



Fiery FreeForm Create

Fiery FreeForm Create is a stand-alone variable data creation application built on Fiery FreeForm variable data printing (VDP) technology.

Note: The term “FreeForm Create” refers to Fiery FreeForm Create in this document.

With FreeForm Create, you create variable data printing (VDP) jobs in a visual, user-friendly application.

VDP jobs combine a set of master elements that are common across copies of a document with a set of variable elements that change from copy to copy.

This lets you create personalized communications, such as a brochure that greets customers by name and includes other personal information obtained from a database. Background elements, illustrations, and text blocks that do not change across copies of the brochure are master elements. Names and other customer-specific information are variable elements.

FreeForm Create utilizes two different workflows that allow you to easily customize VDP jobs.

In the file merge workflow, you combine a master document with a variable document to create customized print communication using an intuitive graphic based interface.

In the variable data document workflow, you combine a master document with variables directly from a data source spreadsheet to create customized print communication without the need to create a separate variable document first, and without the need for a separate variable data creation application.

System Requirements

These are the minimum requirements to run FreeForm Create.

macOS

- Mac OS X 10.11, or later
- 4 GB of RAM or more recommended
- 7 GB of available hard drive space
- Minimum display resolution: 1280 x1024

Windows

- Microsoft Windows 7 SP1, 8.1 (April 2014 update), and 10 64-bit and later
- Windows Server 2008 R2 SP1, 2012 R2 (April 2014 update), 2016 64-bit, and Windows Server 2019
- Intel Core i3 processor or above
- 4 GB of RAM or more recommended

- 16 GB of available hard drive space
- Minimum display resolution: 1280 x1024

Fiery system print support

FreeForm Create supports Fiery servers that run System 10 and later software.

Fiery API

FreeForm Create requires the installation of Fiery API on connected Fiery servers to print.

Installation instructions for Fiery API can be found at <https://www.efi.com/products/fiery-servers-and-software/fiery-integration/fiery-api/installation/>.



Create variable data documents

Fiery FreeForm technology lets you use print options to define master documents and assign them to variable data jobs sent to the Fiery Server.

You can use FreeForm masters for any fixed-element data you combine with different data from day to day. For example, you can store a letterhead template as a FreeForm master and use it for different letter content (the variable-element data).

With FreeForm technology, you can create master and variable documents using the application and computer platform you prefer. To create the master document, use a page layout or graphics application. To create the variable document, use a word processing application with a mail merge feature, a page layout application with scripting support, or a database application.

With FreeForm and Enhanced FreeForm you merge a master document with a variable document on a Fiery server. In the FreeForm Create standalone application, you use an intuitive graphic interface to merge a master document with variable elements or add variable elements to an existing file without the need to directly access a Fiery server.

Create a master document

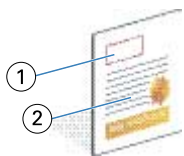
Create a master document, to use with the file merge workflow and the variable data document workflow in FreeForm Create.

Keep in mind that FreeForm Create only supports master documents in the .pdf format. To create your master document, use an application that can save the document as a PDF.

FreeForm Create uses a master document to provide the layout and the fixed elements for the combined document.

- 1 From an application of your choice, layout the master.
- 2 Arrange the master elements (text and graphics that do not change) on one or more pages, leaving space for the variable elements.

Figure 1: Master document



- 1 *Space for variable elements*
- 2 *Unchanging master elements*

- 3 Save the file.

Create a variable document

Creating a variable document to use with the file merge workflow in FreeForm Create.

Keep in mind the following.

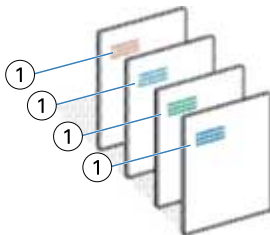
- FreeForm Create only supports variable documents in the .pdf format. To create your variable document, use an application that can save the document as a PDF.
- To create a variable document, use either a desktop publishing application that provides a mail merge function, or a page layout application with scripting support.

In the file merge workflow, FreeForm Create uses a variable document to provide the variable information used in the combined document.

A desktop publishing application or a page layout application takes information from a list or database and creates a variable document for use with a master document. Each application has different controls for this function.

- 1 From your supported application, create the variable document to conform to the layout of the master document.
- 2 Add the variable information in the appropriate places in your document.

Figure 2: Variable document



1 Variable element

- 3 Save the file.

Create a data source document

Create a data source document to use with the variable data document workflow in FreeForm Create.

Keep in mind that FreeForm Create only supports data source documents in .xlsx, .xls, or .csv formats. To create a data source document for the variable data document workflow, use a spreadsheet application that can save the document in a supported format.

In the variable data document workflow, a data source document provides the variable information used in the combined document.

- 1 From your spreadsheet application, enter variable names in the first row. Use one variable name per cell.
 - The first row of the spreadsheet functions as column headers and names the variable fields.
 - Columns specify the variable field.
 - A data source document with 10 columns will have 10 variable fields.

2 Denote image type and barcode type variables in the first row with file accelerators.

Variable type	File accelerator	Example column header	Variable entry in data source	Variable file location
Image	[]	[]images	C:/users/John/pictures/ pic001.png	C:/users/John/pictures/ pic001.png
Image	[]	[C:/users/John/ pictures]images	pic002.png	C:/users/John/pictures/ pic002.png
Image	[~]	[~]images	/images/pic003.png	C:/users/John/project/images/ pic003.png When the data source file is located at C:/users/John/project
Barcode		barcodes	URL:http:// examplesite.com/ barcodes/A001	http://examplesite.com/ barcodes/A001

3 Enter the records.

- Each row specifies the variables for a single record.
- A data source document with 10 rows will have 10 records.

4 Save the file.

Note: FreeForm Create requires the data source document be in .xlsx, .xls, or .csv formats.



File merge workflow

In FreeForm Create, the file merge workflow combines a master document with a variable document.

The file merge workflow combines a master and a variable PDF document to create a single VDP job printed from a Fiery Server using FreeForm variable data technology. With FreeForm Create, you merge the files using a graphic interface to specify the final appearance of your VDP job.

This workflow is ideal for existing users of Enhanced FreeForm (via Command WorkStation Job Properties), who want a visual, user-friendly way to combine master and variable documents.

Create a merged document

FreeForm Create combines a master document with a variable document according to your specification to create a FreeForm file that can be printed by Fiery servers.

Keep in mind the following.

- A master document in .pdf format is required.
- A variable document in .pdf format is required.

1 Under Create, click File merge documents.

2 To choose a master document,

- Click Browse, then locate and select your master document, or
- Drag the master document file to the specified drop location on the Choose a Master document window.

Note: The master document must be a PDF.

The first page of the master document will appear.

3 Optional: If you choose the wrong file,

- Click Change to browse for the correct file, or
- Click Remove to clear your selection.

4 Click Next.

5 To choose a variable document,

- Click Browse, then locate and select your variable document, or
- Drag the variable document file to the specified drop location on the Choose a Variable Document window.

Note: The variable document must be a PDF.

The first page of the variable document will appear.


- 6 Optional: If you choose the wrong file,
 - Click Change to browse for the correct file, or
 - Click Remove to clear your selection.
- 7 Click Create.
- 8 Assign master and variable pages to the combined document.
- 9 Save the merged document or send it to a Fiery server to print.

Change the design files

Change the master or variable file used in a file merge design.


A file merge design contains a master file and a variable file. You may want to change the master file used in the file merge without changing the variable file in order to update the design, or you may want to change the variable file without changing the master file to update the variable information for a new audience.

Change the master file

- 1 In the Design pane, for the master file, click .
- 2 Click Change.
- 3 Locate and select your desired master file, and then click OK.

Note: The master file must be a PDF.

Change the variable file

- 1 In the Design pane, for the variable file, click .
- 2 Click Change.
- 3 Locate and select your desired variable file, and then click OK.

Note: The variable file must be a PDF.

Assign variable pages in a file merge design

Assign specific variable pages to specific master pages in the file merge workflow.

Keep in mind the following:

A master document and a variable document are required.

Verify that your combined document has the correct number of pages and the pages are in the correct order.

- 1 Open or create a file merge design.

- 2 Set the Variable pages per record.

Note: Variable pages per record controls how many variable pages constitute a VDP record.

- 3 From the Variable document pane,

- Drag a variable page you wish to assign on to a combined page on the Combined pages per record, or
- Enter the variable page number in the Variable box of the combined page in the Combined pages per record pane.

Note: Use the navigation bar at the bottom of the Combined pages per record pane to navigate through the combined pages

Note: Use the navigation bar at the top of the Variable document pane to navigate through the available variable pages

The updated combined page will display.


- 4 Repeat Step 3. as needed to assign variable pages.

Note: A single variable page can be assigned to more than one combined page.

Add pages to a file merge design

- 1 Open or create a file merge design.

- 2 To add a page:

- In the Combined pages per record pane, right-click on a page and select Add Page Before or Add Page After,
- In the Combined pages per record pane, select a page, click  , and select Add Page Before or Add Page After,
- In the Summary pane, increase the number of Combined pages per record to add pages to the end of the file merged design.

- 3 Select the new page.


- 4 Assign a master page and/or a variable page to the new page.

Note: To insert a blank page, leave the master page and variable page unassigned.

Delete pages from a file merge design

- 1 Open or create a file merge design.


- 2 To delete a page:

- In the Combined pages per record pane, right-click on a page and select Delete.
- In the Combined pages per record pane, select a page and click  .



Preview file merge design

Examine the results of combining variable and master documents in the file merge workflow before you save or print.

- 1 Create or open a file merge design.
- 2 Click Preview.
- 3 Use the control bar at the bottom of the Preview pane to navigate through the pages of the file merge design by record or by page.

Press on the  button and drag to move the control bar.

- 4 Examine the preview.

Click  to zoom in and  to zoom out.



Variable data document workflow

In FreeForm Create, the variable data document workflow combines information from a data source document with a master document.

The variable data document workflow combines information (including text, barcodes, and images) contained in a data source document with a master document to create VDP jobs without the creation of a separate variable document file or the use of a separate variable data application.

With FreeForm Create, you can manipulate your variables and add as much information or as little information as you want to a master.

Create a variable data document

Combine a master document with a data source file to create a FreeForm file that can be printed by Fiery servers.

Keep in mind the following.

- A master document in .pdf format is required.
- A data source document in .xlsx, .xls, or .csv format is required.

1 Under Create, click Variable data document.

2 To choose a master document,

- Click Browse, then locate and select your master document, or
- Drag the master document file to the specified drop location on the Choose a Master document window.

The first page of the master document will appear.

3 Optional: If you choose the wrong file,

- Click Change to browse for the correct file, or
- Click Remove to clear your selection.

4 Click Next.



5 To choose a data source document,

- Click Browse, then locate and select your data source document, or
- Drag the data source document file to the specified drop location on the Choose a Data source Document window.

Note: The data source document must be a .xlsx, .xls, or .csv file.

The variables listed in the data source document will appear.

- 6 Optional: If you choose the wrong file, click Change to browse for the correct file
- 7 Select the columns from the data source document that you want to use as variables.

Note: For image variables, select  , and for barcode variables, select  .


- 8 Click Create.
- 9 Add variables and edit them as needed.
- 10 Save the variable data document, or send it to a Fiery server to print.

Change the files in a variable data document design

Change the master or data source file used in a variable data document design.


A variable data document design combines a master file and a data source file to create VDP output. You may want to change the master file used in the variable data document design without changing the data source file in order to update the design. You may want to change the data source file without changing the master file to update the variable information for a new audience as well.

Change the master file

- 1 In the Design pane, for the Master file, click .
- 2 Click Change.
- 3 Locate and select your desired master file, and then click OK.

Note: The master file must be a PDF.

Change the data source

- 1 In the Design pane, for the Data Source, click .
- 2 Click Change.
- 3 Locate and select your desired data source file, and then click OK.

Note: The data source document must be a .xlsx, .xls, or .csv file.

Add a variable field

Add a variable field to a page in a variable data document design.


- 1 Create or open a variable data document design.
- 2 Use the navigation bar to navigate to the page where you want to add the variable.

- 3 In the Design pane, find the variable field you want to add.
Use the Search for variable fields box located on the design pane to search through the variables.
- 4 Click on the variable and drag it to your desired location on the page.
- 5 Edit the variable properties listed in the Properties pane as desired.
See [Variable field properties](#) on page 12 for a list of variable properties.

Variable field properties

List of the various variable field properties that can be used when editing a variable data document design

Note:

Click Undock Properties () to float the variable properties as a window.


Click Dock Properties () to dock the variable properties as a pane on the right side of the screen.

Table 1: Variable field properties

Variable type	Available properties	Control	Function	
Text Field/Custom Text	Variable	Fields that do not contain data will be collapsed when stacked in a single text box.	Displays the variables included in a text box	
	Position	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • X axis • Y axis 	Change the position of a selected variable text field box on a master page.	
	Size	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Width • Height 	Control the size of the variable text field box.	
	Font	Font	Font	Choose from a font available on your system.
			Choose font weight	Change the weight of the font used in the selected variable text field box.
			Used in Master	Review the fonts used in the master file.
			Font size	Select the font size.

Variable type	Available properties	Control	Function
		Font color	<p>Select the font color.</p> <p>Note: Color can be selected by CMYK, HSL, Hex, RGB, using the color palette tool, or by adding a custom spot color.</p> <p>Import custom spot colors in Adobe Swatch Exchange (.ase) format by clicking the import icon in the Spot Color tab of the color selection window.</p> <p>Save colors as Preset colors by choosing a color and clicking Add color.</p>
	Alignment	Align left	Align the text to left side of the variable text field box.
		Center	Center the text in the variable text field box.
		Align right	Align the text to right side of the variable text field box.
	Angle	Text box angle	Set the angle of the variable text field box by degree.
	Fill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fill check box • Fill color 	<p>Select the Fill check box to turn on fill behind the highlighted text variable.</p> <p>Click on the Fill color to change the background color in a variable text field box.</p> <p>Note: Color can be selected by CMYK, HSL, Hex, RGB, using the color palette tool, or by adding a custom spot color.</p> <p>Import custom spot colors in Adobe Swatch Exchange (.ase) format by clicking the import icon in the Spot Color tab of the color selection window.</p> <p>Save colors as Preset colors by choosing a color and clicking Add color.</p>

Variable type	Available properties	Control	Function	
	Line height	Text box line height	Control the line height of the text box.	
Images	Position	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • X axis • Y axis 	Position the selected variable image on a master page determined by the location on the X and Y axes.	
	Size	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Width • Height 	Control the size of the variable image.	
	Fit	Proportional		Use the original proportions of an image variable.
		Stretch		Stretch an image variable to fit the size you specify. Note: This setting may distort images.
		Reset		Resets an image to the settings imported from the data source file.
Angle	Image angle		Set the angle of the image by degree.	
Barcodes	Variable	N/A	Displays the barcode variable name.	
	Position	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • X axis • Y axis 	Change the position of a selected barcode variable on a master page.	
	Size	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Width • Height 	Control the size of a barcode variable. Note: This property is not available for all barcode types.	
	Type	Choose from the available barcode types.	Set the barcode type to match a barcode variable contained in your data source file.	
	Bar Text	N/A	Displays the text displayed with the barcode.	
	Scale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • X axis • Y axis 	Change the scale of a barcode variable on the X and Y axis.	

Change a text variable angle

Change the angle of a text variable added to a variable based design.

- 1 Navigate to the page where you have placed a text variable.
- 2 Click on the text variable box in the central pane to select it.
Once selected, a red box with a line extending from the top will surround the variable in the central pane.
- 3 Move your cursor to the top of the red line that extends from the top of the selection box until the cursor turns into a cross.
- 4 Click and hold, then drag the cursor until the text variable is at your desired angle.

Change an image angle

Change the orientation of an image added to a variable based design.

- 1 Navigate to the page where you have placed an image variable.
- 2 Click on the image on the page to select it.
Once selected, a blue box with a line extending from the top will surround the variable in the central pane.
- 3 Move your cursor to the top of the blue line that extends from the top of the selection box until the cursor turns into a cross.
- 4 Click and hold, then drag the cursor until the image variable is in the desired orientation.

Change a barcode orientation

Change the orientation of a barcode added to a variable based design.

- 1 Navigate to the page where you have placed a barcode variable.
- 2 Click on the barcode on the page to select it.
Once selected, a blue box with a line extending from the top will surround the variable in the central pane.
- 3 Move your cursor to the top of the blue line that extends from the top of the selection box until the cursor turns into a cross.
- 4 Click and hold, then drag the cursor until the barcode is in the desired orientation.

Note: The barcode will only rotate in 90 degree increments.

- 5 To reduce the size of the barcode, change the Size values.
- 6 To increase the scale of the barcode, increase the Scale values.

Arrange variables









In a variable data document design, use the arrange variables buttons to automatically arrange a group of two or more variables within a selected area.

1 Open or create a variable data document design.

Note: For the Arrange features to be available there must be two or more variables on a single master page.


2 Select an area by clicking on the master page and dragging the cursor until the box is the desired size. The variables contained within the area defined by the box will all be selected.

3 Click the appropriate arrange button.

- Distribute Horizontally ()-evenly distributes the selected variable boxes horizontally within the selected area.
- Distribute Vertically ()-evenly distributes the selected variable boxes vertically within the selected area.
- Align Left ()- aligns the selected variable boxes to the left edge of the selected area.
- Align Center(vertical) ()- aligns the selected variable boxes to the vertical center of the selected area.
- Align Right ()- aligns the selected variable boxes to the right edge of the selected area.
- Align Top ()- aligns the selected variable boxes to the top edge of the selected area.
- Align Center(horizontal) ()- aligns the selected variable boxes to the horizontal center of the selected area.
- Align Bottom ()- aligns the selected variable boxes to the bottom edge of the selected area.

Float and dock the properties pane


1 Click Undock Properties () to float the properties pane.

2 Click Dock Properties () to dock the properties pane to the right side of the screen.

Delete a variable field


Delete a variable field from a page in a variable data document design.

1 Open a variable data document design.

- 2 Use the navigation bar to navigate to the page where you want to delete the variable.
- 3 On the page, click on the variable field you want to delete.
- 4 Do one of the following:
 - Click Delete (),
 - Press the Delete key, or
 - Right-click and select Delete.

Clone a variable field


Clone a variable field from a page in a variable data document design.

- 1 Open a variable data document design.
- 2 Use the navigation bar to navigate to the page where you want to clone the variable.
- 3 On the page, click on the variable field you want to clone.
- 4 Do one of the following:
 - Click Clone (),
 - Right-click and select Clone.

Preview variable based design

Examine the results of combining variables with a master document in the variable data document workflow before you print.



- 1 Create or open a variable data document design.
- 2 Click Preview.
- 3 Use the control bar at the bottom of the Preview pane to navigate through the pages of the variable based design by page.

Press on the  button and drag to move the control bar.

- 4 Select a record in the left pane to preview the design with that record.

Note: Use the Filters located in the left pane to filter record search results. Filter by Longest and Shortest record to ensure all variables display correctly.

- 5 Examine the preview.

Click  to zoom in and  to zoom out.



Save a design

- 1 Click Save.
- 2 Choose a location for the file.
- 3 Enter a name for the file.
- 4 Select a file type.
- 5 Click Save.



Send a design to a Fiery server

Send your design to a Fiery server to print.

Keep in mind the following.

- You need the **Server Address**, the **Username**, and the **Password** of the Fiery server the first time you send a design to that Fiery server. The administrator user name for Fiery is **Admin**, and the administrator password is required.
 - Editing should be complete.
- 1** Click Send to Fiery Server.
 - 2** Select an existing Fiery server or click New to add a Fiery server.
 - 3** Enter the Server Address, Username, and Password for the Fiery server.
 - 4** Click Login.
 - 5** Optional: Select an appropriate setting from the Settings dropdown.
 - 6** Click Process and Hold, or use the dropdown to select a different job action for the Fiery server. Choose from the following job actions.
 - Process and Hold processes the file and places it in the Held queue.
 - Hold places the file in the Held queue.
 - Print prints the file.
 - Print and Hold prints the file and places it in the Held queue.

