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This PDF document was created by a demonstration version of Prince. The demonstration version is fully functional but includes this promotional page which we ask you not to remove. You can use the demonstration version for demonstration purposes and for academic dissertations. Prince is a powerful formatter that converts XML into PDF documents. Prince can read many XML formats, including XHTML and SVG. Prince formats documents according to style sheets written in CSS. Prince has been used to publish books, brochures, posters, letters and academic papers. Prince is also suitable for generating reports, invoices and other dynamic documents on demand.



Markdown2PDF with Prince XML and TextMate

I've been wanting a decent way to convert [Markdown](#)-formatted text to a nice, printable PDF on our company letterhead forever. I even tried rolling my own with some InDesign scripting, but quickly gave up when I realized that its XML support is below dismal.

Enter [Prince](#). It takes html and css and turns it into a PDF. And it works. No fuss.

Now, if only I could set up my editor to export to PDF and preview it in a new window, I'd be on easy street. Thankfully, TextMate makes that a snap with a bit of bash voodoo:

```
# temporary file for the output xml
tmp_xml="/tmp/${TM_FILENAME%.*}.xml"

# final pdf destination
dest=${TM_FILEPATH%.*}.pdf

# HTML header
cat > $tmp_xml <<EOD
<!DOCTYPE html PUBLIC "-//W3C//DTD XHTML 1.0 Transitional//EN"
    "http://www.w3.org/TR/xhtml1/DTD/xhtml1-transitional.dtd">
<html xmlns="http://www.w3.org/1999/xhtml">
<head>
    <title></title>
</head>
<body>
<div id="header">
    
</div>
<div id="footer">
    <div>
        
    </div>
    <div class="address">info@incomumdesign.com<br />www.incomumdesign.com</div>
    <div class="address">Rua Emilio Berla, n° 180<br />Copacabana, RJ 22061-060</div>
    <div class="address">+55 (21) 9997-0593<br />+55 (21) 9997-0594</div>
```



```
</div>
EOD

# this is the body of the document
markdown $TM_FILEPATH >> $tmp_xml

# close up the tags
cat >> $tmp_xml <<EOD
</body>
</html>
EOD

# convert temp xml to pdf
prince -s /usr/local/prince/stylesheets/INCOMUM_letterhead_en_a4.css $tmp_xml $dest

# remove temp files
rm $tmp_xml

# show result as HTML
echo "<meta http-equiv='refresh' content='0; tm-file://$dest'"
```

Here's the rundown:

1. Designate a temporary xml file to hold the final xml document, and set the final pdf's path, using a [neat bash trick](#) to preserve the file's basename.
2. Write the doctype, head information, etc. as well as the header and footer (see [Prince's documentation](#) for more info).
3. Run markdown on the document's texts.
4. Close up the tags.
5. Run the xml through prince with our own style sheet.
6. Clean up and print out a browser redirect to open the pdf.

You'll need [Schubert's PDF Plugin](#) to view PDFs with Safari (and consequently TextMate).