mac
Companion

Your Guide to All Things Macintosh

Come inside for some Hardware, Software and Book Reviews

Cover by Dustin D'Andrea

This Issue's Contributors:

Dr. Harry Babad	hbabad@maccompanion.com
Ted Bade	tbade@maccompanion.com
Derek Caudill	dcaudill@maccompanion.com
Dustin D'Andrea	ddandrea@maccompanion.com
Dr. Eric Flescher	eflescher@maccompanion.com
Eddie Hargreaves	ehargreaves@maccompanion.com
John McGibney	jmcgibney@maccompanion.com
Joe Muscara	Joe@t2studios.com
Robert Pritchett	rpritchett@maccompanion.com
Mike Swope	mswope@maccompanion.com

Officers:

CEO	Robert Pritchett	rpritchett@maccompanion.com
Counselors	Ted Bade	tbade@maccompanion.com
	Dr. Harry Babad	hbabad@maccommpanion.com
Assistant Editor	Julie Willingham	jwillingham@maccompanion.com

Application Service Provider: http://www.bentobox.net

Contact Information:

All Correspondence may be directed to:

Robert Pritchett, CEO
MPN, LLC
1952 Thayer Drive
Richland, WA 99352
509-943-2524
MacCompanion Magazine
Your Guide to All Things Macintosh
rpritchett@maccompanion.com
http://www.maccompanion.com

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Letter from the CEO

by Robert Pritchett rpritchett@maccompanion.com

Why does Macintosh Professional Network, LLC (MPN, LLC) exist? Because we saw an opportunity in the International Macintosh Community and we want to provide a place for those who are looking to find a safe and comfortable location online where they can communicate with others on a professional level about the Macintosh environment.

We welcome with open arms all those companies and individuals who are currently running on alternative platforms and want to switch to a more friendly and cost-effective computer environment.

There is some great software you may not be all that familiar with that can help you be even more productive and prosperous. We feel that OS X is robust enough to handle any business situation and many companies have found that to also be the case. We will be presenting some of those to you later.

Are we "all business"? No, but we do focus our attention on the OS X environment because we believe it is the future of Apple computing.

How do we plan to communicate? The mode of communication we chose is with the new *MacCompanion Magazine*.

Are we launching this venture, "just to make money"? We wouldn't be honest if we said "no". We all tried being altruistic and that just isn't a good sustainable business model. We need to cover expenses. If we can get a 10% return on our investment in both time and resources with *MacCompanion*, than we'll all be very pleased. However, we are also very interested in making the Mac the "system of choice" when it comes to actually ENJOYING and not just tolerating computers. We want each of you to know that the Mac works for us, we don't work for it - and neither should you.

Come participate with us in this new venture. We intend to give you a good Return on Your Investment. Time is Money and we want you to make the most of it.

Subscribe/Donate to *MacCompanion* so we can cover costs and still give you the best bang for the buck. We've learned a few lessons along the way so far and we don't intend to be, as the Brits say, "penny-wise and pound-foolish". Your contribution will sustain our efforts in giving you the best deal money can buy online today. We intend on distributing a PDF version later so you won't be tied to your computer screen all the time if you'd like to print out a copy.

Just remember, there is no "free lunch" and everything has a cost of some kind. We came here to cut our losses, make new friends, establish great relationships and evangelize a world-class platform!

Editorial

by Robert Pritchett rpritchett@maccompanion.com

Welcome to *MacCompanion*. We want to be yours. We hope you enjoy this issue.

What makes us so "pro-Apple"? Mac-centric folks (they include us) seem to stand out from a crowd and we have fun!

Don't you think "Fun" is a good characteristic to have? "Fun" is an attitude. We don't emulate the staid, shifty-eyed, prevalent self-defeating attitude in the "run-of-the-mill", "got-to-win-at-all-costs" PC-centric world of self-professed "lusers". Please don't take offense and re-read that sentence again closely. Rather, we carry with us the glint of self-confidence and the "I can do it" attitude prevalent at Macintosh User Groups (http://www.apple.com/usergroups/) the world over! We dress comfortably and walk with an assured, springy step. We're fun to be with!

We like to think we know what we are doing. We are productive and effective. We "have a life". We are in control of our computer-based destiny. We may live in a "PC" environment, but we choose to be "different". We ARE different! We also expect our computers to be intuitive and fun to use. We like helping those who want to help themselves be self-sufficient. You do to, don't you?

Does anyone really need to ask why we enjoy the Macintosh environment? For the most part, our Mac-centric demographics show us to be self-made and highly educated (with or without a sheepskin to prove it). We don't consider ourselves to be "Intellectual Elites" (even though we probably are) or feel the need to try and prove that we are to others, but we do feel that we are positive contributors to our societies. We aren't afraid to help others, whatever platform they may currently be using. We are indeed, "Been There, Done Thats". For us, money is not the object of life; more important to us is the quality of life and the fun we can have with it!

We want to share the Mac-based tactile happiness and "no problem found here" feel. And there is a touch of vivaciousness and surge of life as we pick up a technological thing of beauty and use it for the benefit and progress of all mankind. Go "touch a Mac" now!

Dare to be different. If you haven't "migrated up", or "switched" yet, now is a great time to try this alternate life style. As you go through this issue of *MacCompanion*, we hope you will experience the fun "Montessori discovery method" (http://www.montessori.org/) approach to learning and maybe you too will "stand out" and have fun while "being different".

Oh, and by all means, "live long and prosper"! ;^)

Views from the Ivory Tower

by Ted Bade tbade@maccompanion.com

Early in 2002, as I was wandering around this electronic world we call the Internet, I bumped into a fellow who was looking for a few good authors to help with an electronic magazine. He convinced me to write a "News & Opinion" article for it. This brought to light the News & Opinion column I did for *Mac-Nut* magazine. After a few months of work there, it became apparent to myself and many other members of the staff that the beliefs and political connections of the *Mac-Nut* owners were very much different from our own. We parted and began the creation of *MacCompanion*.

In my opinion column, called "Thoughts from the Ivory Tower" (tongue in cheek please), I intend to take a look at issues concerning the Macintosh experience and bring those that I find newsworthy to you, along with my personal thoughts on them. My opinions may not agree with yours; I might, at times, be tempted to play the "Devil's Advocate," by pointing out the validity of the "other-side's " opinion, or I might mock those people or products in the news. It's all in fun.

I have no hidden agenda, other then that I am a die-hard Mac enthusiast. My opinions are my own, but they are not rigid, nor cast in stone. I am open to civil comments and will listen to any person who takes the time to email an opposing opinion. Who knows, I might even include such thoughts in a future article.

Let me make one thing clear. Computers are my hobby, my means of enjoyment and fun, and my past time. They are not my profession. I write because I enjoy writing and experimenting with my computer. I like to think I can see both sides of most computer related arguments and if I don't see the other side, please let me know. ;-)

About me: I am educated as an Electrical Engineer and I work for an Electric Power Company. I enjoy writing and have published a number of articles in newsletters, online magazines and websites; I have also published articles for *MacHome magazine*; and have had one completely non-computer related book published as well.

Finally, I hope you enjoy my column, at least as much as I enjoy writing it, if not more!

The road to world dominance tainted with bad chips — Apple computer, under the leadership of Mr. Steve Jobs, has made some great strides toward recovering its market share. Wonderful design and a "Geek Sanctioned" operating system have gone a long way to bring Apple back into the eye of the public and put Macs in homes and businesses all over the world.

The iMacs, iBooks, Titanium PowerBooks, "Towerbooks", the iPod, iApps, and more great software and hardware enrich the Macintosh way of life. For a couple of years we (dedicated Mac users) have been riding the crest of a wave into the future. But as I look into the future I see it all vanishing.

Macs are slowly becoming less and less powerful compared to other home PCs running Windows or Linux. The problem is in the chips. The PowerPC G4 chip, which a few years ago broke the gigaflop barrier for home PCs, is now an old chip. Motorola isn't doing much of anything to create new chips to put into Macs. Yes, a few minor speed bumps, but nothing really substantial.

I am really really concerned, as any Mac enthusiast should be. If Apple doesn't do something about this situation very soon, they are going to be in real trouble. In early

April the big hardware announcement was the iBook (an old G3 chip machine) was increased in speed to still less then 1 GHz. It is getting to the point that, for peanuts, you can buy a Non-Mac PC that can almost run circles around our Macs. This really bothers me.

I love my Mac for the interface and the elegant operating system. But as new programs take more and more advantage of fast Intel or Intel clone chips, there may come a time when a program can't be made for the Mac, because Macs are just too slow.

There are many rumors out there, probably most of them created by frustrated Mac owners who dream of faster Macs. You probably have heard the one about a newer next generation (64-bit) chip developed by IBM; or the one about Apple making use of Intel or Intel clone chips. I have no idea if any of these are true; in time we will see what really happens. I am surprised that someone hasn't started a rumor that Apple is considering using one of the recently developed "organic" processing chips...

Rumors aside, we need more then electronic gadgets and software from Apple. We need a sleek, yet powerful machine to use as our digital hub. Yes, we want the toys, but more then that we want a machine that will make even the most dedicated Windows user drool with envy!!

Apple, hear my plea, bring faster, better, greater chips to Macs. Please...

Editorial Update - Look at the recent purchase of IBM 970 chips by Apple.

Gamers, Apple does listen, but is it enough? — Players of team based Internet games like to make use of audio voice communications to help coordinate their actions. Wintel people have had a couple of applications that work well enough. However, Mac gamers have had few such options and none of them really good. I used one called Roger Wilco which never made it past the Alpha stage for MacOS 9 and as far as I know, there are no plans for making an OS X version.

Recently a Wintel gaming friend told be about a new program called *TeamSpeak* (http://www.teamspeak.org). As I dug through their forums searching for anything related to the Macintosh I found a very interesting thread. There were a very vocal group of Mac gamers politely urging the guys that developed the free program *TeamSpeak* to consider working on a version for the Macintosh. The programmers are not opposed to doing this, but they have no Mac related experience, little time, and no Mac hardware to work with.

It seems someone with connections from Apple was also reading this thread, since the programmers indicated that around the end of December Apple sent them a G4 PowerMac to use. Very nice!

It will take a while for them to gain the experience and create a Macintosh version of *TeamSpeak*, at least one can hope they will eventually do it. Since one of their concerns with a Mac OS X version appears to be that there are only a few Mac gamers who would be interested. If you are interested, please drop by and let the *TeamSpeak* guys know.

It is really nice to see that people in the technology fields are willing to consider the Mac OS. There was a time when anyone with such a suggestion would be ignored or simply told to go away. I'd like to think this is an indication of a slight change in attitude. Hopefully more and more of this will happen!

Derek's Views

by Derek Caudill dcaudill@maccompanion.com

The following items are ones that Derek has taken notice of recently:

Apple Updates eMac's: The eMac

Apple has released an upgrade to its eMac family line; each eMac features two FireWire 400 ports, five USB ports (three on system, two on keyboard), a mini-VGA output port, headphone jack, Apple speaker minijack, and an audio line in jack. S-video and composite video output and VGA video mirroring is supported on all three systems, and each has a Built-in 10/100BASE-T Ethernet port and 56K V.92 modem. An ATI Radeon 7500 with AGP 4x support and 32MB of dedicated DDR SDRAM video card has been added to each model as well.

The three models differ slightly, but of real interest is the note that the first two eMac's can still boot into Mac OS 9, the third cannot however because of the SuperDrive. Also of interest is that the new eMac's feature new Apple Pro Keyboards and Mice, the design is modified slightly, most noticeably on the keyboard where the two USB ports are now on the top edge instead of the sides and the keyboard is now lifted. The mouse has lost the control dial that was on the back of it as well.

Low-End Model:
* 800 MHz PowerPC G4 CPU;
* 133 MHz System Bus
* 32x CD-ROM optical drive;
* ATI Radeon 7500 with 32MB video memory;
* 128MB SDRAM, expandable to 1GB; and
* 40GB ATA hard drive.

Mid-End Model:
* 1 GHz PowerPC G4 CPU;
* 133 MHz System Bus
* Combo 8x DVD-ROM/32x10x32 CD-RW optical drive;
* ATI Radeon 7500 with 32MB video memory;
* 128MB SDRAM, expandable to 1GB; and
* 60GB ATA hard drive.

High-End Model:
* 1 GHz PowerPC G4 CPU;
* 133 MHz System Bus
* 4x SuperDrive DVD-R/CD-RW optical drive which writes DVD-R discs at up to 4x speed, reads DVD's at up to 8x speed, writes CD-R discs at up to 16x speed, writes CD-RW discs at up to 8x speed, and reads CDs at up to 32x speed;
* ATI Radeon 7500 with 32MB video memory;
* 256MB SDRAM, expandable to 1GB; and
* 80GB ATA hard drive.
Each model is available now and has suggested retail prices of US $799.00, US$999.00, and US $1299.00 respectively.

Product Website:

Company Website:
http://www.apple.com

The iPod Gets A New Look: The New iPod

Apple has released a new family of its popular and successful line of personal MP3 players, the iPod. There are three new models, a 10GB, a 15GB, and a 30GB. Each has a battery life of about 8 hours, with skip protection of 25 minutes. The display is a 2-inch (diagonal) grayscale LCD with an LED backlight. However, that's not all the changes, Apple has also added a charging dock with the 15GB and 30 GB models, it has a charge time of 3 hours and connects to a Firewire port or to a USB 2.0 port with an optional adapter for PC's. The size and weight of the 10GB is 4.1 by 2.4 by 0.62 inches, 5.6 ounces, the 15GB is 4.1 by 2.4 by 0.62 inches, 5.6 ounces and the 30GB is 4.1 by 2.4 by 0.73 inches, 6.2 ounces.

The 10GB doesn't include the dock, but it does include Earbud headphones, AC adapter, dock connector to FireWire cable, and a 4-pin-to-6-pin FireWire adapter. The 15GB and 30GB include a Dock, remote, carrying case, Earbud headphones, AC adapter, dock connector to FireWire cable, and a 4-pin-to-6-pin FireWire adapter.

The Audio support for Mac is AAC (16 to 320 Kbps), MP3 (32 to 320 Kbps), MP3 VBR, Audible, AIFF, and WAV.
The Audio support for Windows is MP3 (32 to 320 Kbps), MP3 VBR, and WAV.

The system requirements are an Apple computer with a built-in FireWire port; Mac OS X v10.1.5 or later (Mac OS X 10.2 or later recommended).
Or a PC with built-in FireWire or USB 2.04, or Windows-certified FireWire or USB 2.0 card; Windows Me, Windows 2000 or Windows XP Home or Professional.

The CD for the Mac version includes the new iTunes 4 for Mac OS X, and the PC version CD includes MUSICMATCH Jukebox Plus 7.5.

The case design is now different, it features a touch wheel as before, but now features 4 touch buttons.

The new iPod is now available and sells for US $299.00, US $399.00, and US $499.00 respectively.

Product Website:
http://www.apple.com/ipod/

Apple RAID's The Xserve Market Again: The Xserve and RAID

Apple pleased the server market in mid February when they announced new updates to their Xserve family. The first in the new lineup is an upgrade to the existing 1U Rack. It comes in two flavors, a single 1.33 GHz G4 processor version, or a Dual 1.33 GHz G4 processor version. Each version comes with 256k per CPU of on-chip L2 cache running at 1.33 GHz. They also feature 2 MB of L3 DDR SRAM cache. They differ in their stock RAM, while the Single 1.33 has 256 MB of PC2700 DDR SDRAM running at 333Mhz, the Dual version comes with 512 MB of PC2700 DDR SDRAM running at 333Mhz.

Each version has four DIMM slots so the RAM can be upgraded to 2 GB using 128 MB, 256 MB, or 512 MB DIMM's. Each version features one hot-plug 60 GB ATA/133 7200 rpm Apple Drive Module, but it can be expanded thanks to the four bays with independent 133 MB/s buses - each of which support up to 720 GB, using 60 GB ATA/133 drives with 2 MB disk cache and/or 180 GB ATA/100 drives with 8 MB disk cache. For optical media, the standard is a slot-loading 24X speed CD-ROM, or an optional Combo drive which features the ability to play DVD-ROM's, CD's, and write to CD-R's and CD-RW's.

There are two Gigabit Ethernet interfaces (10/100/1000BASE-T RJ-45) included with this bad boy. One is on the logic board, and one is installed in the half-length 32-bit, 66Mhz combination PCI/AGP slot. Speaking of slots, there are two full-length 64-bit, 66Mhz PCI slots, as well as the above-mentioned combination PCI/AGP slot. There are also two back panel FireWire 800 ports, two USB ports, and one DB-9 (RS-232) port. On the front panel is one FireWire 400 port. As for the graphics capabilities, there is one ATI card (32MB of DDR SDRAM and VGA connector) installed in lower PCI slot by default. An optional ATI Radeon 8500 AGP 4x card (64MB of DDR SDRAM; DVI, VGA, and S-video connectors; dual display support) can be installed in the PCI/AGP slot, but you'll have to give up a Gigabit port for this.

Also included with this impressive package: Mounting screws with M5 and 10/32-inch threads; Caged nuts; Cable management arm for four-post racks; and an agency-approved 12-foot power cable. The software side of things is also impressive, as an unlimited client edition of Mac OS X Server is included. Rack support is found with the Xserve fitting in EIA-310-D-compliant, industry-standard 19-inch-wide racks, including four-post racks (24 inches, 26 inches, and from 29 to 36 inches deep) and two-post Telco racks (center-mount brackets included). Front-to-back cooling for rack enclosure is also supported.

The single 1.33 GHz Xserve is available for US $2,799, while the Dual version sells for US $3,799. There is also an ultimate version for $8,248 which features 2.0GB DDR333 SDRAM and four 180GB ATA/100 ADM's (720 GB), as well as the AppleCare Premium Support Plan and Mac OS X Server Maintenance.

However, Apple didn't stop there when they released the long anticipated Xserve RAID which offers fourteen hot-swappable Apple Drive Modules. When filled, they offer 2.52 Terabytes of storage, using ATA/100 drives with 2Gb Fibre Channel interface for reliable, and fast, data access. This beauty starts at US $5,999 for a 720 GB array, US $7,499 for a 1.26 Terabytes array, and US $10,999 for a 2.52 Terabyte array.

My Thoughts: Wow, simply WOW! Apple has really knocked the competition out of the ballpark with these products. They are powerful, beautiful, and compared to the other options, affordable. I am not even going to mention the lack of OS 9 support because it isn't needed. With the unlimited client license of Mac OS X server, this beauty has everything it needs. On the Con's side: Not every business has several of the 1U's and the RAID in their closets - and I don't either. I can't even think of a use for them, but I'm drooling over the RAID. Apple, you've done it again, keep up the good work!

Product Web Site: http://www.apple.com/xserve/
Xserve RAID: http://www.apple.com/xserve/raid/

The Xserve Drops Some Weight...

For those customers who need the sheer raw power of the Apple Xserve, but not the frills of video cards and hard drive expansion bays, or the price, Apple has listened to

your needs by introducing a new Xserve configuration specifically designed for customers seeking clustering capabilities. The Cluster Node Xserve features dual 1.33GHz PowerPC G4 CPU's; with 2MB of L3 cache per CPU. The standard configuration features 256MB of DDR333 SDRAM, a 60GB ATA/133 Apple Drive Module, and Gigabit Ethernet. It also comes a 10-client version of Mac OS X Server. The RAM can be upgraded to 2 GB if needed. By doing away with the video card and the hard drive expansion bays found in the normal Xserve, the Cluster Node Xserve becomes a completely headless machine. The new addition to Apple's already impressive line of networking products is now available and has a suggested retail price of US $2700.

Canon Scans Up An Impressive Product: The CanoScan 9900F

Recently announced was one of Canon's newest additions to their line of scanners. The CanoScan 9900F includes film guides for scanning slides and negatives, and features 3200 x 6400 dpi resolution with 48-bit color depth. Scanning bed size is 8.5" x 11.7", which can handle 35mm x 24 frames of negatives, and 35mm x 8 frames of mounted slides. The interface is Firewire for the Mac, and USB 2.0 for the PC. A Firewire cable is not included. Other built in enhancements are FARE 2.0 (Film Automatic Retouching and Enhancement) with new Grain and Fading corrections. The Canon CanoScan 9900F is now available and has a suggested retail price of US $399.99.

Company Website:
http://www.usa.canon.com/html/canonindex.html

Canon's Triad of Printers

i450   **i470D**   **i9100**

Canon recently announced three new printers to add to their already impressive lineup. The first is the i450 Color Bubble Jet, it is rated as being able to print 18 pages per minute in black and 12 pages per minute in color. It touts resolution up to 4800 X 1200 dpi, and it features both 5-picoliter and ultra-fine 2-picoliter droplets, as well as support for EXIF Print, and borderless photo printing. It has a suggested retail price of US $99.99.

The second in this line up adds to the last, the i470D Photo features the same specs as the i450 Color Bubble Jet, but it adds a built in Print Ops Panel with slots for removable memory cards and it comes with Canon Photo Viewer Software. It boasts a suggested retail price of US 149.99.

As usual, the best has been saved for last; the i9100 Photo Printer in wide format can print pages up to 13 x 19 inches. It includes an ultra high-density multi-nozzle print head with up t 4800 x 1200 dpi resolution. It has Canon's Individual Ink Tank System with six color photo printing and lightfastness that is rated at 25 years. It features a suggested retail price of $499.99.

Each of these impressive products is now shipping and feature USB connections, they support Mac OS X 10.2.1 and up, and best of all, Mac OS 8.6 and up is fully supported.

My Thoughts: I've never looked into Canon printers that much, but with the release of these, I'm looking now and saying wow!

Company Web Site:
http://www.usa.canon.com/

Epson Introduces New Scanners: The Perfection 3200 Pro

Not to be outdone by Canon, Epson has introduced two new scanners to its family. The Epson Perfection 3200 Pro and 3200 Photo scanner. Both scanners share similar features; such as maximum hardware resolutions of 3200 x 6400 dpi, a 48-bit color depth, 3.4 Dmax, and connectivity for USB 2.0 and Firewire. The similarities end however with the Pro version, as it offers both reflective and transmissive IT8 targets for color matching both film and photos. The software that is bundled with both scanners includes LaserSoft SilverFast SE 6 and Adobe Photoshop Elements 2.

The Epson Perfection 3200 Pro is available for US $600, while the Epson Perfection 3200 Photo is available for US $400.

Company Website:
http://www.epson.com/

Epson Now Prints On More Than Paper: The Epson Stylus 900

Epson has released a printer capable of printing directly onto CD and DVD media, without using adhesive labels. This remarkable product, Epson's second with this capability, is the Epson Stylus Photo 900. It can print at up to 5760 x 720 dpi and in addition to having a 6-color ink system; the heads spray 4 picoliter ink droplets. Not only can it print on optical media, but it's designed to work as a regular color printer as well. It has the ability to print digital photos on borderless 4 x 6, 5 x 7, and 8 x 10 inch and letter sized photo papers. The speeds go up to 50 seconds per 4 x 6 inch prints. It can also print on cut-sheet paper from 3.5 to 8.5 inches wide, it comes with a roll paper holder accessory for printing on continuous rolls.

It supports media up to 1.3mm thick. Using inkjet-printable CD-R and DVD-R Recordable media from companies including Imation, Maxell, Memorex, Mitsui, TDK and VerbatimCD, users place the disc in a tray that protects it as it makes its way through the printer's straight-through path.

Not only will the Stylus Photo 900 print on optical media, but it supports PRINT Image Matching II and Exif Print technology to help improve digital photo output quality from compatible cameras.

All of the included software is Mac-compatible, it ships with CD design and printing software, Epson Software Film Factory, and PRINT Image Matching Plug-ins for Adobe Photoshop 6.0 and 7.0 and Elements 1.0 and 2.0. Discus EP software is provided for Mac OS X users, specifically.

The Epson Stylus Photo 900 is now available with a suggested retail price of US $199. It connects through a USB interface.

Company Website:
http://www.epson.com/cgi-bin/Store/index.jsp

Clothes For Your Keyboard: The iSkin ProTouch

For those wanting to protect their precious and beautiful Apple Pro Keyboard from dust, dirt, finger oils, and spills, ackNOWLEDGE has come through once again with their iSkin ProTouch Pro Keyboard Protector. The iSkin ProTouch is made to fit the US layout of the Apple Pro Keyboard. Made of a durable silicone skin, this translucent colored product is molded to snuggly fit the keys on the Apple Pro Keyboard, allowing the user to type freely without needing to remove it. The iSkin ProTouch is available in nine colors:

•White Frost (translucent clear white)
•Blue Mist (translucent light blue)
•Creamsicle (translucent light orange)
•Lemonade (translucent light yellow)
•LimeLight (translucent light green)
•Aqua (translucent sky blue)
•Abyss (translucent indigo blue)
•Cherry Pop (translucent light red)
•BubbleGum (translucent light pink)

It has a retail price of US $35.99 and will begin shipping on May 15th, 2003.

Product Website:
http://www.iskinprotect.com/iskin_protouch_spc.html

Company Website:
http://www.iskinprotect.com/index.html

PowerBooks And Laptops Learn To Grow: The CardBus-to-PCI Expansion System, Model CB264

PowerBooks have become more expandable thanks to the ingenuity of MAGMA, who has recently released an external chassis with two 64-bit PCI expansion slots. The CardBus-to-PCI Expansion System, Model CB264, communicates with the PowerBook however at 32 bits only. The chassis is about the size of an average laptop, and it has a drive bay to accommodate a SCSI, Firewire, or IDE/ATA desktop system Hard Drive. A very impressive fact of this product however is that the user can add a Hard Drive without using one of the two PCI slots. There is a special third PCI slot that works with a proprietary storage kit for SCSI, Firewire, and IDE/ATA. It connects to the Powerbook through the PC Card port. The CardBus-to-PCI Expansion System, Model CB264 can also be attached to a desktop computer when an optional PCI host interface is purchased. The CardBus-to-PCI Expansion System, Model CB264 is now available and has a suggested retail price of US $1,095, it supports Mac OS X 10.2.2 and up, as well as Mac OS 9, and Windows 98SE, ME, NT 4.0, 2000, and XP.

Company Website:
http://www.magma.com/index.html

One Small Step For iMac's, One Large Leap For…iMac's: The 17-inch iMac

Apple surprised us again with new iMac updates in early February. This was not a large surprise for those reading the rumor sites, but never the less, it was nice. Apple's updates didn't involve much, but what they did involve packed quite a punch.

Disproving the beliefs of many, Apple still has a 15-inch model, as well as the 17-inch model. The main changes affect the 17-inch model. The speed has been bumped to 1GHz, and the RAM has become PC2100 DDR RAM, which as usual, can be expanded to 1GB. The System Bus is 133 MHz, and it features an 80 GB 7200 rpm Ultra ATA/100 Hard Drive. An upgrade that may make people cast another glance at this beauty is the 4x SuperDrive, and the internal Bluetooth Build-to-Order option. It features an NVIDIA GeForce4 MX with 64 MB of DDR SDRAM, and support for both VGA video mirroring and S-video and composite video output.

For your networking needs, it features a Built-in 10/100BASE-T Ethernet port and a 56K V.92 modem, as does the 15-inch counterpart. Airport Extreme is also readied on this new addition. In addition, on both iMac's is the regular lineup of two FireWire 400 ports, five USB 1.1 ports, a mini-VGA output port, headphone jack, Apple speaker minijack, and an audio line in jack for the 17-inch model.

As for headliners for included software, iLife tops the list, with Quicken 2003 Deluxe coming in a close second. Each model features the attractive Apple Pro Speakers, and a built in microphone, as well as an Apple Professional Keyboard and Optical Mouse.

The 15-inch Model features an 800 MHz G4 possessor, a 100 MHz System Bus, 256 MB of SDRAM expandable to 1GB, and a 60 GB Ultra ATA/66 7200 rpm Hard Drive. A 32x Combo Drive and NVIDIA GeForce2 MX with 32 MB of DDR SDRAM Video card is also standard. Unlike the 17-inch model, S-video and composite video output isn't included, though VGA video mirroring is. Also surprising is that the 15-inch is only Airport ready, not Airport Extreme, and can only except Bluetooth via a USB adapter.

The 15-inch is priced at US $1,300, while the 17-inch is priced at US $1,800. A Custom Built one is also available. It features the 17-inch model, but with 1GB of RAM, Built-in Bluetooth, and an Airport Extreme Card installed, it sells for US $2,348.

My Thoughts: The 17-inch iMac is very nice. A great computer for those not needing the heavy multimedia editing capabilities of the PowerMac's, although, the iMac can still handle that level very well itself. My beefs are the continuous lack of USB 2.0 support, as well as making Bluetooth Built-in optional. Since the iMac is also used in the educational market quite a bit, even with the eMac's, having no Mac OS 9 boot-ability is disappointing. While much of the educational software is Mac OS 9 only and will run in classic, the educational market might see it as Apple short-sheeting them.   I also find it odd that the 15-inch is still available. Given its lack of Airport Extreme capability, Apple should have just discontinued the model, updated it as well, or lowered it's price even more. However, those are just my views…
Product Web Site: http://www.apple.com/imac/

Features

Enjoying the many uses of the iPod
by Ted Bade tbade@maccompanion.com

The iPod is an incredible device, it not only lets you listen to music and other forms of recorded audio, but it can be used as a contact manager, reminds you of appointments, and even can be used as a travel clock. Let's take a look at what you can do with an iPod and the software and/or web sites to help do this.

Our first stop: audio files.

This is what the iPod was designed for. Where does one get the audio to play on the iPod? Napster is gone and truly, we should always ensure that artists are compensated for their work. But there are still many options left.

Rip audio from CDs.

The obvious method: Use iTunes or your favorite ripping program to convert the audio files on CD to MP3 files. You could simply transfer the audio from the CD to the iPod without converting it, but standard AIFF files (the audio format on CDs) takes up a lot of space (a typical song is around 60 to 80 Megabytes - while the same song as a good quality MP3 might only be 2-4 megabytes!).

Where one gets the CDs to rip MP3s from is a matter of choice. Obviously once can purchase them. I have an extensive collection of my own and buy new CDs when I find something of interest. (Independent labels only, I don't support RIAA artists!!) One could borrow a CD from their public library or a friend. Don't forget: If you really like an artist, you should buy their music.

Download, don't rip

Often I am lazy or rather, I have other things I would like my Macintosh to be doing. Downloading music already ripped is quicker then ripping CD, especially if you don't already own the CD!

We are seeing more and more places on the Internet that give one the opportunity to purchase then download music. (There are also a number of ways to download MP3s without paying as well - we might touch upon them later).

EMusic.com http://www.emusic.com

Probably the best service for buying MP3s on the Internet. (at least the best I have discovered). They have a giant library (over 200,000 songs) for download with a modest fee structure, either $10/month for a year subscription or $15/month for a 3 month subscription. Once you have the subscription there is no limit to what you download and what you download stays after your subscription ends. Its a great service and I hope it stays around for a while.

The only major caveat of this service is that the majority of artists found are of the Independent label variety. With the Recording Industry of America (RIAA) bent on controlling both the artists and the customers, there are many artists that will never be seen at eMusic. But there are a lot of terrific Independent artists out there to be enjoyed.

Take a look at eMusic's service. I was surprised by the number of artists that I already knew that were there and have also been impressed by a number of them that I did not know but gave a listen and was satisfied with. They offer a free trial period so you can

not only browse their database but download a few samples before you actually commit yourself. One nice thing about their site, non-members can browse all they want. So check out their offerings before you decide to join.

You will need a helper application to download MP3 files from EMusic. Although EMusic doesn't offer a Macintosh solution, they provide information about two programs one for MacOS 9 and one for MacOS X that do (http://primo.mp3.com/gen/14/players). I use the MacOS X program called Pickup with few problems.

While researching other services, I discovered that with some the music you download only works while you are a member. Once you quit, you are not supposed to use the music or all the music you got was streamed to your machine, so once you aren't a member you cannot stream them anymore. (If you have a service like this, you might want to check out my review of Audio Hijack!!) If you are looking into a service, read the fine print and make use of their free trial and cancellation policy. While our Windows using friends might find it acceptable to have access for only a while, Mac users probably won't.

Finally, I have discovered a few major recording labels are offering the ability to purchase mp3 or regular audio files directly from their site. I discovered this while researching an artist my wife was interested in.

There are also several less then legal non-paying methods of finding music.

Newsgroups
There are a variety of Usenet Newsgroups that concern themselves with music and mp3s. Your Internet provider may or may not provide access to them. In my own state there is at least one provider that censors these newsgroups. (Isn't it odd that a company would censor music newsgroups but not pornography groups that might include children? Obviously the issue here is not ethics or protecting someone's rights!)

If you were to look for such a group, search your newsgroup master list using terms such as mp3, audio, music, or a specific music type (like rock or jazz). (You might get a few porn listings, be forewarned). I found over one hundred different groups with my provider. Including audio books, jazz, 60s music, Rock, and many more.

Peer to peer
While Napster may be dead, there are several other peer to peer programs available. The reason they were able to shut down Napster was because their servers kept track of all the music contents on all the member machines. It also kept track of who transferred what. Peer to peer programs (such as Limewire) search for other computers using that particular service and search the library they offer for the keywords you enter. I won't go into specifics on this either and leave the research to you.

Audio Books
If you have a long commute or a bunch of time to kill listening to your iPod, audio books are lots of fun. I have a 40-minute commute each way to work which offers plenty of time to listen to audio books. Being a fan of Science Fiction and fantasy novels, I never seem to find enough time to read all that I find interesting. Using this normally useless commute time to listen to a new or favorite book is a great use of time.

Again, your local public library is a good place to start. If it's director is interested in technology (as ours is) you might find a collection of mp3 audio books on the shelf. Ours has a good selection covering a wide range of interests. Additionally, most of the audio book producers are beginning to offer the audio in mp3 format. For instance, Blackstone Audio (http://www.blackstoneaudio.com/) provides a good portion of their many audio

books in mp3 format. Other audio book companies might also do this as well.

You could also borrow or purchase regular CD audio books and rip them like you would an music CD. This gives you your own mp3 version for use on you iPod. Purchasing the CD version of these books is probably the most expensive solution, but still an excellent one.

Online audio books

If you are into good deals consider a service like audible.com (http://www.audible.com). This service, which works with MacOS X and iTunes version 3, is excellent. They provide a large selection of both audio books (abridged and unabridged) and subscriptions to shorter works such as the NY Times daily, Science News Weekly, or NPRs Car Talk (a weekly radio show).

Their "basic listener" program costs $14.95/month and lets you choose any 1 book and any 1 subscription. A terrific deal when, for the most part, $15 is less then the cost of many unabridged novels (if purchased without a membership) and an even better deal when you consider that the book if purchased in CD format from a major bookseller might cost around $60! (Its true, I bought Douglas Adams Salmon of Doubt as part of my Audible subscription then found it at a local Borders for $59.95!)

The subscriptions are also useful. A friend found that the NY Times is available daily for download around 5am EST. Giving him ample time to download the current news to his iPod before he heads to work. Thus he can use a long commute to keep up with important news items.

Not only audio

The iPod makes a great contact manager as well. When Apple released iCal and iSync, they also released a firmware upgrade to the iPod that added several nifty features.

Contacts

You can transfer your address book contents to your iPod. A nice feature: Using iSync makes sure that the contact on you iPod reflects those on you Mac.

I am one of those people who has a hard time remembering hone numbers. For years I carried a folded 3x5 card in my wallet containing several important phone numbers. Now I carry my entire contact database on my iPod!

iSync syncs the iPod directly with the Address Book application. If you use another application for keeping your addresses there are ways to transfer the contact to the iPod. The easiest way is using "vcards" (virtual business cards). Most contact information programs can output vcards an for those that don't there are a number of shareware programs that will do it for you. Check out the Version Tracker web site for the latest releases (http://www.versiontracker.com/). Saves vcards can be dropped into the iPods "contact" folder and then viewed on the iPod.

The display is good enough to easily find a phone number or email address one didn't manage to add to the cell phone. You can also create a fake vcard containing important information such as directions to a location or how to find a file in MacOS X's file structure. However, I would be hesitant to store passwords or codes on the iPod.

Calendar

Apple's iCal iApp is a pretty good calendar program and its ability to overlay different schedules onto a single calendar is a real boon to busy families. The interface with the iPod is nice giving one the ability to take their calendar(s) on the road. A dot on any calendar day indicates an item on that day. Clicking on that day brings up the text

concerning the event(s) that day.

There are two major problems with using the iPod for contacts and a calendar. First are the controls. While it works, scrolling through a list of 40 or so contacts takes some time, as would scrolling several months ahead to see what is planned for next December. Secondly, there is no real option for adding or modifying the information while on the road.

People who really make use of access to their contacts and appointments would be better served with one of many Palm devices. Remember the iPod is a mp3 music device. The added benefits of contact database and a calendar although limited are just wonderful.

Ain't this obvious?
The iPod is a hard drive with a Firewire interface. This makes it a great device for moving files, documents, photos, movies or whatever to another Mac with a Firewire interface! Drag a file onto your iPod, plug the 'Pod into a friends computer and drag the file onto their computer. Easy and obvious!

Text and beyond
While I wouldn't want to read a full-length book on the small iPod screen, you can store and retrieve text files with the iPod. This can be expanded to actually downloading a variety of text from the Internet for reading on the iPod.

There are over 40 applications listed on the Version tracker site (http://www.versiontracker.com) of MacOS X applications for the iPod! I won't even try to discuss all of them here. Here is a brief list of innovate ways shareware authors have discovered to use the iPod.

1- Sync memos to the iPod - (http://ipodmemo.firest0rm.com)
2. A variety of applications for getting vcards from programs like Now Contact, Outlook Express, FileMaker, etc.
3. Use Apples text to speech feature to listen to documents on the iPod (http://www.zapptek.com/)
4. Download News, weather, stocks, etc to the iPod (http://www.kainjow.com/news.html)

I have only tried a couple of the many items listed here. They range from very useful to interesting by why! If you want to learn more ways of using your iPod, check out the entire version tracker iPod listing.

The iPod is a wonderful device. I use it all the time and it makes doing many household chores more bearable. I can be seen listening to my iPod while mowing the lawn or vacuuming the house. With all the obvious benefits of owning an iPod I am surprised everyone doesn't have one!

The Future?
If Apple asked me what could they do to improve the iPod I could add little. I have a couple suggestions though. I would like to see an iPod with a larger color screen. This could be used for several different purposes. First you could share your photos. Wouldn't it be cool to sync an iPhoto album with the iPod so you can show friends and family your latest pictures?

Another feature would be the ability to transfer images from my camera to my iPod. Sure I have lots of memory cards, but the iPod has a LOT more space. If the iPod had the above color screen it would also give a better view then my camera's little LCD!

While I am dreaming, perhaps voice recognition and audio in. They one could speak an update or record a memo!

Just dreaming!

Have you an interesting use for your iPod? Perhaps a dream of something you would like Apple to add to it? I would be interested in hearing from our readers. I might even do a followup article sharing the best ideas! Write to me at: tbade@maccompanion.com.

Tutorial: MenuMachine 1.5.2 for Adobe GoLive 6
Reviewed by Mike Swope mswope@maccompanion.com

BIG BANG SOFTWARE PTY LTD	5 MacCompanions
10 BROWNS DIP ROAD	
Enoggera	Strengths: Easy to install. Easy to use, but
Qld 4051	powerful. Multiple DHTML menus per web page.
Australia	Compatible with components for easy menu
Ph: +61 7 3311 2733	updates and maintenance.
http://www.bigbangextensions.com	
$45 USD	Weaknesses: None

MenuMachine 1.52: Just What the Doctor Ordered for Adobe GoLive 6

It is not often that one witnesses the birth of a great piece of software first hand, but within the last year I witnessed the release of Big Bang Extensions' MenuMachine for GoLive 6, and few things have excited me as much or offered as much promise and value as MenuMachine. Nothing has ever made me think that Adobe (or some other software company) should pay big bucks for a third-party application or extension to enhance their application. But there's been nothing like MenuMachine for web design and development. Not from Adobe. Not from Macromedia. Not from Microsoft. Not to my knowledge, at least, as a full-time web designer and entrepreneur. MenuMachine's powerful prescription for DHTML menus is in part fueling sales of Adobe GoLive 6 to users who until now have been hesitant to upgrade.

Bad Blood About GoLive 5 / Skepticism About GoLive 6

Some users of Adobe GoLive 5 have long resented Adobe for the lack of bug fixes for GoLive 5. Known bugs went unsquashed during GoLive 5's useful life. The only update that Adobe issued for GoLive 5 was the Netscape Navigator 6 fix. The resentment from those who were once faithful was clearly and frequently stated on the GoLive mailing list hosted by BlueWorld http://www.blueworld.com/blueworld/lists. Many members threatened to jump ship to Dreamweaver, as Macromedia appeared to at least be iissuing updates to Dreamweaver in response to user feedback and the need to provide a competitive edge. In response to this unrest, Adobe was completely silent. No promises were made. No expectations were raised. No faith was earned. GoLive users

felt like they were being left behind in the world of WYSIWYG web design. List members included well-respected web designers, Adobe representatives, GoLive beta testers, and authors of books about GoLive.

When Adobe announced GoLive 6, there were many questions posted to the GoLive mailing list. Were the bugs from GoLive 5 fixed? Is the upgrade from 5 to 6 painless or will the transition break sites that are already working? Is there a strict step-by-step recipe to upgrade GoLive 5 sites to GoLive 6 that, if not followed to the letter, may create hours and hours of rebuild work? Is the Netscape Navigator fix built into GoLive 6? Are GoLive 6 site files cross-platform? How well does GoLive 6 run in OS X and OS 9? Has GoLive 6's built-in FTP feature been updated? Is GoLive 6 worth the upgrade price? Perhaps some remembered Adobe's lackluster upgrade to PageMaker 7.

After the smoke from the GoLive 6 product announcement cleared, and despite the assurances of Adobe representatives and beta testers, most list members were content to let others skate the bleeding edge and report back to the list about GoLive 6's improvements, stability, promise, and support. Of course, these list members weren't confident that they would see fixes from Adobe even if bugs were discovered, so many seemed content to stay at their current version (some at v3, others at v4, most at v5), until there was a compelling reason to upgrade. The catalyst to upgrade for some was OS X, since GoLive 5's performance in Classic (OS 9 running inside OS X) is abominable. But even more remained at OS 9 with GoLive 5. GoLive 5 worked just fine, for the most part, in OS 9.x. If they weren't running OS X, there just wasn't much reason to upgrade.

Adobe, however, has been slowly persuading users to upgrade to GoLive 6 on its own merits since its release. The GoLive 6 development team had heard users' complaints about v5 loud and clear, and they had vowed not to repeat the mistakes of GoLive 5. And the GoLive development team has kept this vow. In only a few short months since the release of GoLive 6, Adobe has issued a Service Pack, an update to 6.0.1, and a permissions update for Mac OS 10.2. Despite this commitment, Adobe still has many users of v5 and earlier to win over. But it would appear that they're making progress. If more slowly than they desire.

MenuMachine: La Raison d' Upgrade to GoLive 6

The overwhelming raison d' upgrade for many members of the GoLive mailing list, including myself, in addition to OS X compatibility, came in the guise of a well-planned, well-designed and much-desired GoLive 6 extension to create DHTML menus from a small, unassuming Australian developer, also a member of the GoLive mailing list. Other members from the list had even beta tested the GoLive 6 extension (list members sure can keep secrets!). MenuMachine was announced to the list and released, and Big Bang Extensions was immediately swamped with orders. Sales have exceeded expectations and continue at a steady pace. With good reason.

DHTML Menu Symptoms: Alienation and Pain

DHTML menus are those menus found on web sites that, when rolled over or clicked on, drop down or cascade into submenus, sometimes 3 or 4 menus deep or deeper. DHTML menus help visitors navigate large sites such as Koch Industries' (http://www.kochind.com) and Flint Hills Resources' (http://www.fhr.com) web sites. Both sites DHTML menus were built by hand, and expose some of the problems that some visitors can experience with narrowly-compatible DHTML menus. DHTML menus must be well-coded or they will only work well in a single browser (usually Microsoft Internet Explorer) on a single platform (usually Microsoft Windows). As a Mac user, this has been my experience, and the reason seems to be careless coding and short-sighted planning. Other Mac users, I'm sure, have had the same experience. Effective DHTML

menus must work well cross-platform and cross-browser, as entire web sites should, or DHTML navigation is next to useless.

It's easy to understand why many DHTML menus coded by hand work well only in one browser on one platform. DHTML menus are painstaking to create, taking many hours to hand code, test, fix bugs and edit. Many programmers, of course, will borrow code they've used already as a starting point for new menus, carrying along with that code its bugs and idiosyncrasies. Despite this shortcut, DHTML menus take a great deal of time to develop. DHTML layers must be programmed to be triggered on and off. Background and font colors made to change on mousein and mouseout. Submenus set to appear and disappear. Hyperlinks established. Images created and made to rollover. There are dozens of options for developers and designers to consider when creating DHTML menus. Some of the standard tools in GoLive and Dreamweaver make DHTML menus easier to create, but not easy enough to tell friends, family or colleagues. For the beginner, DHTML menus are well nigh impossible to create, and are to be faced only by the very, very brave, even with the latest release of GoLive or Dreamweaver in their web arsenal.

Exactly What Big Bang Promised. And More!

The moment that Big Bang Extensions announced MenuMachine to the GoLive list, members like myself thronged to the Big Bang web site to check out the new software that promised to make DHTML menus so simple. We were skeptical, of course, but hopeful. We studied the screenshots. Read the extensive instructions and FAQs. Some of us whooped, I'm certain (I did, anyway). Those of us with looser wallets than others took the challenge and paid for the opportunity to try this software that seemed too good to be true. Since it was from a respected and reputable list member, it was much easier to accept that maybe, just maybe, this software would do what was promised. Make DHTML menus easy and reliable, DHTML menus that worked cross-browser and cross-platform. Magically. I crossed my fingers as I entered my credit card information. I had a web site that could be completed well ahead of deadline, if MenuMachine was all it was supposed to be.

Within hours of MenuMachine's release, list members began singing its praises to the list, crooning happily and linking to sample menus they had just finished. From scratch. Without any handcoding. As the posts affirming MenuMachine's ease of use, stability, usability and efficiency became more frequent, the skeptics grew optimistic. Those who had been most vocal about the shortcomings of GoLive 5 suddenly began to ask about GoLive 6. Those who had heretofore no compelling reason to upgrade to GoLive 6 suddenly found themselves buying MenuMachine, and then GoLive 6 so they could use it. Big Bang Extensions continues to receive email from customers confessing that the only reason they have upgraded to GoLive 6 is to use MenuMachine.

I don't blame them. Not only does MenuMachine make DHTML menus easy to create in GoLive 6, its menus are compatible in the major browsers for both Macintosh and Windows, including Microsoft Internet Explorer 4.x - 6.x, Netscape Navigator/Communicator 4.x-7.x, Mozilla 1.x and other Gecko-based browsers, and Opera 5-6. Exactly as advertised on Big Bang's web site.

As for Safari, Apple Computer's latest entry into the Internet browser wars, Big Bang claims 90% MenuMachine 1.52 compatibility with the latest beta (Safari 1.0 Beta 0.8.2 from 2/12/03), and promises that most problems will be fixed in the 1.6 update to MenuMachine, due out "very soon." Big Bang also notes that once Safari is out of beta and finally released, MenuMachine will be 100% compatible with it.

MenuMachine: Powerful Medicine

MenuMachine simplifies the creation of DHTML menus substantially for both experienced and inexperienced designers using GoLive 6. It makes them so simple, in fact, that menus that would have taken hours can now be created with MenuMachine in 1/10th the time. For example, I had the crude beginnings of a DHTML menu with three dropdowns that I had started just before MenuMachine was released. The first crude single DHTML layer for the dropdown took me better than an hour to create and have it turn on when rolling over the trigger. I still had to insert the links and make it turn off when the cursor exited the area.

Honestly, I wasn't looking forward to finishing the dropdown and creating the other two dropdowns to complete the DHTML menu, not to mention editing the dropdowns after the client reviewed them and requested changes. But when MenuMachine was announced, I purchased it immediately, and in half the time I had already spent, I had created, tested and tentatively approved the entire set of menus with MenuMachine. Wow!

Although there are just three tabs to MenuMachine - Edit, Format, and Options - MenuMachine is powerful medicine. Big Bang Extensions has thrown in every option and control but the castor oil, it seems. First time users of MenuMachine will become drunk with MenuMachine's power immediately, and will remember that first white-hot feeling of code-enduced euphoria. They won't ever forget it.

The powerful medicine of MenuMachine comes from its thorough capabilities but simple controls. In the real world, DHTML menus are rarely so sculpted and versatile as MenuMachine's. They're simply too expensive to custom-code for each and every web site. That is, until MenuMachine came along. MenuMachine DHTML menus can use either HTML text or images, colored text, and rollover text and images; can have colored borders, display main and submenus in different stylings, display in specified fonts and styles, and have assorted alignments; can pop-up when rolled over or clicked, fade at a specified interval (usually milliseconds), overlap by specified amounts, display arrows to indicate the presence of submenus, open to the left or right, be positioned relative to the window edges, and scroll within the window at a specified speed. Dizzying!

Prescription: Purchase & Install Immediately. Use Daily. Use Often. (But not too often!)

It is very simple to install MenuMachine. In fact, very Mac-like. After users have purchased and downloaded MenuMachine, they simply copy the folder called MenuMachine into the Extend Scripts folder inside the Modules folder inside the GoLive 6 folder (Path: GoLive 6.0/Modules/Extend Scripts). If the user is upgrading from a previous version of MenuMachine, the user simply replaces the old MenuMachine folder with the new MenuMachine folder. The next time GoLive 6 is launched in either case, the user is prompted for the registration key and an activation key, both of which are emailed to the user each time they download MenuMachine (whether first download or the latest update). MenuMachine is now available in the GoLive 6 Objects palette.
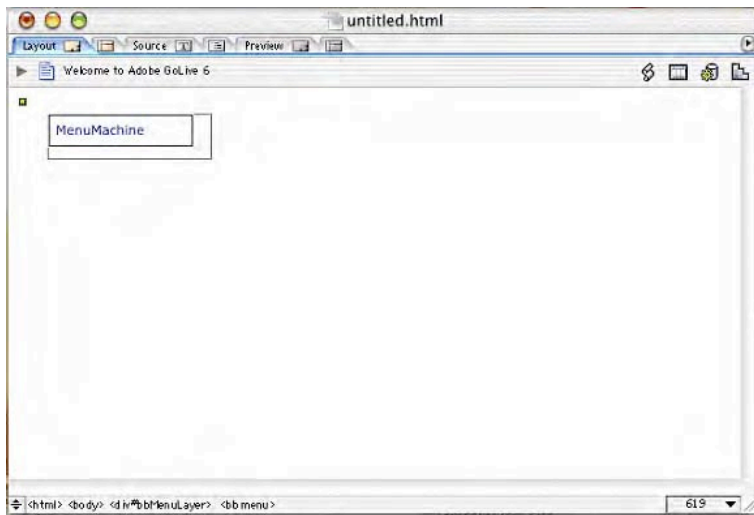
To create a MenuMachine menu, the user simply drags the MenuMachine Object from the Object Palette to his/her document and places the resulting floating layer as he/she pleases. DHTML menus are floating HTML layers, so they can be placed anywhere on the page, so long as the MenuMachine object is not moved out of its parent floating box. If the user moves the MenuMachine Object out of the floating box, MenuMachine displays a pop-up error that this is bad for MenuMachine and it must be undone. MenuMachine, fortunately, offers a Special menu item to fix the nested MenuMachine object. The MenuMachine object must also be the first or last item on an HTML page, i.e. not enclosed within DIV tags. Once the MenuMachine object has been successfully placed, the user then edits and formats the menu to his/her satisfaction, using MenuMachine's three tabs.
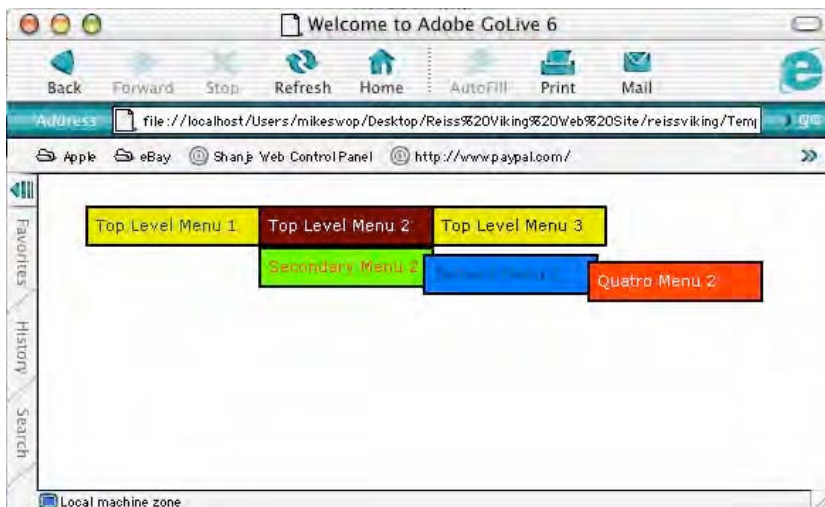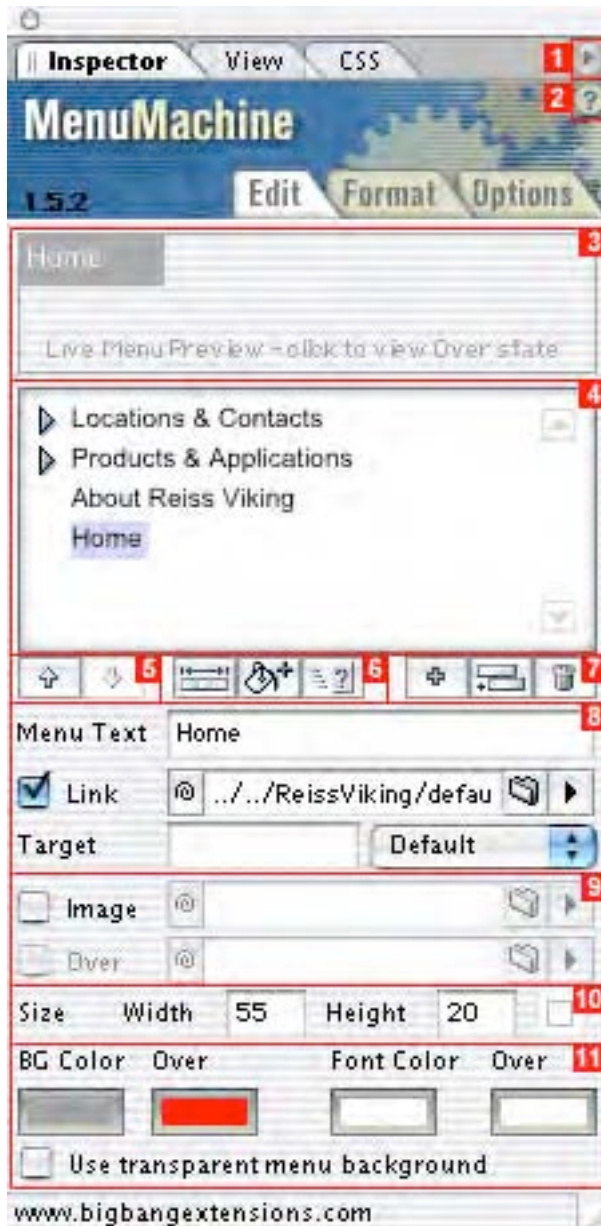

But MenuMachine would be only a band-aid prescription if it could not be used with GoLive 6's components feature. Fortunately, MenuMachine works in components! With components, GoLive 6 users can update their MenuMachine menus in a single HTML file (the component) and have all pages which employ the component be updated as well. Oh, yeah!

The one thing that users must remember to do is upload the Generated Items folder to the live web server along with all pages and updated pages using MenuMachine for their MenuMachine menus to work. This is true with every new menu created and every update made to a menu. This is true also when MenuMachine is updated to a newer version (and after updates are made to the MenuMachine menu). MenuMachine writes its JavaScript code to a file inside the Generated Items folder so that the user's browser need only read the MenuMachine JavaScript code once and cache it for best performance. Always a good practice (if you're using GoLive and still having your JavaScript code written in your pages, you should reconsider).

Anatomy of the Machine

MenuMachine's Edit Tab. The Edit tab is the first tab displayed by default. The settings in this tab control the depth, contents and effects of the menus.

Inspector | View | CSS **1** ▶

2 ?

MenuMachine

1.5.2 Edit | Format | Options

3 Home

Live Menu Preview – click to view Over state

4
▷ Locations & Contacts
▷ Products & Applications
About Reiss Viking
Home

⇧ | ⇩ **5** | ▭ ⟋⁺ ≡? **6** | ✛ ▭ 🗑 **7**

8 Menu Text Home

☑ Link @ ../../ReissViking/defau 🗏 ▶

Target [ ] Default ▲▼

9 ☐ Image @ [ ] 🗏 ▶
☐ Over @ [ ] 🗏 ▶

10 Size Width 55 Height 20 ☐

11 BG Color Over Font Color Over
[ ] [red] [ ] [ ]

☐ Use transparent menu background

www.bigbangextensions.com

1. This small triangle appears on all three MenuMachine tabs. It usually indicates that a palette menu is available, for selecting and/or loading presets. In the case of MenuMachine 1.52, this feature is not yet implemented. That it appears in MenuMachine may foretell an additional feature for a future release.

2. This question mark button likewise appears in all three MenuMachine tabs. Clicking it with a MenuMachine object selected launches the system's default browser and loads MenuMachine's help pages in the browser. A very important feature for new users of any software package. The presence of this feature also indicates the quality of support users can expect from Big Bang Extensions. Big Bang hasn't cut any corners. Professional all the way!

3. This context-sensitive live menu preview area is also available in all three MenuMachine tabs. This feature displays how the selections made in each tab will affect the menu, even the rollover state, based on the selected menu item (see #4). The normal state of the selected menu item is always displayed. To preview the over state, users just click in the live preview area. That this preview area is also context-sensitive is important. Since users can change aspects of each and every menu item in this tab independently of all others, the preview will change depending on which menu item is selected, displaying the unique choices made for the selected menu item.

4. This hierarchical menu list clearly shows each menu item and its placement in the menu hierarchy. The list acts as an outline, indenting each new level. The menus are displayed by the name given to them in #8 below. The live menu is displayed letter for letter and in the same placement as in this menu list. The arrows on the left of each menu item work like the arrows in the Mac OS and GoLive's site palette: click an arrow once to expand the menu item next to it for viewing, click the same arrow again to collapse the menu back to its original state. The arrows to the right of the list area scrolls the menu list up and down. If the user finds the relatively shallow height of this area frustrating while working with larger menus, he/she can simply expand the height of the overall palette. The menu list area expands proportionally with the rest of the palette.

5. These two arrows move a selected menu item up and down the menu hierarchy within its menu. For example, if the user selects a menu item under a menu called Products, he/she can move that item higher and lower in the menu under Products using these arrows. Just as users do with GoLive actions. But, unfortunately, these arrows do not move menu items to higher-level menu. And so far as I can determine, nothing in MenuMachine allows menu items to be moved from one menu to another. I thought that perhaps clicking and dragging a menu item might accomplish this. Alas, it did not. So we're stuck with the limited vertical movement within menus provided by these up and

down arrows for the time being.

   6. These three buttons are not closely related, but MenuMachine groups them together, so I will follow suit. The ruler button controls the overall dimensions of the MenuMachine object on the page. When the user clicks the ruler button, he/she is prompted with a dialogue box to enter pixel values for width and height of the menu in its normal state. The paint bucket button is probably the most useful of these three. The paint bucket button is used to duplicate menu characteristics from a select menu to other menu items of the user's choice. To use the paint bucket button, the user first selects the menu item whose characteristics he/she wishes to copy to other menu items. Then the user clicks the paint bucket icon and in the resulting dialogue box simply selects the menu items to which to copy the attributes of the selected menu item. The third button in this suite is the most obtuse of any feature in MenuMachine. It allows users to bind GoLive actions to MenuMachine menu items by hooking into actions that have been configured as Head Actions set to trigger onCall. What does this mean exactly? It means that advanced GoLive users who employ actions as part of their normal routine can integrate MenuMachine menus with actions into their web sites as easily as possible.

   7. These three buttons are perhaps the simplest to understand. The + button creates a new menu item by duplicating the selected menu item and placing that duplicate at the same level as the original (much like duplicating a layer in Photoshop). The sub-menu button creates a sub-menu in the same manner but places the duplicate menu as a sub-menu of the selected menu. The trash button deletes the selected menu item and any sub-menus. As a safeguard against accidental deletion, which cannot be undone, MenuMachine displays a dialogue box to confirm or cancel the deletion before any menu item is permanently deleted.

   8. This area is the lifeblood of MenuMachine. Users enter the text to name each menu item, as well as specify the link and link target for each menu item. Each menu item's name set here is displayed above in the menu list, even if the user elects to use graphics in his/her menus (see #9).

   9. Although many users prefer to use HTML text for their menus, other users like to incorporate graphics into their menus for some very interesting effects (see Big Bang Extensions own web site (http://www.bigbangextensions.com) and the links at the end of this review). MenuMachine accomodates both types of users. Users may elect to use graphics for select menu items, or for all menu items if they wish. Users simply click to use an image, target the image in the site palette as they normally would to use for the normal state, and target an image for the over state if they wish.

   10. Another simple but powerful feature. The user specifies the dimensions of each menu item in pixels, whether text or graphics. If the dimensions are too small, the text or graphic in the menu will be clipped. With the proper dimensions, MenuMachine menus can be blended seamlessly into web sites.

   11. Color is the first and most noticeable characteristic of any menu. With MenuMachine, users have control over the transparency, background and font colors for each menu item, for both the normal and over states. If the user wishes, he/she can make every menu item a different color with clashing text (it is prescribed, however, that users employ color conservatively and logically in their menus). When the user checks the box to "Use transparent menu background", the selected menu item's background becomes transparent and the BG Color and Over colors are grayed out and cannot be selected. This option can be used on any menu item listed in #4 above. So entire MenuMachine menus and individual menu items both can employ any background color or be 100% transparent. A nice effect here would be the ability to specify a value for transparency, but I don't believe this parameter would be displayed properly in most of today's browsers. In the future, perhaps opacity values will be possible, with browsers that are compliant with Web Consortium standards.

www.bigbangextensions.com
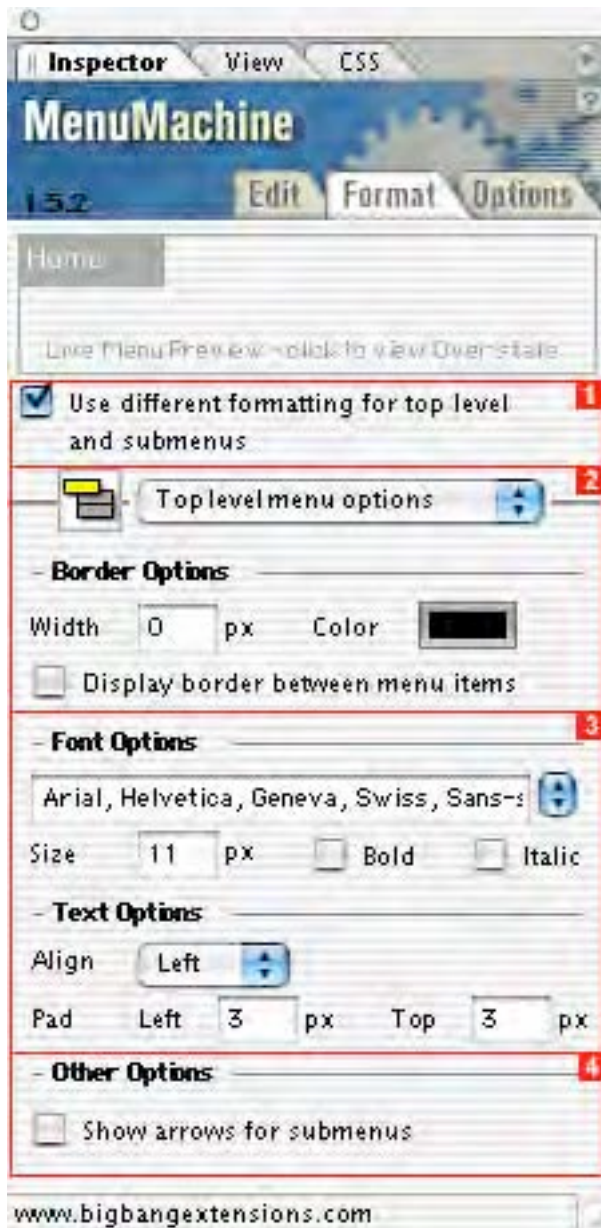
MenuMachine's Format Tab. The Format tab controls formatting for both top level and submenus. Here users can elect to use the same formatting across all levels, or to format the top-level menus separately from the sub-level menus.

1. If users want to have a style for the top-level menus separate from the style from sub-level menus, users simply check this checkbox to format them independently. When this checkbox is activated, a pull-down menu appears in #2 to choose to format the top-level and the sub-level menus independently. Otherwise, no pull-down menu is available in #2, and all formatting choices apply to the entire menu.

2. If users haven't elected to format top-level menus from submenus, all choices made here affect the entire menu. If they have elected to format the top-level and submenus differently, they will need to apply formatting for one first, then the other. There are two types of borders to consider in this tab. The first is a border around the outside of the menu, a box enclosing all the menu items. The other is a border between menu items. The border width parameter, as one can guess, sets how wide the borders will be. If 0 (zero) is used here, there will be no border around the outside of the menus. If any other number is used here, a border of that pixel width will appear around the outside of the menu. Of course, the color parameter specifies the color of the border. Only one color can be specified. If the checkbox for Border Between Items isn't checked, the border is displayed only around the outside of the menu, not between menu items. When the border between items is checked, a border of the same width is displayed between menu items. Users must remember to format both the top-level and sub-level menus if they have elected to use separate formatting.

3. Users also control typeface, font size, font style (whether bold or italic), the alignment used in the MenuMachine menu, the padding in pixels to offset the text from the top and left edges of the menu items. MenuMachine uses the standard font sets of Arial, Verdana, Times and Courier, the same that come with GoLive by default. I could not determine how to add another font set to MenuMachine, so it may not be possible to add another font set. To use one of the default font sets, users simply choose the desired font set from the pull-down menu. Users also specify font size in either pixels or points, whichever is preferred. Users may also choose to make the fonts in the menu normal (by default), bold, italic or bold and italic by checking the appropriate box. Padding here is similar to cell padding in tables but does not apply to the bottom and right of the menus as padding does in tables. To control the offset from the bottom and right edges, uses must make the menus taller and wider to create the illusion of bottom and right padding. This is not an oversight of MenuMachine, but rather a limitation of

how DHTML menus are displayed in browsers.

    4. This option is simple. Users check Show Arrows for Submenus if they wish to have an arrow displayed in menu items which have submenus. When this option is chosen, arrows only appear in menu items that contain submenus. If this option is enabled and a menu item does not have any submenus, no arrow will be displayed.

MenuMachine's Options Tab. The Options tab allows users to specify menu behaviors globally, including orientation, trigger, fade delay, overlap, and relative positioning.
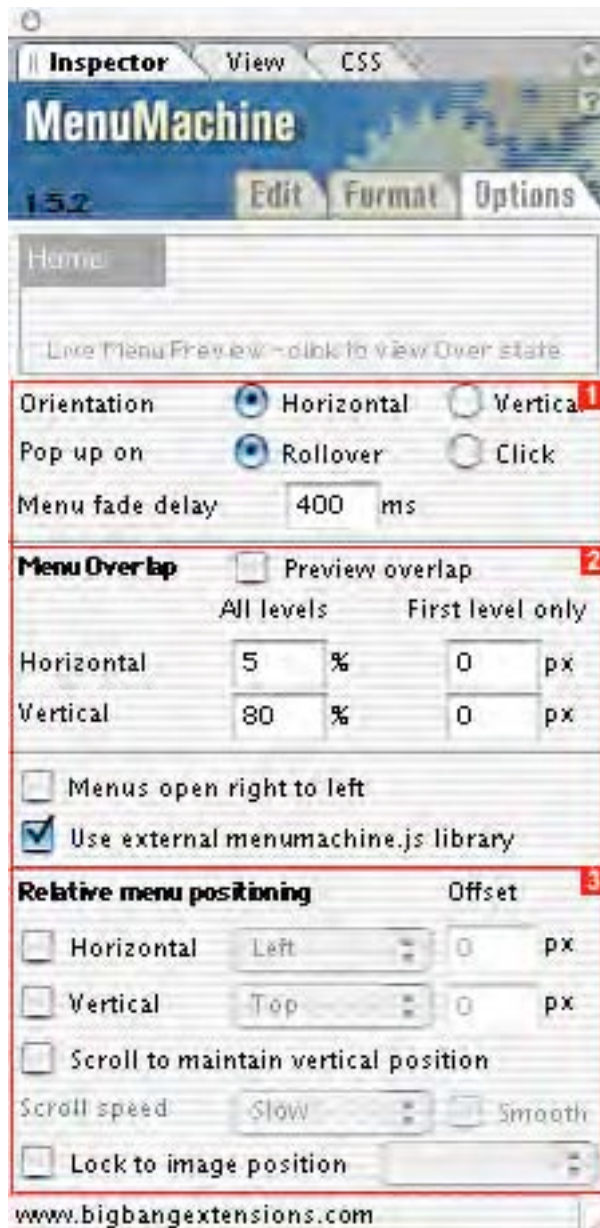
1. MenuMachine allows users to choose the orientation, either vertical or horizontal. Users can also specify for menus to be triggered by either rollover (the traditional choice) or when clicked. But no menu utility would be complete without a means to hide the menus again. MenuMachine also allows users to control how long (in milliseconds) before menus disappear again. So for menus to disappear in 1/4 second, users should enter 250; for 1/2 second, users should enter 500; for one second, users should enter 1000 here; for two seconds, 2000; for three seconds, 3000; etc.

2. By convention, DHTML menus overlap to visually associate submenus with their parents. Checking the checkbox for "Preview overlap" will preview the overlap in the live preview menu area (discussed above). There are two types of overlap to consider here. The first is the overlap between menus and submenus (all levels). The second is the distance between the parent menu and all other submenus (first level only). MenuMachine allows users to specify in percentage how much submenus at all levels will overlap their parents horizontally and vertically. Percentages are measured from the top and right edges of the parent menu by default. A larger percentage in the horizontal setting moves the menu toward the left edge of the parent menu; a smaller percentage in the vertical setting moves the menu down toward the bottom edge of the parent menu. This behavior is reversed if users check Menus Open Right to Left. If users wish to have a gap between the first level menu and its children, users simply enter a pixel value for horizontal and vertical. The submenus, then, will be offset that distance from the first level menu, and a transparent gap will appear between the menus. This effect can come in very handy for some designs. Users also have the option to "Use external menumachine.js library." This is enabled by default. At this time, I do not know of any reason to use an internal library, but this feature is new to MenuMachine 1.52, so at some point Big Bang Extensions felt it necessary to include this option.

3. Naturally, no navigation menu is very useful if it can only be left aligned. So Big Bang Extensions have provided many ways to specify menu positioning. MenuMachine's positioning is absolute by default. So wherever the MenuMachine object is placed on the HTML page is where it will be displayed from the top and left edge of the browser window and scroll with the HTML page. MenuMachine, however, allows users to alter this behavior. MenuMachine menus can be offset in pixels relative to the left, right, center, top, middle and bottom of the HTML page. Both negative and positive pixel values can be used to position the menu. If neither horizontal nor vertical positioning is selected, the user can elect to have the menu scroll to maintain its vertical position in the browser window, independent of the HTML page. Users can also select whether to scroll slow, medium or fast, and check whether to scroll smoothly or less smoothly (default). But sometimes positioning to the browser window is less than desirable. In cases where MenuMachine menus require absolutely precise alignment with an image, they can be aligned with the top left corner of the image. For image position alignment, there are two conditions that must be met: a) the user must have named an image on the page; b) the MenuMachine floating box placeholder must be the last item on the page. Images are named in the More tab of the Inspector Palette. To correct the floating box placeholder for MenuMachine, users must use the Fix Object Nesting option for MenuMachine in the Special menu at the top of the GoLive 6 screen. The option to lock to an image's position only places the top left corner of the menu in perfect alignment over the top left corner of the image.

Case Studies: Web Sites Employing MenuMachine

  * Ad Pro, LLC http://www.adprollc.com
  * Anthony Real Estate http://www.anthonyrealestate.com
  * Autotelic Design http://www.autotelic.com
  * Bank of America Performing Arts Center http://www.bankofamericapac.com
  * Beate De Nijs' MenuMachine Experiments
  http://www.denijsdesign.de/more/bea_menumachine
  * Bill's Bookstore, Inc. http://www.billsbookstore.com/index2.cfm
  * Brian Sooy & Co. http://www.briansooyco.com
  * DD Data Distribution http://www.dd.se
  * GoLive Tips of the Day (German) http://www.totd.de
  * Learning Disabilities Association of Vancouver http://www.ldav.ca
  * Mastercard Retail Jaarprijs http://www.retailjaarprijs.nl
  * National Organization for Empowering Caregivers http://www.nofec.org
  * Physician Practice Solutions http://www.physicianpracticesolutions.com
  * Reiss Viking http://www.reissviking.com
  * Retail Business Show http://www.retailbusiness-show.nl/english
  * Rochman Design-Build http://rochmandesignbuild.com
  * Round Table Tour http://www.roundtabletour.nl
  * Sawmill River Farm http://www.srfminis.com
  * Suzanne Crane Gallery http://www.suzannecrane.com/gallery/plats_body.html
  * Tantra Workshop http://www.tantraworkshop.nl
  * Tokyo Comedy http://www.tokyocomedy.com/english
  * Total Communications http://www.totaltas.com.au/home.php
  * 2003 Intel International Science and Engineering Fair http://www.intelisef2003.org

Prognosis: Cause for Exuberance

Big Bang Extensions has left out very little, if anything, from MenuMachine. No other solution provides such a powerful, integrated, cross-platform and cross-browser menu creation system for Adobe GoLive, or any other WYSIWYG web package. For MenuMachine's power and flexibility, many users of GoLive 5 are upgrading to GoLive 6, despite hesitations about Adobe's lackluster commitment to GoLive 5. Whatever Adobe's

behavior in the past, MenuMachine offers a great opportunity and, frankly, Adobe should purchase MenuMachine from Big Bang Extensions and then pay Big Bang Extensions to maintain and continue its development. MenuMachine is simply that powerful.

For now, however, MenuMachine is an incredible bargain at $45, and quite possibly the best reason (second only to Mac OS X compatibility) to upgrade to GoLive 6. Visit Big Bang Extensions to purchase and download this exceptionally powerful and empowering GoLive 6 extension.

Real World

by Harry (doc) Babad hbabad@maccompanion.com

More Tidbits

MS Word to JPEG - Do you need to convert either scanned and OCR'd **or** word-processed material materials to graphic images? The route below serves to convert scanned paper /OCR'd to MSW (for editing and formatting to meet your needs. The converting you product to a graphics file PICT, JPEG or TIFF) suitable for illustrating a document for Internet use.

1.   Scan and OCR the pages you want to capture
2.   Capture the material in your favorite word processing program
3.   Remove any unneeded elements you don't want in your graphic. I use a table w/o visible borders to organize unsymmetrical (tabular) content.
4.   Format the material to the shape you need (I use format document in MS Word for that task.) Alternatively, directly   take a screen shot of the part you want.
5   Take a screen shot (Command-shift-4 in OS X 'n 9.x) which converts the shot to a 72 dpi PICT file.
6.   Feed the PICT file to "GraphicConverter" http://www.lemkesoft.de, change it's resolution (Picture Menu - Resolution).
7.   Save the document "AS" ... I like JPEG or TIFF files and there you are.
8.   Start at step 3. if you're starting with a word processing document

How to extract Editable Text from Screen Shots
(only if you type poorly)

Editable Text from Screen Shots (for two finger typists) — Ever run into an application (e.g., MS Outlook} from which you could neither cut and paste or drag information from an address list. You could carefully type the information in to ClipEdit Everydaysoftware.net/clipedit/index.html. If you're a two finger typist like I am, then you can easily collect errors by the score since your "fingers" hit the cracks more often than the keys. To add insult to injury, OmniPage X, my present OCR program, can not import a PICT file at 72 dpi in a format that you can OCR directly. There is a work-around, but it's multistep and I wonder why I do it. But inadvertently using mistyped eMAIL addresses or URLS is also time consuming problem, making one feel downright rejected.

So, using the 72 dpi PICT file you captured take a few extra steps and you can get to editable information. Is this worth the trouble? I think so, if there are more than two or three lines to capture exactly.

-    Take a screen shot of the page you cant copy or from which you cannot drag Information. (Command-shift-4 in OS X 'n 9.x). This results in a image which is a 72 dpi PICT file.
-    Feed the PICT file to "GraphicConverter" (http://www.lemkesoft.de), and change it's resolution to at least 150 dpi (Picture Menu - Resolution).
-    Save "as" the document in GraphicConverter ... I use the JPEG format. Your are 3/4's of the way!
-    Feed the document to Acrobat (not the reader) and save it as a PDF file (Saving as a RTF file does not work).
-    Finally, import the document to your OCR software. In OmniPage X using the "assistant" feature, it will be directly OCR'd. Save "as" the editable

text as a MS Word document.

If you are lucky, the corrections you need to make are fewer then you'd have made just typing. If anyone has a better way, please let me know. A standard export the address book does not work with a locked and protected file.

Rants 'n Rage

So I'm ticked off with many web and phone transactions with hardware and software suppliers, aren't you? You all help keep your blood pressures down… Lift every voice – Send all the perpetrators problem report messages. Tell them they really don't want your business now, do they!

Calling Mega-Firms for Help — Button, button, who's got the button - and no live person available ever, when punching "0" at any time in the "listen carefully our menu has changed games! Of course you can go to the web site and tune in to their paid support. Even the IRS and Medicare gets you to a live human being these days.

Free 90 day Service, Well Sort Of — Starting the clock on 90-day free service when the information needed is not in a FAQ section and you need to install your new update on a new computer? Yes, I can do a serial sequence V. 5, v. 5 in Classic and then and finally v. 6 install in OS X. Isn't this cruel and unusual punishment?

Adding New Information to Internet Explorer's "Autofill" Feature - Adding new fields such as FAX in a manner that does not allow you to create a new visible field in your preferences is a pain and botheration. Eddie Hargreaves, a fellow MacCompanion notes: "In the Preferences window, click on the Forms AutoComplete tab, then the Add... button. Type in the number you want, hit OK, then hit OK again to close the Preferences. Then, the next time you're at a form, you will only need to start typing the number and it will fill it in automatically (like a favorite URL in the Address bar)." Uh! Thanks Eddie but both the fax and the home phone lines are in the 509/375 exchange; a lot of trouble to go to, to save typing 3 letters. And why isn't there a separate box in IE for the area code?

Buying on the Web – Web shopping sites, an open question! What's so difficult in setting up credit card fields that match the numbering format on the card? Use either 4 digit boxes or hyphen-separated fields and for AMEX use the 4-6-5 pattern. Doesn't sound like a real tough coding problem or is there some who cares out there?

On Emailing — Folks, do change the header (message name) when you changed the topic in cascading messages And to start out use a focused and specific name for your initial message.- Life also get simpler if you start anew with a drastic topic change, Also when starting a response to a changed subject in the body of these chain responses, deleting the chain of replies in the original topic chain of messages. If what you want to share is more than "classical gas", stick to the point and make it easy on your reader --- it's all too easy to be filtered out!

A Roxio Toast Tidbit

If you are trying to combine information (documents) from several Data CDs, Toast Titanium 5.x does not recognize the information in individually inserted multiple CDs. If the source CD in not in your drive when using a combination of an external burner and a CD-R in your Macintosh CD drive, only the first CD content is entered into the "data/files" window.

So, set up a temporary partition. I prefer, for this, using Apples <u>Disk Copy</u> utility for that rather then those created by Toast, but can't tell you why – Shucks! Put those files into the new partition, arrange them as you like, and then burn... burn!   As a side note, such partitions make a great place of incrementally collecting "stuff" temporary until you've gathered enough to burn to a CD.

Audio

SmartSound® Movie Maestro™
Reviewed by Robert Pritchett rpritchett@maccompanion.com

SmartSound Software, Incorporated	5 MacCompanions
9836 White Oak Ave.	
Suite 209	Strengths: Very short learning
Northridge, CA 91325-1342	curve. 3-Clicks and I'm in
Sales: (800) 454-1900	productivity-mode!
Fax: (818) 718-9990	
Tech. Support: (818) 718-9993	Weaknesses: Know how Gillette
Reseller Sales: (818) 718-9999	grew so well? They gave away
http://www.smartsound.com	the razors and then sold the
$50, $30 per each additional set (so far 6 sets,	blades. $50 is a give-away and
Blockbuster, Cutting Edge, Family, Sentimental,	the pull is to get the Movie Music
Sports and Vacation Movie Music CDs)	CDs. Then upgrade to the
http://www.sonicdesktop.com/moviemaestro/support	Professional packages when you
(Update to 1.01 for QuickTime 6 compatibility.)	want to get professional and also
Requires a desire to want to add music to your	get paid for your work.
iMovies and make them appear professional, even if	
this ISN'T the professional version! Works best with	
OS X 10.2.3, 16 MB RAM, 16 MEG hard drive space	
(lots of hard drive space if you want to not use the	
CDs directly, 350 MB to download off disc, then there	
are the add-ons...), and use at least QuickTime 5.	

We are looking at the prospect of possibly videostreaming and multimediaing
MacCompanion, so imagine my delight when I discovered Smart Sound Software (SSS,
okay, no background hissing) and their products that work so well with iMovie and
iTunes! The professional package we would have to use is SonicFire Pro for $350.

I popped in the Movie Maestro CD, registered the user license, and let the tutorial run. I
then popped in one of the Movie Music CDs and downloaded to my hard drive. I didn't
have to, but I did anyway. There is also a sampler that comes with the install CD to hear

part of each of 10 pieces per Movie Music CD.

The caveat is that Maestro Music is for personal or educational use only and not for commercial ventures. Thus the warning, and our desire to get SonicFire Pro so the ASCAP, BMI, SESAC or other groups don't get sue-happy. I'm sensitized to this since my father used to perform in his own dance bands (and I helped). If you start selling your home-made iMovies, they may pounce and ask for royalties. Count on it. Witness the RIAA issues today. Each Movie Music CD is plastered with a Limited License.

Can you adapt or modify, reproduce or otherwise manipulate the source files provided by SSS? Yes, permission is granted. They just don't want to be held liable for any unauthorized use.

Now, if you want to, go see the commercial at http://www.smartsound.com/moviemaestro/index.html.

I consider our daughters to be music connoisseurs. I expect they will be delighted to use this product in their activities as soon as I give it to them (not yet!) for use with their eMac (okay, they have it all now).
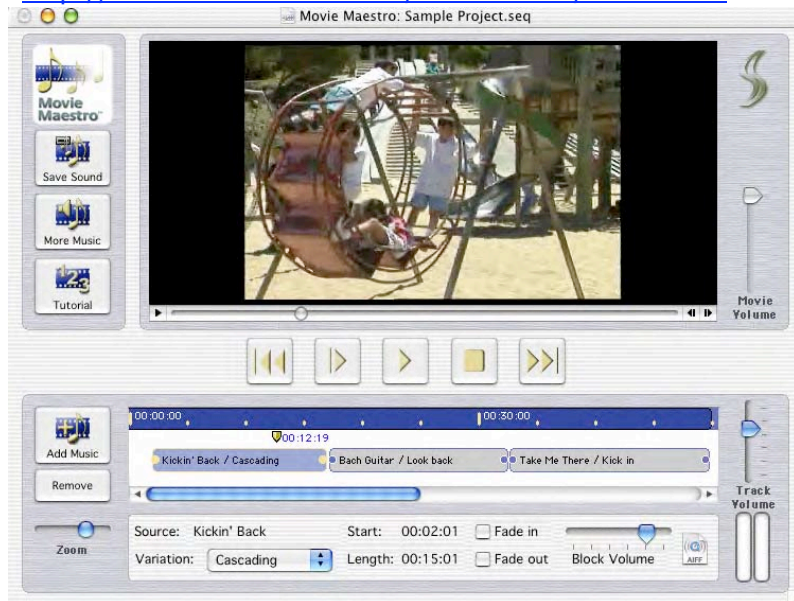

Do you need to buy the Add-on Movie Music CDs right away? That depends on what you want to do. The program disc has 26 songs already. I was able to also check them out using iTunes. Each averaged around 15-19 Megs for an average of 3-minute soundtracks. I'm in the market for a Latino beat (a-hah! they have "Spicy Rhythms"). What is available today can be found here

http://www.smartsound.com/moviemusic/index.html.

How is it used? Import an iMovie, then add the music in 3 steps adding or shortening length as you go. Super cinema. Super simple. Just like the Mac!

This is just a flavor for the SonicFire Pro package though. You'll probably want to trade up after you've tasted Maestro Music. Just be aware that the music on the CDs are proprietary code (not intended to work with other system sound packages) and run at 22k for Music Maestro. The

professional sets operate in multimedia (22k) and professional mode (44.1k) and there are now over 50 CDs. You can join their monthly release club.
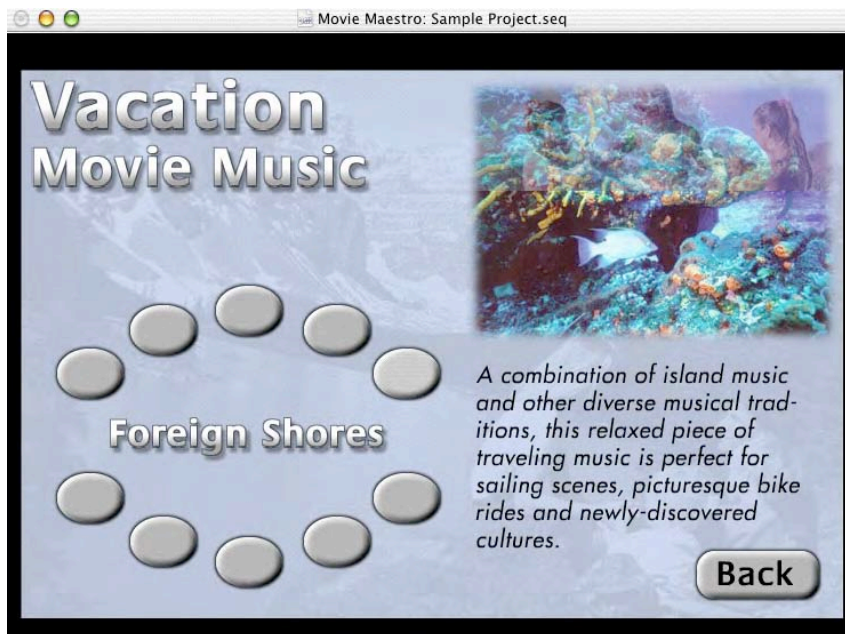
Now, Music Maestro isn't limited to just iMovie. It also works with ASF, AVI, DV (both NTSC and PAL) , Flash (.SWFs), MPEG, QuickTime and WMV video and Cinepak, Indeo Video, Microsoft DirectShow, Microsoft Video 1, Motion JPEG, Sorenson Video and Targa Codecs. It also supports 8/16 Bit, Mono/Stereo, (import/export) AU, AIFF, DV (at 32 kHz and 48kHz) and WAV audio formats.

Congratulations, you now have your very own Video Music Librarian! The sample page provides licks and descriptions per Movie Music CD.

When clicking on the "Add Music" button it took me to a menu with a list to choose any of the Movie Music CDs I downloaded to my hard drive and also gave me options to select either by Style, Library, or Title. By choosing a lick, it loads under the movie clip or just loads if no movie clip has been introduced yet.

If you've played with iMovie at all, the "Soundtrack Timeline" control section feels very comfortable.

Now how well does Music Maestro work with Keynote? It should work just fine, as long as you load a QuickTime movie into it. After all, you already loaded the music into the movie part and you aren't exporting any PDFs, right?

Now I'm going to see if I can use Music Maestro with a presentation on Project Management coming up shortly. I'll need a 17" G4 PowerBook and a couple of hours to prep...

SonicFire Pro 3.0 - Soundtrack Creation
Reviewed by Robert Pritchett rpritchett@maccompanion.com

SmartSound Software, Inc.	5 MacCompanions
9836 White Oak Ave.	
Suite 209	Strengths: Powerful audio
Northridge, CA 91325-1342	editing features with Smart
1-800-454-1900	Music, lots of scores to choose
Fax: 1-818-718-9990	from.
http://www.smartsound.com/	
	Weaknesses: I confess, I have a
$300 USD with Full Spectrum ($100) and	weak wallet. Oh, the product?
Contemporary Insights ($100) or $500 bundle (same	None found so far.
but also with Maximum Action ($130) and Scoring	
Essentials ($130)	
Requirements: OS 8.5 or higher including OS X Power	
PC, CD ROM drive,	
speakers, 16 MB RAM (24 MB recommended), 16 MB	
Hard Disk space plus lots of space for the Music CD	
adds.	
http://www.smartsound.com/sonicfire/order.html#sfp	
Demo Video:	
http://www.smartsound.com/sonicfire/demomov.html	
More Music:	
http://www.smartsound.com/music/index.html	
Requirements: OS 8 or higher, Power PC, 16MB RAM,	
16MB Hard drive space (except you want lots for the	
Music CDs), CD-ROM, speakers	

You saw my review of Music Maestro, right? Well then, here is the natural migration from there to here. You want professional soundtrack creation? Now you've got professional (44K pieces, not just 22K) royalty-free soundtrack creation and over 50 Audio Palette, Sound Palette or Edge Series music CDs to choose from (see the More Music Link). Remember my request for Latin music? They sent me "Spicy Rhythms" and there are 17 pieces on there!

Are you a videographer? Then this product is a "must-have". Time is money and you can't spend all day or night fixing or futzing with music scores to fit video clips. Sonicfire Pro has SmartSound music technology that "fits on the fly" with both beginning and ending time frame intelligence to make the magic work. I understand those are called

"smoothing audio transitions". All I know is that it just works.

Video file specifications such as AVI, Cinepak, DV, DV NTSC & PAL, Indeo Video, Microsoft Video 1, Motion JPEG, MPEG, Quicktime, Sorenson Video, Targa work with this product using QuickTime technology. So do Audio file specifications at sample rates of 11 kHz, 22 kHz, 32 kHz (DV audio), 44.1 kHz and 48 kHz, as well as 8, 16, 24, 32, 64 Bit, Stereo/Mono, AIFF, AU, CD Audio, MP3, Quicktime and WAV. It is safe to say that Sonicfire Pro is compatible with any application or system that imports industry standard media file formats.

If you want to see just how this works, go visit the link on the demo movie provided. It is the same as what comes on the Sonicfire Pro CD.

You really must try the Timeline, Blocks and Video windows to see how this "syncs in".

The fun part is watching how the chosen music fits itself into the movie clip length and does it so well! It does it using the 5-step Maestro feature. Figure out the creativity during the process, then just drag the bars back and forth and see how it re-orchestrates the piece. This is way cool!

Also, for volume controls, there is the graph for moving points up or down to express crescendos, decrescendos, pianos to fortes and other dynamics named Volume and Wave displays. But you don't have to be a professional musician like my father, to use this package to best effect.

So will I become a professional videographer using this product? Let me say that it certainly smoothes the process to become such!

Let's see. We've got the audio covered with SonicFire Pro, the video with iMovie3, the presentation with Keynote and distribution with iDVD. I think we are just about ready to try interactive multimedia presentations as soon as we get some more camera gear...

Books

Beyond Borders: Web Globalization Strategies
Reviewed by Robert Pritchett rpritchett@maccompanion.com
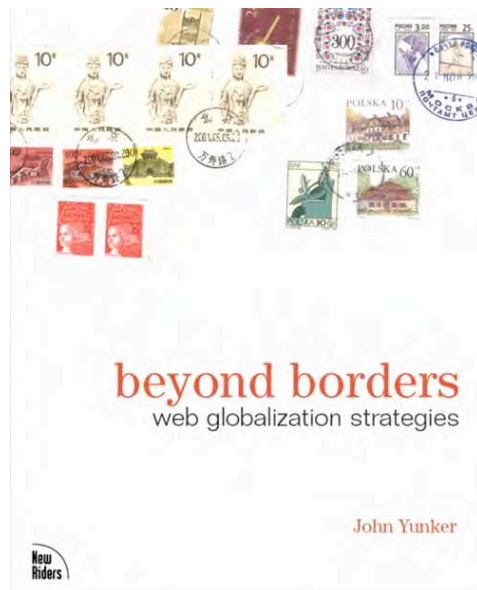
Author: John Yunker
http://www.bytelevel.com/beyondborders
New Riders Publishing, August 22, 2002
http://www.newriders.com
576 pages
ISBN: 0735712085
$40 USD, $63 CA, £31 Net UK
Errata:
http://www.bytelevel.com/beyondborders/errata.html
Tower of Babel global web project in 9 languages
http://www.bytelevel.com/babel/intro.html

"Think Globally, Act Locally". Read "Beyond Borders: Web Globalization Strategies" by John Yunker and learn how to do it on-line. Every chapter is chock-full of URLs that drill deeper into each topic of discussion. So now I think I might know how to reach the majority of folks who use the Internet around the world using 9 major languages and how we can get from "here" to "there". What it really boils down to is that someone on the ground in the country and language you want to market has to be part of the program if you want to be truly successful with globalized e-commerce.

I learned about CJKV (Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese), FIGS (French, Italian, German, Spanish), bidi (bidirectional nomenclature for Arabic, Hebrew, and oriental languages), handling currencies using online services and lots about translation services and even "Simple" or "Controlled" English. I also learned about cultural quirks and idiosyncrasies based on colors, creeds, calendars, number schemes and races and why localizing a site takes an incredible amount of work and why only a few well-monied companies have taken the lead to get there. A few smaller shops have done so as well and some case-studies have been presented in a Q&A format nicely folded into the "this

is how we did it" Chapters. Other faux paux issues discussed are such things as phone number standards, labeling, addressing (my favorite peeve) and how dates and times are presented and recorded.

John Yunker really talks up UniCode but he is almost apologetic about even mentioning Apple, "because of its low penetration worldwide" and early on, "virtually all techniques demonstrated on Windows software can be duplicated on Macintosh software". So don't let that faux paux put you off, because there is a lot of stuff here worth reading if you have any inclination at all in wanting to move your site into multilingual-mode!

There are 7 Parts consisting of 17 Chapters (and Appendices) covering thinking globally, preparing appropriately, implementing and budgeting, using computer-based bilingual and multilingual dictionaries, terminology management software, machine translation (MT), translation memory (TM), content management (merging content management and global management systems), mastering country domains and International Domain Names for Applications (IDNA), supporting international customers and even UniCode and the future of the Globalization of the Internet. The 6 Appendices cover a nice glossary, global color chart, character entities from ASCII to UniCode, language and country codes, encodings for charsets and HTML metatags and headers and International Notation Standards.

"Beyond Borders" gives me a much greater appreciation on just how well Apple has done with OS X language and keyboard localizations (see System PreferencesInternational even if you didn't install all the localizations in OS X). Learn even more at the AppleGlot3 http://developer.apple.com/intl/localization.html, Simultrans http://www.simultrans.com/Articledetail.cfm?PostingID=43 and TRADOS http://trados.com/.

You too may want to reach a global market quickly. By going to John Yunker's website, you can keep up-to-date on what's happening with "best-practices" on a global scale.

Now if John Yunker had only used a Mac...;^)

Desktop DVD Authoring, 1st edition
Reviewed by Robert Pritchett rpritchett@maccompanion.com
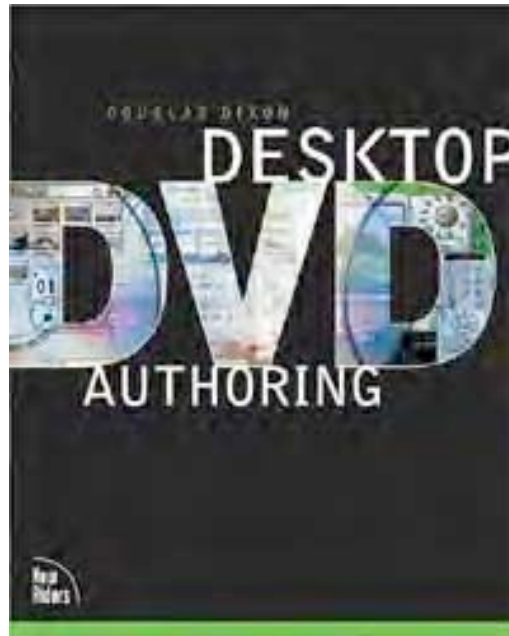
Author: Douglas Dixon
http://www.manifest-tech.com
New Riders Publishing, October 11, 2002
http://www.newriders.com
552 pages
ISBN: 0-7897-2752-8
$35 USD, $55 CA, £27.50 Net UK
Beginner to Intermediate

Desktop DVD Authoring is a reference book compiled from information gathered from a number of resources by Douglas Dixon and then divided up into alternating chapters treating first the Macintosh environment and then the Windows environment.

The reason I requested this book was because I wanted an overview of what technologies are out there I can use today to help us work on doing Interactive Multimedia. This book attempts to bring it all together. An overview is what I got.

The first thing I did was go to the Appendices and read all 4 sections; DVD Technical Summary, References, Glossary and Authoring Software Gallery. Then I went back and read the other 5 Parts (14 Chapters) on understanding and playing DVD for the consumer and computer, working with automated video authoring and editing, personalizing it and then doing professional authoring. Each section deals with different packages available for us today. Okay, I pretty much scanned through the Windows chapters.

For me, one of the most interesting parts was seeing where all the DVD labeling is migrating and also how Apple has really influenced this whole arena with all the technological and software releases causing the whole industry to lower its pricing schemes for products, but I feel that the author wrote this book mostly from the Windows perspective.

Chapter 4 has a table with no less than 7 packages on digital media for the Mac. You already know about all of them and all are from Apple, "built-in".

Most everything else looks like the stuff appears to have come out of Users Manuals and got repackaged here. There are lots of screenshots, pricing information and links throughout the book and a couple of tutorials on the more expensive Windows products.

Think of this book as a one-stop-shop for reviews of all the little programs needed in the Windows environment that are kind of comparable to the ones we get on our Macs (you already know about iDVD, right?) such as CyberLink and Intervideo products. There are other reviews on pricier packages such as DVD Studio Pro, Sonic DVDit!, MyDVD, ReelDVD and Scenarist. The Gallery also treats print to Adobe, Medio Stream, Pinnacle Systems, Roxio and Ulead Systems. For the Macintosh environment some print is also dedicated to iMovie and Final Cut Pro.

If you aren't interested in the other platform and how DVD authoring is done on it, you may safely skip every other chapter in the book, at least in the later sections. Or go Google.

What did I learn most from the book besides knowing something about all the Windows "me-too" DVD software? I learned about DVD capacities and also a little about when to write "disc" and "disk".

FreeBSD The Complete Reference (With CD-ROM for 5.0)
Reviewed by Robert Pritchett rpritchett@maccompanion.com
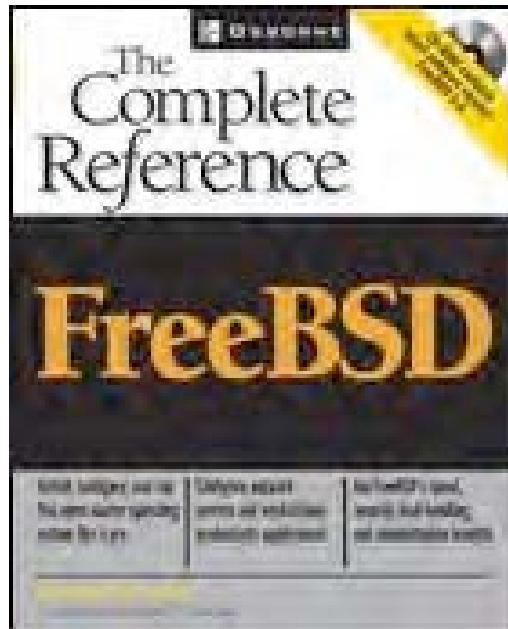
Author: Roderick Smith
http://www.rodsbooks.com/
McGraw-Hill Osborne February 10, 2003
http://www.osborne.com
912 pages
ISBN: 0-07-222409-6
$50 US $75 CA

As you probably know by now Mac OS X borrowed liberally from FreeBSD, so I figured it would be good to know a little about one of the legs that Mac OS X stands on. This book provides that background - and much, much more.

"FreeBSD The Complete Reference" by Roderick Smith is designed for the System Administrator. If you have never played that role before, don't worry too much. It is really an easy read. Honest! Rod Smith did an excellent job laying out this book - this is his 10th - and his professionalism shows.

All the Open Source references can be found here. All the ways of making this stuff work in both BSD and non-BSD environments can also be found here.

All the fun things Linux users have been discovering about GNOME, KDE, GIMP and all the other geeky stuff can be found here. Rod even includes a Glossary!

So what is the value for those of us using Mac OS X? For me it was the Chapters on the X Window system, setting up firewalls and webservers, configuring an SSH (Secure Shell) server, system security, and writing scripts.

The other stuff on office and graphics software, multimedia programming, etc, just made me appreciate that much more the miracle that Apple has pulled off creating OS X - now up to 10.2.5.

If you want to be "in the know" and speak geek with your Linux pals (and know so much more than they after reading this book) or want to also know where part of OS X comes from, grab this book.

Hacker's Challenge 2   Test Your Network Security & Forensic Skills
Reviewed by Robert Pritchett rpritchett@maccompanion.com
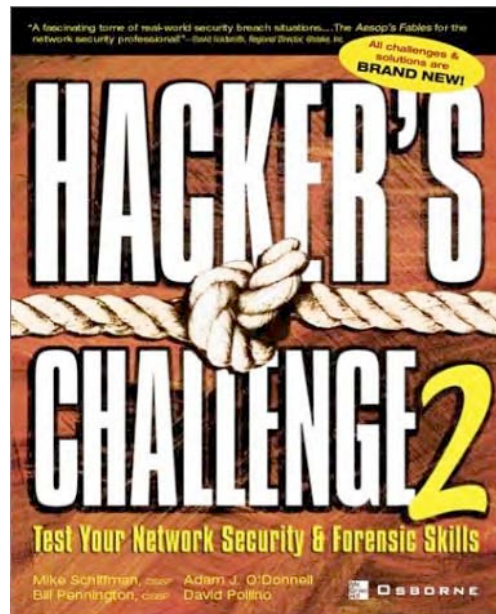
You have a network. Do you know what is needed to keep it from being cracked into? Are you clueless when it comes to reading the tea-leaves of computer forensics? "Hacker's Challenge 2" by Mike Schiffman, Bill Pennington, David Pollino and Adam O'Donnell doesn't really show you "how-to". It is more on the level of "Test Your Network Security & Forensics Skills", by reading what others have experienced and how the issues were resolved. Mystery, Intrigue and some Humor intermixed. And there are lots of network log samples and what they revealed. It is more of a current easy-reading and entertaining "who watches what and how they get there" kind of book (okay, it was for me anyway).

There are 19 scenarios in Part I and in Part II are the solutions with links, etc. for further investigation. Nowhere are Macs discussed 9 I didn't notice anyway), but the book gave me a pretty good indication of what Sys-Admins are up against today from both outside and inside their networked organizations (and I feel so good not to be one anymore!).

I was most impressed with the scenarios relating to wireless systems. Those of us that use AirPort, need to sit up and take notice. That alone makes this book worth reading.

The Appendix has 2 pages of online resources if you want to skip the Chapters. But don't skip them because they are very interesting reading! Whoever put the lessons-learned scenarios together (a computer forensics team, apparently @Stake) did an excellent job, so very few of the scenarios sound or even look similar.

Each scenario in Part I is categorized by Industry, Attack, Prevention and Mitigation Complexities with correlating sections in Part II. There are even some links there that may not have gotten captured in the Appendix. You'll just have to go look for yourself!

One chapter even deals with reverse-engineering espionage as competitors pretend to be sales-teams using nothing more than phone conversations to try and get a leg-up on others. Flash-backs anyone?

After reading the book, I revisited my old friends at SecureMac http://www.securemac.com/ just to see if there were any updates for OS X. I also discovered from other sources about converting normal-speak into 'H4X0R' text http://pineapplestudios.tripod.com/products/hacker.html in OS X, since another chapter deals so heavily in that ego-trip of hacker-speak.

And then I also read this about "Someone out there is giggling at us". http://www.wired.com/news/infostructure/0,1377,57229-2,00.html on the whole cracker underground and some of their personalities.

I'm not L33T (elite), but this book is †h0_6h†-pr0v0ki|\|6 (thought-provoking). Watch your lower backside. Feeling paranoid? Maybe you should. The Mac environment is not immune.

The Humane Interface--New Directions for Designing Interactive Systems
Reviewed by Robert Pritchett rpritchett@maccompanion.com
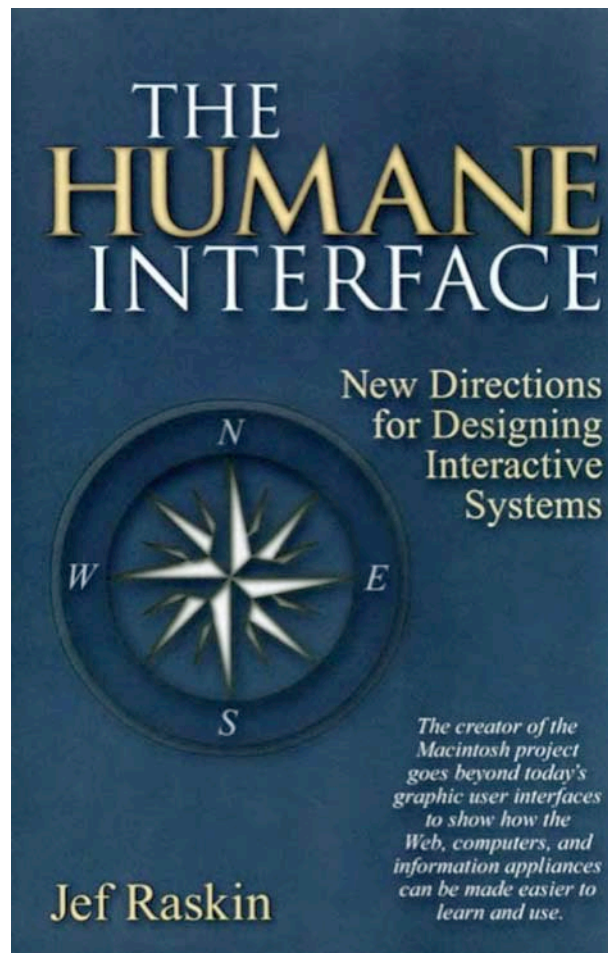
Do you remember the Apple Guidelines book? I gave mine away. I should have kept it, but sometimes we must move on. And so must Technology, if it is to become our slave and not our master. Jef Ruskin points this out in graphic detail in "The Humane Interface--New Directions for Designing Interactive Systems" and I was delighted to be able to review it. In many ways he is such a breath of fresh air!

He breaks old paradigms and moves us to think clearly with the end-goal in mind and maps clear-thinking ways of how to "get there" using cognitive psychology (cognetics) and some scientific formulations (Quantification and GOMS Goals, Objects, Methods, Selection Rules analysis) in order to lead us into a better process for interacting between Technology and how we intend to use it.

We tend to overcomplicate the intuitively simple, whether with test equipment or

browsers - or computer interfaces - and we tend to step into some deep and messy blindingly obvious flaws as a result (think Caps Lock Key vs Shift Key on a computer keyboard - a left-over from manual !@#$% typewriter days).

Ruskin shows us how to logically "oversimplify" - and get away with it with Human Computer Interface or HCI and noun-verb constructs (Select object, then action) and "locus of attention" and "monotony of action" vs "habit-forming action" and "Unification". Oh yes, the Unification Chapter. It is such a good read! (Polymorphing across platforms, zooming (drilling down) and leaping (optimized search process), interface efficiency and Modes that go bye-bye. Imaginative controversy.

Some of Raskins Rules: "A computer shall not waste your time, harm your work or require you to do more work than is strictly necessary." So why waste time with a boot-up process? Remember when TVs had to warm up? I've got a monitor that does the same thing today all by itself (energy saving mode - yuck!). Mousing around (Fitts Law). Choosing among options (Hick's Law). Programs doing whatever they want even when you answer questions yes or no. Oh, and an interface is humane if it is responsive to human needs and considerate of human frailties and user's   should set the pace of an interaction.

And yet, he commits a heresy; "Icons are bad design because they take longer to execute than keyboard strokes". See, he designed the Macintosh environment. Seems he is stuck in keyboard-mode. That's okay, I'm stuck in Voice-Recognition mode. And he talks a lot about the Canon Cat he designed back in the 1980s. And I looked for the ZoomWorld stuff online too. Too bad, I've seen better. Just remember, this went to print nearly 3 years ago.

But it is nice to know I'm not the only one that suffers from Double Dysclicksia (failure of the Graphical Interface Design GID to let us know if it takes one click or two to do the desired function). I also liked the discussion on visual affordance (apparent functionality by just looking at it, like knobs or buttons).

This is a book of inspiration, not perspiration.

Full of golden nuggets, but you have to highlight them or at least follow Jef Ruskin's italics. I heavily bookmarked it. If you do any kind of Interface design work, this book will become a classic.

Information Architecture: Blueprints for the Web
Reviewed by Robert Pritchett rpritchett@maccompanion.com
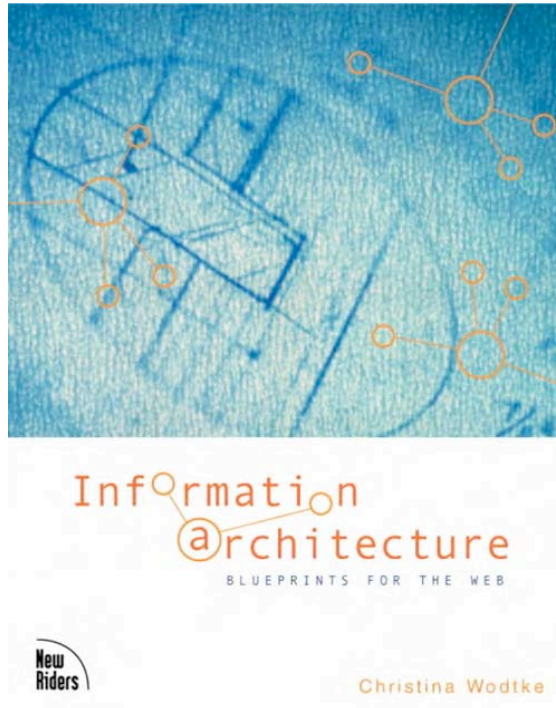
Author: Christina Wodtke
http://www.eleganthack.com
New Riders,October 16, 2002
http://www.newriders.com
368 pages
ISBN: 0-7357-1250-6
$30 USD, $47 CA, £23.50 Net UK
Beginner-Intermediate

"Information Architecture: Blueprints for the Web" by Christina Wodtke makes the obtuseness and obfuscation of web design both entertaining and understandable.

It helps to answer these 3 questions about a web site;

Am I in the right place?
Do they have what I am looking for?
Do they have anything better?

And now I know what the difference between an Information Architect and a web guru is. The Web Guru is, "... a critic who prescribes rigid, oversimplified rules of website design". Obviously, the guru gets under the skin of Information Architects because "design rules" are taken at "pat-answer" face value and not questioned.

This book is intended to show how to understand the web design process without getting overly technical and uses a liberal dose of sometimes subtle humor to educate.

Thus the Blueprint approach. And the way she did it works with "ways of working". She turns a few "Laws of Web Design" into "Practical Principles" based on short attention

spans and "gotta-have-it-now" mentalities but doesn't succumb to "set-in-concrete" design concepts.

So get to know who your audience is, then do some prototyping based on mental modeling and classification (taxonomy) exercises. Christina Wodtke uses a bottom-up instead of a top-down approach and fills in the blanks along the way with "personas". It took me a while to figure out what she was doing. Kind of like cardboard cutouts of real people who would use a new site and how they would react to it. It's an empathetic "walk in your moccasins" activity.

Then there are some good interface principles she discusses. Okay, 5; Simplicity and Elegance, Proximity and Relevance, Focus and Feedback, Hierarchy of Importance and Task, and the Right tool for the right job.

And there are a few URL examples showing both good and not-so-good followers of those principles.

After all that, finally there is the IA process of whiteboarding/storyboarding and paper-scribbling and avoiding the computer for a while using sitepath diagramming and topic mapping. I loved her various "people" diagrams. I think I'll be using the diagramatic animat-able "star" people from now on or maybe the star-trek ones.

She uses a real project for the e-zine Web Design http://www.digital-web.com/ she worked on as an example of her techniques. She also discusses how to overcome "designer's block" and finishes with, "it is the responsibility of IAs to protect human beings from drowning in the sea of information".

Quick Note: Don't go to http://www.blueprintsfortheweb.com because it just reroutes back to http://www.eleganthack.com.

There are 12 Chapters and a Recommended Reading list that has 9 other books (with one going back to 1990) she uses as well as a couple of weblogs and 2 more websites on IA.

I dog-eared pages in "Eat Me, Drink Me, Push Me" (Chapter 8) and "All Together Now" (Chapter 11). I'll be able to use some of that knowledge in our own e-zine design improvements.

If you believe in scripture, all things were created spiritually before they were created temporally. After a few years at an Architectural firm, I grasped that concept as designs went from dreams to minds to physical buildings. This book does a similar thing by helping cross the gap between that ethereal realm of dream to screen using effective blueprinting principles of design to making successful websites.

The Macintosh iLife: An interactive guide to iTunes, iPhoto, iMovie, and iDVD
Reviewed by Robert Pritchett rpritchett@maccompanion.com
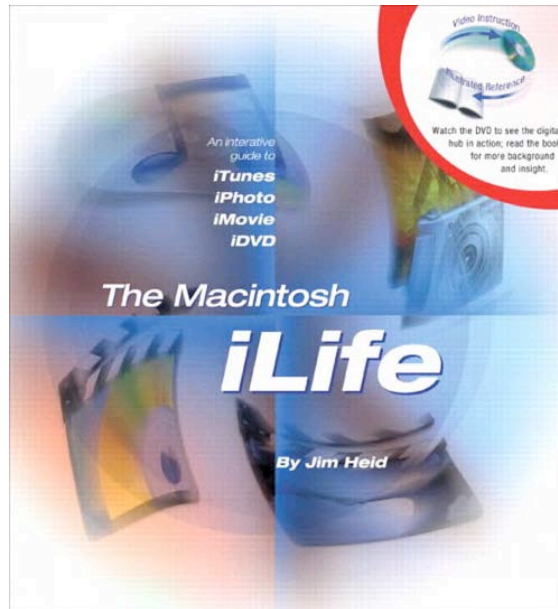
Author: Jim Heid
http://www.heidsite.com/
Peachpit Press April 01, 2003
http://www.peachpit.com
240 pages
ISBN: 0321170113
$30 US, $47 CA, £23 UK

Want to listen to a DVD tutorial on the fun side of the Macintosh experience? Jim Heid does a pretty good job with "The Macintosh iLife: An interactive guide to iTunes, iPhoto, iMovie, and iDVD" - but you need a DVD player to enjoy this one - or you can just read the book. But you miss a lot - a whole lot - if you can't do the interactive bit with the DVD - and that is what helps make this jaunt through the Apple-based desktop multimedia studio so much fun!

This hybrid DVD-Book combo is a multi-color extravaganza update from his earlier efforts in iTunes, iPhoto, iMovie and the iPods as well as the .Mac web services.

The DVD runs for nearly 2 hours and shows how to make the amateur look professional and covers such topics as ITunes and iPod music, getting organized in iPhoto, editing video in iMovie and then bringing it all together in iDVD. Following along in the book and on our eMac made this a very pleasant experience.

I liked the part about the tape and vinyl recording to CD using the iMic to make it happen. I kept telling everyone it was easy. Jim Heid shows just how easy it really is.

iMovie2 Solutions : Tips. Tricks and Special Effects
Reviewed by Dr. Eric Flescher eflescher@maccompanion.com
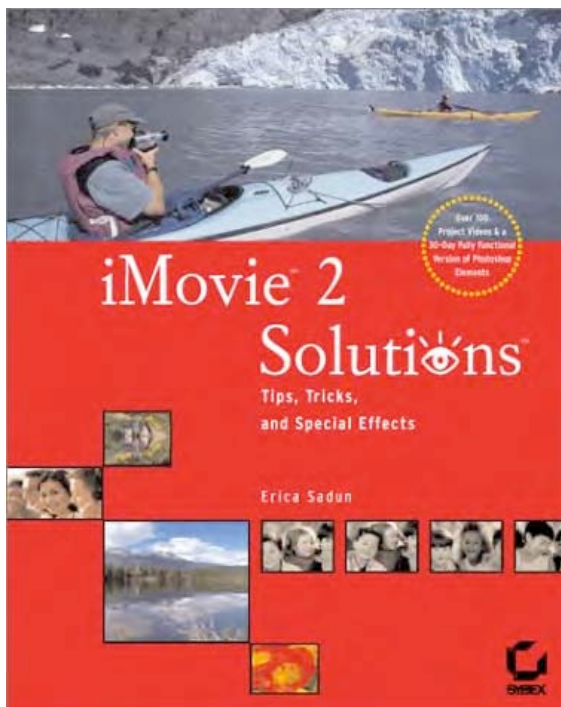
Author: Erica Sadun
Sybex Inc. May 2002
http://scooter.sybex.com/sybexbooks.nsf/homepage
ISBN: 0-7821-4088-2
$40.00 USD, $64.00 CA, £30 Net UK (includes CD)

This book is not for the novice graphic and video creator. One must learn how to use QuickTime Pro and Photoshop Elements and the basic tools first.

5 MacCompanions

Strengths: Very well laid out and thought out in-depth step-by-step instructions and illustrated screens and visuals. Great resources and tools on CD for exercises in the book as well as other creations in other works you may produce with basic graphics, animations and more. The creations are a "work in progress" and you learn best by "doing." You will find much of the software most helpful for other projects and applications beyond the book as well.

Weaknesses: Imovie2 is not contained on the CD. Shareware fees for continued support of some of the software. QuickTime Pro, must be paid in advance to access the software and adds technically to the initial price of the book. However these costs are reasonable (in comparison to buying other software like Photoshop, Final Cut Pro, Adobe Premier).

For Macintosh users iMovie has become a very popular tool, particularly for novice and "non-expert editors," who want to make and create videos for home, work and school. Many video creators however think that iMovie is only a tool for novice users and that if you want to produce quality videos, one needs to use other software. There is an assumption that you need to move to Final Cut Pro or Adobe Premiere to build stylish and more professional looking videos. If you want to improve your editing productions, do you have to use other software? However brilliant visual and dynamic videos can be produced with iMovie. All you need is some extra resources and step-by-step instructions. "iMovie 2 Solutions" by Erica Sadun can provide the guidance, tips, tricks, knowledge and resources to develop the special effects to take your videos to the next level.

As for the software itself, (the book does not cover this issue), iMovie can be used with either OSX or OS9. iMovie2 is not contained on the CD so you must download it from the Apple site, if you don't have it. (Users with the first edition iMovie may want to upgrade for free from the Apple site while new Macintosh owners will find it on their new computers). The book comes with a well-stocked CD that contains software to be used with the chapter, instructions and projects. Demo trial versions (PhotoShop Elements, Totally Hip Livestage Professional and Hipflicks) can be used (but once the allotted time is used up you must use other software or purchase the product). Additional resources as Ulead Royalty Free Media (video, images and sound), shareware utilities (Filetyper, DVmaker, MakeSimpletext, SoundRecorder, SoundEffects), GeeThree slick transitions and effects sample packs and additional resources help to integrate special effects into your videos.

Chapter One introduces you to power tips and getting the most out of iMovie. QuickTime Pro is introduced as a tool for video production. One soon discovers that the name of the book is a little bit of misnomer. Much of the work is accomplished by using tools available within QuickTime Pro (which you must purchase from Apple for a nominal fee) and then imported and used in iMovie. Once this realization subsides, you can dive into the 100 projects, which each chapter encourages you to build as a practice sessions towards building more stylish videos.

This first chapter covers the so-called "secret files," the project folder and the many folders within the subfolder called media. These contain the sounds, stills, videos and special clips one uses to produce the video. These chapter basics, give you a good understanding of the inner workings of the iMovie software. The liberal use of screen shots, gives you a very good visual insight into the various parts of the software and what the text is elaborating upon. Editing and changing preferences, extracting and transforming transitions, iMovie's file types, importing, extracting and using sounds, tracks in your video that hold sound or videos, annotating movies (adding credits, copyright and other labels) are also covered. Additional details cover how to export and import (digital video (DV) movies, moving between iMovie and Quicktime, preparing non-standard sized video the transfer of stills. Performing cutaways (jumping from one video source to another like those used on television) transforming footage with empty titles, cutting footage, positioning tricks, and resizing and precise placement of audio are also covered in depth.

Chapter Two elaborates upon iMovie stills and special effects with images that can be presented with iMovie. The instruction detail how images can be imported as is and how fade effects can be added to the movies. Using Photoshop Elements for exporting and modifying stills (adding thought bubbles) are possible. Adding color blends and replacing colors, using transitions to highlight objects on the video are demonstrated and discussed. Background animations can be created to add colorful and changing displays and backgrounds.

In Chapter Three, overlays are covered along with concept and techniques of the integration of video footage and still photos, by placing above the existing video, in different layers. Stacking your videos to create repeated images and adding overlays to hide flaws in your video or photos or to emphasize special parts of the images are demonstrated. This includes the use of picture grids that are a creative way of composing multiple clips within a single movie. The more complex designer grids, using Photoshop elements take the grid concept to another higher level. Learning how to create video albums and image galleries to share, adding frame like features around the videos are also noted. Combining fancy overlay techniques and iMovie's Push transition allows the creating of virtual art galleries.

Transparencies, in Chapter Four, show how blending, adding and creating merged videos from different sources, as well as adding logos and watermarks can be achieved. Learn to use masks and crop your photos to hide or highlight all or parts of your video sequences. Focusing attention and using transparencies for particular effects are introduced, along with the use of insets and side-by-side videos that can be used to join and integrate segments and videos. Creating "hole like features," to let one video source show through another video are talked about in detail.

Chapter Five, animated effects are covered along with animation creation and adding moving banners. This chapter introduces the Apple's free software called MakeEffectsMovie (downloading directions provided), which was developed to showcase the range of effects for QuickTime developers but for the most part, are used to build exciting and animated movies. Flying overalls are covered and how to add see through elements that move around the various parts of the screen are reported. Effects as stock ticker, animated borders, border variations, making objects flying across the screen, sending a message, rotating overlays, bull's eye effects, basic mask animations, over masking, moving lens effects, flying stripes, exploding effects, animated footprints show other possibilities to stylize your video in different ways not thought possible.

Chapter Six, the use of titles are covered and more. While titles can be created with iMovie, instructions in this chapter go beyond the basics. Large sized titles (using Photoshop Elements) can be created along with titled sequences and using zoom effects. Adding effects to your title and importing titles designed with other programs, along with adding subtitles and special touches and use of masks over titles are also amply covered. Some of these effects are paused drift, tumbling scrolls, dragging sound tracks from your favorite CD, ghost titling tricks, rippling titles, colored lens effects, more exploding titles, hidden messages, title on title effects, fluid- drip transitions, center zooms, twist and turn titles, lingering text, QuickTime produced titles and fade-aways.

Chapter Seven, iMovie artistry covers self-expression in new and different ways. Learning how to control the color in your videos and produce additional effects, using PowerPoint and producing slide shows within iMovie and using QuickTime are highlighted. Special effects black-and white to color, old time feeling nostalgia enhanced effects, using rich color tints, color grids, TV masks, TV type documentary panning effects, creating and using river or pond reflections, using gradient wipe effects, special use of fades and cut effects.

This book offers a wealth of information, ideas and resources for video editing endeavors. The author uses visual screen shots well and these are most helpful in demonstrating the instructions and the effects. Most of the instructions are highlighted within the screen shots and illustrations. However in isolated cases, the essential parts in the visuals are not highlighted. You have a little bit of searching to find out what the text " is talking about."

This is not a book for beginners. Each chapter has a set of step-by-step exercises that require a little thought and application. Novice users who have not used iMovie beforehand, may quickly get lost. Users who have made movies with iMovie and gained insight into the tools and uses of the software will gain a better appreciate of the exercises and what additional effects can be created with iMovie. While you may not want to utilize all the effects outlined in all the chapters, you will gain a better appreciation of the use of QuickTime, iMovie and other software tools.

One must learn how to use the other software contained on the CD as well as QuickTime Pro to utilize the book to the fullest. When tools such, for example magic wand are used in the instructions, the author does not detail where the tool is found within the PhotoShop Elements software. When certain tools for the software are talked about, if you are not familiar with these, a little searching is involved. The author does not go into basic details about PhotoShop Elements and some of the other software, so you must learn how to use these application-tools before you progress further with the exercises. Other shareware and other software are talked about within the context of the exercises and these are illustrated in helpful fashion and instructions elaborate on the use. When the trial periods are over you must pay to keep using the software and these are reasonable priced. While this adds to the basic cost of the purchase of the book technically, you may find these tools very helpful in all sorts of graphic and artistic uses, especially now that you have been introduced to the power of some of these graphic tools.

As your creations grow, you can begin to integrate the resources of the different chapter to meet you needs. With the ideas and knowledge from this book, designing   creative iMovies, QuickTime videos and using the software for different graphic projects of your own design are within your reach. Practicing with the well thought out step-by-step instructions takes time but it is a challenge and fun. Along the way you will learn further about how to use your iMovie software to the fullest.

If you are interested advancing your video experiences. Working with iMovie and Quicktime and graphic software to produce more stylish videos, then this book iMovie2 Solutions, may give you the blend of instructions and resources, to take your iMovies to even greater heights.

Integrated Web Design, Building the new breed of designer and developer
Reviewed by Robert Pritchett rpritchett@maccompanion.com
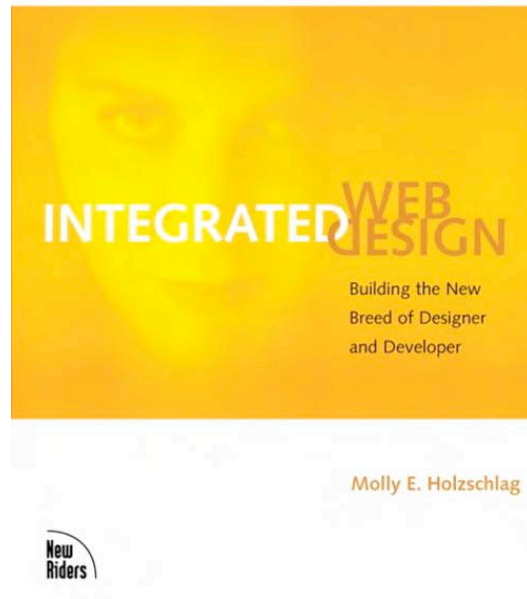
Author: Molly Holzschlag
http://www.molly.com/books.php
New Riders, September 16, 2002
http://www.newriders.com
ISBN: 0-7357-1233-6
224 Pages
$40 US, $63, CA, £31 Net UK, €42

Are you at all familiar with Bloggers? Go to http://www.molly.com for an idea.
"Integrated Web Design, Building the new breed of designer and developer" by Molly
Holzchlag seems to be a compilation of her experiences based on what she observed
from her life and her time with WebTechniques Magazine (a now defunct monthly) and a
host of other publications (some less defunct). Think of this book as being a "best-of-
breed" approach to putting sites together, but on an "Executive Summary" level. You
want to dig deeper? Look at the URLs and sidebars. It's a hard-copy blogger.

This is an "idea" book intended to make me think. I seriously dog-eared it.

The book is a splash of color, type styles and printing tricks. It is styled like a print
magazine starting out with a page listing everyone from Publisher to Indexer. There are
3 Parts; What Is Integration? (Orange section), Integration Primer For The
Programmatically Inclined (Blue section) and Integration Primer For The Artistically
Inclined (Green section). May I suggest curling up in your recliner so you may spend
time integrating yourself into the 11 Chapters?

The Sections are labeled in color with the Section wording on the "wrong" side of the
page (backside). The "meat" in each chapter is in small print, while the quotes are
color-coded based on the section they are in with much larger print. There is a lot of
white space and each chapter ends with an "Integrated Design " summary sheet. I don't
know if this is on purpose or not, but I also noticed the pages have subtle texture (#60

Influence Paper).

Molly Holzschlag seems to like getting us to "think differently" about how we structure our daily lives and how we are culturally tuned and how that affects our way of thinking about how we do website preparation and maintenance. I really enjoyed the first section, wondering what it had to do with website design, until I got the "a-hah!" from the left-right brain multi-disciplined integration discussion. Then she threw in some personality profiles or mini-bios on folks who do site integration for a living.

In Part II, she paint-buckets color, opens space (balance, harmony, proportion, subtlety, proximity, weight, size) and uses those to explain how culture affects our way of thinking about them. And then she gets into typography and what works on the web versus what works in print. By this time, I'm finally catching on to the subtlety of her presentation.

Part III discusses structured markup (HTML, XHTML body metaphor), CSS (Cascading Style Sheets) and when to use them, DOM (Document Object Model) Scripting and Dynamic HTML and Integration Media based on Flash, SVG (Scalable Vector Graphics) and SMIL (Synchronized Multimedia Integration Language).

She loves the new technologies and their potential for us as we build sites.

There is a healthy balance here, but the book may be considered superficial fluff because it doesn't "drill down" deep enough. It is not a text book, but rather, "mind candy" or maybe even a "peace pipe" between programmers and designers who need to know how to wear the other's moccasins and become one with their creations as new demands are placed on us.

The message seems to be - adapt or go do something else. The fun is in adapting.

The No Nonsense Guide to Mac OS X Jaguar
Reviewed by Derek Caudill dcaudill@maccompanion.com
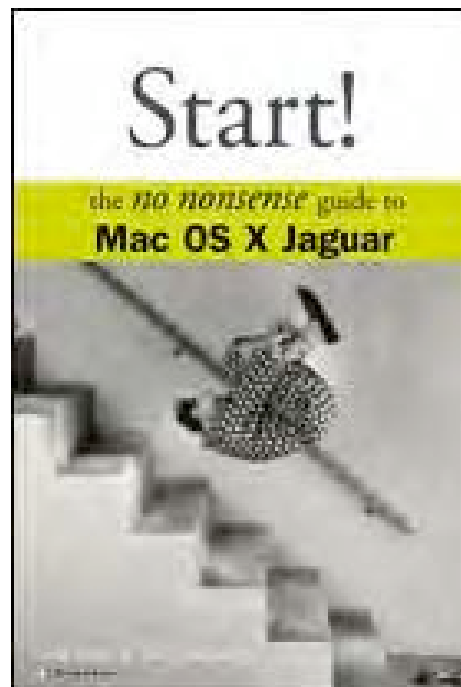
Authors: Greg Simsic and Katy Bodenmiller	4 MacCompanions
http://shop.osborne.com/cgi-bin/osborne/0072227370.html	
Publisher: McGraw Hill Osbourne	Strengths: Well organized, teaches basics, gives a complete overview, speaks in plain English, doesn't talk down to the audience.
http://shop.osborne.com/osborne/	
Pages: 168	
ISBN: 0-07-222737-0	
Price: $17 USD	
	Weaknesses: At times dry, and it seems to drop off at the end, no closure.

I was recently reminded that Apple is once again growing, that it's maturing, and that its future is looking bright, and Apple isn't looking back. But being an owner of a Mac Plus, SE, two Performa's, a Centris and a B&W G3, I already knew that all too well. I've been a loyal Mac OS user for several years, and in that time I've always had trouble changing over to a new OS, but never in my wildest dreams did I ever have as much trouble, or trepidation, as I did when deciding to switch to Mac OS X, in fact, I haven't yet, but I plan to with my next Mac. One main reason for this fear was that I just didn't know enough about how OS X worked as I did the older OS's, which is true for many of us, that is why when the Editor of MacNut came over and handed me a Mac OS X book to review, I wasted no time pouring over each page, hoping to become more familiar with this brave new OS, and while I am still cautious, I am now eagerly anticipating my switch more so than ever before!

The book I received is not one for those totally technical in nature, as this book is made to teach the fundamentals, and to do so without a slew of jargon, which is a feat worthy of being called a miracle in the OS X world. It's a hands down, grass roots, plain speaking book that clearly outlines the features of Jaguar, and how to use them to their best potential. But enough of a general overview, lets get down to specifics shall we?

The book itself is 168 pages long, not including the glossary. It's broken down into eight Chapters, each broken down into a variety of sub sections. Each Chapter focus's on one specific area of Jaguar's features.

The first Chapter focuses on acquainting the user with Mac OS X, it gives a basic rundown on what the OS is, how to start up the machines, and what the Finder is. It also describes the menu bar, desktop, icons, and aliases, and teaches their functions. The Dock is covered slightly in this Chapter, but not much. Again, this Chapter is just an introduction to Jaguar and its most common components. While many people will find the sections on opening windows, finding files, and using the search command a bit to easy, they are excellently done for those new to a computer.

The second Chapter lets users play around a bit, as it focuses on personalizing the system through the use of the Preference Pane's. It also focus' quite a bit on accounts in Jaguar, how to create them what they are, and such things, here is where it gets a little more technical. It won't have you ready to conquer account administration on UNIX, or Mac OS X Server, but it will teach you the basis for managing accounts on your own computer. Personally, it made me feel a lot more comfortable with accounts, now I understand them better, and have a visual understanding.

The third Chapter is where the book really shines in my eyes. Boy is my mouth drooling over X now. To understand that, you have to know that when it comes to organization on a computer, I am a neat freak, I categorize each thing in its own folder. My Hard Disk

has sixteen folders on it by it self, and nested in those are hundreds more. I like to organize my own way, so when I saw that Apple was trying to tell us how to organize with the Users Home folder, I panicked, but after reading this, I realized the X wasn't going to freak out if I designed my Home folder my way. Besides, it is mine, right? I can even wallpaper it if I want! This Chapter shows the basics of moving around files and folders, copying them, and pasting them as well. Tips and tricks are also thoroughly covered, making the most out of organizing with both the mouse and keyboard. The Chapter even goes into detail on how to organize a neatnik's worse nightmare, the Dock.

Chapter Four is the Chapter that those who know all the basics will really enjoy, because here is where the basics of actually using Jaguar to do something is discussed. While the actions aren't the most exciting, they show the simplicity and complexity that OS X is capable of, even on a limited level. Everything from opening files to creating PDF's are discussed here, and a basic intro to Apple's built in applications such as Text Edit and Calculator are also featured. It also covers how to set up a printer, one of the most confusing tasks in Mac OS X. After this section though, chaos is brought to order. After reading this, I really had a sense of the problems people have had with the column view layout that OS X uses in its open and save dialogs, I think that they will be the hardest thing to get use to, but again, this Chapter made me more comfortable with them.

For those of us who still rely on portable media, like floppy disks, Chapter Five will be a relief as it discusses all sorts of media, and how to interact with them. Since the main focus also is on sharing, this Chapter also covers the basics of emailing files, and networking them to both other Mac's, and PC's. It isn't a comprehensive guide to networking, just the basics. This is a Mac book. Stuff is supposed to just work, and that's what these Chapters rely on. One of my favorite parts of this Chapter was that it went into detail on what file permissions are, and how to set them. I was also impressed with how the authors ran through networking with other OS X machines, and with Mac OS 9 machines as well. Burning CD's is also covered here, as well as everything needed to prepare the CD's to be burnt, such as organizing files and such.

Chapter Six is focused on mainly one thing, and that is everything about connecting to the Internet. From how to getting online by signing up with an ISP, to the basics of communicating over email, and using web browsers to surf the net. This Chapter is a very solid rundown of how to get connected, and if that's not enough, it even runs you through the basics of setting up a .Mac account to publishing a Webpage. This will be old hat for most people, and many people with existing service won't have to worry about this as OS X will automatically import your network and internet settings from Mac OS 9. Setting OS X to use the Internet is extremely easy, and if you've ever done it in Mac OS 9 or earlier, you'll be able to find your way around without any problems.

One of Apple's biggest claims to fame is its line of easy to use iApps that allow the Mac to become a "Digital Hub for your Digital Lifestyle". These consist of iTunes, iMovie, and iPhoto, and this Chapter gives a well-rounded rundown of them all. It tell the basics of how to use them, and gives clear examples that show the power of simplicity of them. It even discusses how to pick out Digital cameras, camcorders, and scanners. What's more, this Chapter teaches how to manage fonts more easily.

Lets face it, Mac OS X has its problems too, just like any other product, and just like anything else, there are ways to fix those problems, or to prevent them from happening. Chapter 9 focuses primarily on ways to prevent your Mac from acting up, and it also gives helpful tips to solve problems that couldn't be prevented, and finally, it discusses where to go for help. Many of us Mac-Nuts have been using and troubleshooting Macs for years, and we are used to the functions of Mac OS 9 and older, but most of our troubleshooting skill goes down the drain with OS X, and frankly, that scares me to death. While this Chapter won't make you a wizard overnight, it will get you in the right

direction by helping you to understand how OS X works, it gets you in the mindset that OS X isn't as simple as its ancestors were.

Throughout this review I've used words such as show, and teach. This book wasn't written as a step-by-step guide on how to complete tasks, it is more like a roundtable discussion, telling what the Operating System can do, and telling how to make it do those things, and more. It does have a few sections with steps, but mostly it just tells you how to do something in plain English. After reading this review, you might think that its too simple minded, and should be a Dummies Guide. Well, that could be the case, but it's not. While the book talks about the basics, and I mean the absolute basics, it goes beyond that in giving tips on how to make those tasks more efficient, it goes so far as to sowing the complexities in simplicity, and yet, shows how to control it. I fancy myself a pretty good computer user. Set me down at a computer, and I can find my way around it. This book however showed me some tricks, and explained some of the technologies to me better than any of the magazines I've read. I've used OS X many times before, just playing around. After this book, I use it more efficiently, and even more than I use to.

How do I like the book? My absolute most favorite thing is the organization. The authors deserve a big kiss just for that. Or a manly slap on the back and a strong handshake. It's beautiful. Each Chapter is divided into sections, and none of the sections go beyond the scope of the Chapter. They all relate with each section seamlessly, and what's even better, if they relate to something in another Chapter, they explain it right then in there. You don't have to piece the puzzle together yourself later. They show the relationships, and show them clearly. I also like the fact each Chapter was short enough not to get old real quick, and that each paragraph, line, and word was plain speaking. The authors never made me feel low because they had to explain how to open a window to me. I don't think anyone would get offended by this book or feel as if they've been spoke down to. The writing is really polite. Another thing that tickled my fancy was the author's sincere sounding excited over the functions of Mac OS X. This wasn't just a job for them, they were excited about telling the different functions. Its for this reason that the book never got too boring. At the front of the book is basically two welcome pages, and the authors personality really shines through there. I like that. It makes the book more personal to me. The graphics, while black and grey, were very clear, and they showed exactly what was being discussed.

Now, what didn't I like? Well, one thing I didn't like was that even though the authors were excited about the technology, there were times when the book got dry. But to be honest, it could have just been because they were explaining stuff I had just spent a week going over in class. The only other thing is that there was no ending statement, the book starts out with a nice welcome section, lots of personality, but after the welcome section it seems to disappear after a while and its like I'm reading from a robot. The authors seemed very personable to me, I would of liked to have gotten to know them better through their writings. This may just be me, but the book seemed to leave me hanging, there was a welcome, where's the goodbye?

My suggestions would be to spice it up a little with some more personality. There were a few jokes, very corny, and I loved every one of them, (put more in!) and put a goodbye, other than that, color would have been nice, but only to show the beauty of Aqua.

Would I recommend this to someone? Absolutely! If you're new to computers, to Mac's or just new to OS X, read this book. It will give you the basics that you need to get you started, and it will take away a lot of the fear that we all have with something new, even if we don't want to admit it. I would of bought it myself, and I thought I knew the basics of Jaguar already, and this shows me that I hadn't even touched the tip of the iceberg.

Mac OS X Jaguar: The Complete Reference
Reviewed by Robert Pritchett rpritchett@maccompanion.com

Author: Jesse Feiler
http://www.philmontmill.com
http://www.mediaschool.com/
 McGraw-Hill Osborne Media, January 7, 2003
http://www.osborne.com
ISBN: 0-07-222789-3
912 Pages
$40 US, $60 CA, £22.40 Net UK

"Mac OS X Jaguar" by Jesse Feiler took a while to get through because of its extensive coverage. It's big, it's complete and it's current as of Mac OS X 10.2.

There are 24 packed Chapters divided into 5 parts. (Welcome, Using, Networking, Using Apps and Programming). I spent most of my time going through the Networking and Programming sections. There are also 4 Appendices on Installing, Troubleshooting, a Glossary, and what I thought was unique, a Glossary of Visual Objects.

I learned about Human Interface Guidelines and how those nice touches in Aqua now stand out for me, why Partitioning can make sense in some situations and how Web Safe Colors and Colorsync profiles are used. I also figured out how to use iChat locally and discovered the civic responsibilities associated with hosting a web server. I also dug into the OS X calculator and Grab and found out a few more things about SMTP settings and some history on scripting. I also discovered why it is important to know a little about Command Line Interfaces and when it can be good to know how to use Terminal mode.

Towards the end of the book, where the meat for me was. the topic is on Project and Interface Builder and setting it up with "Nothing" (get the book and find out what that means). I liked the "If this doesn't work, you have another problem" approach and declaring, instantiating, defining, linking and testing testing, testing! I also found a step-by-step approach to how to use AppleScript Studio. I also discovered the Core Foundation objects and a long list with explanations and history on programming languages, past and present and which ones work with OS X and which ones don't ("if it won't work in Classic, it won't work in Cocoa").

Jesse Feiler seems to have a fondness for Carbon, but he is open-minded about Cocoa.

The book doesn't read like a dictionary, but it is "fully-featured" and provides background in a lot of areas that tend to be glossed over in other books I've read recently.

If you want to complete your OS X Jaguar library, get this book.

Mac OS X 10.2 Advanced: Visual QuickPro Guide
Reviewed by Robert Pritchett rpritchett@maccompanion.com
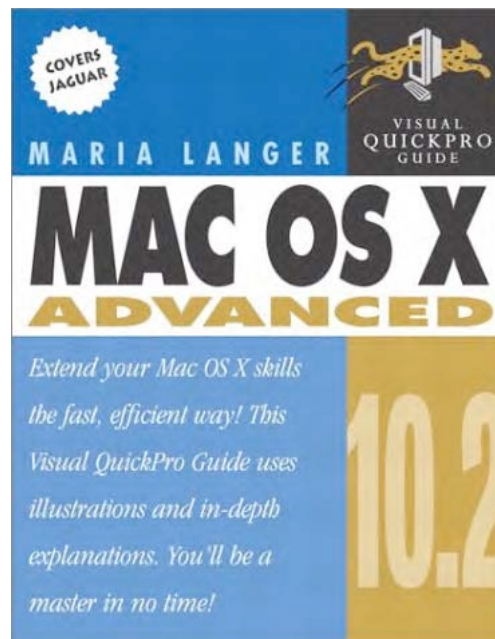
Author: Maria Langer
Peachpit Press, December 23, 2002
http://www.peachpit.com
368 pages
Price: $25 US, $39 CA, £19 Net UK
ISBN: 0-321-16893-3

Sorry Maria and Peachpit Press, this is a "me too" book. Even my reviewer gave this one back to me with the excuse that it was "too advanced". Hogwash. He's read a lot of books and he was being polite. I'm sorry, after having good 7-course cuisine with Pogue's "Missing Manual", this one is breakfast cereal without the milk.

The pictures are grey on grey and very tiny text. There is too much here on OS 9 (dead) and OS 10.1 (yawn) and .Mac (so?). The dedication is given to Apple Tech support. Well, maybe they'll read it. It's a good thing books are published in "on-demand" mode today, isn't it? Good, now I don't feel so bad.

For advanced features there is some text that discusses Unix. There isn't a single reference anywhere to URLs or other references (Okay, wrong. I found one on the back cover). Even the Appendix is a 3-page short-list of keyboard equivalents. Wait, there are references, but back to the original book with the same title, minus the "Advanced" word. Oh, and the back page does refer to her website, http://www.marialanger.com. It

took a while to get through the book. I kept putting it down.

Now there IS some information that digs into AppleScripting and Speech Recognition I dog-eared, but that was about it.
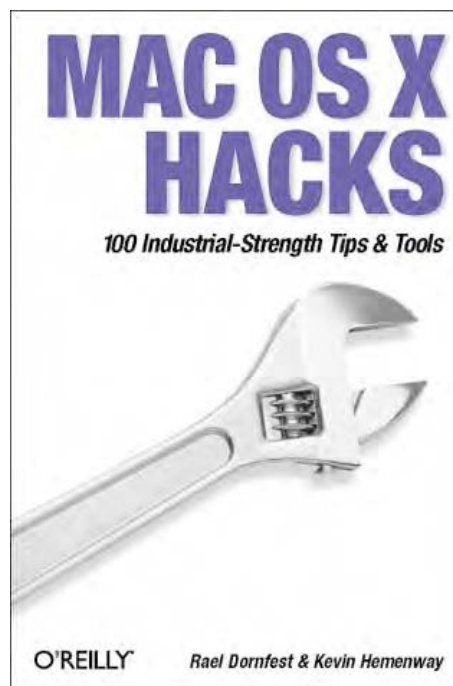
This is a no-nonsense reference text. Not for entertainment. Eleven Chapters on moving from OS 9 to OS X, Unix, Networking, Security, AppleScript, Preferences, Fonts, Utilities, Speech and Handwriting and finally .Mac. Subjects are written along the front edge of each page, front and back. It was designed apparently for one of those old college computer room reference tables. You've seen them. The ones with the codebooks lashed together in a rack 45-degrees off the tabletop?

It's like all the meat was left in the first book and this one was handed leftovers. No frills, nothing fancy, plain vanilla. Basic Black. Strictly business.

Could I have done a better job? Probably not, but Maria Langer is up against some great competition!

Mac OS X Hacks 100 Industrial Strength Tips and Tricks
Reviewed by Robert Pritchett rpritchett@maccompanion.com

Authors: Rael Dornfest, Kevin Hemenway
http://www.oreillynet.com/cs/catalog/view/au/35
http://www.raelity.org/
http://www.oreillynet.com/cs/catalog/view/au/779
http://www.disobey.com/
O'Reilly March 2003
430 pages
ISBN 0-596-00460-5
$25 US, $39 CA, £17.50 UK

Have you ever wanted to go beyond the plain-vanilla shackles of the OS X GUI and play with your own OS X functionality? No, you won't go blind doing so. "Mac OS X Hacks 100 Industrial Strength Tips and Tricks" by Rael Dornfest and Kevin Hemenway gets you into the geeky world of hacking - not cracking - OS X. Knowing these published hacks puts you into the realm of the Power User, but not raise your hackles.

Now you can tweak away to your heart's delight. Rael Dornfest and Kevin Hemenway didn't come up with these all on their own. Just like the Mac culture, they pulled in expertise from at least 16 other contributors to make this book.

And it is a reference book. You could just read it from cover to cover, but why? Take the time to play with each of the hacks as you get to them. Look at how you use your computer and find out if there are any better ways of doing something by scanning the 9 chapters covering filing, starting up, using multimedia and the iApps, working with the user interface, playing with Unix and Terminal, networking, emailing, webbing and databaseing.

There is even stuff in here on both vitally important shareware and freeware.

So come and get this book on "quick-and-dirty" solutions to those "how can I do this?" problems.
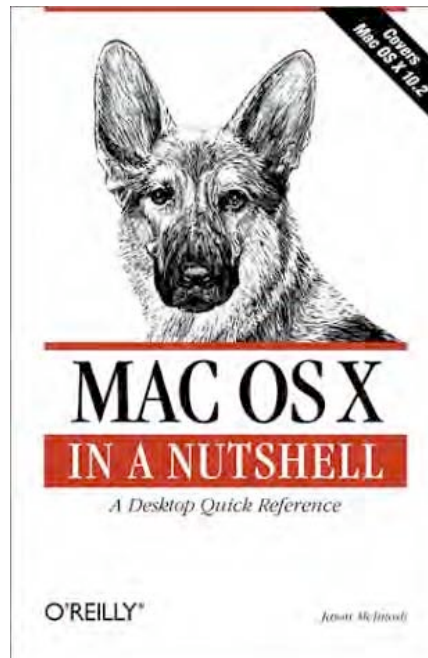
The "Hacking" series from O'Reilly is intended to take back hacking as a good word and not a bad word (which cracking is).

This book shines that direction. The parts that are interesting to me right now are the nearly 30 hacks related to networking, webbing and databaseing.

I think the wrench on the cover is there to symbolize the fact that adjustments can be made to help us customize Mac OS X to our own needs, making it work even more for us than before.

Mac OS X in a Nutshell A Desktop Quick Reference (10.2)
Reviewed by Robert Pritchett rpritchett@maccompanion.com

Authors: Jason McIntosh, Chuck Toporek, Chris
Stone
http://www.oreillynet.com/cs/catalog/view/au/174
http://www.oreillynet.com/cs/catalog/view/au/45
http://www.oreillynet.com/cs/catalog/view/au/783
O'Reilly January 2003
http://www.oreilly.com
826 pages
ISBN 0-596-00370-6
$35 US, $55 CA, £25 UK

Yes, that's right - another OS X book, but this time from O'Reilly.
Seems all the O'Reilly cover themes for the Macintosh environment from O'Reilly have
gone to the dogs, but this by no means indicates that the OS itself is a dog.

"Mac OS X in a Nutshell A Desktop Quick Reference" by Jason McIntosh, Chuck Toporek
and Chris Stone is a really BIG nutshell full of reference material including all the Mac
OS X Unix commands and options based on the Developer tools and advanced use of
Terminal mode. It also delves into configuring a not wet, but DAMP (Darwin, Apache,
MySQL, Perl/PHP/Python) web publishing system - and that is why I got the book - so
we can "do it" on our website.

But there's so much more here; running Java applications, how to handle system and
network administration, directory services and NetInfo, Scripting, CVS (Concurrent
Version System) and even installing and running X Windows and BSD Unix applications
(that X11 stuff).

You want to be the world's best Macintosh power user? Memorize these pages. Oh, you
don't have to, just follow the well stocked Index and References sections for more info.
Pet this puppy. It will be your best friend if you want to dig deeply into the
underpinnings of OS X 10.2.

Maya 4.5 Fundamentals
Reviewed by Robert Pritchett rpritchett@maccompanion.com
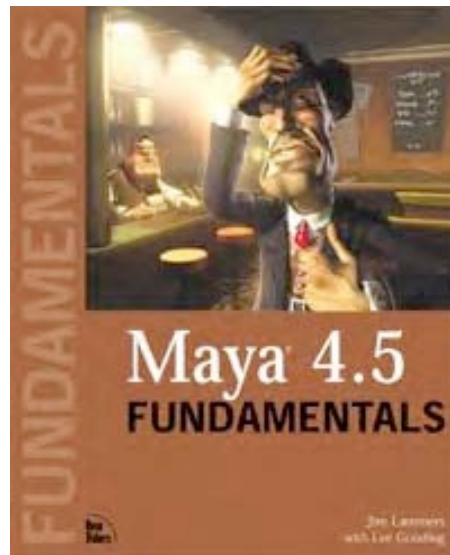
Authors: Jim Lammers, Lee Gooding
http://mayafundamentals.com/
NewRiders JAN 14, 2003
http://www.newriders.com
ISBN: 0735713278
624 pages
$45 US, $70 CA, £35 UK
Errata:
http://www.trinity3d.com/M45F/M45F_Errata.shtml

Are you interested in creating new worlds? Welcome to the deep, complex, 3D environment created by Alias|Wavefront. If you want to really enjoy "Maya 4.5 Fundamentals" by Jim Lammers and Lee Gooding, get the Student version of Maya from http://www.aliaswavefront.com. The CD that comes with the book has 14 hours of instructional information on it - however, it apparently requires OS 9 to use the StartMAC button. Go figure. Anyway, 14 hours of video on 1 CD is pretty awesome, don't you think? What a kick!

Just remember that Maya used to cost between $15K and $30K on an IRIX workstation from SGI, then lately, the price became $2K even as the full bundle is $6K. Oh, and it requires a better video card and Mac than I have - and a 3-button mouse. The free download is 107 Megs. Maya 4.5 requires the G4 chipset OS9 on a separate partition than OS X and at least 512 MB of memory. Oh well.

Anyway, the book is real interesting because it is a beginner book, starting out with a Pre-Maya Primer, so I felt pretty good knowing I at least was starting in the right direction at the right place for me. Now I just need to get this on a machine that meets the minimum requirements.

The Book has 4 Parts; Quickstart, Basics, Going Further and Appendices for 3D Studio Max and LightWave users.

The "project" is named "Spooky World". Here is a place where some of the animation was created for one of the chapters; http://www.me3d.tv/me3d.html and the cover came from here; http://www.sormann3d.com/portfolio/index.htm.
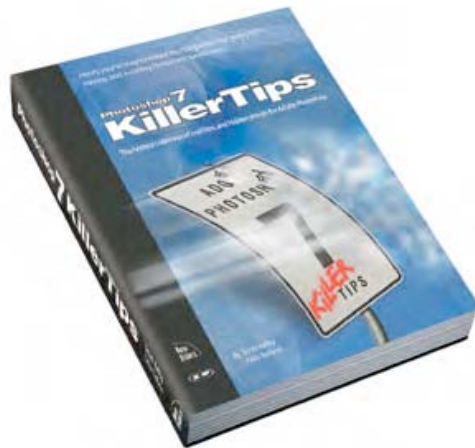
By the time I get through with getting a new computer to run Maya, I will have learned about the interface, primary tools, modeling with NURBS (Non-Uniform Rational Basis Splines, like that helps, right?) and polygons, applying materials and textures, lighting, using modifiers and deformers, animating scenes, using cameras, rendering stills and animations, and using particle systems, dynamics, and paint effects. If that appears to be a bit overwhelming, that is because in many ways it is. I'm still trying to get a good grasp on *Carrara Studio* and this happens to drop in my lap! Maya 4.5 Fundamentals will take a while to digest.
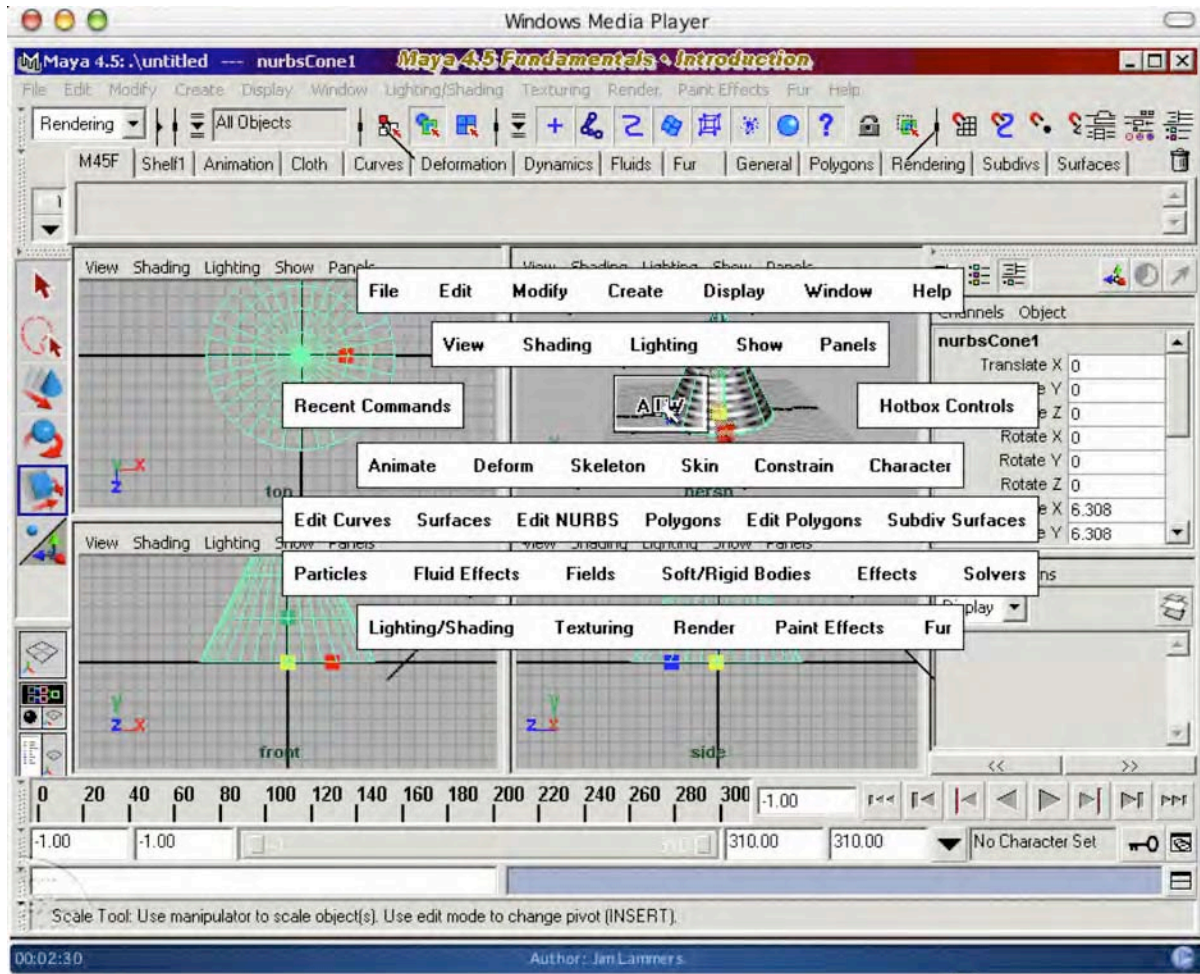
I keep hearing that 3D is dead. Well, not from where I'm sitting! maybe it is just dead for older machines that can't take the punch for rendering projects in a timely fashion. Anyway, if you have any inkling of wanting to learn 3D and animation on the Mac, try starting here. Just get a machine powerful enough to handle it and maybe a multi-button mouse from Contour.

Photoshop 7 KillerTips
Reviewed by Robert Pritchett rpritchett@maccompanion.com

Authors: Scott Kelby and Felix Nelson
http://www.macdesignonline.com,
http://www.photoshopkillertips.com
New Riders Publishing, July 15, 2002
 http://www.newriders.com
250 Pages
ISBN 0-7357-1300-6
$40 US, $63 CA, £31 Net UK

Until Adobe comes up with a newer interface, the tips provided by Scott Kelby and Felix Nelson in "Photoshop 7 Killer Tips" are the "Gee, I wished I'd known that sooner" kind that save both time and money. This book is an update to Photoshop 6 Killer Tips and should be eye-candy for Photoshop enthusiasts and is a quick-read reference guide best appreciated by those who eat, drink and sleep Photoshop for a living.

There are 10 Chapters all title-themed with speed-related topics that really don' t give us a clue as to what is inside. Oh, and ignore the intros to each Chapter unless you like the twisted tongue-in-cheek sense of humor expressed as a backhanded insult to the established book publishing formulas.

There are over Photoshop 300 illustrated tips here, but you will need to use the short Index to find what you are looking for - or the long Table of Contents.

This book will be of great use as long as you bookmark/dog-ear the pages where you find hidden nuggets of great stuff. Most of my dog-eared pages were found in the Troubleshooting Chapter. Is it worth the effort to buy this book? Yes, but think of it as a parody on publishing and it will be much easier to read. If you find Photoshop 7 (PS7) easy to navigate, then this book will be too.

I think it would be fun to attend one of Scott Kelby's training sessions. He puts a lot of energy and effort into his work and he obviously enjoys what he does for a living.

Check out Scott's websites listed along with this review!

Streaming Audio The Fez Guys' Guide First Edition
Reviewed by Robert Pritchett rpritchett@maccompanion.com
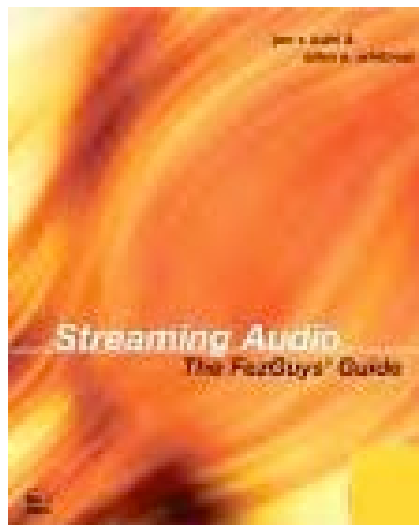
Authors: Jon R. Luini, Allen E. Whitman
http://www.fezguys.com/
New Riders Publishing May, 2002
http://www.newriders.com
ISBN: 0-7357-1280-8
$35 USD, $55 CA, £27.50 Net UK
Intermediate

Go to the Appendix for Tools and resources and then read the Glossary, then read the rest of the book.

"Streaming Audio The Fez Guys' Guide First Edition" by Jon R. Luini and Allen E. Whitman has effective details on how to author and deploy streams for the Real Media, Windows Media, QuickTime and WinAmp/Shoutcast platforms and it is heavy into Windows solutions and in my mind, really downplays the Mac. Why do I think that? Because it completely ignores OS X and repeats itself over and again about how the "Macintosh users can't do anything else on their computer" while Windows users can. Maybe they'll get this corrected in the 2nd edition?

There are 4 parts to the book with an introduction to concepts, terminology and streaming audio, then working with Real Media, Windows Media, QuickTime and WinAmp/ShoutCast, 3 case studies on streaming server set up, reasons for supporting various formats and discussing issues such as audio optimization, hardware encoders, batch encoding and presentation with SMIL and embedded players.

My interest was in how it treated QuickTime Pro. The authors basically say forget it and get a real Codec for a lot more money. But there are URLs throughout the book as well as in the Appendix.

What the book does do is show a lot of pages on each of the 4 streaming technologies available at the time this book was written in tutorial-mode. I felt I was back in time 3 years instead of just last year.

There is some valuable information regarding compressors, equalizers and signal

processing to retain audio quality at low bit rates.

Frankly, I expected more. A lot more, besides learning that if I press Option + G I get ©. But there is a page or two on what to look out for in Chapter 12 on Advanced Authoring Techniques while Chapter 13, Advance Presentation gets into embedding Streaming Audio into a web page using any of the 4 technologies listed above and also using Synchronized Multimedia Integration Language (SMIL) for interactive audio/visual presentations and playing with playlists.
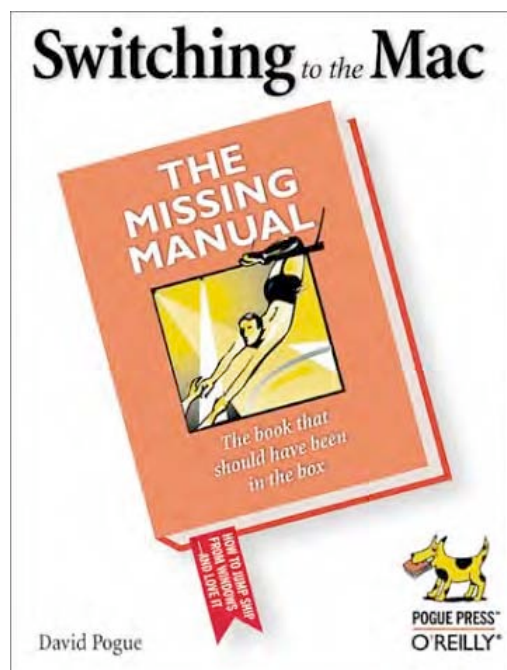
The website listed above doesn't have an errata or update page either so when the authors decide to do another edition of this book, they may decide to update the website as well.

The addicted to noise online music magazine is dead, but Chime interactive is still good to go at http://www.chime.com/ and you can find Jon Luini at http://jon.luini.com/ and Allen E Whitman may still be reachable at allen@fezguys.com.

I want to see the sequel.

Switching to the Mac: The Missing Manual
Reviewed by Robert Pritchett rpritchett@maccompanion.com

Author:David Pogue
http://www.missingmanual.com/
O'Reilly March 2003
http://www.oreilly.com
440 pages
ISBN0-596-00452-4
$25 US, $39 CA, £17.50 UK

We promised we'd discuss ways to help the Windows-pained refugees and now we

deliver.

"Switching to the Mac: The Missing Manual" by David Pogue is the one to give to the "fence-sitters" who haven't migrated to the Mac yet. It has the Pogue humor and the jargon-free content that sets him apart from the masses.

And yes, there is a lot of stuff here. Five parts in 14 Chapters and 3 Appendices on how to adapt to the Mac. Of course, the Move2Mac package by Detto makes this process easier, but that isn't included in the book.
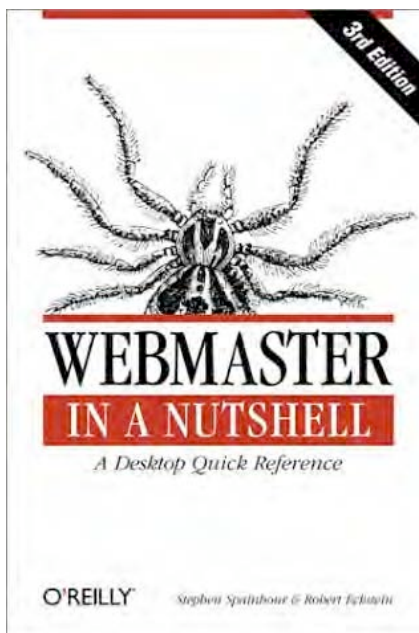
What is here is an exposé on how the Mac is different, ways of moving files and email from a PC to the Mac, issues related to a host of software and "act-alikes", using Mac hardware, webbing, signing up and settling in, playing with preferences and working with all the "freebees" that come with the system software. The 3 Appendices cover the Mac OS X installation process, the cross-reference windows function to Mac function list and a keystroke list for Apple-option-whatever and what the effects are for doing so.

I just kept going "a-hah!" as I read the migratory process in the Special Software, Special Problems in Chapter 7.

This is a book to give to your Windows-based friends. Think of it as a life-saver.

Webmaster in a Nutshell, Third Edition
Reviewed by Robert Pritchett rpritchett@maccompanion.com

Authors: Stephen Spainhour, Robert Eckstein
http://www.oreillynet.com/pub/au/172
http://www.oreillynet.com/pub/au/155
O'Reilly December 2002
http://www.oreilly.com
576 pages
ISBN 0-596-00357-9,
$35 US, $55 CA, £25 UK

If you do any kind of "webmastering" work, more than likely you have a bookcase full of "how-to" books on 8 acronym-happy topics such as HTML (HyperText Markup Language), CSS (Cascading Style Sheets), XML (Extensible Markup Language), JavaScript (client side), CGI (Common Gateway Interface) PERL (Practical Extraction and Reporting Language), PHP (PHP Hypertext Preprocessor), http (HyperText Transaction Protocol) and others on Server Configuration. Would you like a quick reference compilation instead of all those other books? Those references can all be found here in Stephen Spainhour's and Robert Eckstein's book, " Webmaster in a Nutshell, Third Edition".

This is the 3rd edition, so it covers information on all those acronyms up through December 2002. I grabbed it mostly to educate myself more fully in CSS and PHP. This is not a beginner's book by any stretch of the imagination. Nor is it really a "how-to" book full of "copy/paste" programming. It is a "touch here" book.

The last part on server configuration deals with Apache and includes http Header information, server responses, optimizing performance and status codes.

And that is really all it is in a nutshell. For fast answers, come here. To dig deeper, there are other O'Reilly books on each acronym shown above here.

Web Services Security
Reviewed by Robert Pritchett rpritchett@maccompanion.com

Are you the least bit interested in Web security issues? Interested in the current technologies related to authentication, authorization (digital signatures, etc.), cryptography, encryption or protocol reliability? Okay, how about trust relationships and confidentiality?
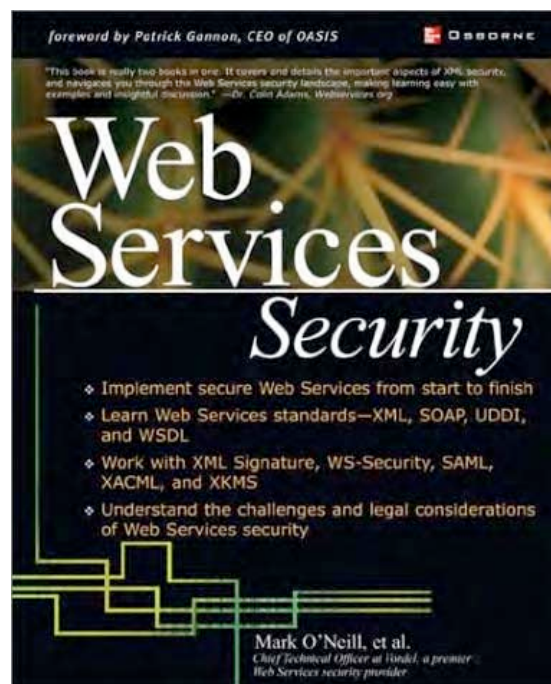
"Web Services Security" by Mark O'Neill with Phillip Hallam-Baker, Seán Mac Cann, Mike Shema, Ed Simon, Paul A. Watters, and Andrew White gets into the details and challenges related to legal considerations and the weighty responsibilities associated with the webification of business. It also deals with privacy issues and on-line transactions.

Oh, it is full of acronyms, code samples and such, but it does use case studies to exemplify what is being done to make the business of doing business on the Internet safer from the misdeeds of crackers and on-line marauders - and even possibly Internet lawyer litigation. ;^)

It also deals with the complexity of "Catch-22s" of Information Security and Web Services and does a fair job of balancing both.

And of course, it segues into Vordel's offering in XML and web services security (hey, isn't that the name of the book?), since Mark O'Neill is the CTO of Vordel.

I personally liked the chapters dealing with security threats, how VeriSign's Trust Services Integration Kit works with the Secure Assertion Markup Language (SAML), the various Public Key Infrastructures (PKI) and dispelling myths associated with Contract writing and how those don't depend on signatures to be valid.

That last one is very important to us here at MPN, LLC. The signature doesn't make the contract legally binding, the content agreed upon does - worldwide. I loved the "for instance" examples. That alone made the book meaningful for me personally. Signatures do provide closure however, so we still insist on a signature being a "binder" no matter what from it takes.

If you have at least an inclination in wanting to do business online and you want to know something (speak intelligently with the Information Technology folks) about web services security issues, you will want to look at this book.

.The Wireless Networking Starter Kit
Reviewed by Robert Pritchett rpritchett@maccompanion.com
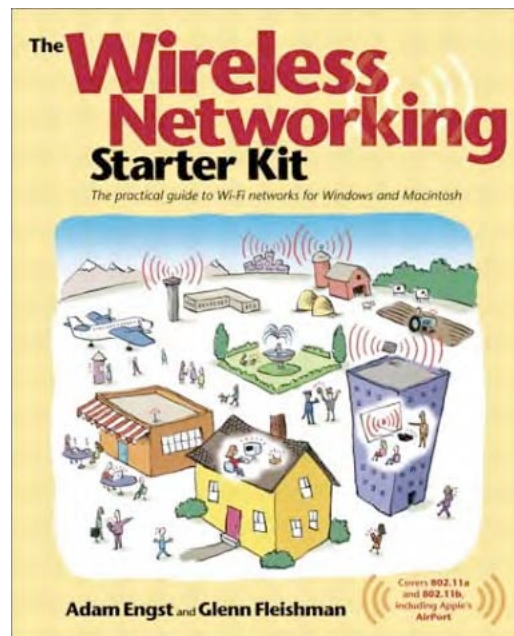
Authors: Adam Engst, Glenn Fleishman
http://www.wireless-starter-kit.com/
PeachPit Press
http://www.peachpit.com
318 pages
ISBN 0-321-17408-9
$30 USD, $47 CA, £23 Net UK
http://wireless-starter-kit.com/80211g_update.html

"The Wireless Networking Starter Kit" by Adam Engst and Glenn Fleishman is a book that is platform agnostic (meaning it is about 802.11b wireless and not hung up on which platform is used).

There are 10 Chapters ranging from why using it, connecting it, building it and then taking it with you. You want mobile? You've got mobile!

It goes quickly from the basics into how to set up your system to use wireless with lots of screenshots. By the time you are done reading this book, you will know how to install it on both Macs and Windows systems.

Emphasis is given to planning before installing and discusses even spoolers, switches, bridges and routers.

And then there is the ever-present issue of security with WEP and solutions using SSL, VPN and SSH and how to use them so security concerns don't become a show-stopper. And if you need to remember what those acronyms mean by now, it's all here.

I loved the chapter on antennae theory and practice, "Going the Distance". It covered various antennas and on how to calculate signal strength.

I especially liked the information regarding how to access wireless networks and hotspots around the world, some for a fee, some not and how to find them.

And there is a whole chapter on troubleshooting (aptly named "Things That Go Bump On the Net".

The last chapter is on the future of wireless. With Apple's announcement of their support of 802.11g, the future is now. And I included the update URL so the book isn't obsoleted.

Oh, and there are lots of URLs to check out too. Everywhere!

The authors lean heavily on their own experiences with certain wireless equipment and anecdotes and reminds me of my Amateur Ham Radio activities.

Currently I have one of the AirPort Extreme Base Stations. It has the external adapter so a Dr Bott external antennae may be used with it. The US FCC probably will be certifying that setup as a system soon.

And yes, I have heavily bookmarked this book too! When someone asks, "Do you have experience?" I can honestly say, "I do now" as soon as my 17" PowerBook arrives and I get the AirPort Extreme Base Station hooked up and I check out the neighborhood for other wireless networks, maybe make another home-made antennae that doesn't interfere with everyone else...

Games

Aladdin Systems Ten Games for X
Reviewed by Ted Bade tbade@maccompanion.com

Aladdin Systems	4 MacCompanions
http://www.aladdinsys.com/	
CD web page:	Strengths: Overall, this CD is a great deal and
http://www.aladdinsys.com/tenforxg/	will provide hours of fun. The CD is well worth
System requirements: MacOS X 10.1	the price. All the shareware games on this CD
or higher. Special requirements are	either come pre-registered (full versions that
included with the game description.	don't need a license key) or license keys are
	included.
$50 USD	
	Weaknesses: Addictive.
Game requirements: G3/333, 128 MB	
of RAM, an ATI Rage 128 video card	
with 8 Mb video RAM or better or an	
Nvida GeForce 2 graphics card with 8	
MB of video Ram.	

The Ten Games for MacOS X CD contains a good selection of excellent shareware games that run in MacOS X. Aladdin Systems is doing a real service for both Shareware authors and users of MacOS X by creating this CD. They have sorted through many shareware games and selected the best. All the shareware games on this CD either come pre-registered (full versions that don't need a license key) or license keys are included which is good news for the shareware programmers. Every computer game player will find several titles they will enjoy on this CD, so it is an excellent choice for your favorite MacOS X game player.

The number 10 (not the X) is really a misnomer. There are actually 13 games on the CD. (13 for X, just doesn't have the same ring to it as 10 for X does!!) But this only

makes the CD a better deal!

This CD contains a diverse variety of computer games. If you play Mac games you are probably familiar with the incredible, graphically mastered games from Pangea Software. This CD includes two excellent Pangea choices, Bugdom 2 and Cro-Mag Rally.

Cro-Mag Rally is very similar to Star Wars Pod racer, except that the vehicles are "Stone-age" (ALA the Flintstones) cars. Players choose from a variety of stone-age vehicles (each with good and bad points) and race against others on a variety of tracks and terrains. Network play is included with this game increasing the fun. This game is great for all ages; not really violent, although you can crash into and throw things at opponents. Game URL: http://www.pangeasoft.net/cromag/index.html

Bugdom 2 is an excellent game in which you play a grasshopper on a series of missions to locate things, help your friends (like mice) and gather various power-ups, all while avoiding or eliminating a variety of enemies (bugs, lawn Gnomes, etc.). This game requires a bit of coordination and some good reflexes. As with all Pangea games, violence is at a minimum so its good for all ages. Look for a full review of Bugdom 2 in an upcoming issue of *MacCompanion*. Game URL: http://www.pangeasoft.net/bug2/index.html

Another favorite game company is Freeverse Software. Included in all their games is a cheeky humor that has little to do with the game itself but definitely adds to the overall game experience. What would one expect from a company who created Jen, their cartoon spokeswoman and that goofy singing smiley face Jared?

AirBurst is an interesting variation on the little Brick Out game. In this game you play against up to 3 real people or 8 computer players (on the same computer). In this game you sit on a cloud of bubbles and attempt to deflect "razor sharp balls" (that could destroy the bubbles that make up your cloud) while trying to break the bubbles of your opponents. It is a lot of fun and includes a number of interesting power-ups. Non-violent and fun for all ages. Game URL: http://www.freeverse.com/airburst.mgi

Burning Money Puzzle Lab includes a number of interesting variations in a Tetris-like game. The object of the game is to rotate and control falling sets of little multicolored balls so they form specific patterns when they land. The variations in this game include a wide variety of shapes and color combinations that need to be created. If you are into Tetris, you will find hours of fun with this game. This is a non-violent game suitable for all ages. Game URL:http://www.freeverse.com/bmpl.mgi

If you have ever played Cribbage and enjoyed it, you will enjoy **Classic Cribbage**. This version includes an elegant interface and tough computer opponents. However, you can also play real people over the internet. The Internet feature includes text chat ability. This game is non-violent and suitable for young adults and older. Game URL: http://www.freeverse.com/cribbage.mgi

Freeverse's **WingNuts: Temporal Navigator** is a truly fun overhead view shooting game. You fly your craft in an effort to shoot down the enemy air fleet while catching power-ups and friendly pilots that are parachuting to safety. You chase the evil "Baron" and his variety of air machines across time. This game could definitely fill in a lot of free time!! Its a shooter, the controls are basic and with a little time any one could master them. Game URL: http://www.freeverse.com/wingnuts.mgi

The last entry from Freeverse is **3D Bridge Deluxe**. This version includes an extensive tutorial that will help you learn (if you need to) the rules and methods of Bridge. This game includes online playing option so you can play with friends across the globe.

Another non-violent game that requires a bit of skill and willingness to learn the rules. Game URL: http://www.freeverse.com/bridge.mgi

Leaving Freeverse we move onto the other companies represented on this CD.

Astrosquids by Lost Minds is reminiscent of the old arcade game Defender. In this variation you play a squid moving along a path filled with rocks, which you cannot hurt but must avoid, and enemies which you must either elude or shoot down. Its a lot of fun and a real challenge as the game moves along. Controls are basic and easy to master. A little violence but a lot of fun. Game URL: http://www.lostminds.com/content/astrosquid-main.shtml

Bommo Sweeper X is a "cute" little version of the classic mine sweeper game found on (ugh) Window's PCs. Its a game of logic in which you click on a squares trying to avoid the bombs. If a square isn't a bomb, a number in this square indicates the number of adjacent bombs but doesn't show where they are. Using logic, you figure out where to click next! Excellent non-violent game. Warning, this could be addictive!! Game URL: http://www.slovis.com/simples.html

Deep Trouble by Code Blender Software is an excellent submarine shooter game. You play the good guy submarine out to destroy the aliens. This game includes maneuvering in all three dimensions as you search for targets. A lot of fun with a minimum of violence. Game URL: http://www.codeblender.com/dt.html

Geneforge by Spiderweb Software is a role-playing game. You play a member of a special race with a number of useful powers and abilities. As with all these games, there are quests to go on and things to find. This game promises to be a lot of fun. There is a lot of material to read and decisions to be made as you create your character and begin a game, which allows one to dive headlong into a new world, but its a lot more complex than a regular shooter type game. Game URL: http://www.spiderwebsoftware.com/geneforge/index.html

Jinni Zeala Pinball by Little Wing company is a Pinball game. Up to four people can compete on the same computer or you can play all four positions as I do !!! As with a real pinball machine there are bumpers, traps, special areas to aim for, the ability to nudge the ball and tilt the machine. A real time killer but worth it. No violence, just flying balls! Game URL: http://www.littlewingpinball.com/html/eng/products/jz/index.html

Video Poker 5000 by Slovis Software is a video poker machine game. You put in virtual money and play a variation of poker trying to win more. Its a relatively simple game that makes a great pass time, and it's a lot easier on your purse or wallet than if you were to go to a real casino ! Game URL: http://www.slovis.com/videopoker.html

As you can see, this CD provides a wide variety of games for all types of gamers. I believe that most computer game enthusiasts will be happy with just about every title on the CD. They all play well and are fun. The people at Aladdin, in my opinion, made excellent choices.

As a dedicated game player, I try a lot of shareware games. Many are not so good, some are okay, while a few are really good to excellent. Aladdin has sorted through the current list of shareware games and put together a CD with some real gems.

Hardware

Coolshields and Screensleeves
Reviewed by Robert Pritchett rpritchett@maccompanion.com

CoolShield	5 MacCompanions
P.O. Box 1594	
New York, NY 10025	CoolShield
1-212-663-5093	
http://www.coolshield.com	Strengths: Nice idea for those
http://www.smartlyte.com	wanting to protect their screens
http://www.ultrasuede.com	when not in use.
http://www.coolshield.com/shield_instructions.html	
	Weaknesses: You really want to
$40 US Coolshield, $30 US Screensleeve	cover up your Apple Logo?
	5 MacCompanions
PowerBooks 12", 17"	
	Screensleeve
	Strengths: "Light" enough. (What, you don' t like puns?)
	Weaknesses: The light-fixture (Smartlyte) could perhaps use some re-engineering. Not intended for "rough" environments.

Coolshields

Why buy a Coolshield? Probably because it looks cool and beats $1 duct-tape and Cardboard contraptions when used with the new ultra-cool-looking G4 PowerBooks®. Is it worth $40? With the included blue-toned 200-hour per double-battery Smartlyte, I'd give it a qualified "Yes"! Do it if you are into being "cool" and you can afford one. The extra plastic snaps for closure when not in use are a nice touch. Even though the cover material is vinyl for the PowerBook®, it feels like fine glove leather. The unit for the 12" comes with the same material (Ultrasuede by Toray) as the Screensleeve. With the ample side pieces, it doesn't look like it is going to topple over anytime soon when in use. It comes in 12 and 14 oz weights, and I'm sure the 17" will probably end up weighing 16 or 17, right? ;^)

No, this is for protection against florescent light glare and nosy neighbors and sunshine! On a flight, it probably would be nice to keep the bright LCD screen from bothering everyone around you - even if you are Minni-Me (you know, the guy who walks close to the ground but has recently reach star-status?).

Why use plastic snaps instead of velcro faster strips? Probably they are intended to avoid the disturbing "rip!" sound of velcro in quiet places and replaced with the "pop-it"sound of snaps instead.

I'd really like to see the "Ultrasuede" for the 17" myself. The fabric has to weigh a lot less than the vinyl and would add a real touch of class to the 17" PowerBook. Maybe by the time you read this they will have done that. I'll take two!

The Smartlyte aquamarine LED light sticks out beyond the Smartlyte casing a bit too far and rubs against the Coolshield case when that is closed, at least on mine (PowerBook® size). Of course, it could be easily reversed so it is facing towards me and not towards the screen so it isn't causing its own 35-degree glare-problem. A new unit can be bought for about $13 from smartlyte.com. A red-light might work better in darker environs (no, they tried that and it didn't work as well) and the green-light gives me flashbacks of the "Green-Lantern"(remember him?). The soothing, cool-look of Aqua-marine (blue) is "it". Will the 17" PowerBook optical fiber-based lighted keyboard nullify the nifty smartlyte? Maybe not.

Right now, there are Coolshields for PowerBook® G4 and the 12 inch iBook®.

Make the 17" Ultrasuede and I'll buy one for my new 17" PowerBook "wannahave".

Screensleeves for PowerBook® G4 12" and 17"

Is the embroidered Screensleeve worth the suggested retail price of $30? No, not really. It looks like it is made from the same material used for cleaning quality eye glasses (Ultrasuede) and I just don't see Mac-people wanting to cover up their status symbols! Unless, of course they just like to pretend to be "high-society". The slip-cover is intended to protect the LCD and cover from scratches. It's just kind of classy where even a flour-sack mock-up would probably work just as well from keycap indentations and finger-oil transfers. Sniff.

The embroidered logo should be used on the non-screen side when covering the LCD screen so as not to possibly scratch the LCD surface. Perhaps by the time you read this they will have changed the graphics on the website too.

As of this review, there are 3 sizes, PowerBook® G4, 12 inch iBook® and 14 inch iBook®.

Epson Stylus C42UX Personal Printer
Reviewed by Robert Pritchett rpritchett@maccompanion.com

Seiko Epson Corporation http://www.epson.com $80 USD Specifications: 1,440 x 720 max resolution Weight: 24.8kg Dimensions in mm: 424 x 227 x 168 (w x d x h) One-year on-site warranty Ink Cartridges, Black $16 USD, Tri-Color, $20 USD Or http://www.inksell.com/epsc42ux.html $11 USD & $12 USD Requires USB port and USB cable, 5 MB hard drive space.	4 MacCompanions Strengths: Lightweight, yet durable and acceptable printing. Weaknesses: Relatively slow, somewhat loud, slurps ink.

I received this printer as part of a rebate scheme along with my 17" PowerBook order, so my cost for the printer was less, assuming the rebates are honored.

I also saw these being given away with any purchase in Seattle, so I wondered if they were worth the box they came in. I suspected this to be another Gillette episode (you know, give away the razor, sell the razor blades).

I read where the printer was a bit noisy. I found that to be true, something akin to the old HP Plotter noises with the hyperactive printer pens swinging rapidly from one side of the page to the other.
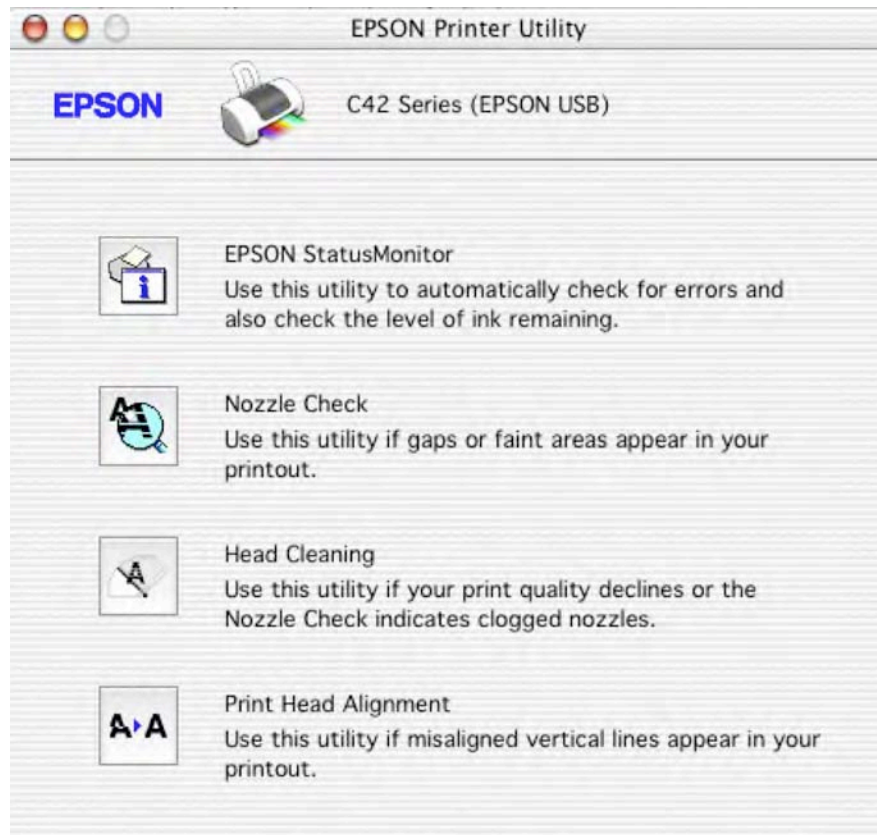
I heard that the print cartridges were expensive. Not any more than other printer cartridges and I found another outlet that has a lower price. You could probably do better.

I printed out the February issue of an online magazine and the pages were acceptable. But at an advertised 12 pages per minute? I don' t think so. It took well over an hour and a half to print out 54 multicolor pages from within the Adobe print function on my iMac running OS X. It kept having to stop and think about what it was doing, so it must have precious little memory.

The printer weighs very little and I intend to use it as part of a portable office environment while doing contract work. I'll just use earplugs to reduce the clatter.

The slide-out receiver paper tray reminds me of a big flat tongue that is in upper-lick mode. I don't think the unit is really designed to handle large printing processes but is intended for the occasional onzey-twozy print jobs. The printed 8.5 x 11 or A2 sheets hang off the end nearly 3 inches. The paper feed assembly appears to be sturdy, but handles about half-a-handful of paper. And I can feed envelopes through it too.

Cartridge swap-out is easy enough with the extra button on top to do just that. Much more intuitive than on my older Epson 740.

So why bother? Well, if I want to do "photo-quality" prints, I can, even with this unit. It's just going to take a while for it to do a page. And I will probably need to keep a handy supply of print cartridges near by.

Installation even with the driver was easy enough with only one reboot after the driver was installed in OS X from the included CD.

The printer utility has some nifty features. See the next figure for the 4 things to play with.

And for cartridge usage, the status window looks promising.

EPSON StatusMonitor

C42 Series (EPSON USB)

EPSON StatusMonitor

Remaining Ink level

Manufacturer :   INKbyEPSON
Ink type :   Black
Cartridge type :   Standard Capacity
Cartridge code :   T036
Production date :   '02/11

Update   OK
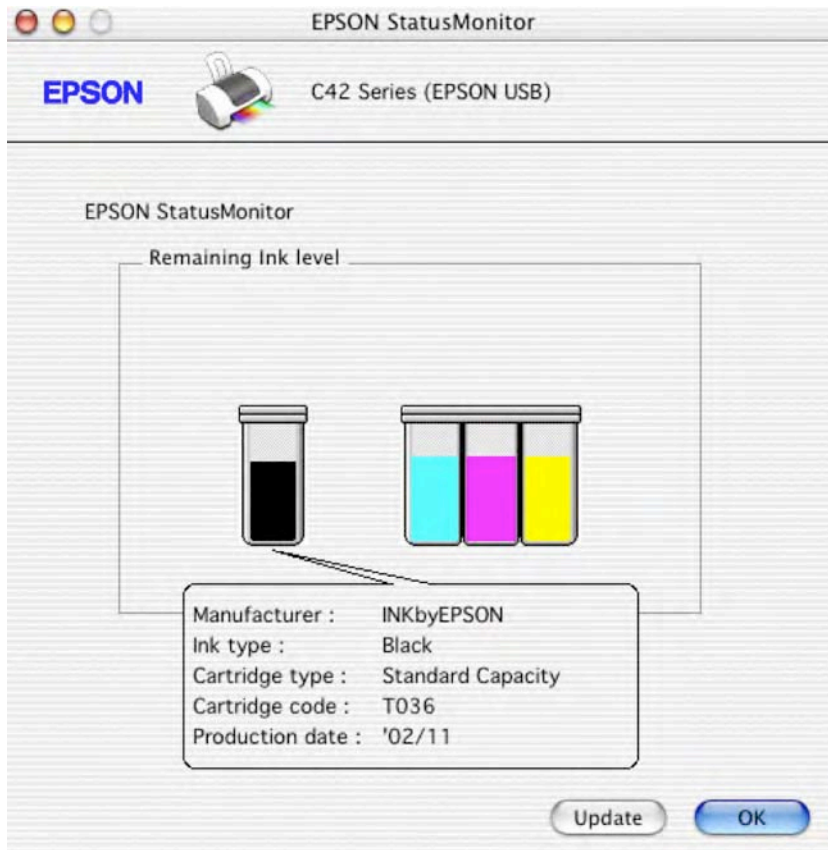
If it is to be believed, I might have two or possibly three more production runs of the PDF version of that magazine before I need to replace the ink. I think I'll go and do other things instead. I don't want to wait that long. Thankfully, I can multitask.

Apparently, this printer is designed to be a throw-away give-away, perhaps not intentionally, but if anything goes wrong, who am I going to pay to repair it? It is at the "it costs less to replace than repair" stage. Only time will tell if it can be a workhorse. I'm guessing with the 1-year warranty, it is intended for light-duty and yet with acceptable printing.

iBot pro
Reviewed by Robert Pritchett rpritchett@maccompanion.com

Orange Micro, Inc.
1400 N. Lakeview Ave.
Anaheim, CA 92807
Phone: (714) 779-2772
Fax: (714) 779-9978
http://www.orangemicro.com/ibotpro.html

Price: $150 USD, $22 USD for the OS X driver update if the iBot FireWire Pro has been purchased previously.

Mac with a Firewire port, 32 MB RAM, 12 MB Hard Drive space, CD-ROM and an iMic (Griffin Technology) or a PlainTalk adapter from 1394FireStation.com ($15.00 USD) for the stereo headset interface.
(Not usable on PowerBook G3's that have the FireWire port built-in prior to June/July 2000. A workaround is an added FireWire CardBus.)

FAQs:
http://www.orangemicro.com/updateibotmacsoftware.html
A Web Cam comparison chart can be downloaded as a PDF at http://www.shipitforyou.com/1394firestation/ at the bottom of the link for the Orange Micro iBot Pro Firewire Web Camera W/Mic.

5 MacCompanions

The camera swivels up and down. All that is missing is the motorized controls for remote control movement. Okay Orange Micro - make one of those for this device and the gadget freaks will really love you!

Strengths: Uses FireWire and has about $200 worth of software. Very responsive.

Weaknesses: The wire stand. Get some velcro so it doesn't walk off the top of the monitor. Oh, you have an LCD screen? Set this on the tabletop instead.

Do you want to see and speak over the Internet in real time? Do you want to videoconference? So what is there out there that can be used with OS X to do that? Try the Orange Micro iBot Pro FireWire-based desktop video camera. What separates the iBot Pro from the other offers? How about the stereo headset. The iMic adapter is not included however.

The stereo headset is from Avid http://www.avidproducts.com/headsets.html and appears to be the AV-44 model.

This camera also comes with the following software:

> iSPQ VideoChat version 5.0.6 comes with it and includes a registration key to get started.

> BTV Pro 5.4.2 also comes with it as well as QuickTime 5, if you don't already have that installed.

> The ArcSoft Camera Suite is also included, consisting of both VideoImpression 1.6 and PhotoImpression3. If you have the latest iPhoto and iMovie, well, you know...

> The iBot Pro also works with Yahoo Messenger and SquidCam, CUSeeMe, ClearPhone and iVisit (OS9 only).

To communicate with folks using Microsoft NetMeeting, they will need to have iSPQ VideoChat running on their system as well.

To see what else is out there, try http://www.macupdate.com/info.php/id/6597

There is also a 30-page PDF iBot Manual for both Macs and PCs. It covers each of the

installation packages and has a few FAQs. Appendix A has a few hardware options. Appendix B lists Specifications and Appendix C covers the Warranty.

You can read about the specifications and features elsewhere. I'm interested in a couple of things; does it focus well and is it responsive? Yes and yes. Heck, it is a Firewire device for speed (400 Mb per second) and operates at 30 Frames per second at 640 x 480. It can also see out to 62 degrees side to side and the lense focuses from 1 centimeter to infinity. On top of that, the FireWire cable is 6 feet long and the device is plug-and-play. This is a joy to use over a cable modem environment.

SmartDisk USB External Floppy Disk Drive (Titanium Color)
Reviewed by Robert Pritchett rpritchett@maccompanion.com

SmartDisk Corporation	5 MacCompanions
12780 Westlinks Drive	
Ft. Myers, Florida 33913	Strengths: Incredibly quiet when in use. Runs off USB power. Works without extra drivers under OS X. It will probably last forever.
Phone: 239/425-4000	
Fax: 239/425-4009	
http://www.smartdisk.com/	
	Weaknesses: No spring-loaded auto-eject mechanism. Has a CD for Windows-only environments. Support from OS X could be a lot better.
$50 USD	
Operating Position: Horizontal Supported Diskette Type: (3.5 inch) 1.4MB Mac/PC Format. Dimensions (in/mm): 4.075 in/103.5 (width) x 6.083 in/154.5 (depth) x .929 in/23.6 (height). Weight: 1lb 2oz/544g. Operating temperature range 41 - 104 degrees F. 2-foot long USB interface cable. Mac OS 8.5 or later. Works with OS X, USB port and a masochistic need to still use floppies.	

Did you notice that the only other PC competition that made money last year finally is giving up on the floppy drive as part of their offers?

I bought this unit because every once in a great while I need to be "backward compatible" with older systems. It was either that or I had to keep an older perfectly functioning Mac around. I know lots of Mac aficionados that do. I don't.

The drive reads and writes to standard 1.44 MB floppy disks at a data transfer rate of up

to 500 kbps and powered through a USB port. Connecting it to my non-Apple Extended Keyboard, I got the "this isn't powered" error message, so I moved it to a USB hub and that worked fine under OS X. No extra software nor drivers needed.

What brought this purchase about was that one of our editors had an competing product that wouldn't format floppies. Well, okay, he couldn't get it to work for him under OS X anyway. So I got this one to see what was going on. He figured it was because his tower was a prototype unit and the motherboard may have been causing grief. That turned out to not be the situation.

I'm a little slow, so it took us an afternoon to figure out what was going on because I got the same behaviour on my system. The "fix" was that in using Disk Utilities in OS X, the default is "Mac OS Extended" under the "Erase" tab. What is needed is to click on the floppy icon and change the default under "Erase" to "Mac OS Standard". Then change the label from "Untitled" to something else and check the format. Joy came when a floppy disk icon appeared on the desktop and I then knew I was "good to go" to load files to the floppy or vice versa. And no, none of my OS X troubleshooting guides even address this issue. It's like, "Floppy drive? Are you kidding?"

This drive comes with a card that says if this is used with OS X, just plug it in and it works. Well, it does, but you do need to know where the Disk Utilities are located (bottom of the Applications folder in Utilities) and you need to know that the old "Initialize" is now "Erase" and that the disk gets "mounted". And don't forget that floppies don't use the Extended format.

The drive is exceptionally quiet and only the green LED light really lets me know something is going on. To eject the floppy after I was done with it, I needed to actually manually use the eject button, unlike the competitor's product that played nice with the eject function in OS X. Also, this unit won't do 400 nor 800 KB floppies, so it isn't entirely backwards compatible. That's okay. I'm transferring genealogy files to IBM floppies anyway for GEDCOM name submittals (They still haven't figured out how to do file transfers over the 'Net? The Sneakernet is so 20th Century.) - and yes, that format is also still supported in OS X.

So, if you still have a need to be flippin' floppies for sneakernetting circles, go get one of these and plug it into a USB port so you too can move files the old fashioned way. Sometimes that is what it takes to get real work done. Every once in a while.

Shareware

iPulse 1.0.3
Reviewed by Eddie Hargreaves ehargreaves@maccompanion.com

The Iconfactory http://www.iconfactory.com http://www.iconfactory.com/ip_home.asp $10 USD Mac OS X 10.0+	4 MacCompanions Strengths: Monitors many system activities. Highly customizable. Weaknesses: Doesn't monitor Internet traffic to/from Classic applications. Can interfere with applications that take over the screen.

The Iconfactory is known for its premier Macintosh icon creation. And while its newest product is a system monitoring utility, it still has a visual flair on par with the company's best work.
iPulse is an application designed to monitor various aspects of your system, including: CPU activity, system load over time, network activity, memory activity and usage, disk usage, and the current time and date.

If, pre-OS X, you used the "About This Computer" window to monitor your memory usage, you were probably surprised to see there was no comparable window in X. Even though X has modern memory management, it can still be incredibly useful to know how much of your RAM is being used
iPulse does an excellent job of graphically displaying current memory use based on the information provided by the Unix 'top' process. It also displays pageouts and pageins, a good indication of whether or not you could use more RAM.

The CPU Monitor utility provided in OS X is useful for watching how heavily your processor is being hit, and how often. Since applications and hidden processes can hit your processor without any visual indication, CPU Monitor is useful to have running.

iPulse also measures CPU activity, but its display is not quite as visually useful as CPU Monitor, since it is a circle instead of a square.

What makes iPulse more useful than CPU Monitor, though, is the additional aspects of your system it measures.

Network activity can be measured and is very useful for determining how quickly files are downloading from the Internet or a local network server. It will also show whether you're sending data, very useful if you have a broadband connection since X is so intertwined with the net.

iPulse isn't easy to understand at first glance, so be sure to read the help file provided.

No one can complain about how iPulse is displayed, since it is highly customizable. It can be run in the Dock, as a floating window, or both. Its colors can be changed, its text can be removed, its size can be varied, it can appear above the Dock or below all windows. If you feel it's taking too much of a toll on your system, you can decrease the time between updates. You name it, and it can be changed via the Preferences, which is only a right-click away.

The only big problem I had with iPulse was when I set it to display above all windows or above the Dock. If I run an application that takes over the entire screen, such as a game or DVD, iPulse will continue to bring itself to the front and has to be specifically hidden using CMD-H. Also, it sometimes has display issues with applications directly below it, when its transparency doesn't kick in for an update cycle.

On a lesser note, its network activity monitor does not notice Internet traffic flowing in and out of any applications running in Classic.

It can be difficult to find shareware for OS X that doesn't add some level of instability to the system, but iPulse is a handy graphical front-end to multiple Unix processes that makes it easy for Terminal-phobic users to really know what's going on in there.

Software

DragThing Version 4.6 - Productivity/Navigation
Reviewed by Derek Caudill dcaudill@maccompanion.com

TLA Systems http://www.tla-systems.co.uk/ http://www.DragThing.com/index.html Single User License: $25 USD, Five Packs: $99 USD, Ten Packs: $150 USD, Unlimited User Site: $1,000 USD, Unlimited World User Site: $2,000 USD Mac OS X v10.1.5 or later. Mac OS 9 with CarbonLib 1.6 Installed.	5 MacCompanions DragThing is what the OS X Dock should have been. Strengths: Makes navigation of files quick and efficient; can be configured to fit almost any need. Is stable and easy to use. Development for OS 9 and OS X is conjoined. Weaknesses: Doesn't allow different Dock settings for each OS. Importing of Docks is very frustrating and time consuming.

Navigating the files and folders of a Hard Drive can be like searching for a needle in a haystack. I have hundreds of folders categorizing my stuff; to put it simply, I nest. My system would drive some mad, and I do get agitated when I want to quickly access a file. I have many files that I access frequently, and aliases clutter my desktop, and the OS X Dock. That's why I happily use DragThing.

DragThing is a stand-alone file and folder Dock, as well as a companion for the OS X Dock. DragThing sits on the desktop as a drawer or a box, which expands to show a row of icons when clicked.

These rows, called Layer, hold any type of file; organization is up to you. I keep files, folders, and URL's that I use regularly. The number of rows is limitless, depending on resolution. You can add multiple rows to each Layer, and the restriction on the number of Layer is the same, but only if you turn on show Layer tabs in the Preferences. Layers can be named individually.

There's no limit on the number of Docks that you make, if you share your computer, you can have a different Dock for each user. DragThing comes default with two preset Docks, a Process Dock which shows each running application, and a Disk Dock, which shows each mounted disk or partition.

DragThing installs easily, you download it, decompress it, and you have technically installed it. Double click the DragThing Application icon, and your done. By default, DragThing is set to open automatically at startup.

Use of the program is as simple as clicking and dragging. If you want to add an Item, simply drag the Item's icon to an empty tile, and you're done! You can also drag and drop files on these aliases just as you would on regular aliases. You can also drag any of

the Item's off the Dock to a folder or the desktop and a new alias will appear. To delete Item's, select the Item or Item's and press your delete key.

When first opened, the Process Dock and a Multi-layered Dock appear. This Dock has four Layers: Applications, Documents, Folders, and URL's. You now add Item's or change the visual layout. Do this by going to Edit and click on Dock Options. In the Appearance tab, you choose the options to display or not display. Layer Folder Tabs, Name Bar, Item Names, Window Title Bar, floating the Dock, and showing icons or just the Item's names, or both. There are options to go with these as well.
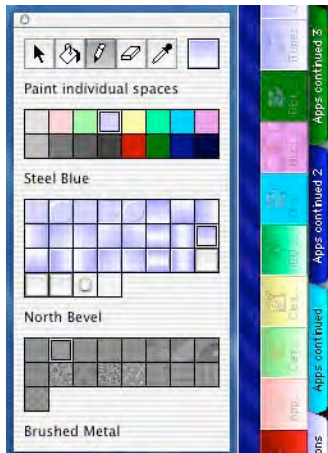
Each Layer can be colored and textured, and you can create your own textures!

Gradients can also be set. In OS X only, the appearance of the Dock can be transparent or opaque, and you can place a fully functioning Trash Can on the desktop. Options like these make DragThing fun to use!
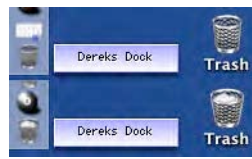
Sound sets are also available. Each action you take in DragThing can produce a sound. You can use the included sounds, the Appearance Control Panel sounds in OS 9, or use your own sounds. You can turn the sounds on and off for each task individually or all at once. The sounds play seamlessly, there's no delay, and you can control their volume from within the Preferences.

DragThing also incorporates contextual menus, which can be controlled from within Preferences. Control clicking on any Item lets you open the Item, get info, give the Item a label, or remove the Item from the Dock. The path of the Item is shown, and, if it's a folder, it will show the contents in a hierarchical menu fashion.

DragThing has a large assortment of options for keyboard control and also has Hot Keys. The Dock can be set so that each tile acts as a button, or so that the Items need to be clicked only once to open. You can also set the Dock to be not shown, shown, minimized, or maximized in most applications and set it differently in others.

One of my favorite features is how the Preferences are organized. DragThing has three separate Preference windows: one for the Dock, one for Layers, and one global Preference screen for all of DragThing. Each window groups similar settings together and clearly separates different settings from one another. This is helpful when looking for one particular Item to change; it saves from having to look through each panel. The settings are in the form of radio buttons, check boxes, and slide bars, and each function is described simply.

DragThing is an application that I use everyday and would be lost without. But even DragThing can be brought down. I have had it unexpectedly quit on me once in OS 9 and several times in OS X, mainly when changing settings that reopen the Dock or save

its settings. However, when a power failure occurs, DragThing shines through by maintaining a backup file of all your settings; and when reopened, gives you the choice of using the backups, trying to repair the settings files, or going ahead and using them.

I do have a few quibbles, my biggest one being that if I have one Dock in OS 9 and one in OS X like I usually do, I can use the same Dock for both OS, but the settings have to be the same. I can't have the Dock as a window in OS 9 and as a drawer in OS X. This is very irritating, and my only alternative is to save a copy of a Dock's settings, which, when opened, will re-open the Dock with those saved settings. The problem with this is that the same Layer or Items will not be in both settings. If I have a file for OS 9 and one for OS X, they are not joined when adding Items or Layers. When exporting Docks, DragThing makes a folder that contains folders for each Layer, and aliases of each Item you had on that Layer. That's nice, but if you've deleted your Dock accidentally, you can't import that Dock the way it was set up. You have to drag and drop each Item on a new Dock, rename each Layer, and figure out how you had the Layer and Items arranged. I would rather be able to export the Dock completely into one file, then import it and have everything like it was. The documentation with DragThing is just a Help document that tells the basics about the settings and menu items, but no details, making it hard to understand what each setting can do.

iDVDThemePAK 1 and 2
Reviewed by Robert Pritchett rpritchett@maccompanion.com

Realeyz Imaging	5 MacCompanions
Todd Siechen	
ICQ: 12011473	Strengths: Well-thought-out
http://www.realeyz.com/	Themes, considering the price if I
todd@realeyz.com	were to do this on my own.
ask@idvdthemepak.com	
http://www.idvdthemepak.com	Weaknesses: None discovered
Each ThemePAK is $29 USD or $54 USD for both 1	yet.
and 2 (both have the Street Theme included). There	
is nearly 700 MB per disc.	
A Macintosh OS X system that uses iDVD2 or	
iDVD3, Video formats of either NTCS or PAL. Lots of	
hard drive space. Like 700 Megs per CD	
More info can be found on Video links at	
http://www.thepeatgroup.com/Links/videolinks.html	

In our quest for the best tools for creating an interactive multimedia environment, I discovered this outfit. Don't confuse it with the other review by Mike Swope on iDVDThemes. These products are different.

iDVDThemePAKs (PAKs) uses 3D elements and natural motion in the background. Each PAK comes with 2 still and 6 motion menus (30-second movie clips). The free StreetThemePAK comes ready to be used in both NTSC (National Television Standards Committee) and PAL (Phase Alternating Line used mainly in Europe at 625 lines at 50 half-frames per second vs 525 lines at 60 half-frames per second for NTSC) formats. Oh, and the PAKs run in either iDVD2 or iDVD3 from Apple. The PAKs come either in NTSC or PAL formats and interestingly enough, the PAKS come on CDs and not DVDs today.

Where do the files end up after installation? Try ~/Library/iDVD/Favorites/ where the "~" is your Hard Drive of choice.

Can we download Theme material from the website? No. The motion theme files are over 100 MB each and that isn't an option at this time.

So what can be found on each of the CDs so far? Well, how about 8 Themes each not including the free Street Theme? And the additional Chainfence theme in ThemePAK 2 when both PAKs are purchased together.

ThemePAK 1

Adventure
Bubble
Industrial
Metal Time
Cinema
Retro TV
Sports
Undersea

ThemePAK 2

Beach
Corporate
Mechanical
Motorsports
Ocean
Road Trip
Techworx
Valentine

It is striking to see these in motion. For example, in the Valentine Theme the large heart throbs. The smaller ones rotate. The other Themes in motion do similar tricks. The left column shows a silhouette of a walking person to indicate that the Valentine is a motion theme. And think of all the time these Themes save by keeping me from reinventing the wheel! Very classy. Very cool. Keep them coming Todd!

Todd Siechen heard me. By the time you read this, IDVDThemePAKs 3, 4 and 5 will be available. **Editor's Note: 3 and 4 are now out.**

IDVDThemes
Reviewed by Mike Swope mswope@maccompanion.com

IDVDThemes.com	5 MacCompanions
4229 255th Place SE	
Issaquah, WA 98029	Strengths: High-quality, professional, full-motion themes for iDVD 2 appropriate for many subjects.
425.369.9932	
http://www.idvdthemes.com	
$24.99 iDVD Themes: Volume One	
$12.99 iDVD Themes: Holiday Themes	Weaknesses: As of early February 2003, not compatible with iDVD 3. A few esoteric themes.

Macintosh computers with SuperDrives, capable of burning DVDs, are changing the face of consumer video. No company has made video and DVD creation easier than Apple Computer. Not HP. Not Sony. Not Dell. iDVD 2.0 introduced enhancements for making DVDs up to 90 minutes in length (previously limited to 60 minutes) on the Mac.

Despite the powerful features of iDVD 2, many users quickly find iDVD 2's built-in themes very limiting. There's only so much that can be done with one parchment, one brushed metal, one wedding, one sports and one travel theme. Button shape and placement can provide some variation, but not much for the consumer who has made more than a couple of DVDs. Sure, the consumer can use his or her own photos or movie backgrounds, but the average consumer doesn't have the patience, software or skills required to produce high-quality results to match their growing concern for near-professional DVDs.

Enter iDVDThemes.com, with an additional 16 full-motion themes for iDVD 2 (iDVD 2 is only available for OS X) in two volumes, one a 4-theme holiday collection, the other a 12-theme, 2-CD showcase titled simply Volume One. Attractively labeled, the CDs for Volume One contain nearly 1.2 gigabytes of professional-quality themes for the Mac DVD creator. The small QuickTime movies on the iDVDThemes.com web site do not do these themes justice. Installation is as simple as dragging the twelve themes to either the ~user/library/iDVD/Favorites or the root library/iDVD/Favorites directories. That's it. When iDVD 2 is next launched, the themes will be listed in iDVD 2's Themes tab. A one-page Acrobat PDF installation sheet (most of the page is taken up by images) is also included on the first CD of Volume One.

There are three elements for a successful theme: background, soundtrack, and buttons.

iDVDThemes.com has blended all three elements more successfully than anticipated. Volume One contains themes for Children (2 themes), Road Trip (3 themes), Patriotic (1 theme), 1960s Tie Die (1 theme), Ducks on Pond (1 theme), Black and White (1 theme), Morning Breeze (1 theme), Coffee Beans (1 theme) and Yellow Liquid (1 theme).

The twelve full, smooth, arresting backgrounds in Volume One from iDVDThemes.com are top notch, with excellent contrast for button readability. The variety of backgrounds also seems to address the next-level needs of consumers: Independence Day/summer/veterans celebrations/national holidays (USA Pride); quiet moments at home/family nostalgia (Morning Breeze); overland vacations (Road Trip 1, 2 and 3); young children (Pink or Blue Bubbles); and hunters/nature lovers (Ducks on Pond). There are also the Yellow Liquid, Tie Die and Black and White themes for which it will be more difficult to find suitable content.

The twelve themes utilize only ten soundtracks, sharing a soundtrack across the three Road Trip themes. This variety of accompaniment greatly increases the attractiveness of iDVDThemes.com's offerings. Each soundtrack is professional and appropriate. Unlike soundtracks I've used, these soundtracks are not abrasive or annoying. In fact, as I worked on this review, I listened to each of them over and over and over and over in the background. They left me as sane as when I began the review.

Buttons are a third element of a quality theme. Although Apple's stock themes use custom button shapes, the 14 somewhat-bland additional button shapes aren't very useful. There's very little special about them. Disappointingly, the Yellow Liquid, Tie Die, and Morning Breeze themes draw upon Apple's bland button shapes. Though not unique, the buttons are acceptable.

But the best themes -- from any source -- use custom button shapes. The remaining themes in Volume One from iDVDThemes.com use custom button shapes. The USA Pride theme uses a black-bordered square button that's about 40% smaller than Apple's. The Road Trip themes also share a button shape resembling the well-known Route 66 highway sign. The Pink Bubbles and Blue Bubbles themes share a 3D spherical "bubble" shape. The Duck on Pond theme uses an old school TV-tube-shaped button. The Coffee Bean theme employs an interesting round coffee-stain button. And the Black and White theme uses a grunge button similar to the Apple button found at Row 3 Button 2 in the Customize menu of iDVD 2.

If Volume One of iDVDThemes.com's themes for iDVD 2 for Macintosh can be considered a litmus test, then one can do much worse than buying Volume One and the Holiday themes from iDVDThemes.com. Their themes are easy to install and easier to use, true to Apple's vision of one-click, drag-and-drop, near-professional DVD creation. We look forward to these themes being made iDVD 3 compatible, and to the surprises we'll find with the release of Volume Two.

OmniGraffle 2.1
Guest review by Joe Muscara Joe@t2studios.com

Omni Development, Inc. 2707 NE Blakeley Street Seattle, WA 98105-3118 Phone: 1-206-523-4152 x250 or 1-800-315-OMNI x250 http://www.omnigroup.com $60 USD (unlicensed version allows up to 20 items in a document, 1-day free trial available to allow more than 20 items) Mac OS X 10.1 or later (versions for older versions of X available)Help - Unlimited email, mailing list Screenshots http://www.omnigroup.com/applications/omnigraffle/screenshots/	5 MacCompanions Strengths - Very easy to use and intuitive, many uses, many smart and clever design features, customizable. Weaknesses - No autoconnect line feature. Documents can't be multi-level. Palette takes up significant screen real estate on smaller monitors.

Diagrams are useful tools in many fields. They can help organize, they can communicate ideas, and they can reveal problems before too much work has been committed or too much furniture has been moved. OmniGraffle makes creating these various types of diagrams fast, simple, and even fun, yet it has powerful features and customizable tools that make it useful for any level of user.

OmniGraffle's interface is immediately familiar to anyone who has used a drawing application, with only minor differences for those features exclusive to the program. Upon launch, there is the main window or "canvas," the palettes window, and the Info viewer.

The main window is where you create your diagrams. At the top of this window is a customizable toolbar, while most of the window is dedicated to the drawing area. There

is a handy zoom menu at the bottom of the window next to the scroll bar. By default, OmniGraffle starts up with a single 8.5 by 11 inch page in portrait orientation, but other sizes are available. It is also quite easy to add more pages via the Pages pane in the Info panel. Here, you can also set up margins and scaling, and a handy "Scale To Fit" button scales your diagram to whatever number of pages you have chosen.

The palettes window provides ten pre-made sets of shapes for your diagrams, including Basic, Boolean Gates, ERD, Garrett IA (with a link to the creator's web site directly in the palette), Flow Chart, Magnetized, Network, Office Layout, Org Chart, and UML. There are more sets of palettes available at Omni Group's web site (Cash Flow, Toy Building Bricks, Electronics, Periodic Table, and Maps), as well as other third-party sites, and you can create your own palettes within OmniGraffle quite easily. Simply click the "New" button on the palette window toolbar, a new OmniGraffle document window will open up, and you can create new shapes or modify existing shapes in the new document. You can also use shapes from other palettes as is, allowing you to conveniently combine commonly-used shapes on one palette. Then, simply save the document (by default, OmniGraffle selects the correct location for you), and your new palette is available in the palette window.

The Info panel allows you to customize your shapes and lines, as well as the pages and layers in the document. Conveniently, OmniGraffle allows you to "clone" instances of the Info panel, so you can set up several and arrange your working area as you like. This is not unlike the way tabbed palettes work in Adobe's applications. There, you can grab the palette you want to view separately and drag it on the screen as you prefer. In OmniGraffle, you simply clone a new instance of the Info panel and select which pane that instance of the panel should display.

One of the most powerful features in OmniGraffle is the way lines work with shapes. If you need to connect a line from a shape to another shape, you draw your two shapes, and then select the line tool. When you are over the first shape, the edge of the shape pulses and glows not unlike the default button in an Aqua dialog. Clicking here connects the start of the line to the shape. Moving the cursor in any direction out of the shape "hooks" the line to the edge of the shape, and changing the position of the cursor adjusts the location of the line on the shape accordingly. To connect the line to another shape, simply click on the other shape. The line will be drawn between the shapes, and you can adjust the appearance of the line via the appropriate pane in the Info panel. You can also draw the line without connecting it to another shape by double-clicking an empty space in the window.

Magnets can be applied to shapes (and are applied to many of the pre-made shapes as appropriate). The magnets are points on the shape that make a line drawn to or from that point snap to it. For instance, when creating a flow chart, lines show the path of the logic from one activity to the next. In OmniGraffle, the flow chart shapes have magnets set on them by default. Lines drawn between these shapes can snap to the nearest magnet if the entire shape was selected when drawing the line, or the lines can be set to use specific magnets by clicking directly on the magnet when the line is drawn. This is extremely useful for creating tidy diagrams, such as often needed in flow charts, org charts, and other technical diagrams. OmniGraffle is very intelligent about the way it handles these connecting lines when one or more of the shapes are moved as well. This helps when a diagram needs to be cleaned up or objects need to be moved to allow space for other objects. The only thing missing is an "autoconnect" feature, where lines are automatically drawn between objects as they are added and reducing the number of steps required to complete a diagram.

Also missing from OmniGraffle is a "drill-down" feature, where diagrams can lead to sub-diagrams via double-click. This feature would allow you to have a top-level diagram that

gives an overview, and then more specific diagrams that can be viewed as needed. For example, in a flow chart, sub-processes can be one shape on the top level view, and can have more specific details shown in the sub-diagram, while in a network diagram, the main diagram can show the overall network topology, and sub-diagrams can focus in on specific parts of the network.

OmniGraffle comes with extensive on-line help, and there is a useful PDF manual available for download (though it is obviously in need of a slight update to better match the current version of the product). The manual describes how to get started with OmniGraffle, including installation, licensing, and a tutorial. It also gets into many more features of OmniGraffle that are worth evaluating than can be described in this review.

If you have the need to draw diagrams or charts, OmniGraffle is an easy-to-use, yet powerful tool for doing so. It has applications in many fields, and can be customized quite readily. It is definitely worth checking out the demo, and it has many features that dedicated drawing or illustration applications do not, and the price is much less. **Editor's Note: Look at Version 3.0.**

Total Training for Adobe Photoshop 7, Complete
Reviewed by Robert Pritchett

Total Training Incorporated	5 MacCompanions for vehicle concept, 4 for
Instructor: Deke McClelland	current mode of transportation.
324 Encinitas Blvd.	
Encinitas, CA 92024	Strengths: Excellent instructional process with
1-888-368-6825 (toll-free in the US)	QuickTime.
1-760-944-3900	
http://www.totaltraining.com	Weaknesses: The stand-alone version could use
Released: 4/4/02	less reliance on one particular browser. And why
Price: Complete CD or DVD set, $250	install non-Mac platform files or load other
US or "+Web", $350 US.	unnecessary files (i.e, QuickTime 5.0.2
OS 9 or OS X, CD-ROM Drive, 312 MB	installation stuff when QuickTime 6.x is on the
HD space (program + training	machine already)?
folder), Microsoft Internet Explorer,	
QuickTime 5.0.2 (on the Installation	
CD), Photoshop 7, Internet access	
and a desire to learn.	

Are you a visual "learner by doer" like I am? Does it take a while to wrap your mind around a software application as complex as Photoshop 7 (P7)? Well, here is some much needed instruction by one of the best English-speaking trainers on the planet.

Total Training has compiled 3 Adobe Photoshop 7 Training Sets into one package consisting of 8 CDs or DVDs. You decide which package is best for you. Oh, and check out their other offerings online.

Those P7 sets are divided up into "Fundamentals", "Essential Photoshop" and "Photoshop At Its Best" and span 14 "Programs" and something around 55 topics that take an average of 20-25 minutes each over 26 hours of time to get through. Think of it as "$10 per hour" that is bought only once and can be reused at your leisure.

A "Lesson Files - Total P7" folder holds over 256 Megs of JPGs, TIFFs and other stuff used in each of the lessons.
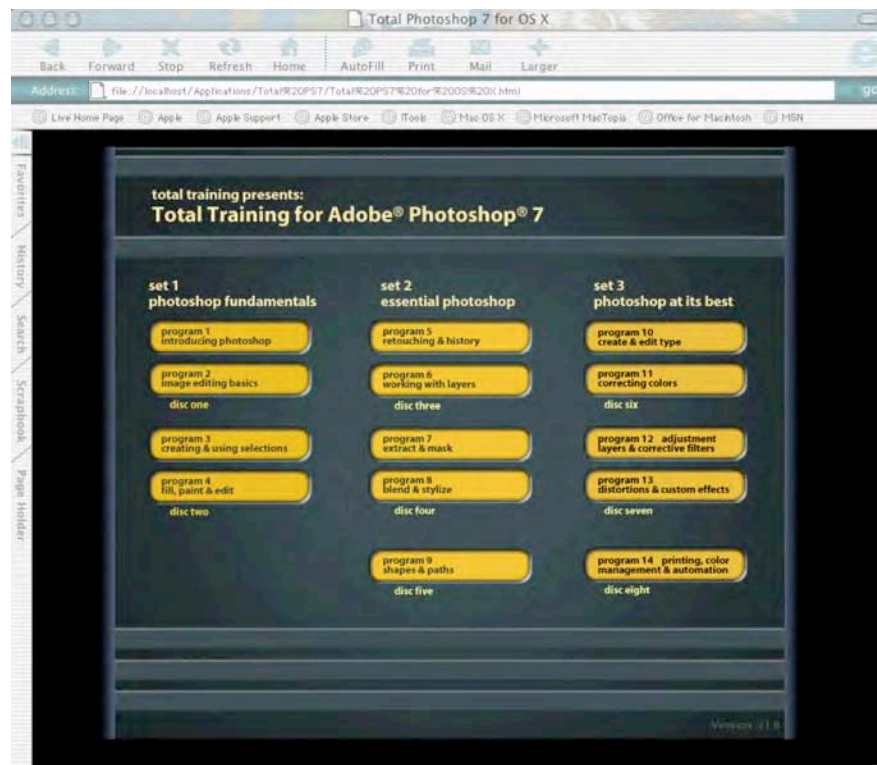

The overall theme is based on a Carpenter-workshop-like "New Yankee Photoshop" atmosphere, including termites that add some animation along with the QuickTime movies and even power saw-blade backdrops on each of the Video CDs. Must be that "cutting-edge" symbology. Believe me, you won't be "board"!

Deke McClelland presupposes nothing and has a good grasp of how Photoshop 7 works in both Mac and PC-based systems. That's an understatement. His seasoned learning method has a mature, easy style to it that makes the interactive media process a joy to participate in. And his humor is never hurtful but it can cause a case of the geeky-giggles, so be warned, especially with each intro and also the out-takes in the credits. ;^)

Mind you, I'm still towards the front end of this 26-hour marathon, so please bear with me. I discovered I could use the fast-forward button and listen to Deke in chipmunk-mode, so that helped me move right along, but doing so sacrifices the "do this along with me" rubric.
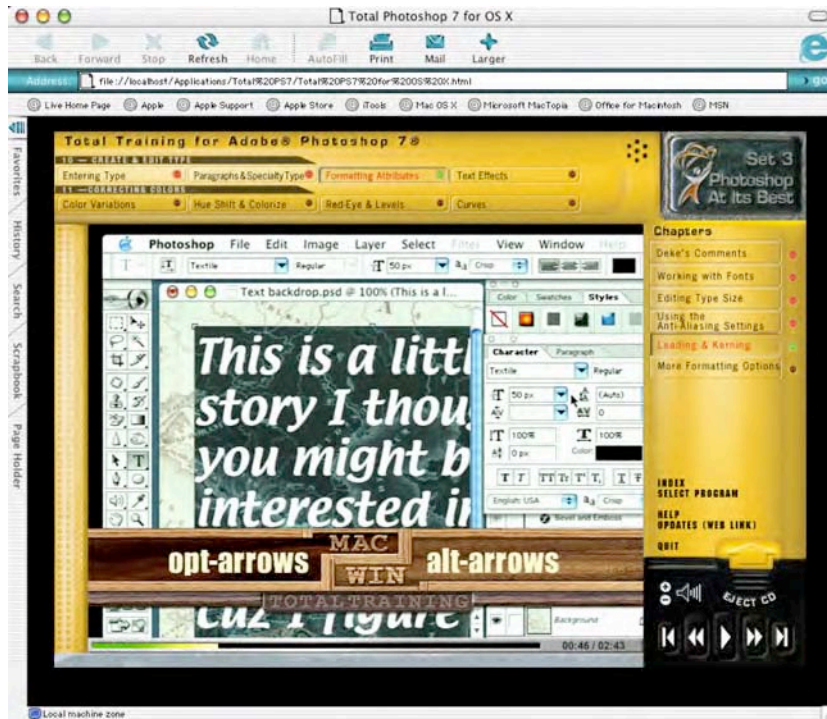
Now for the "gotchas" that a persistent, patient person like me was finally able to deduce, once I also used very responsive Tech Support and the Total Training Forum archives. It could be because of those termites, but currently, trying to run this package in either the OmniWeb or Safari browsers is not possible, at least not on my machine yet. A beta process is in the works to correct that, however. Measure twice, cut once.

Meanwhile, I had to go back and reinstall MSIE 5.2.2 (yes, I dumped it when I beta'd Safari), then also reloaded Macromedia Flash and/or Shockwave for OS X, checked my version of QuickTime and downloaded a patch for OS X off the Support site http://www.totaltraining.com/support/downloads.html so I could actually access the Video CDs correctly. (I got black screens in the other browsers.) I turned off my anti-virus package to see if that made a difference, but no, it didn't. Also, the Readme file didn't mention the OS X issues. Oh, and the Installation CD didn't go through the OS X root scenario asking for the password, etc. It just "does it". The 56-MB folder that loaded correctly into the Applications Directory contains coding for both OS 9 and OS X and I also found Windows files in the XTRAs sub-folder. There is a separate OS 9 installer as well on the Installation CD.

I was told that the reason for the OS X patch is because Adobe Director for OS X wasn't released until very recently and the package was produced using the older version. I'm sure when Photoshop 8 is released that will also be resolved.

Also, if you aren't very tolerant of the XP Pro and OS 9 environments, you will have to get that way, since a lot of the instruction transitions from those OSs. This is a great reminder that P7 is cross-platform and so is Total Training, even when OS X leaves the other systems behind in the sawdust.

The Total Training Photoshop 7 set I was given reflects on Photoshop 7 and not on Photoshop 7.0.1, so this requires some more mental flexibility. Then again, I don't have the Webified version where that is most likely rectified by now.

Once you've mastered the gauntlet of installation gotchas, the learning process in these CDs is a breeze!
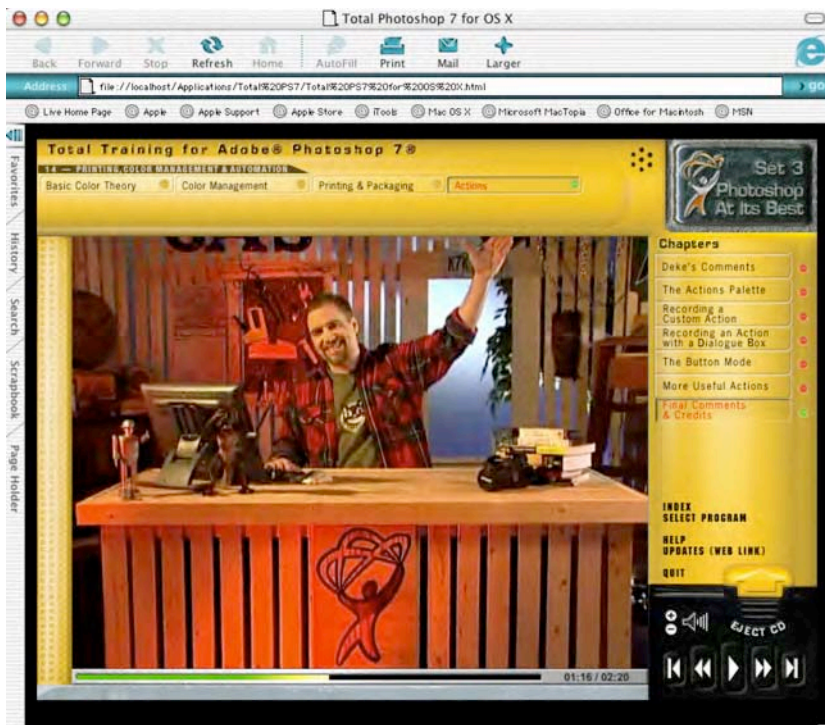
I'm very impressed when an instruction system makes me feel like I'm in control and I can rewind or fast-forward without fear of messing things up too much. However, in OS X, the Video CDs (TPS7CD) have to be ejected manually, at least with this version.

If you look closely, you will notice the bookmarking technique (red for reviewed, yellow for not completed, green for Set 3, Video Content Disc 6, Program 10, Formatting Attributes, in the Leading & Kerning lesson). I also captured the keyboard shortcut commands prevalent through the series for both Mac and PC.

The way the included 19-page Quick Reference Guide is outlined with Program CD, Lesson Topics and Time Duration also makes this an "easy-to-learn" drill-down system and nicely augments the information printed on the back covers of each well-designed CD case.

What would I like to see different? Not so much reliance on Videos-on-CDs with the possibility of having the whole process perhaps loaded on a server-side Hard Drive. Then again, there IS the web-version. And full functionality on other Browsers besides MSIE (promised, but not delivered yet).

So, assuming I were buying P7 training for my webified wood-working (so-to-speak) team, would I spend $250 on this carpentry-like training system? Sure-as-shootin'! Well, back to learnin' P7...

TotalTrainingP7_4.jpg

Like Deke says, "See ya!"

Unsanity Haxies
Reviewed by John McGibney jmcgibney@maccompanion.com

FruitMenu v 3.0.1

It's an OS X hack that gives "Classic" Apple Menu features to OS X. It allows you to add folders, applications, commands and submenus to your Apple Menu. And it allows you to customize your contextual menus too.

FruitMenu installs into your System Preferences application. Open "System Preferences" from your dock and you will see the FruitMenu icon in the bottom row under "others". Clicking the icon brings up a dialog box that allows you to customize FruitMenu's functions. There are tabs for: general controls for the FruitMenu application, the Apple Menu, Contextual Menus and an Exclusion List of apps you want to exclude from accessing FruitMenu.

I added several apps and folders to the Apple Menu via FruitMenu and clicked the Apply button. The items I added became immediately available. I miss the old Apple menu since I upgraded to X and I must admit it's nice to have most of my favorite settings back. As expected FruitMenu works flawlessly in 10.1.5 and in Jaguar (X.2.2).
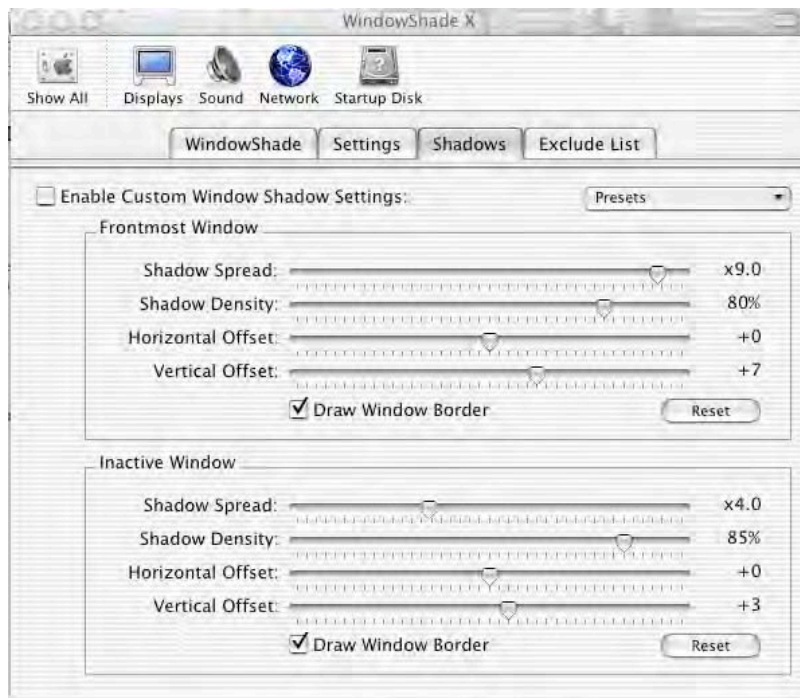

WindowShade X v 2.1.2

It's an OS-X hack that brings back the WindowShade function from OS 9. It also allows you to tweak the window display characteristics for OS X. Sliders allow you to adjust opacity, offset, and shadows.

Xounds v 1.4

Remember those endearing/annoying sounds that played along with every event in your finder back in OS 9? Well they're back with Xounds. Xounds allows you to import your old sound sets from your OS 9 Appearance Folder and use these sounds in X. You can also download new sound sets from the Internet just by clicking on the download button in Xounds. Once installed you can select the set you want and then customize it further in the "Advanced" window.
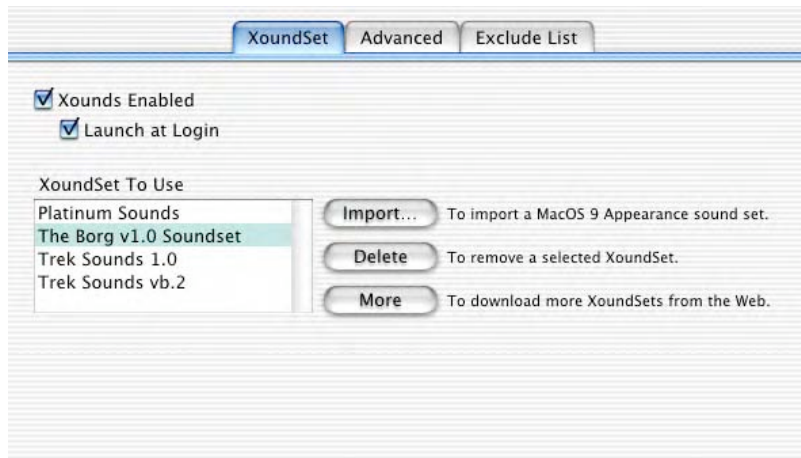
Here you can fine-tune your settings by selecting the effects you want signaled. Menus, Windows, Buttons, Sliders and Finder events can be enabled or disabled and volumes set for each group. Applications can be excluded from these sounds by adding them to the Exclude List.

Application Enhancer (Free)

It's a required add-on for some of the Haxies so they can modify the Finderís display output. If it is needed by a particular Haxie and you have not yet installed it, you will be offered an opportunity to link to the Unsanity site. Once installed itís invisible and works completely in the background allowing Unsanity's creations to interact with OS X's display features.

Unsanity's Installers

In one word - perfect! This is how all installers should behave. The Haxie's installers are well thought out and simple to use. All the software uses the same installer model. They offer the 4 choices:
Installing for one user or all users.
Check for newer versions of the software prior to the actual install.
Creating installation log
Launching Application upon completion.

The installers also give a running account of the install process to keep you informed of the progress. These installers should be the models for all installers for use in OS X. The installed applications show up in the System Preferences window in the bottom row under "Others".

Installed with each application is a TextEdit document giving complete details on registering and setting up each application. Unsanity has done their homework and created several valuable utilities to enhance your OS X experience and restore some of the lost features from OS9 and earlier.

Other Products

Unsanity also makes the following other Haxies for OS X. See their site at _ http://www.unsanity.com/products.php for more details. Maybe I'll review them at a later date.

Labels X - adds file labeling features and allows you to use labels from Mac OS 9.
Silk - enables the Quartz text rendering and smoothing for Carbon applications in Mac OS X.
ClearDock - changes the Dock background color under Mac OS X 10.2.
Menu Extra Enabler - allows you to use third-party Menu Extra modules in Mac OS X 10.2.
Dock Detox - removes application icon bouncing in the Dock in Mac OS X.
Metallifizer - will add or remove brushed metal appearance to Cocoa applications on Mac OS X 10.2.
ShadowKiller - removes the windows and menu shadows completely to speed up slower Macs.

Cee Pee You - free menu extra to show CPU load in your menubar and, optionally, on PowerMate.
Mint Audio - audio player for Mac OS and Mac OS X. Featuring alarm clock, skins, equalizer, automatic cross-fading between tracks, float-above-all small control window and much more, this player is a perfect companion to your everyday Macintosh experience.

VSE Be Found - Search Engine and Web Site Analysis
Reviewed by Dr. Eric Flescher eflescher@maccompanion.com

Voget Selbach Enterprises GmbH Koenigsberger Strasse 28 D-56235 Ransbach-Baumbach Germany Amtsgericht Montabaur 6 HRB 6339 USt-IdNr.: DE204741670 Fax:+ 1 (561) 423-0457 (USA, International) 01212 5102 39-020 (Germany) E-Mail support@vse-online.com http://vse-online.com/ Lite Version $20 USD, Pro Version $90 USD	5 MacCompanions

Strengths: Two versions give you a range of options and price ranges. Easy to use, flexible and has multiple options for customizing your submissions. Tutorial and artificial intelligence type feedback shows you immediate results so that you can learn about and change the coding of your pages. Users do not have to know html coding as the software takes care of that as you work with it. The software is visually appealing, well laid out and easy to understand. Helps submit your site not only to the many search engines around the world but also directories (like Yahoo) and other directories.

Weaknesses: Having to buy updated scripts every three months (after the initial trial period with Pro version) but such is the changing nature of the industry. While such search engine changes may not be significant, you must decide if it is worth it to update the search engine scripts which means additional costs. |

Figure 1

Finally you have your website built. Now you need a Macintosh software product that will help you submit your page(s) for search engine consideration. But before you submit, you need to prepare your page(s) for one or more search engines. If you are not adept at html code, you need to find an easy to use product that will also assist in the preparation of your page(s) and code the pages properly for the search engines, many of which have different considerations. If you are Macintosh user, VSE Be Found may be the software product to meet these needs.
You can try VSE Be Found before you buy (however the demo is limited to using only a few search engines) and there is a thirty-day money back

guarantee. There are two versions the Lite version and the Pro version. The features that the Pro version has that are not found in the Lite version are: the ability to check rankings; checking link popularity; being able to submit to multiple sites; submission to more then 100 search engines (only 10 for Lite but this includes Google); and free updates for search

engines scripts for three months.

Upon launching the Pro version, a menu appears with seven options (see Figure 1).

Making your web page search engine ready is the place to start. Clicking on the icon, the Prepare your Web Pages screen appears (as in Figure 2 below).

The work area is well laid out and easy to understand. The upper window is for dragging and dropping or searching and adding your document (one webpage) or adding a series of pages by clicking on the "Add folder" tab. The best place to start is your main homepage as most Internet users will find and be introduced to your site through this main page.

VSE Be Found takes into account a variety of locations on the page called META TAGS. These coded html areas contain a variety of information that is searched by the search engines before submission. Proper preparation is important so that your pages are scanned in the right manner for maximum searchable capabilities by the hundreds of search engines found worldwide. Without this, your page may not be submitted to some search engines or may not be categorized for maximum search capabilities. The first place to start is the title of your main page.
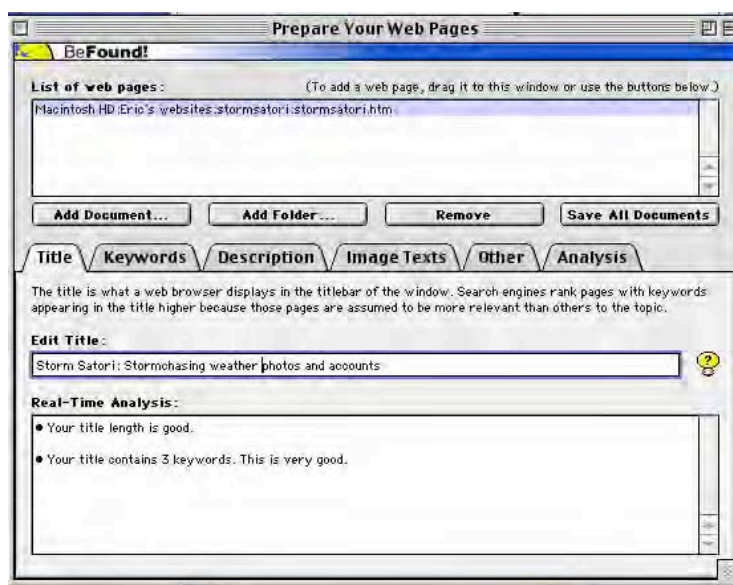

Figure 2

VSE BE Found analyzes the current title and rates the name of the site/page on the scale of Excellent to Poor. The more keywords that are used in your title the better. As you modify your title, the software gives you feedback immediately.

Keywords are the heart of the searches. As in the title tabbed area, clicking on that keyword tab brings up an area in this case, that allows the entering and ranking your keywords. It ís a challenging but an enjoyable exercise, experimenting and seeing how many relevant keywords that you can enter that yield for a better "score". Each time the intelligent feedback informs you whether you don't have the proper number or right keywords that synchronize with the title. Information is also displayed if some of your actions will penalize your rankings on certain search engines. Correction is the key and as you try, your knowledge of the search engine process grows. Sooner or later you will reach a very good or excellent ranking with your keyword. But there is more work to prepare your pages and VSE BE Found also helps with that.

Descriptions of your pages (simple to expand) are also important as the search engines

search for information the links your title to the keywords and the description. Search engine ranking suffer if there is not a proper correlation among these areas. The software analyzes your descriptions and with trial and error you increase your ranking for a proper description.

The software also helps code pictures that your site has. The search engines also index these. Some web users actually turn off image display and VSE BE found allows you to insert descriptions so that people will see the description even though the images are not viewed. This is also helpful for blind internet surfers who rely on such descriptions (to "view" the entirety of your site via their text readers.).

The other tab allows for further customization of one or all of the pages on your site. Keyword comments can be added to one or more of the pages on your website. The options of telling the search engines to index the page and to follow all links (important for rankings in Google and other search engines) can be turned on or off. Inserting the day(s) number tells the search engines when to revisit your pages for indexing. Another option is to turn off the prevention of local caching in web servers and web browsers (leaving on allows the web surfers to come back to your site in a more quick fashion). The name of the author of the site and the publisher can also be inserted into windows which are then coded into one or more your pages.

Clicking on the analysis tab shows the full review of your preparation. A review appears of your rankings and how well your page is prepared. At this time, additional corrections can be made before you save your pages. The next step is submitting your pages.

Clicking on the "Submit your web page URL to search engines" button in the main window displays the "Enter Submit Information" window. This area, the "Enter Submit Information" window is divided in two sections. The upper area shows the name of the Submission Profile. This Profile contains all information that is needed to submit your web pages to search engines. Six panels in the lower section of the window appear (Page, Contact, Descriptions, Search Engines, Notes, and Validation).

Profiles assist in submitting your site. Clicking the "New" or the "Duplicate" button can create new profiles. Multiple profiles are important if you want to submit your web sites for yourself or a client for whom websites are prepared. This also helps if you have more than one web site. An advantage of this software is that the Professional version of VSE Be Found can handle more than one submission profile. The "History" button allows you to view when and how often the web site URL has been submitted to the variety of search engines.

Categorization of your web page helps the search engines to locate your pages. The pages can be indexed using cone of three type categories (academic, business or personal). Once checked, bring up different categories that you select. The page language option can be changed as well especially for those search engines who only search pages that are written in certain foreign languages (French, German, etc).

Search engines often change the way submissions are accepted. At times some search engine scripts don't work. The search engine scripts of VSE Be Found are constantly updated and can be found on the software's website. The software to send out the pages accesses these. A listing of the "Search Engines" menu area show over 100 worldwide search engines. VSE Be Found can submit pages to one or more. One search engine can be selected for submission by clicking on it while multiple search engines can be selected by holding down the Shift key or the Option key and clicking the listing names.

The "Validation Panel" can analyze and tell you if you have selected a search engine that does not accept your web page. The search engines that accept your web pages in a

special language can be found by using the "Select Search Engines" popup menu.

It is interesting to watch as your page is submitted to the listing of the search engines. Most go through without a problem but if problems do come up, a message indicates why the page has not been submitted to that particular search engine (language etc).

In addition, the software helps the submission of your pages to none search engine-directories like Yahoo. In this case, each submission is performed individually. There are options to submit to other areas on the Internet as well.

Additional features allow the checking of search engine rankings, website popularity and looking at the code-meta tags of competitor websites. This is part of the ongoing process of optimizing your website in terms of website search engine capabilities. Search engines change all the time and special scripts must be installed with BE Found before submitting your pages to the search engines. For an additional fee, updated scripts for the many search engines can be purchased from the company, to maximize your effort when you resubmit your search engines. While not needed to submit your websites after the first attempts, the updates are helpful for future submissions.

VSE Be Found is fun, powerful and easy to use. The support (once you sign up for full service) is top notch. The price is most reasonable. So try the software and let Internet surfers know about your website masterpieces.

Webdesign
Reviewed by Dustin D'Andrea ddandrea@maccompanion.com
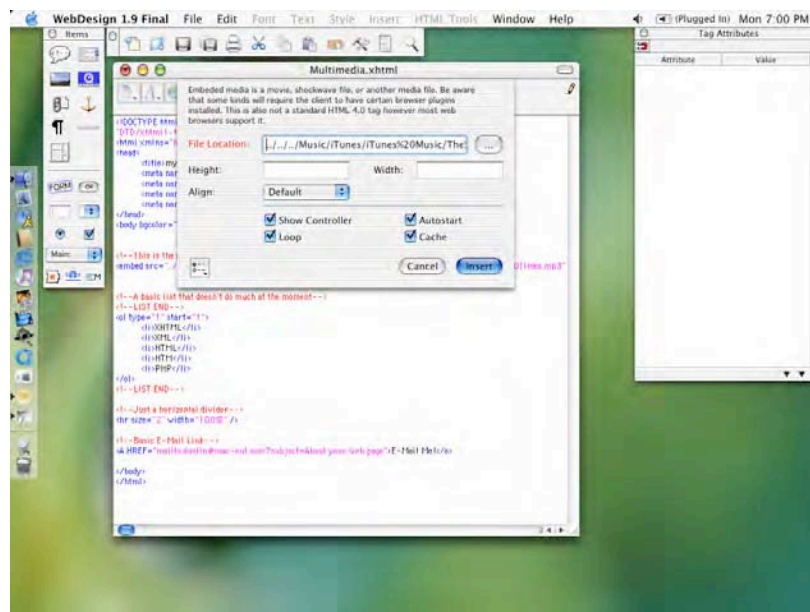
Rage Software	5 MacCompanions
http://www.ragesw.com/	
$30 USD	Strengths: Easy to use, great wizards, inexpensive.
Mac OS 9.0 or higher with CarbonLib 1.5 or higher; Mac OS X 10.1 or higher	Weaknesses: Too cumbersome for advanced users, no design view, possible compatibility issues.

WebDesign is a basic, inexpensive text-based HTML editor. At first sight, it looks like most other HTML editors, and it even resembles Mac OS X's Text Edit. Although it looks basic on the outside, it is a powerful and easy to use HTML-editing program.

Initially I had some installation troubles. WebDesign would not install on Mac OS X 10.2.3. I had to archive and reinstall Mac OS X to get the program to work after a number of troubleshooting measures failed. This may not have been the fault of WebDesign itself, but I felt it was necessary to make a note of it. Also, Rage Software's technical support staff gave me a thorough response within an hour. When the program finally installed, it worked great, and was speedy in Mac OS X 10.2

There are many things to like about WebDesign. It is incredibly easy to use, especially when inserting media objects and anchors. This is accomplished by dragging and dropping the object you want and filling in some options in a small pop-up box. All of the code is then generated for you. If you are a veteran web designer, you can code everything manually if you want. I found the wizards straightforward and easy to use – most specifically the media player plug-in. All you have to do is give it the location of the item to play, and WebDesign sets up everything, including the controller.

It is very easy to set up new pages through the wizard. Meta and body tags can be added almost effortlessly when creating a new page. All of the newer web page formats, such as HTML, XHTML, and XML are supported. Built-in tutorials are available HTML, XHTML, CSS, among others. In addition, there are keyboard shortcuts to commonly used things, like bolding, and underlining. Nothing about the program was complicated at all.

Some users may be dissatisfied with a few major feature omissions. One of the first things I noticed was the lack of a "design" or a WYSIWYG view. Although I think the price of the program warrants the omission of that feature, it would have been a very nice inclusion. I would have also liked a bit more integration with Java, along with some basic scripts.

I was somewhat exasperated when program wouldn't install properly, although I was pleased with its simplicity when it did. But would I recommend it? For basic streaming media sites, I would recommend it. I would also recommend it to beginners who want to learn HTML. I would not recommend WebDesign to advanced users, unless all you need is an easy to use text-based editor. I think I'll stick with Macromedia's Dreamweaver.

That's it for this issue! We hope you enjoyed it and had fun learning some new things. Please let us know what you think. Email us at feedback@maccompanion.com.