Adobe

Adobe Competitive Intelligence — Execution Briefs

Scope: PLG "Now" motions across Acrobat · Express · Remove Background

Date: May 2026 **Classification:** Adobe Internal — Confidential

> Each brief translates one PLG motion from the acquisition playbooks into a ready-to-ship execution package: landing page copy, in-product or email copy, A/B test hypothesis, and the single metric that confirms it's working. Hand directly to a copywriter, engineer, or PM sprint.

BRIEF 1 — "PDF EDITOR FREE TRIAL" SEO LANDING PAGE

Motion from playbook: Build a dedicated landing page at acrobat.adobe.com/free-trial targeting "PDF editor free" (200K/mo searches). Adobe is invisible for this keyword; Foxit ranks #1 with a no-credit-card trial page.

Competitor countered: Foxit (ranks #1–2 for this keyword, no CC required on trial)

Landing Page Brief

URL: `acrobat.adobe.com/free-trial`

Page title (for SEO + GEO): `Try Adobe Acrobat Free – No Credit Card Required`

Meta description: `Start your free 7-day Acrobat Pro trial. Edit, sign, compress, and share PDFs. No credit card needed. Cancel anytime.`

H1: `The world's most trusted PDF editor. Free for 7 days.`

Hero subheadline: `Edit, sign, compress, and redact PDFs. No credit card. No commitment. Just Acrobat.`

Primary CTA button: `Start Free Trial – No Credit Card`

Trust line below CTA: `7-day full access · Cancel anytime · No ETF on trial`

3 proof points (below fold):

- `Trusted by 500M+ users worldwide`
- `Acrobat Sign included – send documents for signature free during trial`
- `Rated 4.6/5 on G2 across 3,000+ reviews`

Pricing comparison table on page:

	Adobe Acrobat	Foxit	UPDF
Free trial	**7 days, full access**	**14 days**	**14 days**
Credit card for trial	No	No	No
eSign included	✅	Add-on	❌
AI Assistant	✅	Limited	Basic
Annual price	$239.88	$159.99	$29.99

In-Product / Retargeting Email

Subject line A: `You haven't tried Acrobat yet – here's 7 free days, no card needed`

Subject line B: `Foxit is $80 cheaper. Here's why Acrobat users don't switch.`

Email body (3 sentences):

> Adobe Acrobat Pro is free for 7 days — no credit card, no commitment. During your trial you get full access to PDF editing, Acrobat Sign (send unlimited signature requests), AI document summarization, and 100GB cloud storage. Start your trial in 30 seconds at acrobat.adobe.com/free-trial.

CTA: `Start Free Trial`

A/B Test Hypothesis

Control: Current trial page (requires CC, generic headline)

Variant: New page with "No Credit Card" in H1 and above the fold, and an explicit "vs Foxit" pricing table

Hypothesis: Removing CC requirement + surfacing competitor price comparison will increase trial starts by 40%+ for users arriving via non-branded PDF editor searches

Primary metric: Trial starts from non-branded organic search

Secondary metric: Trial-to-paid conversion rate (to ensure no quality degradation)

Run time: 4 weeks minimum, 10K+ visits per variant

Success Metric

Non-branded organic trial starts: **500/mo → 5,000/mo within 90 days**

BRIEF 2 — SIGNER-TO-TRIAL CTA ON ACROBAT SIGN EMAILS

Motion from playbook: 200M+ free signers receive Acrobat-signed documents monthly and see zero conversion prompt. Add a single CTA below the "document signed" confirmation.

Competitor countered: This is a free acquisition channel unique to Adobe — no competitor can replicate it.

In-Product Copy Brief

Placement: Below the green "You've signed [document name]" confirmation message, before the "Download a copy" button

Headline: `Want to send documents for signature?`

Body (1 sentence): `Adobe Acrobat lets you send, track, and manage unlimited signature requests – try it free for 7 days.`

CTA button: `Start Sending for Free`

Trust line: `No credit card · 7-day full trial · Used by 500M+ people`

Email Follow-Up (sent 24h after signing)

Subject: `You just signed a document with Adobe. Want to send one?`

Body:

> Yesterday you signed a document sent via Adobe Acrobat Sign. Thousands of businesses use Acrobat to send contracts, approvals, and agreements for signature every day — and you can too.

>

> Start a free 7-day trial. No credit card. Send your first document in under 5 minutes.

CTA: `Try Acrobat Free`

A/B Test Hypothesis

Control: No CTA on signer confirmation screen

Variant A: CTA below confirmation, before "Download a copy"

Variant B: CTA as a separate follow-up email 24h after signing

Hypothesis: Warm signers (already in an Acrobat workflow, highest trust moment) will convert to trials at 3–5× the rate of cold web visitors

Primary metric: Signer → trial start conversion rate

Run time: 2 weeks (high volume surface — 200M signers/month)

Success Metric

Signer-to-trial conversion: **0% → 3–5%**

At 1% of 200M monthly signers = **2M trial starts/month** — the single largest acquisition lever in this playbook

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BRIEF 3 — FTC NARRATIVE RECLAIM: PAID + ORGANIC CAMPAIGN

Motion from playbook: Prospects researching "Adobe Acrobat review" hit the FTC lawsuit story before they hit product content. Foxit runs ads on "Adobe Acrobat ETF" and "Adobe Acrobat cancel." Adobe cedes this traffic entirely.

Competitor countered: Foxit (actively running "no lock-in" ads on Adobe's brand problem keywords)

Blog Post Brief

URL: `blog.adobe.com/acrobat/our-subscription-terms-explained`

Title: `Adobe Acrobat Subscription Terms – Explained Plainly`

Target query: "Adobe Acrobat cancel subscription" (40K/mo), "Adobe Acrobat ETF" (15K/mo)

Structure:

1. What the annual plan includes and costs ($239.88/yr)
2. What happens if you cancel in year 1 (ETF — acknowledge it directly, explain why it exists)
3. What the month-to-month option costs ($22.99/mo, no ETF)
4. How to cancel (step-by-step, 3 steps, no phone call required)
5. What changed since the FTC case (process improvements)

Tone: Radically transparent. No legal hedging. First person ("we"). This page will be cited by AI assistants — clarity is more important than caution.

Paid Search Ad Copy

Ad 1 — Keyword: "adobe acrobat cancel"

Headline 1: `Cancel Adobe Acrobat Anytime`

Headline 2: `Month-to-Month Plan Available`

Headline 3: `No Long-Term Commitment Required`

Description: `Adobe Acrobat now offers a no-ETF monthly plan at $22.99/mo. Full PDF editing, eSign, AI Assistant. Start or switch today.`

Ad 2 — Keyword: "adobe acrobat alternative"

Headline 1: `Why Switch? Try Acrobat Free`

Headline 2: `Includes eSign + AI – Foxit Doesn't`

Headline 3: `7 Days Free, No Credit Card`

Description: `Before you switch, compare: Acrobat Sign, AI document chat, 100GB cloud. Foxit charges extra for eSign. Try Acrobat free for 7 days.`

Success Metric

"Adobe Acrobat alternative" search traffic landing on Adobe.com: **<5% → 30%**

BRIEF 4 — AI INTENT SEARCH FOR TEMPLATES

Motion from playbook: Replace keyword-only template search with natural language: "I need a LinkedIn post announcing a product launch in tech" → ranked templates + AI previews. Directly counters Canva's #1 acquisition advantage.

Competitor countered: Canva (ranks #1 for every design template keyword; their discoverability is the primary reason new users choose them)

Feature Copy Brief

Empty state headline (before search): `What are you making today?`

Search placeholder text: `Try "Instagram post for a coffee shop" or "pitch deck for a SaaS startup"`

Zero-results state: `We didn't find an exact match — here are 5 templates our AI thinks will work. Customize any of them.`

AI-matched template card label: `AI Pick · Based on your prompt`

Onboarding tooltip (first use): `Adobe Express understands what you're trying to make — not just keywords. Try describing your goal in plain English.`

Onboarding Card Copy (replaces blank canvas)

Headline: `What are you making?`

3 questions (shown as tap cards):

1. `Who's your audience?` → Social media · Business · Personal · Education
2. `What type of content?` → Social post · Presentation · Flyer · Video · Logo · Document
3. `What's the goal?` → Announce something · Promote a product · Share an update · Just exploring

After 3 taps: Show 5 template recommendations with "Start with this" CTA on each

Skip link: `Start with a blank canvas →`

A/B Test Hypothesis

Control: Current keyword search + blank canvas default

Variant: Natural language search + 3-question onboarding card

Hypothesis: Intent-matched templates reduce blank canvas drop-off and increase first-session export rate by 2×

Primary metric: First-session template selection rate (35% → 65%)

Secondary metric: Time-to-first-export (8–12 min → under 3 min)

Run time: 3 weeks, new users only

Success Metric

First-session creation completion: **28% → 55%**

BRIEF 5 — "PUBLISH TO ADOBE EXPRESS" IN PHOTOSHOP EXPORT

Motion from playbook: Add "Open in Adobe Express" to the Photoshop export dialog when a user selects JPG/PNG/PDF. One-click opens Express with file loaded, CC auth pre-linked.

Competitor countered: Canva (has no inbound surface from professional design tools; this converts the CC install base at $0 acquisition cost)

In-Product Copy Brief

Dialog button label: `Open in Adobe Express`

Tooltip on hover: `Continue editing in Express — add text, resize for social, or animate`

Post-export modal headline: `Take this further in Adobe Express`

Modal body: `Your file is ready to open in Express. Add text overlays, resize for any platform, or create a social media series — all in one click.`

Primary CTA: `Open in Express`

Secondary CTA: `Just download`

If user doesn't have Express activated:

Modal headline: `Your Creative Cloud plan includes Adobe Express`

Body: `You're already paying for it. Open your exported file in Express and unlock templates, AI tools, and brand kits — included in your CC subscription.`

CTA: `Activate Express Free`

Email (sent to CC users who export to JPG/PNG 3+ times/week but have never opened Express)

Subject: `You're exporting from Photoshop — here's what happens next in Express`

Body:

> You export files from Photoshop regularly. Adobe Express — included in your Creative Cloud plan — is where those files go next: resize for Instagram in one click, add animated text, build social series from a single design.

>

> You've never opened it. Here's a 60-second overview of what it can do with your Photoshop exports.

CTA: `See Express in 60 seconds`

Success Metric

CC monthly active → Express new account activation: **3% → 15%**

BRIEF 6 — "MADE WITH ADOBE EXPRESS" VIRAL SHARE LOOP

Motion from playbook: Every shared Express asset opens a branded URL with "Remix this in Adobe Express" CTA — replicating Canva's share loop that drives 60%+ of their new signups.

Competitor countered: Canva (their share loop is the #1 driver of their 260M user base; Express has no equivalent)

Share Page Copy Brief

Page URL pattern: `express.adobe.com/s/[share-id]`

Page headline (above the shared asset): `Made with Adobe Express`

Subheadline: `Free AI-powered design for everyone — remix this or start your own.`

Primary CTA (prominent, above asset): `Remix this design`

Secondary CTA (below asset): `Start your own in Express — free`

Social proof line: `Joined by 30M+ creators worldwide`

Opt-in toggle on export screen: `Share with "Made with Adobe Express" link`

Toggle label: `On: your design gets a shareable page · Off: standard download only`

A/B Test Hypothesis

Control: Standard download, no shareable URL

Variant A: Opt-in "Made with Express" share page

Variant B: Default-on share page with opt-out

Hypothesis: Default-on (Variant B) drives 3× more shares but may cause brand-safety concerns for professional users — run both and measure

Primary metric: Share → new account creation rate

Run time: 4 weeks

Success Metric

Share link → new signup: **0% → 5%**

Projected impact at scale: **500K+ new signups/month**

BRIEF 7 — DEDICATED REMOVE BACKGROUND SEO LANDING PAGE

Motion from playbook: Build adobe.com/express/feature/image/remove-background with an above-the-fold upload widget. remove.bg ranks #1 because their *entire homepage* is the product. Adobe has no equivalent URL.

Competitor countered: remove.bg (#1 rank), Canva (#3–4 rank) — both have dedicated, product-as-landing-page URLs

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Landing Page Brief

URL: `adobe.com/express/feature/image/remove-background`

Page title: `Remove Image Background Free — Unlimited | Adobe Express`

Meta description: `Remove backgrounds from any image instantly — free, unlimited, no sign-up required for your first image. Better quality than remove.bg. Try Adobe Express.`

H1: `Remove Background Free — Unlimited`

Hero subheadline: `No sign-up for your first image. Unlimited free after that. Better results on hair, fur, and complex edges than any other tool.`

Above-the-fold UI: Full-width upload widget — drag & drop or "Choose image" button. No navigation, no feature list above the fold. Product IS the CTA.

After removal — upsell prompt:

Headline: `Replace this background with AI`

Body: `Generate a professional studio background, a lifestyle scene, or a custom setting in seconds — using Adobe Firefly.`

CTA: `Try AI Background Replacement`

Proof point strip (below upload):

- `9.7/10 image quality on G2 — highest rated background remover`
- `$0/image vs remove.bg's $0.195`
- `Unlimited free — no credits, no monthly limit`

Competitor comparison table:

	Adobe Express	remove.bg	Canva
Free images/month	**Unlimited**	**1 preview**	**10**
Price per image (paid)	**$0.00**	$0.195	~$0.05
AI background replacement	✅ **Firefly**	❌	❌
Image quality (G2)	**9.7 / 10**	9.4 / 10	8.8 / 10

Paid Search Ad Copy

Ad — Keyword: "remove background free"

Headline 1: `Remove Background Free — Unlimited`

Headline 2: `Better Than remove.bg · $0/Image`

Headline 3: `No Sign-Up for First Image`

Description: `Adobe Express removes backgrounds from unlimited images free. 9.7/10 quality on G2. replace.bg charges $0.195/image — Adobe charges nothing.`

Success Metric

SEO rank for "remove background": **#6 → #1–2 within 60 days**

Landing page → new signup: **8% → 18%**

BRIEF 8 — E-COMMERCE LANDING PAGE (SHOPIFY FOCUS)

Motion from playbook: Build adobe.com/express/for/ecommerce targeting Shopify sellers. 10M+ Shopify stores need background removal for product photos. PhotoRoom owns this segment with a dedicated Shopify app; Adobe has no presence.

Competitor countered: PhotoRoom (dedicated Shopify app, 1,000+ reviews, owns "background remover shopify" keyword)

Landing Page Brief

URL: `adobe.com/express/for/ecommerce`

H1: `Professional product photos for your store — $0`

Subheadline: `Remove backgrounds from unlimited product images free. Better quality than PhotoRoom. No per-image fees. Ever.`

Savings calculator copy:

`How many product images do you process per month?`

`[slider: 100 – 10,000]`

`At [X] images/month: remove.bg costs you $[Y]/year. Adobe Express: $0.`

Social proof: `Trusted by Shopify sellers, Etsy creators, and Amazon merchants`

CTA: `Start removing backgrounds free`

Secondary CTA: `Get notified when our Shopify app launches →` (email capture — this is how we build the launch list before the app is built)

Success Metric

E-commerce segment as % of new Express signups: **<5% → 15%**

Shopify app waitlist signups: **0 → 2,000 before launch**

BRIEF 9 — REMOVE → GENERATIVE FILL UPSELL MODAL

Motion from playbook: After every background removal, show a post-removal modal with 5 AI-generated scene options (Generative Fill). Extends the session from 30 seconds to 3–5 minutes and is the natural free-to-paid conversion trigger.

Competitor countered: All competitors — no other background removal tool offers AI scene replacement. This is Adobe-only.

Modal Copy Brief

Trigger: Fires immediately after background removal completes, before download

Modal headline: `What's behind your subject?`

Subheadline: `Generate a background with AI – studio, lifestyle, product shot, or custom scene.`

5 preset scene buttons:

1. `White studio`
2. `Lifestyle – outdoor`
3. `Product on shelf`
4. `Gradient minimal`
5. `Describe your own...`

After selecting a preset: Preview renders in 3 seconds with Generative Fill

CTA below preview: `Use this background`

Secondary: `Try another scene`

Tertiary (dismiss): `Just download the cutout`

If user is on free plan and has used 5+ Generative Fill credits:

Upsell headline: `You've discovered Adobe's most powerful feature`

Body: `Unlimited AI backgrounds with Adobe Express — $8.33/mo, less than one remove.bg subscription.`

CTA: `Unlock unlimited AI`

A/B Test Hypothesis

Control: Download button appears immediately after removal

Variant: Post-removal modal with 5 Generative Fill scene previews

Hypothesis: Users who see the Generative Fill upsell immediately after removal will activate at 4× the rate of users who go straight to download

Primary metric: Remove → Generative Fill activation rate

Secondary metric: Free-to-paid conversion rate among users who see the modal

Run time: 3 weeks

Success Metric

Remove → Generative Fill activation: **3% → 12%**

This is the primary free-to-paid trigger for the Remove Background acquisition funnel

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