DesignMerge® Pro vs FusionPro – Product Comparison

Producing VDP with FusionPro (FP) is fundamentally different than with DesignMerge Pro because FP does not work directly with Adobe InDesign. The process is basically that a) you save the fixed/static portion of your document as a PDF file, then b) you use the FP desktop tool to create variables that are placed "on top of" the PDF. Conditional logic (Rules) can be specified through the use of a hand-coded JavaScript interface. When the merge process begins, the product takes the incoming data, merges it, and produces a print stream that emits the variable portion of the piece with the background PDF. The final composite output is then sent to the printer.

Don't be confused - there is a plug-in component that is offered by FP, but it is designed only to assist the end user in creating proprietary FP templates. Once an Adobe InDesign document is tagged, it must then be exported to a format that only the FP application understands. In the course of doing this, many of the Adobe InDesign features are simply lost, and more advanced editing (especially for conditional logic, which is hand-coded using the JavaScript language) must be performed inside of the FP application.

Because of this approach and the limitations of the FP standalone application, many of the composition features available in Adobe InDesign are simply not supported in FP. Examples include kerning & letterspacing, tabular composition, runarounds, anchored boxes, transparency, multi-page documents, drop-caps, type on a curve, Pantone color support, and many other features. DesignMerge has no such restriction – you just select any element in the document, and *Make it Variable™*. If you already know how to use Adobe InDesign, then you already know how to use DesignMerge software!

Another significant difference between FP and DesignMerge is that FP uses it's own composition engine to produce the variable data. This means that although the static portion of the document (which you saved as a PDF) looks correct, the variable portion does not match up with the static portion. The only workaround? You must recreate the entire paragraph or story, containing both static and variable text, using the FP application. Whew!

Beyond those differences, consideration must be given to the overall feature set of the two products. FP has no interactive Rules building and testing capability, and provides nothing like the DesignMerge Pro CopyFit (automatic copy-fitting) or GroupPicture (variable groups and layouts) features. Conditional logic is offered, but requires the knowledge of the JavaScript programming language. DesignMerge Pro on the other hand features a totally menu-driven Rules engine that requires no programming skills at all, and provides Adobe InDesign specific features such as variable Layers and Master Pages.

More advanced features such as the DesignMerge Pro longest and shortest line test, full preflight reporting, and overset text checking are critical to any successful VDP application. And the DesignMerge Pro software API allows you to control every aspect of the product, which is fantastic for customization projects, and our full integration with Enfocus Switch can completely streamline just about any VDP process.

The following product comparison chart lists some of the major features included with your purchase of DesignMerge Pro, and compares them to those offered by FP. If you have any questions on the available features, please contact your DesignMerge representative, or visit **www.designmerge.com** for more information.

DesignMerge® Pro vs FusionPro – Product Comparison Chart

Capability	DesignMerge®	FP
Works directly with Adobe InDesign	√	(Template Transfer Only)
Cross-platform with full Macintosh & Windows support	√	√
Supports Variable Text, Images and Articles (multi-paragraph, styled text)	√	(No Article Support)
Includes support for PDF/VT and PPML output formats	√	√
Variable type-on-a-curve, runaround, and transparency support	√	
Supports Pantone and custom colors for text, style sheets, and frames	√	
Menu-driven conditional logic support (if/then/else) with custom action support	√	(Requires JavaScript)
Automatic copy-fitting of overset or underset frames (MPS CopyFit)	√	
Built-in consecutive numbering features	√	
Supports job "chunking" and print optimizations for greater efficiency	√	
Fully variable Layers, Layouts & Master Pages	√	
Multiple-up imposition with support for "Cut & Stack" output in document	√	
Supports continuous text flows across multiple pages	√	
Variable Data alignment and styling precisely matches the Static Data	√	(Variable Does Not Match)
Interactive testing features for conditional Rules and Actions	√	
Longest Line, Shortest Line and Overset Text checking	√	
Data Preflight features to check for missing variable pictures and Articles	√	
External Adobe InDesign documents as variable assets (MPS GroupPicture)	√	
Multiple user-defined global search paths for variable assets	√	
Full scripting API available for automation and custom actions	√	
Adobe InDesign Server support for Web-To-Print and automated workflows	√	
VDP packaging feature to collect all variable assets for a VDP job	√	
Integration with Enfocus Switch and other workflow software products	√	
Create individual PDF files for every data record with full filename control	√	
Font-based 2D bar code support for QR Code, Data Matrix, and PDF417	√	(Graphic-Based = Slow)
USA Development, Sales, and Technical Support (no outsourcing)	100%	(Outsourced)