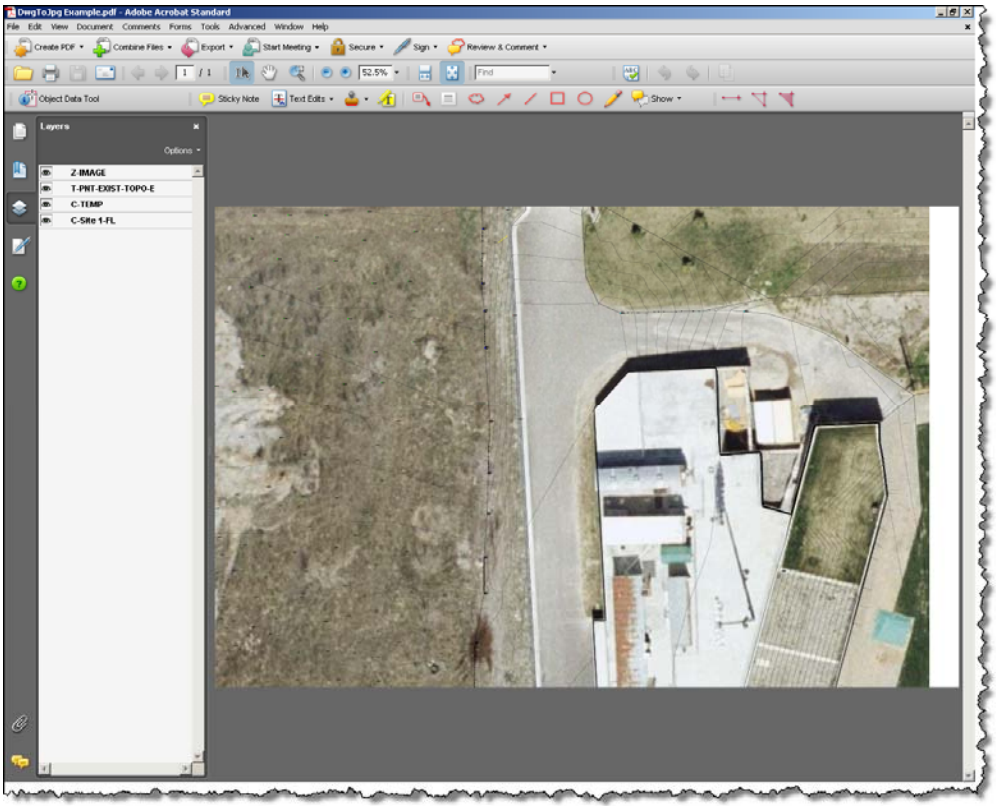
Now you are back to the Plot dialogue box. Select OK to plot.



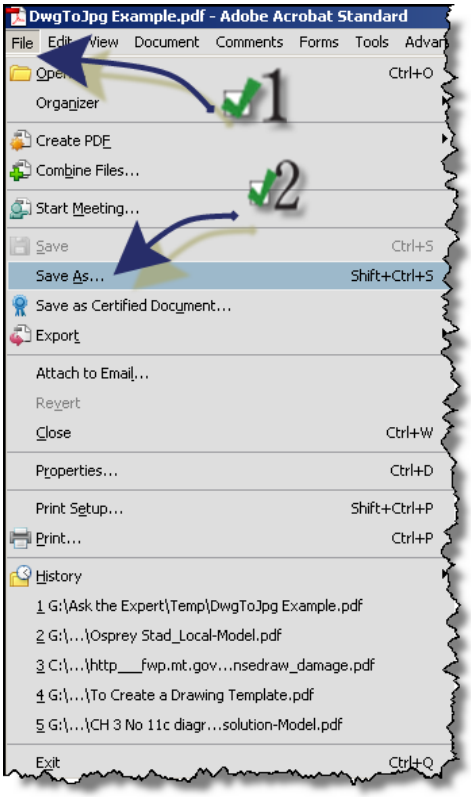
You will then be prompted for a location to save the PDF file and name the PDF file. Do so and select Save.



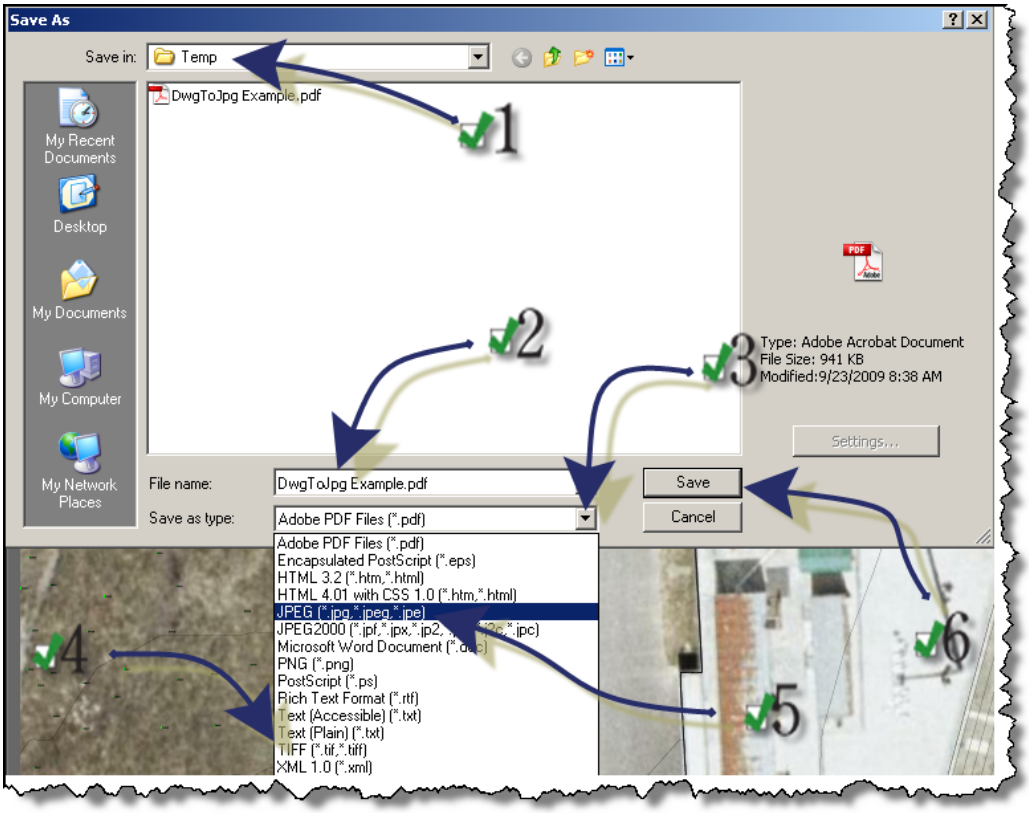
It will now create a PDF file and open the PDF Viewer.



I am using Adobe Acrobat 8 Standard. From here you can go to the File pull down menu and select Save As.

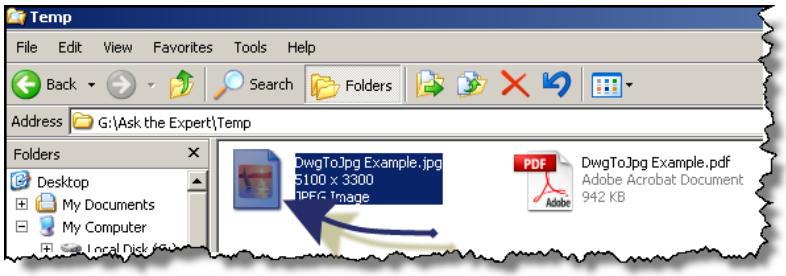


You will be now be prompted to select a location, a name and the file type for the Save As command.



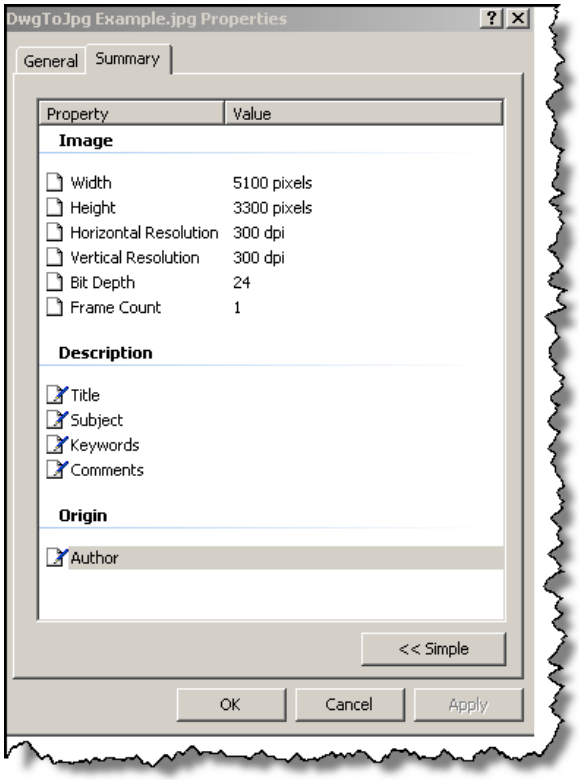
1. Select location
2. Select name
3. Opens file types
4. Note you can also select a Tif file format.
5. Select JPG file type
6. Select Save.

You will now see a JPG file in the folder you selected.



It is complete sound like a long drawn out process but once you have the PC3 set and saved it can be done in a couple of minutes.

Here is a screen capture of the Image summary within the file properties. I thought that you might be curious to see this information.



There are many ways to accomplish this task using similar methods. Some of the other methods you can explore are;

SnagIT from Techsmith: It allows you to create high quality screen shot plus it has an image printer. I use the SnagIT for screen captures all the time, but I have never used its image printer. SnagIT is a great little program to have over ever it is not a free program I think it cost me something like $45 but don't quote.

CutePDF Writer: This is another PDF writer that has a little different set of settings available to it than the DWG to PDF.PC3. It is also a shareware program. You would also need to find a shareware program to convert he PDF to a JPG there out there.

PrintKey: Is I believe shareware screen capture software that works really well.

I am sure there are a lot more out there like these but these are the ones I have used in the past. Right now the methods I have just shown seem to work the best for me.