

AcroTeX.Net

On Tabbing Order

Part Two

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The  $\LaTeX$  source file for this [AeB Blog](#) is attached to this document. Click `settaborder1.tex` to save the source file.

## 1. Introduction

In the blog *On Tabbing Order*, I discussed the ways that tab order can be set, these are by row, column, structure, and widget order. This blog highlights some new commands available in AeB (AcroTeX eDucation Bundle) for setting the tab order through structure.

There are now two methods to set tabbing by structure: by **list** or by **number**. We discuss each of these in subsequent sections.

Documentation—and additional details—on the tabbing features described in this blog can be found in the [eformman.pdf](#) document, the AeB reference for Acrobat forms and document JavaScript.

## 2. Set Structure Order by List

In this brief example, the order the fields are visited is set up using the list method. Press the Tab key, the field labeled text2 is visited first.



I've set the structure up so that text2 is visited first, followed by text1. As was illustrated in *On Tabbing Order*, tab order can be applied to form fields, links, and annotation created by the annot\_pro package. The verbatim listing is as follows:

```
\setTabOrder{s}
\setTabOrderByList
...
\textField[\V{text1}\objdef{text1-\thepage}]{text1-\thepage}{1.25in}{11bp}
\textField[\V{text2}\objdef{text2-\thepage}]{text2-\thepage}{1.25in}{11bp}
...
\setStructTabOrder{%
  {text2-\thepage}
  {text1-\thepage}
}
```

The arguments of `\setStructTabOrder` is the “listing” that this method is named after. This command must be placed on the same page that the fields it refers to are located. Note the presence of the `\setTabOrderByList`

command following `\setTabOrder{s}`, this declares the method of setting the tab order (for structure). `\setTabOrderByList` is the default, so it need not have been listed.

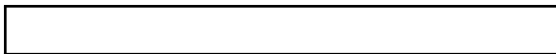
An alternate way of setting defining the options for the above fields is to use the user interface of the eforms package.

```
\textField[\ui{value={text1},  
  objdef={text1-\thepage}}]{text1-\thepage}{1.25in}{11bp}  
\textField[\ui{value={text2},  
  objdef={text2-\thepage}}]{text2-\thepage}{1.25in}{11bp}
```

Above are the same fields, but using the `\ui` command that encloses the optional arguments. Within the argument of `\ui`, we can use the standard key-value notation: for example, `objdef={text1-\thepage}` instead of `\objdef{text1-\thepage}`. Incidentally, note the `-\thepage` attached to each of the `objdefs`, this is to ensure that names of the object references are unique throughout the entire document, otherwise, Distiller will spit out an error message.

### 3. Set Structure Order by Number

We demonstrate structure tabbing again, the order the fields are visited is set up using the number method.<sup>1</sup> Press the Tab key, the field labeled text2 is visited first.



I've set the structure up so that text2 is visited first, followed by text1. As was illustrated in *On Tabbing Order*, tab order can be applied to form fields, links, and annotation created by the annot\_pro package. The verbatim listing is as follows:

```
\setTabOrder{s}
\setTabOrderByNumber
...
\textField[\V{text1}
  \objdef{text1-\thepage}\taborder{1}}{text1-\thepage}{1.25in}{11bp}
\textField[\V{text2}
  \objdef{text2-\thepage}\taborder{0}}{text2-\thepage}{1.25in}{11bp}
```

Note the declaration `\setTabOrderByNumber`, this sets the number method. For the number method, there is no `\setStructTabOrder`, rather, the tab order is entered in the optional optional argument with the `taborder` key.

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<sup>1</sup>Kudos to Genevieve of Adobe for setting my thinking straight on tab order using numbers.

The tab order is a zero-based index; above I've set `text1` with `\taborder{1}` and `text2` with `\taborder{0}`. As a result, `text2` is visited first, followed by `text1`.

An alternate way of setting defining the options for the above fields is to use the *user interface* of the `efrms` package.

```
\textField[\ui{value={text1},
  objdef={text1-\thepage},taborder=1}]{text1-\thepage}{1.25in}{11bp}
\textField[\ui{value={text2},
  objdef={text2-\thepage},taborder=0}]{text2-\thepage}{1.25in}{11bp}
```

The two methods described here should not be mixed together on the same page. I think I prefer the list method, seems easier to manage and maintain, if more fields are added to the page.

That's all there is to it! Very swave!

## References

- [1] *Adobe PDF Reference, Sixth Edition, version 1.7*, available at <http://www.adobe.com/devnet/pdf/> ([PDF Technology Center](#)).
- [2] *Adobe Supplement to ISO 32000, Base Version 1.7, Extension Level 3*, available at the [PDF Technology Center](#), <http://www.adobe.com/devnet/pdf/>.

- [3] *Document management Portable document format–Part 1: PDF 1.7*, First Edition (July, 2008), available at [http://www.adobe.com/devnet/pdf/pdf\\_reference.html](http://www.adobe.com/devnet/pdf/pdf_reference.html) ([Adobe PDF Technology Center](#)).
- [4] *pdfmark Reference*, available at [Acrobat Developer Center](#)