VIP PDF-Reader

(for Visually Impaired People)

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1. Introduction

The VIP PDF-Reader (**VIP** stands for **v**isually **i**mpaired **p**eople) allows accessible PDF documents to be viewed as flowing text. It has a range of settings for displaying PDF documents and guarantees that people with restricted vision or learning disabilities and older people with sight problems can read the text easily.

1.1. Accessible PDF documents

Accessible PDF documents contain tags. These tags are what make the document accessible, by providing structural information which enables assistive technologies such as the VIP PDF-Reader for people with visual impairments or screen readers for blind people:

– to identify specific text elements, for example headings, lists, images and tables
– to read out the content in the correct sequence

Many authoring systems, including Word, InDesign and OpenOffice, can create PDF documents with tags.

2. Installing and uninstalling the VIP PDF-Reader

2.1. System requirements

The system requirements are as follows:

– Microsoft Windows XP or later
– Apple Mac OS X Snow Leopard or later
– Ubuntu Linux 10.04 or later, or other equivalent Linux distributions

2.2. Installing the software

No administrator rights are needed to install the software.

You can download the VIP PDF-Reader from the www.szb.ch website.

For example, if you want to download the English version of the VIP PDF-Reader for Windows:

1) Download the ZIP file in the language you want, for example "V*IP_PDF-Reader-english.zip*".
2) Extract the files from the ZIP file you have downloaded to the "*VIP folder*" of your choice.
3) If you have downloaded the English version of the VIP PDF-Reader, you can start the program by double-clicking on the file "*VIP_Reader_english.exe*".

2.3. Uninstalling the software

To uninstall the VIP PDF-Reader, simply delete the "VIP folder" where you have put the files.

3. Start-up window

Le VIP PDF Reader se compose en principe de deux vues : de l'écran d'accueil et du lecteur The VIP PDF-Reader has two views: the start-up window and the reader itself, where you can display PDF documents.
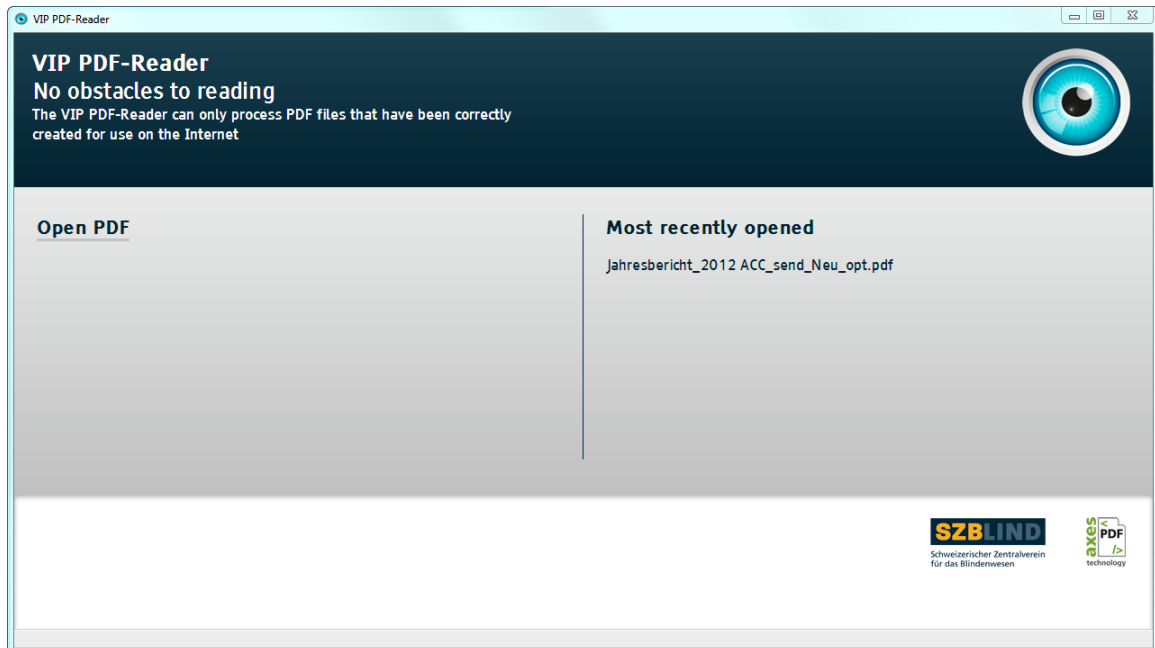
Figure 1: Start-up window

The start-up window is the starting point for using the application and provides two ways of opening PDF files.

–   Drag the file from the file manager program into the start-up window.
–   Click on the button under the logo to open a dialog box where you can select the file you want to open.

4.   Document view

When you open a file, the document view window appears. If the file you have opened is very large or contains a lot of text and has more than 100 pages, it can take several seconds for the content to be displayed.
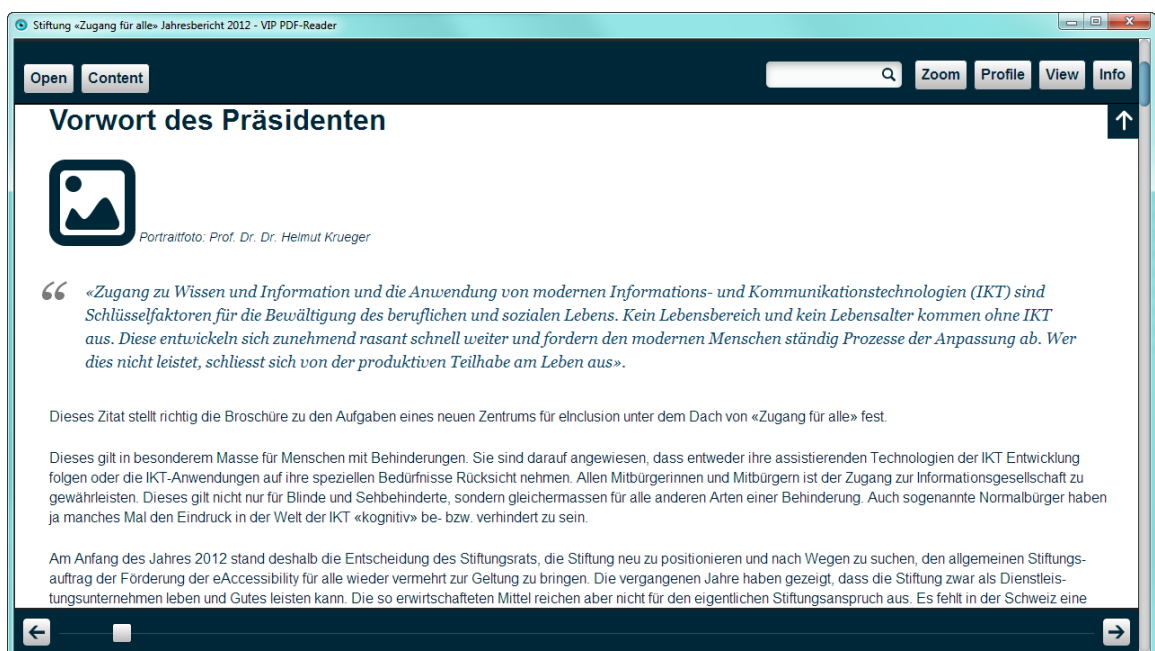

Figure 2: Document view

4.1. Tables and images

To open a table or image, click on the table or image icon. The table or image will appear in a separate window in front of the document window. To close this window, click on the Close button or press the `<ESC>` key.

4.1.1. Zooming into a table

Here is an example of a table icon.

Figure 3: Table icons

Here is an example of a table which has been opened and zoomed.

Figure 4: An open table

In the table view, the header row is displayed at the top or on the left and is fixed in position in a similar way to Excel files, so that it is always visible when the table is being read.

4.1.2. Zooming into images

Here is an example of an image icon.

Figure 5: Image icons

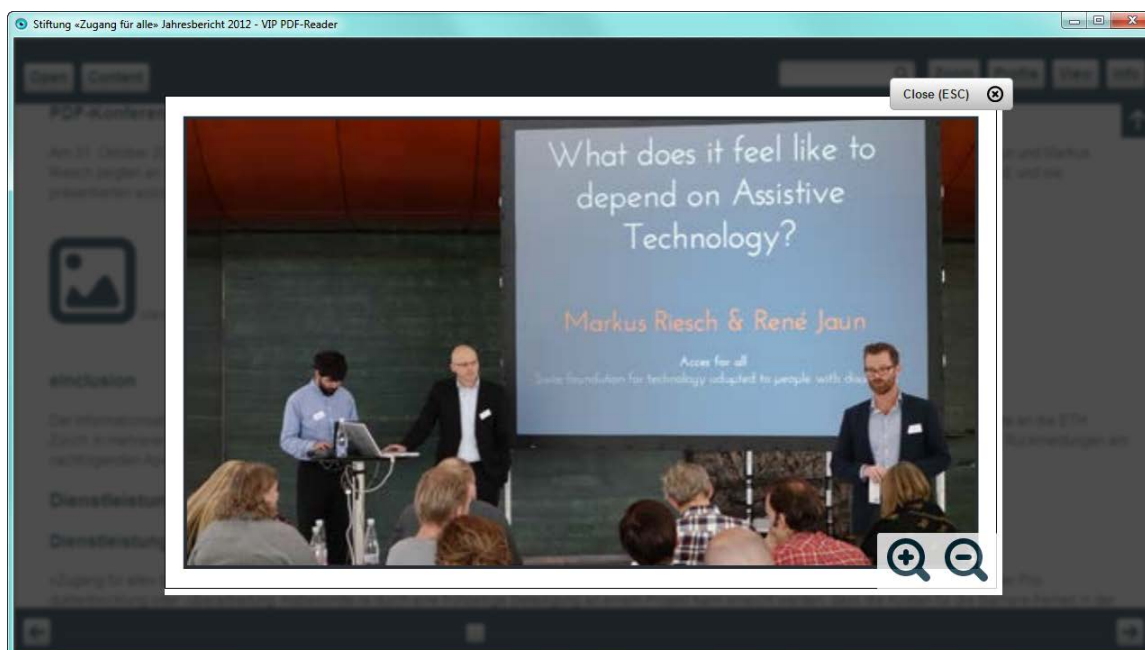Here is an example of an image which has been opened and zoomed.

Figure 6: An open image

The image view has two buttons for zooming in and out of the images. You can access these buttons and the Close button from the keyboard using the `<TAB>` and `<SHIFT>` + `<TAB>` keys as normal.

5.   Navigating in the document

To navigate in the document, use the arrow keys and the mouse wheel. You can scroll up and down with the ↑ (up arrow) and ↓ (down arrow) keys or the mouse wheel in the same way as in a web browser. To make books easier to read, you can use the ← (left arrow) and → (right arrow) keys to go to the previous or next page, so that the bottom line moves to the top of the window. After you have opened the document, the focus is in the toolbar, if you are using the keyboard. To navigate in the document, simply press `<ALT>` + ↓ (down arrow).

6.   Overview of the user interface

6.1.   Toolbar with buttons

By clicking on a button (with the exception of the Open button) you will open a dialog box. To close the dialog box, click anywhere outside the dialog box or press the `<ESC>` key.

If you are using the keyboard, press `<CTRL>` + ↑ (up arrow) to move to the toolbar. There you can navigate through the buttons using the ← (left arrow) and → (right arrow) keys.

Press the `<ENTER>` key to open the dialog box for the button and then use the ↑ (up arrow) and ↓ (down arrow) keys to select items in the dialog box.
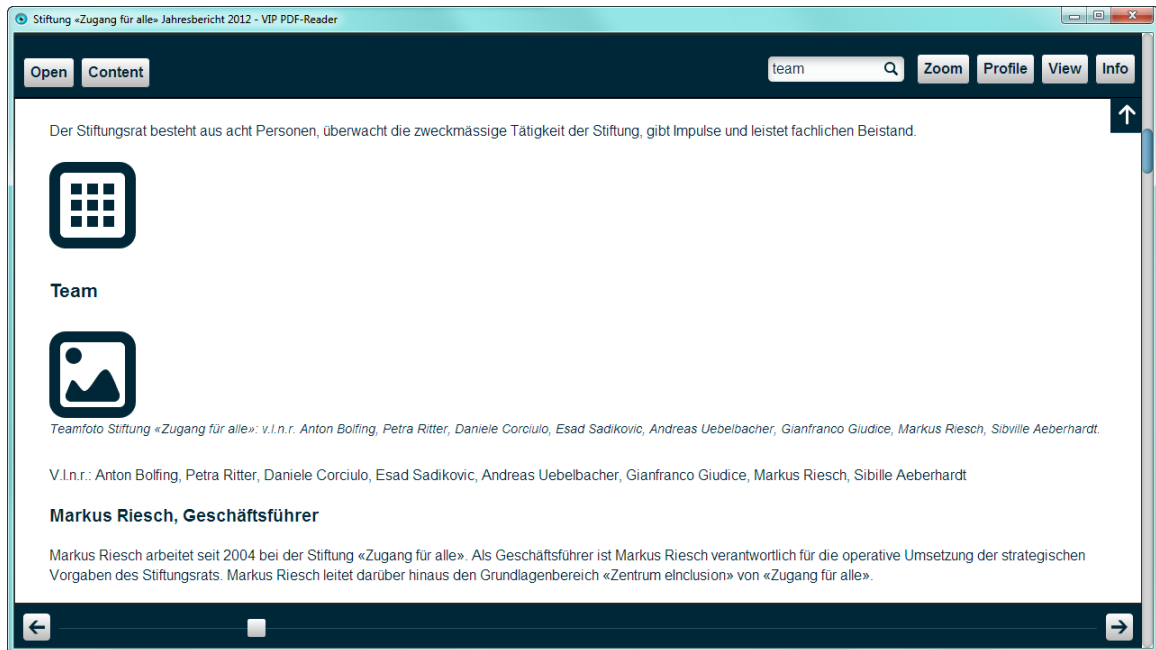
Figure 7: Toolbar with buttons

Table 1: Buttons Toolbar

Buttons	Description
Open	Opens a new document and closes the previous one
Content	Moves to a chapter in the document
Search	Searches for text in the document
Zoom	Zooms into or out of the document
Profile	Saves the current settings or restores previous settings
View	Sets up the VIP PDF-Reader to meet all the user's requirements
Info	Displays information about the application and how to use it

6.2. Profile dialog box

You can save settings in a profile and restore them at a later date. To the left of the name are the foreground and background colours for this profile. Profiles also include settings for the font, the alignment and the line, word and character spacing.

The five existing default profiles are designed for specific target groups to make it as easy as possible for them to use the VIP PDF-Reader.
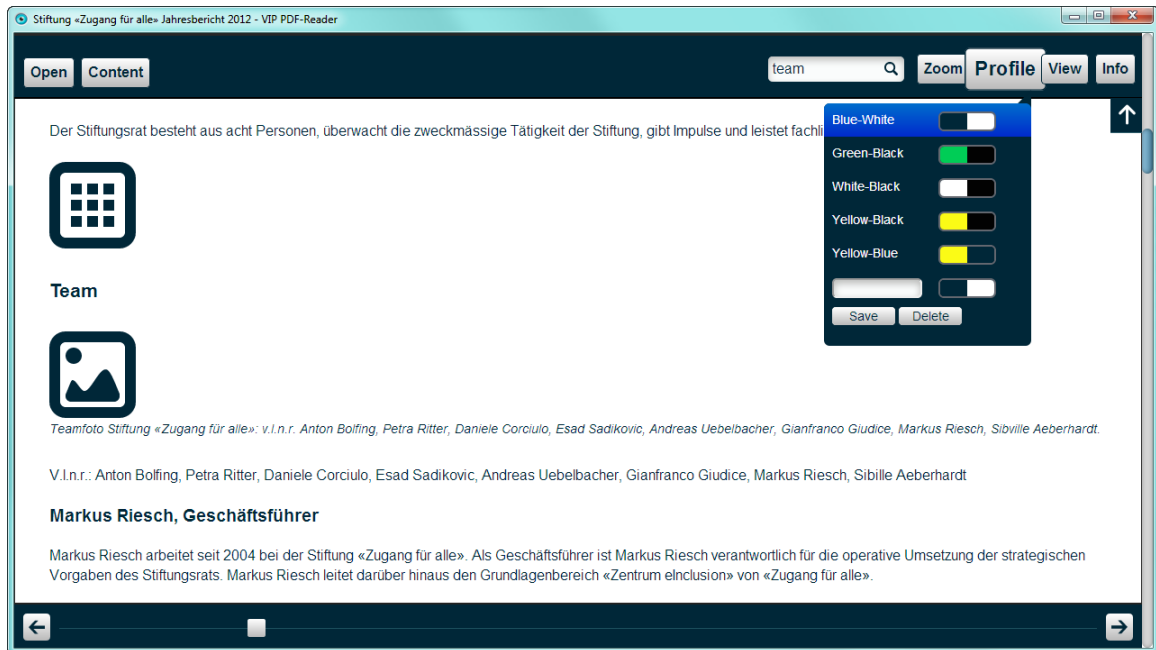
Figure 8: Default Blue-White profile selected

When you change one of these settings, the bottom field becomes active and you can save the new settings, after you have entered a name for the profile in the input field.

Click on the Delete button to display buttons next to the profiles which allow you to delete them.

6.3.   View dialog box

Using the ↑ (up arrow) and ↓ (down arrow) keys on the keyboard you can move between the input fields. By pressing the ← (right arrow) and → (left arrow) keys in an input field, you can switch between the different values.
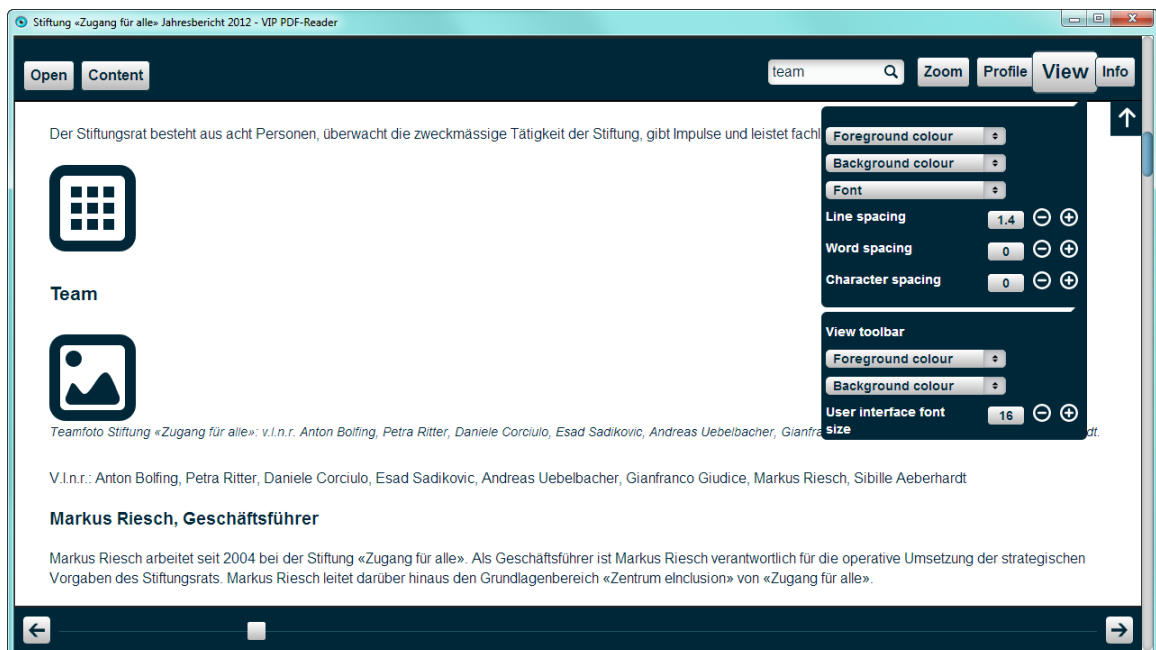

Figure 9: Entering personal settings

Table 2: View dialog box

Buttons	Description
Foreground	The foreground and font colour in the document
Background	The background colour in the document
Font	The global font (in the document and the toolbar)
Alignment	The alignment of the document
Line spacing	The line spacing relative to the font size (the default is 1.4)
Word spacing	The word spacing in pixels in addition to the default spacing of the font
Character spacing	Character spacing in pixels in addition to the default spacing of the font
Foreground of toolbar	The foreground and font colour of the toolbar
Background of toolbar	The background colour of the toolbar
User interface font size	The font size of the user interface which enlarges the entire toolbar

7. FAQ

7.1. The document is not accessible

I have received the error message "This document cannot be displayed." What should I do?

As a user:

Unfortunately, many PDF files are still exported or created in a non-accessible way. The PDF file you have selected has no tag tree. This means that the images, text, tables, headings etc. have not been tagged as such. Therefore, the VIP PDF-Reader cannot extract meaningful information from the PDF document, which is why it has displayed this error message. Please contact the creator of the PDF file.

As a publisher:

Check your software settings for options with structural tags and accessibility when you export a PDF document. However, only in a very few cases will this be enough to create a high-quality, well-tagged PDF file. We recommend that you become more familiar with the subject or consult an expert.

7.2.   The document is not legible

The document is not legible. Images are missing, tables cannot be read or there are other errors in the presentation of the document. What should I do?

Many programs can create a tag tree, but do not do so correctly. This can mean that the entire document cannot be read. The VIP PDF-Reader can only display text in the format that is provided by the PDF file. There is no way of checking whether this information is correct.

The only option is to read the PDF file in a standard PDF reader and to complain to the creator of the document.

8.   Keyboard shortcuts

If you press the `<?>` key within the VIP PDF-Reader, you can display an overview of all the keyboard shortcuts.

8.1.   Global navigation

Table 3: Global navigation

Keyboard shortcut	Description
`<ALT>` ↑	Moves to the toolbar
`<ALT>` ↓	Moves to the document
+	Zooms into the document
-	Zooms out of the document
`<TAB>`	Moves to the next button
/	Moves to the Search input field
?	Displays an overview of all the keyboard shortcuts

8.2.   Navigating in the toolbar

Table 4: Navigating in the toolbar

Keyboard shortcut	Description
↑ , ↓ , ← or →	Navigates through the toolbar
`<ENTER>`	Chooses an option
`<ESC>`	Closes the toolbar

8.3.   Navigating in the document

Table 5: Navigating in the document

Keyboard shortcut	Description
↑ or ↓	Scrolls up and down
← or →	Moves to the previous or next page
`<TAB>`	Moves to the next table, image or link
`<ESC>`	Closes the image or the table
+ or -	Zooms into or out of the current image

8.4.   Navigating in the settings

Table 6: Navigating in the settings

Keyboard shortcut	Description
↑ or ↓	Moves to the next or previous input field
← or →	Activates the next or previous selection

8.5.   Navigating in tables

Table 7: Navigating in tables

Keyboard shortcut	Description
`<SHIFT>` ↑ or ↓	Moves the header row to the top of the table
`<SHIFT>` ← or →	Moves the header row to the left of the table
↑ or ↓	Scrolls up and down
← or →	Scrolls left and right

9.   About the VIP PDF-Reader

The VIP PDF-Reader has been developed on behalf of the Swiss National Association of and for the Blind (SNAB). Access for All, the Swiss foundation for accessible technology use, was involved in the project as the development partner and the software developer was xyMedia. The logo and the graphical user interface were designed by the agency sag's. The initial version of the VIP PDF-Reader has been supported by the Swiss Bureau for Equality of People with Disabilities FBED and by the Emmy Hedinger Foundation.

We would like to thank the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) for permission to use the Tiresias font that it has developed in the VIP PDF-Reader.

9.1.   Addresses

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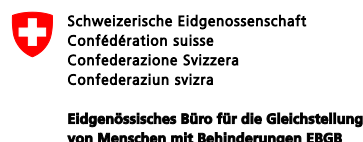E-mail: services@xymedia.ch
Web: www.xymedia.ch

Kindly supported by:

–   The Bureau for Equality of People
    with Disabilities FBED

–   The Emmy Hedinger Foundation

10.   Support and Feedback

Support and further information are available from:
www.szb.ch

Please send error reports and suggestions for improvements directly to:
information@szb.ch

11. Donation

If you like using the VIP PDF-Reader and find it useful, we would be happy to receive a voluntary donation. You will be helping to develop and improve the tool even further.

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