

The following was in the Eastman on-line genealogical newsletter March 27,1999.

Another Method Of Presenting Genealogy Data On The Web

Do you want to display your genealogy information on your Web site? Most modern genealogy programs will automatically generate HTML pages, which you can upload directly to your site. The problem with them is that they are often quite "robotic." That is, the machine-generated text can be a bit repetitious if you read quite a few pages of the data.

Another method of creating Web pages is to have your genealogy program output to a text file and upload that. However, such files generally do not look very attractive. Of course, you could generate your own HTML files by hand, but that's a lot of work.

I recently heard about a different approach. L. D. Pierce wanted the appearance of a published book that would appear as an image on the viewer's screen. Luckily, the tools are available to do that. He generated the documents with a standard word processor, selecting data from whatever sources he wanted. He could vary the formatting, use different fonts or even embed pictures or maps or whatever graphics he wanted. He then used Adobe Acrobat to create an "image" of a printed manual. The image was then uploaded to his Web site.

To view the online publications, the viewer must first obtain the free Adobe Acrobat viewer. You can download it online from <http://www.adobe.com>. Versions are available for Windows, Macintosh and for some versions of UNIX. The Adobe Acrobat viewer installs quickly and easily. Keep in mind that the free viewer only allows users to read Acrobat files; creation of these files requires the full Adobe Acrobat program which can be purchased from most software outlets.

I looked at L. D. Pierce's Web site this week and found it quite interesting. The Pierce genealogy book was easy to use. This is a full-length genealogy publication. I was able to click on a page in the Table of Contents and see that page almost instantly on my screen. I could move from page to page sequentially or jump from section to section. The one picture that I found looked excellent on the screen, probably better than it would have on a normal printed page. Some of the surnames in the book were Pierce, Abercrombie, Wilbanks, Scott, Finley, Faus and Hibbs.

In creating an online book with Adobe Acrobat, several options are available for formatting and for controlling what the reader can do. The author can control whether or not the reader can print pages locally. The text is not editable and cannot be copied or duplicated using cut and paste. Nobody can easily cut and paste your data into their own documents. However, the documents can be downloaded to someone's computer and read later.

To view some of L. D. Pierce's genealogy publications in Adobe

Acrobat format, go to: <http://members.xoom.com/ldpierce>

For more information about creating documents with Adobe Acrobat,

look at: <http://www.adobe.com>