

Publishing Anonymously

By IP.com



A number of disclosure tactics require anonymous publication. To this end, the IP.com Publication Process allows you to publish without providing authorship information. During the publication process you will be given the opportunity to elect to publish with "full authorship" or to publish with "no authorship information." You should select "no authorship information" if you wish to publish anonymously.

If you select "no authorship information," you will not be offered the option of including information on related persons (names, addresses, etc.) nor a copyright statement. In addition to the fact that no identifying information will be collected about you, your document will be renamed to a generic name, your document will be rendered to an Adobe PDF file to assure it contains no hidden information, and the original of your document will not be included in the final publication.

If you want to publish anonymously but prefer not to be bothered with a lot of technical detail and instructions, use the "Quick Start Anonymous Publication Method" described below, and skip the rest of this document.

If you wish to publish anonymously, and would like to be able to take full advantage of the flexibility of the IP.com publication process, you should read and understand this entire document.

Quick Start Anonymous Publication Method

If you want to publish anonymously but don't want to be bothered with a lot of technical instructions, this is the method for you. Just follow these easy steps and you will publish anonymously and quickly.

- Prepare your publication and save it as a Microsoft Word document (.doc file). All tables, pictures, figures, diagrams, etc. that you wish to include with the publication should be included in the actual Word document itself.
- Print out and proof-read your document carefully to make sure you did not inadvertently include information that accidentally gives away your identity, such as logos, items in headers, footers, etc. The publishing process will not remove such items if you include them in your document.
- Follow the steps in the publication process, and provide the requested information, including title, abstract, etc. Select "no authorship information" when given the option. Provide any optional information that you wish, in the appropriate fields in the publication process, such as classification, related documents, etc.
- In the last step, upload your Microsoft Word document that you prepared in step 1 (above).

The Word document will be automatically uploaded and converted into a pdf file. This pdf file will be published instead of the document. You should not upload any attachments.

Advanced Anonymous Publication Methods and Considerations

Certain document types, such as Microsoft Word, may contain hidden identifying information. Thus, a document that contains no identifying information when printed or viewed on the computer screen, may still contain hidden identifying information such as author, company name, name of last editor, etc. To see this hidden information, try opening the file in a text editor, such as Windows Notepad (found under "Start/Programs/Accessories/Notepad" on most Windows computers). You can then peruse the document for undesired identifying information. Note that many computer files viewed with a text editor will contain a lot of gibberish. Nevertheless, any hidden identifying items should be visible in plain text, somewhere among all of the gibberish. We recommend that you do not try to remove the undesired information using the text editor, since this will likely result in the file becoming unrecognizable by the original program in which it was created. In most cases, a Microsoft Word document (*.doc) will contain such hidden identifying information. The "no authorship information" option allows anonymous publication without having to worry about such hidden information.

When you select that option, 1) no information about you is collected; 2) your document is renamed to a generic name; 3) your document is rendered to an Adobe PDF file to assure it contains no hidden information; and 4) the original of your document is not included in the final publication. Be sure to carefully scrutinize your text for any information that may give away your identity. IP.com is not responsible for any information disclosed by or contained in your document or its attachments. IP.com recommends that for a no-authorship publication you use a single primary file which contains your text and illustrations (such as a Microsoft Word or RTF file) and that you do NOT use an attachment file. Remember that IP.com is not responsible for any file content.

Advanced Use of the PDF Rendering Option

The pdf option described above in the "Quick Start Anonymous Publication Method" converts a word document into a pdf file, thereby removing all hidden information. The "render as pdf" option can actually be applied to any of the document types that are accepted for primary documents - HTML, txt, rtf, wpd, doc, and ppt. You may also include attachments (any file type is acceptable as an attachment) when using this option, but you must be sure to check the attachment files for undesired hidden information, since only the primary document, not the attachment, will be rendered as a pdf. The risk of accidentally including hidden information is why IP.com does not recommend including an attachment with anonymous publications.

If you wish to include an attachment, you must be sure to remove/avoid hidden identifying information. Here are some methods to do that.

Converting a Word Document to a Rich Text File to Remove Hidden Identifying Information

This is an excellent method (available in Windows) that will retain much formatting from the original document, without including any hidden identifying information. In most

cases, pictures, tables, etc. can be included without significant loss of the original formatting.

This procedure starts with a Word document and creates a rich text file that has no hidden identifying information.

1. Open the Word document with Microsoft Word.
2. Access the "File/Save As" dialog, change the "Save As type" field to "Rich Text Format" using the pull-down, and click the Save button.
3. Close Microsoft Word.
4. Open the WordPad application; WordPad is generally accessible from the "Start/Programs/Accessories" system menu.
5. Access "File/Open" and open the RTF file previously created with Microsoft Word.
6. Access "File/Save" to save the document.
7. Close WordPad.
8. The RTF file you just created will have your filename with an .rtf suffix. Be sure to publish this rather than the original .doc file.

The resulting RTF file should now be free of hidden identifying information. If you need to make changes to the RTF file, be sure to open it in and save it from WordPad rather than Microsoft Word to avoid reintroducing hidden identifying information. (If you double click on the RTF file, it will open in Word by default. So you must open it directly from within WordPad if you plan to save changes.)

Text File

Publishing in "Text Only" (.txt) format, which can be done using Microsoft Word or any text editor, will make it easier to avoid undesired hidden identifiers. However, use of "Text Only" file formats will also remove any embedded non-text items (such as graphics) and most formatting. Therefore, this method will generally not be useful for attachments.

HTML File

Alternatively, to retain much of the original formatting, consider saving the document as HTML, being sure to check the final document with a text editor and remove any identifying information. If you wish to publish the in "HTML" format, but need to include non-text elements, consider using another method (check back soon for instructions on how to include non-text elements in an HTML document).

Other File Formats

Many other file formats are appropriate for attachments, including .gif, .jpg, .tif, etc. To be on the safe side, it is prudent to examine all files for hidden identifying information in a text editor, as described above.