The Macintosh Professional Network Presents

macCompanion

Your Guide To All Things Macintosh

September 2003 Issue 3 Volume 1

Blues

to X
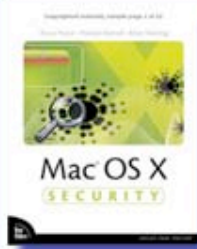
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Scott Kelby

Cover design by Derek Caudill

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This issue is dedicated to the memory of Randy Cypherd. He passed away August 17, 2003. He helped us through our transition from where we were to where we are now. He will be missed.

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And our special thanks to those who have allowed us to review their products!

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Letter from the CEO

by Robert Pritchett

Special Note:

On August 17th, we lost one of our own, Randy Cypherd
http://www.maccompanion.com/aboutus.html, to a long bout of illness, so we are
dedicating this issue to his memory. He submitted the review last month on ePocrates
http://www.maccompanion.com/archives/august2003/software.html#4 before he passed
away, and now you know why. He will be missed, even though he was with us for only a
short time, helping us transition from what we were to what we are now. He is beyond
the pain and suffering experienced in mortality.

_____

So, Are the Gloves Off Yet?

Do you think the gloves are finally going to come off between Macs and the rest of the
computer industry?

Picture the following all too common occurrence, won't you?

My other job
At the office where I work—yes, I do other things besides run macCompanion—we have
an Information Technology (IT) person who used to work at Microsoft (MS) for 3 years
as part of the XP Pro development team. He's *very* knowledgeable about MS software.
We hold a staff meeting on Monday mornings, but usually he has been up the entire night
working on the network stuff. He is usually all bleary-eyed and sleepy when he comes to
the meeting. He is exhausted and worn out. He looks physically beat. Why? Well, he
keeps pushing off the hordes of crackers and malcontents who thrive on the Internet and
who somehow keep finding ways into our system and causing grief. That effort keeps
him occupied. I've watched him work this way for months. I feel for him.

The latest incident was when he had to come back to the office after one hour's sleep to
fight off yet another cracker who had sneaked in and was merrily dancing around on our
servers. Because we had not been keeping up with the updates from MS (Yeah, really!),
we also were slammed with the MSBlaster worm that wasn't eradicated from our
individual PCs until two days later. Our servers were taken off-line and our individual
systems had to be inoculated. And this occurred shortly after my own system had had the
hard drive replaced. It, along with many other machines on our network, was littered with
thousands of spambots. That computer network was crawling, dragging, and limping
along, but those network-nasties were finally removed as well.

Toward the end of the week I was finally able to enter all my case notes from the stack of
paper-based backup system processes. We have to rely on those when the system does go
down. Now do you see the picture? There is a paper-based backup system in place

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because the "paperless office environment" is so unreliable. And this was before the East Coast blackout, which no one yet has admitting could have been caused by a computer system glitch (as of this writing).

So back to our burned-out IT guy. He's willing for us to replace all the PCs with Macs, but he doesn't want us to touch *his* Servers. We are in the process of buying a bunch of Terminal Server licenses. We just bought a motherboard to replace our FTP (File Transfer Protocol) server and he finally got that system working again. We just bought the annual subscription to the TechNet stuff from Microsoft and joined their Partners program. The constant CDs from MS are flowing—again—so we have some legacy issues to deal with before we can move to an Xserve environment.

There is Mac-hope!
Just prior to this episode, we got a call from an agency that had been paying tech support for four years. When they spoke with me, they prided themselves on the fact that this was their first call – ever – for tech support! And for what? To move our application from one server to another, an easy enough folder copy/paste process. So I asked what they were using. I could have guessed, but couldn't believe it until they verified what I was thinking: sure enough, they were using Virtual PC on Macs to use our program. I got all teary-eyed and choked up. I even got goose pimples! They had been doing for years what I had recently quietly suggesting we do in-house. And they said they weren't the only agency in a production environment to do so. I was elated! Now we are working with them in "Skunkworks" mode to help them use our Agency Management software in a non-emulated environment so those of us that use the product can "go native" on the Mac. I'm so excited!
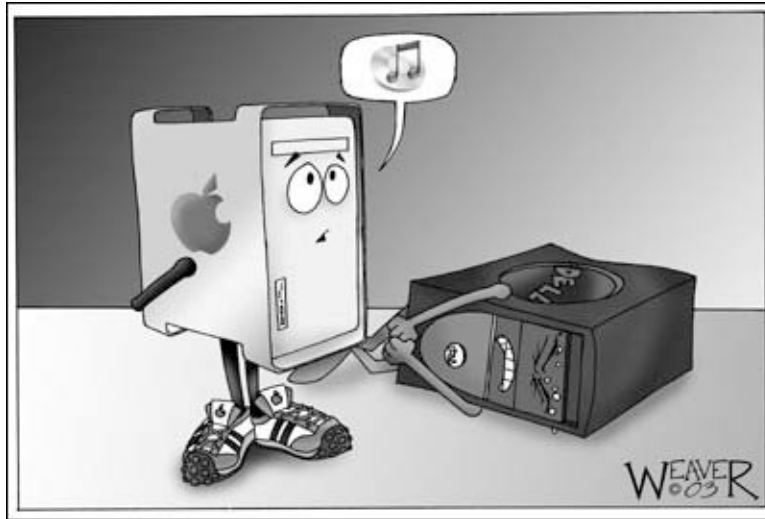
So who's IT?
So imagine my surprise (I'm being sarcastic) when business bean counters are looking once again at outsourcing Information Technology (IT) support. Trade journals are repeating the "study" that IT in a business environment is irrelevant. Look, I used to be a "Network Nazi" myself. I fully understand why our own IT guy is not willing to move away from his comfort zone. He has a growing family to support and he feels that the Mac threatens his livelihood. And he is far from being alone in that feeling: In most businesses the wolf (the IT department) is guarding the henhouse (the business system) as far as the technology is concerned, to keep the business operational with computers, networks and databases. As Robert Cringley wrote in his article, "May the Source Be With You" http://www.pbs.org/cringely/pulpit/pulpit20030814.html, IT departments are very concerned about losing their power, prestige, budgets, and personnel. So face it and grow up. The Mac is as much a threat to other computers as electricity was a threat to the whale oil industry.

Adapt or die
I figure if I can adapt, then the other IT guys should be able to as well. In our particular situation, our own IT guy *is* the IT department. Since our new Chief Technology Officer is comfortable using Macs, then perhaps our IT guy will have to adapt or die. I'll keep you posted. Maybe we can get him a G5!

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Meanwhile, enjoy this cartoon we received permission to reprint here:

http://media.iowastatedaily.com/vimages/shared/vnews/stories/3f0a0e9bb3c97-93-1.jpg

Then add your own favorite non-Mac computer in place of the one clutching his privates. Gloves off, indeed!

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Editorial

by Robert Pritchett

Ye Shall Obtain Knowledge!

That's an interesting title, isn't it: "**Ye Shall Obtain Knowledge!**" So what do we mean by that? Okay, what you don't know *can* hurt you. Remember the old saying, "To be forewarned is to be forearmed." Well, we'd like to let you know what is going on in our environment.

We have some great products in the queue to review over the next few months. We really do have a lot of items lined up: books, hardware, and software. It just takes time to get through them all, so please bear with us. The Macintosh environment is alive, well, and innovative. It is where things are really happening, and it is very exciting!

Now I'm going to discuss some information you may or may not know about:

I'm going to let you in on a "soon-to-be-known-world-wide" secret about OS X. In the virus game, the score so far is Microsoft, 70,000+ viruses; Apple's OS X, 0 viruses. And this doesn't include Worms or Trojans. But, even with them, the impact so far has been "collateral damage" to us on our chosen platform. Macintoshes are being affected, but not directly.

Over on MacObserver, Charles Gaba drills down deeper about computer viruses in his editorial, "**Mac Viruses By The Numbers - Word Macro: 553, Classic Mac: 26, OS X: Zero**" http://www.macobserver.com/editorial/2003/08/29.1.shtml.
Yes, that is correct. Out of over 71,000 viruses out there, so far none directly affect OS X. Zero! This is where having the low score is a good thing. We anticipate a few more folks are going to move over to our Macintosh environment after they have suffered enough from the battlebots of the Internet and the cyberwar that is decimating the WinTel world. We anticipate quite a few more.

We at macCompanion are still suffering from Internet battle fatigue ourselves, however, because we continue to suffer from living in a WinTel world. Some of our own staff still can't receive e-mail because they are served by Internet Service Provider platforms that have been adversely affected by the Microsoft-specific worms that travel through the Internet. So, their reviews are prevented from reaching us in a timely manner, and we can't edit and publish them. This is not a good thing.

Then there is SPAM, or "Stop Porn & Abusive Marketing". Did you know that a citizen living in and registered with the state of Washington could sue for $500 USD per instance of spam, and up to $4,000 USD if the spammer also resides in that state? http://www.wa.gov/ago/junkemail/citizenlaw.shtml. But those citizens must first register their e-mail with the state at http://registry.waisp.org/.

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Other states are enacting similar processes. And at the US Federal level, H.R. 2214, or "RID-SPAM" Act, and H.R. 2515, the "AntiSPAM Act", are both in progress. Unfortunately, those proposals don't allow the citizen to take direct action against spammers, whereas Washington State law does.

John Manzione has written an excellent article, **"Virtual PC won't run on a G5. Boo Hoo, what are we supposed to do now?"** http://www.macnet2.com/more.php?id=391_0_1_0. Personally, I love the comments flowing there about Microsoft's ownership of Virtual PC 6.1, which doesn't currently run on the G5. All the Microsoft software that we Macintosh users are forced to use, so we can work in the WinTel environment is discussed there. So far the follow-up commentary from John's article has been excellent.

And before we get into our own September issue, I want you to go see what David Zeiler wrote about Mac security in his Mac Experience column, **"Backlash - Readers contend Mac's OS X is much tougher to crack than Windows"** http://www.sunspot.net/technology/custom/pluggedin/bal-mac082803,0,1353478.column. See David's other great articles at the bottom of that column.

I am reviewing a number of books on computer security and hope to get those to you shortly. Are we Macintosh users completely immune to "cyberwar"? http://www.psycom.net/iwar.1.html Not really, but so far we are not directly affected, because OS X is already battle-hardened and well written (okay, there *are* 30 vulnerabilities that have been found and updates have been distributed by Apple). You knew that, right? And, OS X just keeps getting better with time.

Oh—one more thing that really delights my heart: the U.S. government is finally allowing the Macintosh back onto its "approved list" of products. Why? Because intrepid federal employees fought the good paper chase fight and began using them in their line of work. This was in spite of the government IT departments that tried so hard to force those employees to use the 800-pound gorilla (Microsoft) that gave those IT departments their job security. Jason Miller wrote about it in the Government Computer News, **"Linux, Mac OS added to Federal Enterprise Architecture Platforms"**. http://gcn.com/vol1_no1/daily-updates/23302-1.html**.**

Now, go see what else *we* wrote about this month in macCompanion. You, too, shall obtain knowledge!

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Views from the Ivory Tower

by Ted Bade

Steve Jobs in the news - Steve Jobs has been in the news lately. He is one of the top (if not the top) paid CEO of companies with revenues of $5 billion or more (according to *Bloomberg*). Quite an improvement for a guy who was refusing to take any money at all while holding the position as interim CEO!

In a recent interview with Business Week, Steve Jobs discussed innovation and the fact that Apple is putting money into Research and Development during a time when many technology companies are fighting to survive. (you can read the full interview at: http://www.businessweek.com/technology/content/aug2003/tc20030813_7682_tc121.htm). Great Job Steve!

While Steve has his faults (don't we all), I believe that his vision, innovation, and drive are what make Apple a company that is always on the leading edge of new technology. Even though it surprises many Mac Users, Macs aren't the most popular type of computer. Apple would have a hard time surviving if it weren't for the innovations and advances in technology this company brings to the computer market on a regular basis. People who use Macs come to expect this and enjoy the "next great thing" from Apple. That's one of the reasons so many people stay with the Macintosh platform.

In the above article, Mr. Jobs indicated that music isn't a new thing even with computers. Yet one has to admire the innovative approach that the iTunes Music Store (iTMS) has brought to the market. It provides a solution to both the music consumer and the music industry. It isn't perfect, but it does a terrific job and Apple was the first company to do it! iTMS helps fight music piracy by providing an honest and easy way of getting music.

A number of people, including the CEO of Intel, feel that Apple's (and specifically Mr. Job's) decision not to go with Intel chips was a bad idea. I don't have the technical knowledge to judge which chip would be best for Apple, but I can say that I have always been satisfied with my Macs and I am really looking forward to the G5-based Macintosh.

So, thank you Steve Jobs, and keep up the great innovation!!

Many praises for the G5 Macs and the Macintosh platform - It is late August, the G5 Macs have begun to ship and a flood of positive articles concerning the Macintosh, the G5, and Mac OS X have been seen in computer-related magazines. Is this a fluke, or is there enough dissatisfaction with the Wintel market that managers are considering alternatives?

ComputerWorld ran an interesting article called "*Mac Myths and IT*" that was featured on Apple "Hot News" web page. While this article didn't suggest everyone run out and buy Macs, it did point out some of the benefits of the Mac and debunked the three common Mac myths: Macs are expensive compared to similar PCs (Macs are more expensive then a typical stripped down PC, add in all the extras that are standard with a Mac and the

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prices compare favorably), the lack of software (all the important business software is available along with many other types of applications), and that the Mac is based on proprietary protocols (Not true, MacOS X is actually more standard then a typical Windows PC). You can read the article by visiting: http://www.computerworld.com/softwaretopics/os/macos/story/0,10801,84023,00.html You might learn a few things even if you are a dedicated Mac user!

In an article published on the TechNewsWorld web site, Aberdeen Group's Chief Research Officer Peter Kastner discussed the G5 CPU and was quoted as saying: "For a new chip, this is about as good as it gets. The performance improvements are so evident that only a few minutes in the store demo area will convince many buyers that it's time to upgrade." The article goes on to discuss some of the technological improvements in Apple's new G5. It is not just the new chip, but the improved data throughput, faster graphics speeds, and massive memory support combined with the new chip that make a truly spectacular machine. To read this article visit: http://www.technewsworld.com/perl/story/31363.html#story-start.

InfoWorld's web site hosted a series of articles concerning the Macintosh platform and the new G5. One article points out that Apple includes some really high-end technology along with rock solid UNIX code with their machines. It puts a positive light on Apple competing in the IT market. You can read all of them by visiting: http://www.infoworld.com/reports/SRapple.html.

In an interesting article on the PBS web page Robert Cringely suggest that one reason that Macs aren't used more in Information Technology (IT) departments is that they might reduce the need of IT support, that is IT jobs and budget. Why? Because Macs are easier to use. Windows machines require a lot of support and the article indicates that LINUX machines require just as much support. An interesting concept that I have often considered myself. Read the full article at: http://www.pbs.org/cringely/pulpit/pulpit20030814.html.

A friend with some IT experience pointed out that one thing the Windows world provides is certification and training. Which gives them credentials. This is a good point. Now allow me to refute it.

Imagine, for a moment, a world in which automobile controls were kept at the level of modern computers. That is very difficult to understand and control. We could have developed a whole new industry of certified auto operators to bring us back and forth to work! Now imagine a small company creating an automobile with simple controls, that almost anyone could master with a little time reading the manual and some practice. Luckily the auto industry isn't the computer industry!!

Apple's innovations usually make the computer experience easier. I find people who use Macs often acquire significant computer skills in general. In my opinion, this happens because Macs are easier to use, so rather then fighting frustrating battle after battle with the computer, Mac Users tend to explore and try more things. The more they try, the more experience they acquire and the bolder they get. It's a great cycle of learning!

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A real hacker (in the good sense) might enjoy the challenge of a difficult computer. There is nothing wrong in that. I enjoy troubleshooting Window machine problems as a hobby. But that is not for everybody. I have friends that like to rebuild cars too. But that is not my cup of tea. The average user of both automobiles and computers just want to get their work done. We know the Macintosh platform lets even the most average user accomplish this with ease.

It is good to hear Apple's name brought up in the Tech-News arena without words like "beleaguered" or "too expensive"! Mac users like myself have come to expect innovation and advances in new Macintosh models and we demand ease-of-use.

It would be great to think that perhaps a few companies might switch to or simply incorporate Macintosh computing into their daily use. Perhaps the G5 and all the innovations included with it will help this along.

Music in the news again - It seems that music, especially music made available on the Internet is always in the news lately. Peter Lowe, Apple's Director of Marketing for Applications and Services indicated that the best way to minimize illegal file sharing is to compete with it. Which is what Apple is doing. The iTMS offers a legal way to download music. It seems like a good plan but time will tell.

You probably heard about *Buy Music*, an internet based music selling company that copied Apple's iTunes model. On the surface this program seems like a better deal (79 cents a song), but there have been some problems. Poor or even no technical support is one, especially since there have been problems using the music purchased. According to USA Today early customers of *Buy Music* found they couldn't transfer the music they bought to their portable players! Well, they said you could **buy** the music, nobody said anything about **listening** to it!!

Another possible problem is that some artists have discovered that some of the music being sold at *Buy Music* isn't properly licensed. That is, the artists involved haven't given permission to use their music. Very naughty. This is as bad as trading music over the Internet with Napster, **but** (with a lot of emphasis on the "but"), since no major record publisher is involved, there is little concern. Except, of course, by the artists whose music is being s(t)old.

Apple has its problems and things don't always work, but so far the iTunes Music store has worked very well for me. I haven't heard many complaints and those that I did hear were that a certain artist wasn't available. Great job Apple!

Macs and computer viruses – {Editor: This can't be said enough! See the Letter from the Editor this month.} I read a very interesting article concerning computer viruses recently. Right after Windows systems were once again hit by another bug, which caused a lot of trouble for many people.

The article titled: "What me Worry?" by David Zeiler had some interesting statistics. For

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instance that there are an estimated 70,000 Windows specific viruses while Symantec estimates about 50 Macintosh Classic based ones. Apparently not a single Mac OS X virus has surfaced in the two years since its introduction.

The article indicates, and I agree, that people who write viruses want to have a grand effect, so they write for the largest platform. The lack of Mac OS X computer viruses doesn't mean that viruses cannot be written for Mac OS X, just that they aren't. However, the article also quoted an Internet Security person as saying that Apple probably did a good job closing security holes in the Free BSD UNIX used under Mac OS X. From this one could imply that it might be harder to write viruses for Mac OS X.

Apple has been sending regular security updates via the software update control pane. Many people, including Apple, look over MacOS X's code searching for security leaks and when one is discovered, Apple very quickly releases a patch. Apparently Microsoft does this as well, however, there are some problems. Apple usually turns around a patch in a week while Microsoft takes a few weeks.

But worse then that, often Microsoft patches cause other problems after they are installed on a system, so System Administrators wait to install them, giving viruses time to be written and spread. I have heard of only a few minor hassles associated with Apple's security patches. The most annoying one for me being every time a new one is installed I have to once again give permission to all my applications to use my keychain.

Install those patches! {Editor: Only around 30 vulnerabilities have been resolved so far after 2 years.} Keep your Mac safe. Also, consider using a virus software package. You probably won't need it for a Mac-specific virus, but by using it, your Mac can kill any Window's-based viruses that pass through your Mac. Its tough enough using a Window's-based machine, lets do a little to help those people... ;-)

Chameleon Macs - I couldn't pass this one up. Recently a rumor surfaced that Apple has filed a patent application for a computer whose outside would change color. http://www.macnn.com/news/20774   Apple has gone a long way to make interesting looking Macs, some we have liked and others we haven't.

I just found hearing about the potential that a user could change the color of their own Mac to suit their personality so, er, well, weird... I just had to share that with you.

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Real World

by Harry {doc} Babad (with the OS Jaguar learning-curve Blues)

Moved to Jaguar-Land — Trials 'n Tribulations of a Macintosh OS 9.x User in 12 Bars

I got the blues — I've got the blues
I got the Jaguar on my back
OS X won't cut me no slack — blues.

Woke up this morning feelin' kinda blue
Empty books and Help files
New OS supposed to be true blue.

OS Jaguar Keeps Me Groanin' and Moanin'

A twitch of the mouse - YOU mess up a document or folder title, command doesn't Z reverse the change? It sure enough did when I was an OS "niner".

I make a new folder [Command–Shift N], Finder don't highlight the title in list sort. — Have to chase the "untitled folder, then click and type away – Takes too long and it's all feels bad! [Works fine in icon view, that's true.]

Niner helped me put right back, documents stuff that I dragged out. Hit command Z put it all away right into the folder stack. It's dead, all dead in OS X.

Want to take a folder, paint it icon new. Many niner icons, used to work just fine, even GIF's and JPEG worked all the time. Itty-bitty icon when pasting into folders and documents and when docked no images form that are large and true. Haven't solved yet, even with Graphics Converter™, got my dander up, each with each try, it's getting greater. So I paste from the clipboard, open up Converter {graphics} resolution to 150, it then gets info, pastes the image at times so very clear and true. But it's a real pain, not a universal cure, half-sized icon don't my problem cure.

OmniPage X, the one we bought won't work with Jaguar the way you thought. Don't recognize my scanner, it's being mighty shy, quits for no good reason, so no scanning on the fly! Work-arounds a plenty scanner software works just fine, drag it into OmniPage and use it — keeps your wrists all limber.

Install a new and shiny, Office X for me to use. The user custom dictionary, in Word was flashed, and gone. Didn't have a backup, no don't nag me now. The old one had too many late night typos but was loaded up for bear. Now I get a chance to re-spell then again this year.

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Simple Text, Text Edit, and new in RTF are really nifty. Used them all the time, along with custom clipping [clip Edit™]. Why can't the #@&#! computer accept them as being mostly the same, or just apply a save-as to keep the same old name. New titles creating is a real drag when saving changes for text grabbed off the net. I'd love a real good haxie — so I'll keep searching on the net.

Called a man at QuickKeys, used the telephone – The man he did tell me QuickKeys v. 1.0 with Jaguar cannot dance. He'd up and go and send me a brand new CD. So now again with QuickKeys, I can keep up our romance. It won't cost a nickel, not even one damn cent, so I be up and running in a few weeks when it's been sent.

I thought it neat and spiffy, two burners on my desk, one fired up external and the G-4's super totals up the rest. Can't tell the stupid system, since Toast in my first choice, that always there's a blank disk in the LaCie on the desk. CD Burning takes three steps to boogie and a while to make it work. You all at Apple and Roxio, it makes me wonder why, a new preference can't be crafted — could save the extra work.

Setting up the system, transferring documents galore. Wasn't super careful where I put them then, now nightmares creep out when I seek my files. Some documents will drop in folders, true and fine in Harry's home for working when in OS X. Other times it copies, in my hard disk, just laid right back and hiding mighty fine. [Yeah, I have two internal disk drives my new Mac-mobile, the new one Apple put there and from my old OS 9 G4]. Then there's stuff in classic, which I have not tried, when I finally fix it, I'll be more then satisfied.

Selecting printer was a breeze, but chooser is demised, but once located, print center works just fine.

But then you have to network, the route is hard to find. Trying to get networked, to my client site, figure to use network preferences, but that is really moot. Firewall protected, so use VPN to boot, need real help and it worked in a toot.

I wish I was nimble, had small motor skills galore, the document resizing corner is just too damn small. The niner had a corner square with just more room to grab, and zoom don't help fine-tune a window's size. So you just grin and bear it. It's your fate and all, but "universal access, its just new to me, so I'll live with it. Cussing very free!

I must have real bad Karma, the trash dialog is gone. Can no longer flag trash items in detail. I know I can double-click but that's the long way round. All I want's a snicker test of how many items in trash. Just knowing trash's size saves from accidental dump and with my need file gone, I'm really in a slump.   I've yet to solve it, perhaps another haxie, but there's neat shareware out there I'll give some a try. I'll have the problem licked in the by-and-by!

For those you who are clippers, there a mighty fine OS X tool, clipEdit OS X 2.6 http://www.everydaysoftware.net/clipedit/. It's a mighty useful quite simple and quite cool. Clipping edits are a breeze,. Change text as you may, and the text

formatting works along the way.

Missed using my apple. Sort of like a dock, listed all sorts of stuff for easy click and open. Make the dock seem limited, but there is a cure. Get FruitMenu 3.0 and the "apple" again can do. Two ways to get the tool direct http://www.unsanity.org/, and Ten for X http://www.aladdinsys.com/ haxies and fixes make Jaguar friends again.

No more labeled documents, folders and the like. Color navigation from old niner takes a hike. So there is a haxie that word colors a new? Try Labels X 1.1.1 from Unsanity http://www.unsanity.org/, it's somewhat new.

FAXstf's quirks are rampant, it came with the new Jaguar machine. Save yourself some burn, there's an easy out down load and try it - Page Sender FAX Software http://www.smilesoftware.com/ may work alright for me. But miss the best fax software, Global Fax™ is no more, so I'll keep going faxless or going to a store.

One more chord, night's almost gone, a final gripe to air — the Jaguar finder is not very fair. Select a document, click on it. This just works all right. Depress the shift key and select another, several list items down, with undivided bounty, you get all documents in between. It took some trial and error and a tall-tall glass but command-click deselects some or all!

I've got the "miss niner" all the time blues
Midnights working Jaguar is not the path I choose
They say the leaning curve is steep,
Tomorrow in another day blues!

Got a new book in review, "the Mac OS X conversion kit: 9 to 10 side by side" [Scott Kelby – Peachpit Press] Might have solved *mooost* of my problems but was printed much too late. So I still have the OSX get me graying and moaning blues!

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Audio

Audio Hijack Pro Version 1.2.4

{Editor's Note: This is now up to Version 2.0}
Reviewed by David Knuth

Rogue Amoeba Software, LLC
29 Scottsdale Ct.
Cranbury, NJ 08512
audiohijack@rogueamoeba.com
http://www.rogueamoeba.com
$30 USD, (Free for registered users)
http://www.rogueamoeba.com/audiohijackpro/
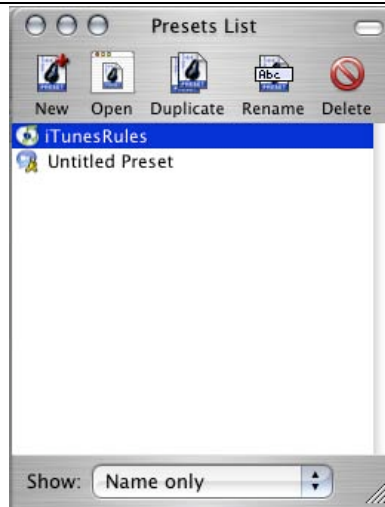**Requirements:** OS X 10.1 - 10.2.6, 2.6 MB
Hard Drive space

Strengths: Powerful audio application that makes any audio stream sound magnificent with an endlessly extensible set of plug-ins that do almost anything you want.

Weaknesses: There are such things?

Okay, this has to be the coolest application of its kind. Assuming there are other applications that do the same thing. Rogue Amoeba, one of the current leaders in making software that, in my opinion, breaks all the rules, has made one of the most truly useful apps currently available. What does it do you ask? In a word: everything.

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Let me be more precise. It does everything you could want for audio input and output. It's an absolutely indispensable application, once you use it. Of course, that still doesn't tell you what it does. So, let me start with a bit of history and discuss for a moment what it is we use now for audio on the Macintosh.
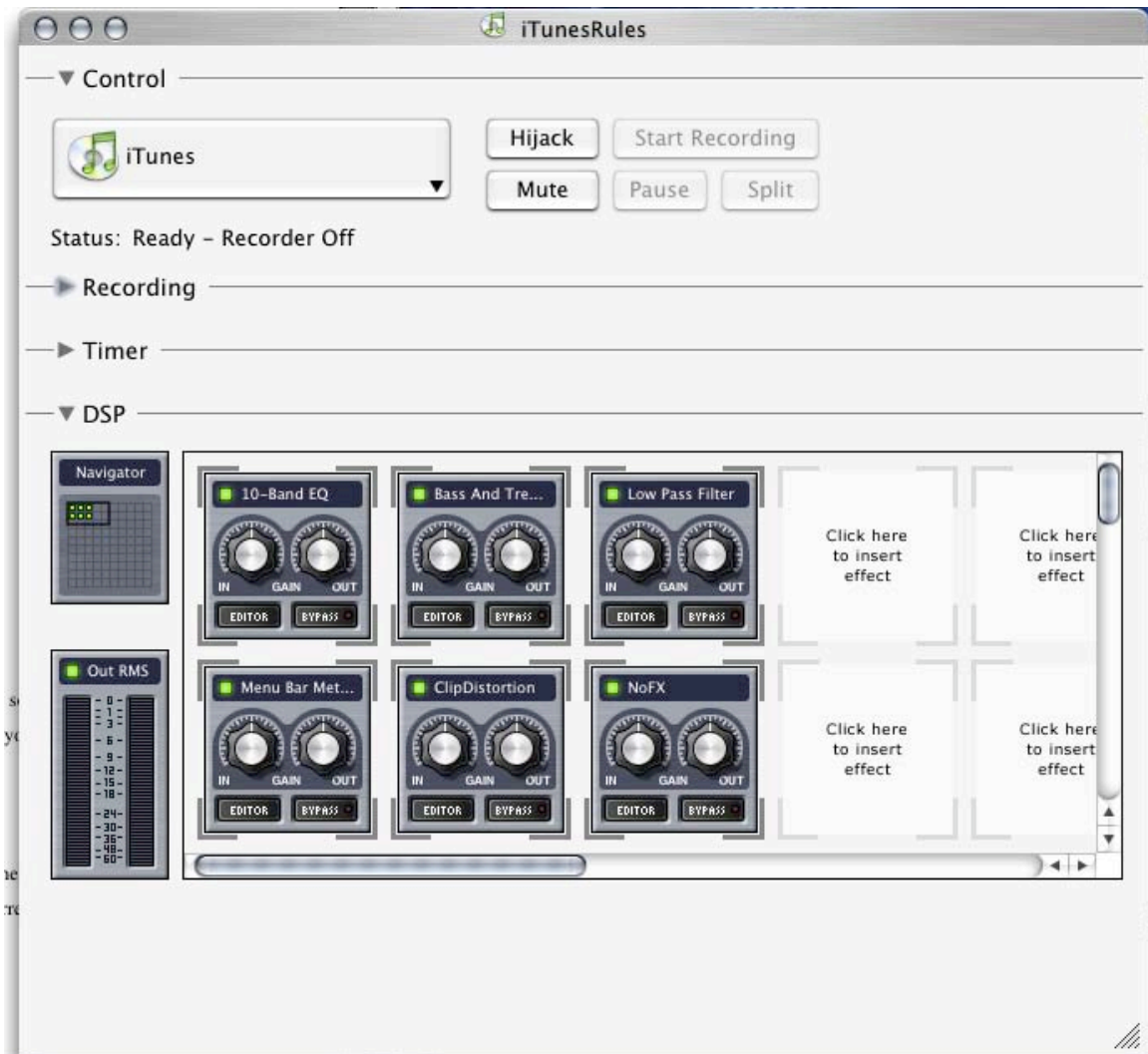
A few years ago, an audio format was introduced that revolutionized the concept of digital music. The MP3. Bane of the Record Industry, or so they say. That little file that made Napster one of the hottest and most despised, programs on the planet. And with this file format came players: MacAmp, SoundJam which begot iTunes, etc. It became the next fad of the digital lifestyle. It may have even been the catalyst that made the idea of a "digital lifestyle" a buzzword in the first place.

So now, here we are, imaging our audio in terms of MP3s. But that isn't the only audio we deal with. We also deal with a multitude of applications, like AOL Instant Messenger and those of its ilk that make noise. And we have microphones that allow us to not only hold digital conversations, but also record music. And we can use our audio inputs and outputs on our wonderful Macs to produce music and to record music and to make our Macs into inexpensive digital machines that are the center of our audio existence.

Okay, so where does Audio Hijack Pro play into this? Right there. Most self-respecting applications, like iTunes, come with a basic set of equalizers to allow the user to adjust and tune his audio. However if an MP3's recording is bad, or if there's noise that got through the encoding, what can they do to allow you to smooth things out? Nothing. In fact, the more you try to play with audio settings in most of these consumer applications, the less you realize they can actually do.

This is where the first part of Audio Hijack Pro comes into play. With this piece of shareware, you get the ability to create as many audio filters as you want that handle everything from equalizers (featuring both a 10-band and a 32-band set) to genuine audio filters. The extensibility and flexibility of audio control this program exerts is truly mind-blowing. And, even if your digital audio files were a bit dingy before, they'll be stellar on that expensive audio system you have hooked to your Mac. You can even configure

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settings separately on an application-by-application basis. Configure as many different sets as you like! Oh, and here's a real gem; got an internet radio station you love and want to listen to even if you can't get on the 'net? Audio Hijack Pro will allow you to record the audio that passes through it from iTunes to your speakers. Simply set it up and let it go, it'll make perfect recordings of the audio for you to play back any day you like.

So, what about audio input that I mentioned before? Before we get ahead of ourselves here and start thinking "but I can control audio for my inputs with composition software", let's remember that these programs are often either expensive or time-consuming to learn and master, or both. And they're more than the average person needs. Audio Hijack Pro will act, after a fashion, as a cheap way to tweak and record hours of audio no matter your level of skill.

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With a few hours of exploring, the possibilities this application provides are endless, and the quality is top-notch. Support from the manufacturers is excellent as well, and you can't go wrong. Try it for a while, and you'll see what I mean.

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Sound Companion 2.0

Reviewed by Dr Eric Flescher

FTC Publishing
PO Box 1361
Bloomington, IL 61702
C/o Michael Kessler
1-888-237-6740
1-309-663-5025-Fax
Mike@ftcpublishing.com
http://www.ftcpublishing.com
http://www.ftcpublishing.com/demos.html
Single $60 USD, Lab (5) $210 USD, Site
License (30) $800 USD
Requirements: OS 7 or later, 16 MB
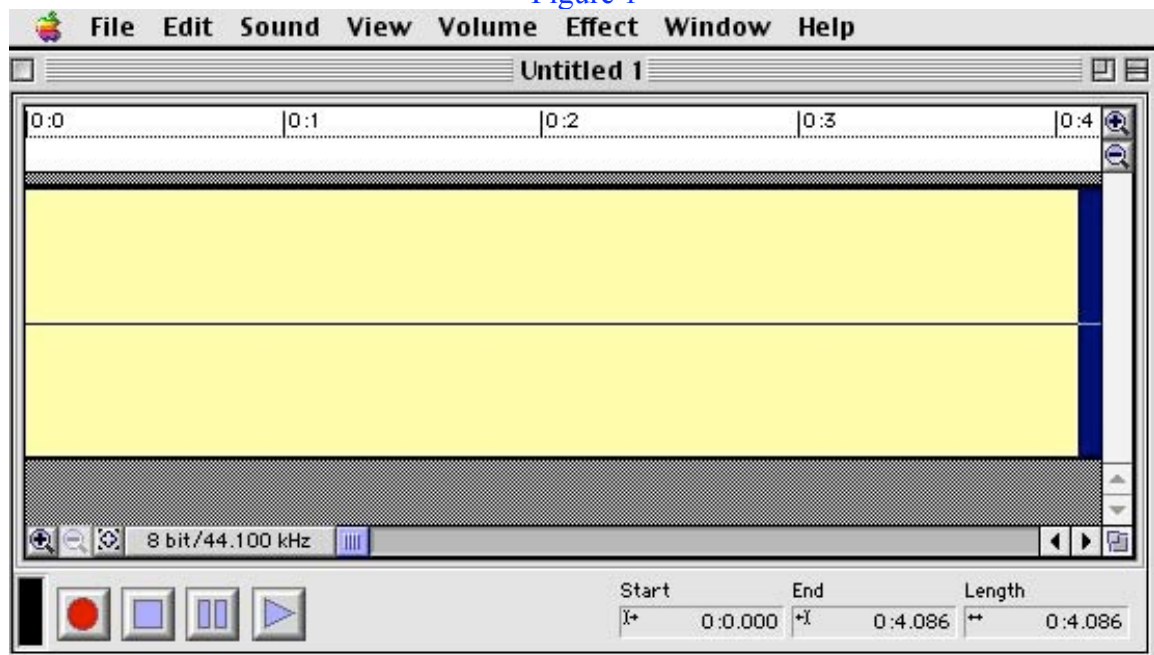RAM, 4 MB Hard Disc space, CD-ROM
Drive

Strengths: Easily read documentation, display and command toolbar, and ability to work with different sound files. Flexibility and allows enhancing and adding sound and music to other popular software. Additional sound and music effects CD, bought separately, can be used to add to your projects and are royalty free.

Weaknesses: Cannot work directly with MIDI and embedded sound files in QuickTime. Not as many "bells or whistles" as other sound editing software. Some computer users may want "all-in-one packages" that integrate sound editing with importing of video and other capabilities for complex multimedia projects with music or video, QuickTime and other video and sound formats.

Multimedia, combining sound, movies and images, is more commonplace due to the power of computing today. However if you want to create multimedia presentation and products, a sound audio editing program is needed to edit, revise and create sound, music and audio files. A solution for many teachers, students and non-educators may be Sound Companion.
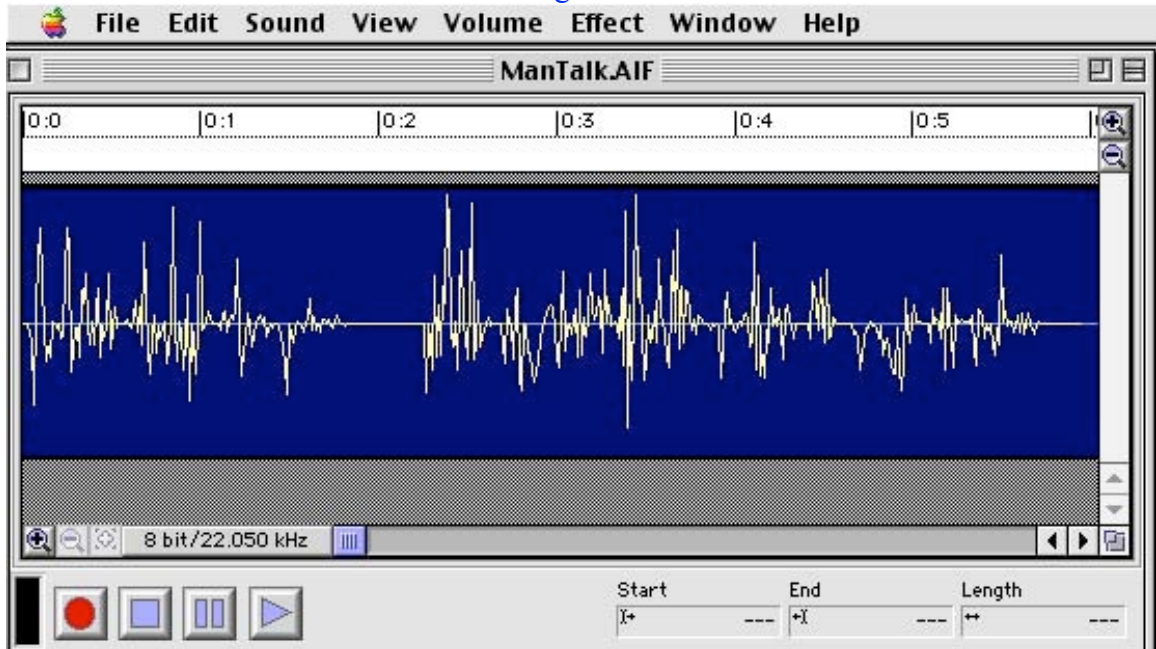
Sound Companion and requires at least one megabyte of hard disk space for installation and a 2x CD-ROM.. The software works with Macintosh (System 7 and higher and 2.0 megabytes of RAM memory) and also works on PC computers.   Installation is a very easy process and once launched, sound editing can begin.

Figure 1

This software works with AIFF, WAVE and System 7 Sounds (Macintosh only). The window without sound appears yellow. Clicking on the FILE menu and selecting OPEN, a sound file can be placed into the editing window.

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Figure 2

This editing window displays the sound as a waveform on a blue background. Zooming in and out, record, pause, play and fit to window command buttons are well placed for ease of use under the sound display area.

Recording sound can be accomplished in two ways. Clicking on the RECORD button of the display area is one method. Clicking on the "Sound Menu" and choosing "Record" is the other way. Recording begins immediately with an external attached mike, built in mike or when using an iMic external device (by Griffin).

On the bottom left, the recording level meter shows the volume level being picked up by the microphone. The quality of the sound by default is 8-bit (22.050 KHz). Clicking on the "Sound" menu and then selecting "Sound Format" can change the quality. The different choices to select from the pulldown menu are sample rate (22.050, which is FM quality or 44.1 Khz, which is CD quality).
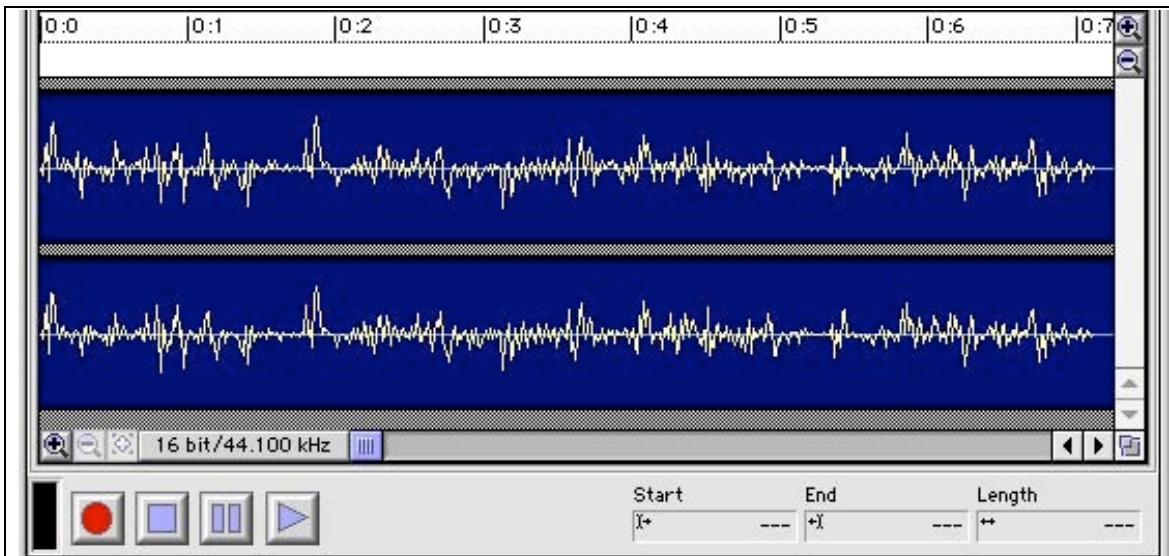
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Figure 3

The sample size can be either 8-bit or 16-bit. The higher the bit depth of the sound/audio files, the greater the quality and the better it will sound. Sixteen-bit audio has less his and static as compared to the 8-bit audio sound files. However the tradeoff is that the 16-bit audio files take up two times the space on the computer hard drive. Experimentation with the file types is the only way to decide whether the 16-bit is required to suit your needs.

On the bottom right, three small number windows indicate the beginning and the end point of the selection in seconds and the total length of the selection in seconds.

Operations are flexible. Parts or all of the music or sound file can be played. Segments of sound from one file to another can be copied or cut. The sound files can be saved in three formats (one minute of sound with an 8 bit setting, 22 kilohertz takes up 1.3 megabytes) so ample hard drive space or an external hard drive is needed.

Audio effects, built into the Sound Companion software under the "Effect" menu, can also be applied to the sounds or only to a specific part of the selection. Fading sounds in and out, changing volume/amplitude and mixing sounds by adding tracks are also possible.

Sound Companion can work indirectly with other file types. While the software does not allow the direct import or converting of QuickTime sound files, there are others ways to accomplish this goal. First, you have to open the QuickTime file in the Apple Movie Player (or iMovie, which is not specified in the documentation). The next step is using "Export" command to save the sound as an AIFF file, which can then be editing in SOUND COMPANION. MIDI sound music files cannot be imported directly but MIDI sequencing programs can export the sounds into AIFF format. Additional sound and music effects CD, bought separately, can be used to add to your projects and are royalty free.

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The easily read documentation (38 pages) details how to use the program and sounds with other multimedia software as Powerpoint, Hyperstudio and mPower. Illustrations and detailed instructions assist in the understanding of this easy to use software.

Sound Companion is easy to use and flexible basic sound editor with a few more good tools. Computer users may find that its simplistic interface and non-complicated set of commands, will allow easy editing sounds, music and other files. It is also easy to import spoken sounds, digital sound files from tape recorders and then use these in video and other multimedia projects. Some computer users may want all in one package that integrate sound editing with importing of video and other capabilities for complex multimedia projects with music or video, QuickTime and other video and sound formats. For most, however this software will handle your basic digital sound and music needs.

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Books

Mac OS X SECURITY

Mac OS X Security

Reviewed by Robert Pritchett

Authors: Bruce Potter, Preston Norvell, Brian Wotring
http://www.macsecurity.org
New Riders Publishing May 21, 2003
http://www.newriders.com
408 Pages
$40 USD, $63 CAN, £31 NET UK
ISBN: 0735713480
http://www.macsecurity.org/osx-book
Experienced Mac OS X Geek level

Strengths: Not a "How-To", but a "What-For" UNIX-based book. Great detail and lots of links. The humor is even well-placed.

Weaknesses: No glossary and a few typos.

Is Mac OS X really "free and clear" of the cyberwarfare currently going on over the Internet? Well, OS X isn't quite as invincible as so many pundits are leading us to believe. "Be diligent and adhere to the principle of least privilege", pretty much sums up **Mac OS X Security** by Bruce Potter, Preston Norvell and Brian Wotring. A prerequisite

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to getting into this book is feeling comfortable with the UNIX and FreeBSD side of Mac OS X. If you aren't, then don't.

Apple's Mac OS X version of UNIX is very powerful and is superimposed with a pretty interface only Apple could have devised. Underneath all that prettiness is one powerful operating system that can be "geek heaven" to those who profess to know all the underpinnings of the product.

If you aren't superstitious, then you won't mind that the book is divided into 13 chapters. These tend to be more or less evenly distributed among 6 sections:
> The Basics (intro to both client and server security fundamentals)
> System Security (workstation and UNIX stuff)
> Network Security (all the network, communications and Internet access things that come with OS X but need to be turned on to use)
> Enterprise Security (using Mac OS X Server and Directory Services)
> Auditing and Forensics (incident response and follow-through)
> Appendices (3 of them) The "Further Reading" appendix is priceless.

This book could just as easily have been made into three books, one each covering applications, servers, and enterprise systems.

I dog-eared the heck out of this book. Maybe it is just me, but I found it to be fascinating reading. Especially after all the hype about the Mac's immunity to the nasty stuff floating around in the shark-infested waters of the Internet.

Mac OS X Security isn't so much of a "How-To" book as it is a "What–For" book.

When Panther is publicly released, the book won't become obsolete. And I also list the website that will keep this book current.

So what have I learned about this "multitasking, multithreaded, multi-user, and multiprocessor system with enhanced interoperability with other systems"? It is vulnerable, but not as much as the opposition platform apologists would like you to think.

I know I'm going to have to encrypt my e-mail to people I deal with on a daily basis. And I think I now know how to back my e-mail directory with an encrypted disk image process. I have a better understanding of Web browser security issues. I also learned that I don't need to be afraid of the KeyChain, but I do need to approach it differently. I know how to corral Apache and "jail" other applications so crackers will have a harder time infiltrating my systems. I think I can do a better job reading logs now and I know I will want to download OSIRIS from http://osiris.shmoo.com for auditing purposes. I know I will want to dig a little deeper in to computer forensics, OS X style. And I think I'm going to ask that the last chapter on "Incident Response" be implemented at my workplace.

The only thing I see missing here is a glossary of terms; and, like most first editions, this

one has a few typos, but nothing to get really concerned about. I think those will get resolved in the errata site posted above. So far, no one else has submitted any.

I highly recommend this book to all Apple system administrators or Apple SysAdmin wannabees who deal with hybrid computer environments. I give this one a high 5!

Mac OS X Conversion Kit 9 to 10 Side By Side, Jaguar Edition
Reviewed by Harry {doc} Babad

Scott Kelby
http://www.ScottKelbyBooks.com/
PeachPit Press Published June, 2003
http://www.peachpit.com/
$30 USD
277 pages
ISBN: 0735713545

Strengths: Well-written and fun to peruse. Excellent "cross-over" book.

Weaknesses: Not really intended for non-OS9 users.

Mac OS X Conversion Kit: 9 to 10 Side by Side, Jaguar Edition by Scott Kelby, is a clear-cut, well-written, side-by-side comparison of features in OS 9.x and their present appearance and modified function, if any, in OS X. I found the book not only easy to read and understand, but also helpful for identifying a few cross-over features I had not yet learned, or had forgotten from lack of use. I have now lived with OS X Jaguar for over six months, and every time I want to do something new with the finder or preferences, I

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still feel like a newbie, even though I have reviewed a number of OS X Jaguar books for *macCompanion*.

According to the publisher, PeachPit Press, "**Mac OS X Conversion Kit: 9 to 10 Side by Side** aims to take readers from their old Mac operating system to the new one. There's a lot to learn and a lot to get used to. This book makes the learning curve as smooth as possible by cataloging the most important things you need to know and showing them in a format Mac users will appreciate; the old way is on the left page, and the new way is on the right page." The author has organized the book by topic so you can use it more like a reference manual; indeed, he appears to prefer you *not* read it from cover to cover. Hey, don't flame me! It's just the impression I get from the author's words in the book's introduction.

Kelby has a quirky and iconoclastic but enjoyable sense of humor that shines through in every chapter without detracting from its technical contents. It departs from other Macintosh OS X books I've read because it makes finding information fun. A "must read", the "Start Here" section sets the tone for what is to follow. To illustrate Kelby's tongue in cheek humor, here are some chapter headings that show the author's irreverent approach. The chapter on <u>Troubleshooting</u> is subtitled "It's Not a Good Sign if You're Reading This". New features of OS X are highlighted in "Cool Things You Could Not Do in OS 9." Kelby shares the oddities in OS X under the heading "Little Things Apple Changed Just to Mess with Your Head". Many of the narratives tickled my sense of humor and relaxed me enough to want to learn more about OS X.

By providing crisp, side by-side views of the specific functions in OS 9 and mapping them to their counterparts in OS X, the author answers the age-old question of "Where has all the @#$%#*# stuff gone?" As is appropriate, Kelby provides information on alternatives ways to perform tasks in OS X. The left-hand pages often provide menu, keyboard and contextual menus alternative for reaching your goal—let's say, "deleting files in OS X." In addition, many of the individual OS X pages contain a box called "New Stuff". I found this extra material was very useful, enhancing my ability to work in OS X.

The book is aimed at the group of Macintosh users who were, and still are, made most uncomfortable by Jaguar. The discussions on the accumulations of Library folders, Document folders, and Fonts folders scattered willy-nilly on my hard disk were sheer (almost) enlightenment.

Refugees from OS 9, many of us still kicking and screaming, need all the sympathy and help we can get. **Mac OS X Conversion Kit: 9 to 10 Side by Side** book provides us with such support. *MacCompanion* readers should remember that we, as a group, did not switch to OS X until Jaguar appeared on the scene. We cowered, envisioning the productivity losses we'd encounter. We were warned about the potential tribulation of switching in long feature articles on OS X in *MacAddict*, *MacWorld*, and Internet reviews. But, alas, we were ultimately forced to change by either peer pressure, or needs for software that only worked in OS X, or new computers with OS X pre-installed as their primary operating system. For me, it was Robert Pritchett (the *macCompanion*

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publisher) telling his staff that we would no longer review software that worked only in OS 9.x.
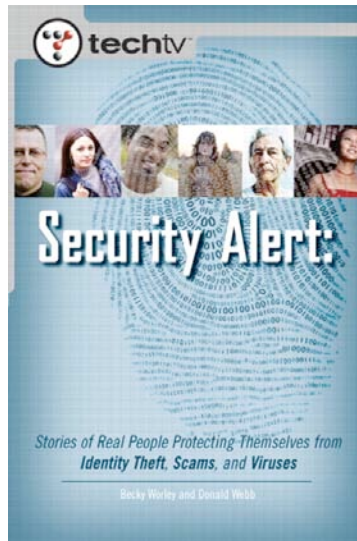
So *macCompanion* readers, if you've moved from a Wintel platform to an OS X driven Macintosh, or if you started with a new Macintosh that had Jaguar installed, then this book is <u>not</u> for you! (But, like home-made chicken soup, it wouldn't hurt you either.)

Now don't get me wrong: this book is very, very good—but it's not perfect! I would have admired Kelby's efforts even more if he had more firmly shared, even in fine print or a miniature appendix, that there are "haxies" out there that would return my favorite (missing) OS 9 features. Yes, I know Kelby wanted to help me switch and not straddle both operating system worlds. But I went for haxies because cold turkey is such a pain. OS 9 features that I used and missed are now a part of my OS X operating system, after finding most of them at <u>Unsanity.com</u>.

Having "my" haxies has increased my sense of comfort with OS X, making me less of a "Stranger in a Strange Land" (Robert Heinlein). With Kelby's book and a few selected haxies, you can have your cake and eat it, too, leaving OS 9 in the dust. Well, almost. If some of your favorite applications haven't yet migrated to OS X, you will still need to use the Classic environment. So send a very small nod of thanks to those in Cupertino and an even bigger nod to the folks who create haxies that you can download at your whim.

<u>My bottom line on **Mac OS X Conversion Kit 9 to 10 Side By Side, Jaguar Edition**</u>
I shrugged off the author's strong suggestion on how to use his book: I read it from cover to cover. (So, Scott Kelby, you can be miffed or peeved with me if you like. What do you expect from a Macintosh user?) But listen up out there… for all of you who've finally switched from OS 9 to Jaguar and still have withdrawal symptoms, this book is worthy of space near your computer. I give it 4.5 macCs.

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Security Alert: Stories of Real People Protecting Themselves from Identity Theft, Viruses, and Scams

Reviewed by Robert Pritchett

Author: Becky Worley
New Riders Publishing, Aug 01, 2003
http://www.newriders.com
288 pages
$25 USD $38 CAN £19.50 NET UK
ISBN: 0-7357-1352-9
Novice to Intermediate

Strengths: Shows real-life experiences and "lessons-learned" the hard way about the loss of innocence on the Internet.

Weaknesses: Focused primarily on PCs (and that's bad?). No URL Appendix for all the links listed. A few typos found.

Has anyone stolen your identity or stalked you? Have you ever fallen for any of the email alerts about bogus viruses? Have you put all you personal information on an "ego" website letting the world know who you are, what you have done and where you live? Then maybe Becky Worley's book "**Security Alert: Stories of Real People Protecting**

Themselves from Identity Theft, Viruses, and Scams" published by NewRiders Publishing for TechTV Press will be helpful in keeping you from being taken advantage of online.

Think of this book as being an introduction to Internet "street-smarts". I dog-eared a lot of pages in this book.

Even though Becky Worley explains the difference between Hackers and Crackers (Hackers are good, Crackers are bad), she sticks with the Hacker term throughout her book. In the first chapter, "Hacking 101", she even discusses a little about Hacktivism (Cracker justification of political motivation for their reasons for defacing websites). She also discusses why it is necessary today to have both a firewall and encryption in place as well as keeping file-sharing turned off.

The 2nd chapter on "Identity Theft: Who owns me now?" is an eye-opener. This kind of thing is keeping the US Federal Bureau of Investigation very, very busy. Becky strongly believes it is important that we lie to others online about ourselves so we can be protected from online sharks as we bob around on the Internet sea. She gives lists of common-sense things to do when shopping online and the importance of using legitimate sites such as Escrow and PayPal for paying for products.

In the next chapter, "The Virus Threat" Becky goes into detail for the PC population about what is needed to be done about protecting our machines from Viruses, Trojans and Worms. Her real advice? "Buy a Mac".

In the chapter on "Hoaxes, Virus Myths and Scams", I liked the story about how scams can turn deadly. Yes, people can and do loose their lives when they get sucked into get-rich-quick schemes. A list is also provided for double-checking those virus alerts before we "spread the news" about the latest dire warnings to our email address book members.

The best "lessons learned" treatise is the "Safe and Sane Online Interactions" chapter. It details a few of those "your email is never private" stories on how online faux-pauxes can destroy your career or life by having information you meant to be private goes public.

The "Protecting the Family" covers such topics as promiscuity, pedophiles and cyberbullying and what can be done about those things.

That segues into the next chapter, "Privacy". That one covers cookies, spyware and keylogging and email strategies to protect from SPAMming. Again, this is focused on WinTel machines.

I'd like to take the last chapter, "Protected Not Paranoid" in the book and put it up front because it is a synopsis of everything discussed in the other earlier 8 chapters. It looks like it may have been the original outline the earlier chapters were based on.

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The one Appendix is appropriately named "Homework". It is broken down by chapter heading from the book and lists the "to-do" items presented in each of those chapters.

So what is the point of this whole exercise? The intent is to keep us from becoming "easy marks" for those who have made a sport of committing cyber-crime on uninitiated and unsuspecting "newbees" to the 'Net. The book is full of "horse sense" items we all need to take a look at as we strive to become more adept as using the Internet on a daily basis.

Hardware

Apple iSight Firewire video cam

Reviewed by Ted Bade

Apple Corporation
http://www.apple.com
http://www.apple.com/isight/
$150 USD
Includes 3 stands, carrying case, FireWire cable and adapter.
Requirements: Firewire port, iChat AV software, OSX 10.2.5, 600MHz G3 or later processor, Broadband.

Strengths: Fast, easy to use and definitely MacOS X compatible.

Weaknesses: Expensive. Does not include any software package to take advantage of its abilities. Isn't recognized by iMovie.

The new iSight is a fast FireWire web cam, which is fully compatible with MacOS X, easy to use, and offers that cool, many-holed aluminum look of the new G5 computers.

I had been searching for a new web cam for video conferencing. My old USB cam had little hope of ever seeing an OS X driver. Even the third-party driver guys were staying away from it. I was excited about iChat's video/audio abilities and wanted to give them a try. So I visited a local Apple reseller to inspect an iSight.

They had one connected to a new Mac, but it wasn't dong anything. My first impression was that it looked cool, yet it looked like a camera! Not the little bug or eyeball things

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that I had been considering. I searched the Mac's hard drive for the iSight folder, expecting to find some video software to try this camera out with. No Luck. There just wasn't anything.

Luckily (or perhaps intentionally), someone at the store had installed a copy of the AV-iChat Beta, which makes use of the iSight. Video from the iSight was fast! I could wave my hand back and forth and see it move on the screen, no 1960's-from-the-moon slow video here.

iSight offers fast and clear video and will pump that video into whatever conduit you have to the Internet. As I visited with a couple of friends, they told me that the video they received was excellent. You can temporarily shut off the video by twisting the front bezel, in case you need to straighten up your tie before facing your friend ;-)

iSight also has a built in microphone, so you can voice-chat with friends rather then text-chat, assuming your friends have a microphone as well. This is just like a telephone, except there are no long distance fees and, of course, you have to make prior arrangements to use it. If you are really lucky, and have a friend with all the right equipment, you can move your communication into AV. It's almost like being there!

One feature iSight doesn't have is a video zoom. Which would be nice if you were caught in a video-chat wearing some horrible colored top and wanted to hide it, or just wanted to zoom in on something.

Apple is great for creating toys that lack features, thereby creating a secondary market of enhancements. The iSight could really use some software! My older USB cam came with a package that would let me take snapshots as well as making short movies. The iSight doesn't include any software and from what I hear, Apple is even going to make us pay for iChat AV when the final version arrives.

My old cheap ($50) USB cam also came with a license for CuSeeMe, a video conferencing software package, once popular on the Mac but which dropped Mac support and updates. I am sure that Apple could do something like this, or at least include some software to let a new owner tinker with the camera.

I tried a couple of video packages I have lying around my Macintosh. iSpQ video chat http://www.ispq.com/ recognizes and works well with the iSight. It even offers a variety of video and audio controls. This is a great package to try since they offer a MacOS X version and are continuing to work on it. Visit http://www.ispq.com/downloads/ to download the version for either MacOS X or MacOS 9.x. They offer a 21-day free trial.

A newer package, still in Beta called VChat also works very well with it, if you aren't afraid to play with beta software. VChat is a MacOS X program that lets OS X users access CuSeeMe reflectors. It's a great solution for Mac Users who miss CuSeeMe. http://homepage.mac.com/vchat.

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I was quite surprised when I discovered that both iMovie and Image Capture (both included with MacOS X) do not recognize the iSight! What is Apple thinking? (Perhaps the upgrade to Panther will include some software for the camera.)

The iSight offers three types of mounting stands. One table top, one that clips onto a flat panel monitor (or laptop), and one with stickyback tape you can stick to something like a monitor, computer, or any flat surface.

iSight's hardware is sound. It produces great video and clear audio. It works in MacOS X, even though it is up to the purchaser to find software to use with it. It is definitely worth considering. If you like to buy Apple branded items and want an excellent web cam, even coordinated, assuming you get a G5!, then definitely consider the iSight.

JumpDrive

Reviewed by Dr. Eric Flescher

Lexar Media, Inc.
47421 Bayside Parkway
Fremont, CA 94538
510-413-1200
510-440-3499 (fax)
http://www.digitalfilm.com/
Lexar 128MB JumpDrive USB Flash Drive
$77 USD
Lexar 256MB USB 2.0 JumpDrive Pro Flash Drive
$140 USD
Requirements: USB port

Strengths: Different sizes of the storage units are offered and there are USB and USB 2.0 versions. Using the JumpDrive is easy, a pleasure to use and quick. In addition, this little hard drive will work cross-platform as long as the computer has a USB port. Works with USB hubs.

Weaknesses: The only problem that was found is that both an iMac on OSX and Powerbook with OS9 locked up, when the JumpDrive was in the USB port on startup. So to forestall this problem, insert the JumpDrive after start up.

As computer usage increased by many, so did the need for extra space to store, retrieve and exchange data. Computer discs were the only way to do this for a long time. Then files and data began to outstrip the size of these mini storage units. The Zip drives by Omega were the first popular media to make a major step in being able to exchange larger amounts of data from one storage area to another, with the ability to transfer larger files. However another Zip drive and inserted zip disc, are needed and needs to be

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attached to the other computer to transfer the data. Now new devices like the Lexar's JumpDrive are taking transfer to another level.

Using the JumpDrive is easy, a pleasure to use and quick. Made to fit into USB port on computers (Mac and PC), the JumpDrive can be inserted easily. The JumpDrive can also works when inserted into a USB hub. The only problem that was found is that both an iMac on OSX and Powerbook with OS9 locked up, when the JumpDrive was in the USB port on startup. So to forestall this problem, insert the JumpDrive after start up.

If your USB external device plug-in programs are installed (a CD is provided to load on your Macintosh if you don't have the drivers installed), then a small little drive icon saying "Lexar Media," appears on the desktop. The small little problem is the icon can appear anywhere on screen, so a little searching may be required, depending upon how cluttered your desktop appears.

Transferring data is accomplished by dragging your files on to the icon. These can be graphics, written documents, software programs and other files. Once transferred, the JumpDrive can be ejected (hitting Open-Apple-Y for OS9), inserted into your other computer and then the data transferred. It is an easy as that. Fast, quick and easy and you can transfer files that are under the size limit of the unit bought.

Different sizes of the storage units are offered. Most work with USB but there are USB 2.O compatible jump flash drives as well. All you have to do is select the right size (the 12k drive was a good size, but you might need a bigger one). In addition, this little hard drive will work cross-platform as long as the computer has a USB port.

Lexar Media, the first company to develop and advance proprietary read-write speed standards for its USB-enabled CompactFlash cards, has created a beautiful little device. It loads on to the desktop of both OS9 and OSX so you can use JumpDrive with either OS or even cross platform transference to a PC or back and forth, assuming your PC has the appropriate USB drivers (see CD). Try Lexar's JumpDrive to achieve your data storage transfer needs.

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Shareware

CADintosh 4.4 2D for Architectural and Technical Drawing
Reviewed by David Knuth

Lemke Software GmbH
Erich-Heckel-Ring 8a
31228 Peine
Germany
lemkesoft@aol.com
or support@graphicconverter.net
Phone: +49 5171 72200
or +49 172 9333595
http://lemkesoft.com/en/cadintosh.htm
$33 USD
96-page PDF Users Guide
Requirements: OS 8 or later, PowerPC
with 16 MB RAM

Strengths: Cheap, powerful, easy to use once you understand its interface. Quite powerful for a shareware application.

Weaknesses: Not as feature-rich as more expensive packages. Offers no printed documentation.

CAD, or Computer Aided Drafting, has been around for a long while. In fact, it's one of the more technical fields out there that is very important, but very often overlooked. The

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Macintosh has only a secondary role in this field, as the primary CAD systems are large-scale UNIX systems or are Windows PC's.
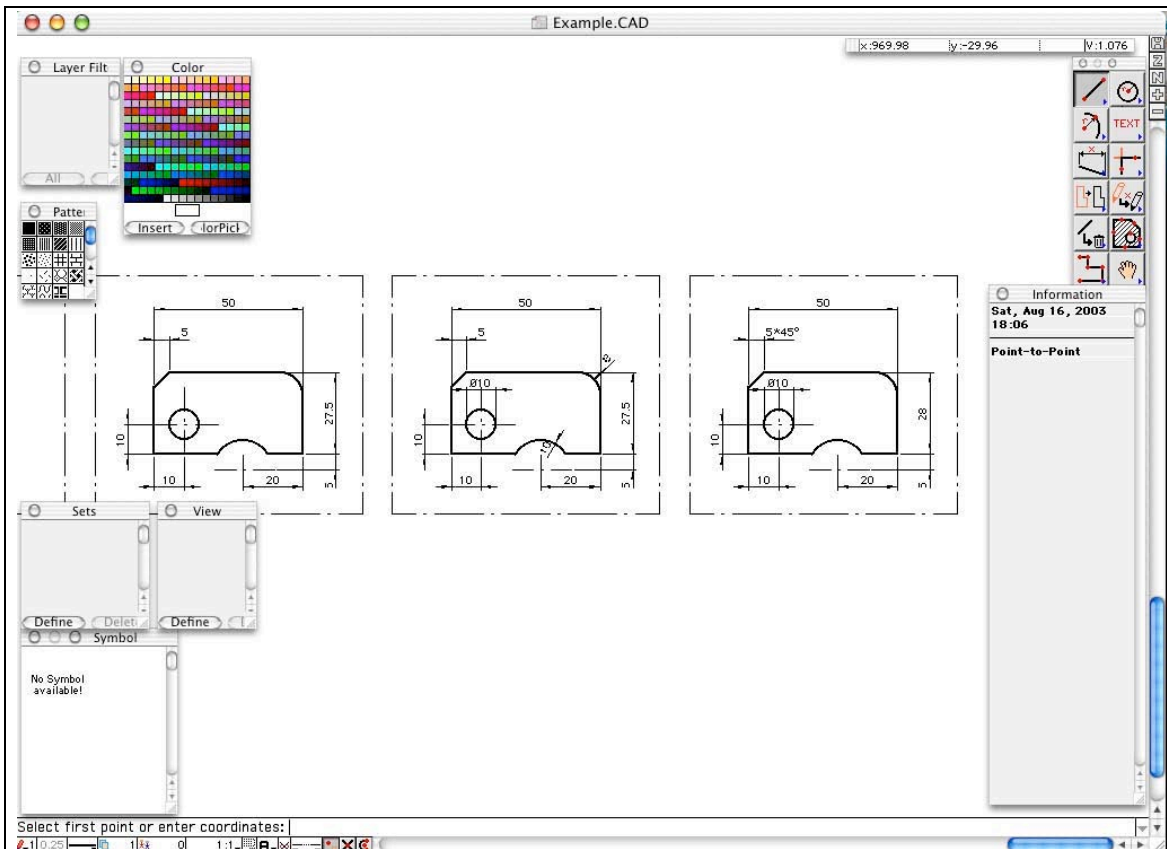
However, just because we have a secondary role in this field doesn't mean we don't have excellent programs on our side to help us get by in this field. This is perhaps, one of our best-kept secrets. There are many good CAD programs on the market for the Macintosh that vary as to their price and complexity (and functionality) to suit just about anyone's needs.

As a student in the local Junior College's CAD Drafting program, I was exposed to both AutoDesk's suite of applications (which are in my opinion, the low-end standard in CAD software) as well as IDEAS CAD Package. Having those programs as a basis, I began testing one of the lower-end Macintosh applications, CADintosh. This program is an older piece of software from our capable friend, Thorsten Lemke (author of the renown program GraphicConverter).

CADintosh is indeed a low-end program for the simple user, much like GraphicConverter is the low-end program for the simple user not able or willing to get Photoshop. No, it doesn't do some of the fancier features of the bigger CAD packages. And it is a little rough. However, it is a decent package nonetheless, and is still in development, which means the author is working to polish it as I write this.

CADintosh allows any user with enough time to do the basics of drafting: creating blueprints with measurements, with the perks of most of the basic 2D programs available. I say "any user with enough time" because it does suffer from the usual quirk of this sort of application: a nonstandard interface. Show me 10 CAD Packages and I'll show you 10 varied interfaces for the same set of tools and features.

You're thinking that that may be a problem. Of course, it is certainly a hurdle you have to face: you can't simply take your AutoCAD-gained knowledge of where tools are and what the widgets look like and apply it in this program and get the same expected behavior. As a user unfamiliar with this interface, I found it a bit daunting to use. I found that I was looking for the line tool to draw a line and when I found it, I was shocked to find that it didn't let me click in one point and have the line follow the cursor so I could track it to where it needed to go.

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Also, I noticed that the software allowed you to use typed commands with the mouse tools. Hey that's fine by me, I'm used to this after my days playing around with MasterCAM (which is one of the premier packages for Computer Aided Machining). This worked, after I understood the system, as I expected it to. That made my job in working with this software that much easier.

After a few minutes of searching the CD, I found the documentation for the software and began to read through it (yes, boys, if you're going to use this seriously, please remember his documentation and manuals are on the CD and you might want to print them out). The manual was very comprehensive and after a while I found myself making some progress on some 2D (Two-Dimensional) projects I did in my class on AutoCAD.

The bottom line, you ask? Well, I would rate this product "sound". It's not the most stellar 2D package available, but for $33, I'll compromise and learn how to use it. This software will get you through in a pinch, providing you have some proficiency with it, and is a very decent package overall. I would recommend this to any student or general basic draftsman that wants to work on a budget but still have a comprehensive toolset.

What are the alternatives? Well, how much do you have to spend? Of the other CAD Packages for the Macintosh I've worked with, and am working with currently, there are several that come to mind. DenebaCAD is one, which offers awesome functionality with a more complete 2D/3D drafting environment and is easily one of my favorites. It allows for beautiful modeling and very precise 2D drawings. It does come at a price, though.

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Expect to pay $550 for the full version. Other packages, such as Nemetschek's VectorWorks and Engineered Software's PowerCADD, range in their prices and functionality. I hope to work with both in the future and provide a more comprehensive review of each.

Mighty Mouse 1.1: Sophisticated, Simple & Safe Cursor Enhancements for the Macintosh

Reviewed by Mike Swope

Unsanity, LLC
unsanity@unsanity.com
http://www.unsanity.com
http://www.unsanity.com/haxies/mightymouse
Curser sets: http://www.resexcellence.com
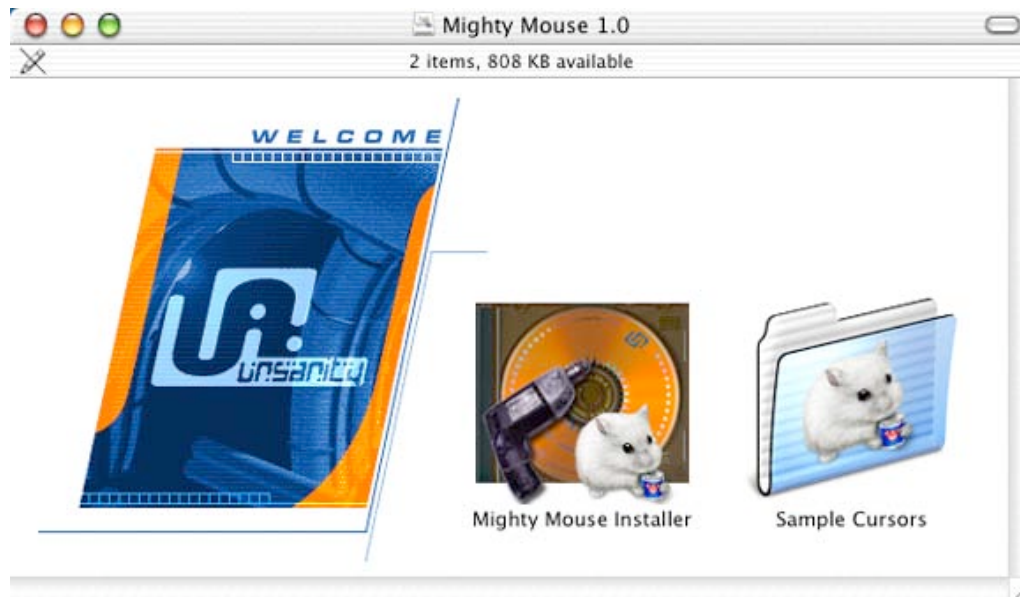$10 USD
Requirements: OS X

Strengths: Stable, simple and elegant. It lets Mac OS X users do things with their cursors that they likely hadn't imagined, without sacrificing stability. Mighty Mouse is rock solid for an initial release.

Weaknesses: Importing cursors is a bit cumbersome (especially from CursorXP themes) because they cannot be previewed before importing them. An image editor would also be helpful when editing and creating cursors instead of having to jump back and forth into another applications to create and test proposed cursors.

Unsanity's Mighty Mouse 1.1 is a Mac shareware enhancement (a,k.a. Haxie) to make the Mac computing experience more entertaining, similar to CursorXP for WinXP. Unsanity also publishes other well-known (deservedly so) Mac system enhancements and software such as FruitMenu, Labels X, WindowShade X, Xounds, Silk, ClearDock, and other titles. Like these other titles, Mighty Mouse is simple, safe, friendly, beautiful and genuinely fun! This Mouse does not disappoint. In fact, it downright surprises!
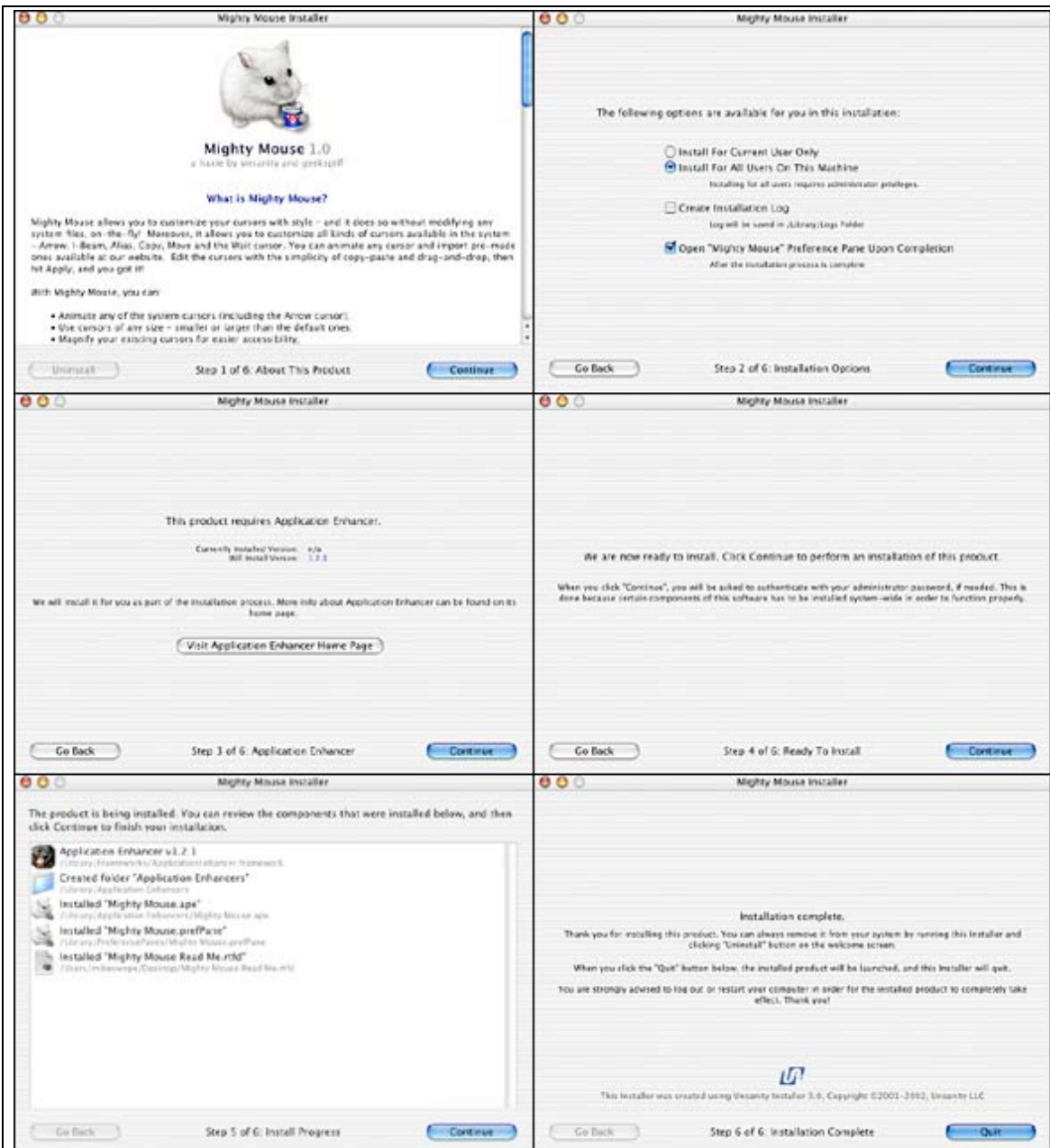
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Mighty Mouse offers some fun and fancy cursor enhancements for OS X:
• Lets users change and animate their system cursors, including the Arrow cursor
• Uses cursors of any size, smaller and larger than the defaults
• Can magnify existing cursors for better accessibility
• Can import cursors made by other Mighty Mouse users
• Can create cursors to be shared with other Mighty Mouse users
• Can import cursor themes intended for CursorXP for Windows

Unlike other shareware applications I've used, Mighty Mouse offers a sophisticated yet painlessly simple installer, developed in-house by the Unsanity crew. I had expected to have to read a page of PDF instructions and copy this file here and that file there and another file here, as one must do with many shareware offerings, but Unsanity's installer gets right down to business, quickly and efficiently. Open the installer and 6 brief clicks later, Mac users are looking at the Mighty Mouse System Preference Panel, ready to load sample cursors supplied with the Haxie. If a user happens to be upgrading from a previous release, Unsanity's installer is intelligent enough to recognize this, uninstall the old version, and continue installing the upgrade while retaining all preferences and cursors in use for a seamless upgrade. Few upgrades work this well!

As with commercial installers such as Adobe, Apple and others, the Mighty Mouse installer provides information, choices and feedback during the installation process, but does it better. When the installer is first launched, the user is shown information about what Mighty Mouse is, what it does, how to install it, who publishes it, etc. This is, in truth, the Read Me document packaged into the installer window. This reiteration of the Read Me is a good idea, since many users don't take time to read these documents, myself included. Users are also given the opportunity to simply uninstall Mighty Mouse in this first window, rather than install or update.

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Mighty Mouse's default installation options work fine for most users. By default, Mighty Mouse will be installed for the current user only, will not create an installation log, and will immediately launch the Mighty Mouse preference pane when the install is complete. Of course, users may choose to install Mighty Mouse for all users (requires administrative privileges), to save an installation log, and not to open the preference pane after installation. If by chance a user has already installed Mighty Mouse for all users and then attempts to reinstall for just the current user, Mighty Mouse warns that having two copies of Mighty Mouse installed is not a good idea and lets users elect to Remove for All Users or Install for All Users (again) or simply cancel the install. A similar warning is given in the reverse situation, and if the user elects to continue, the local copy of Mighty

Mouse will be uninstalled and a global copy installed. As installation takes place, Mighty Mouse lists what has been installed and the relevant file paths, essentially the installation log that users may have elected to save, and when installation is complete suggests that the current user log out and then back in before using Mighty Mouse.
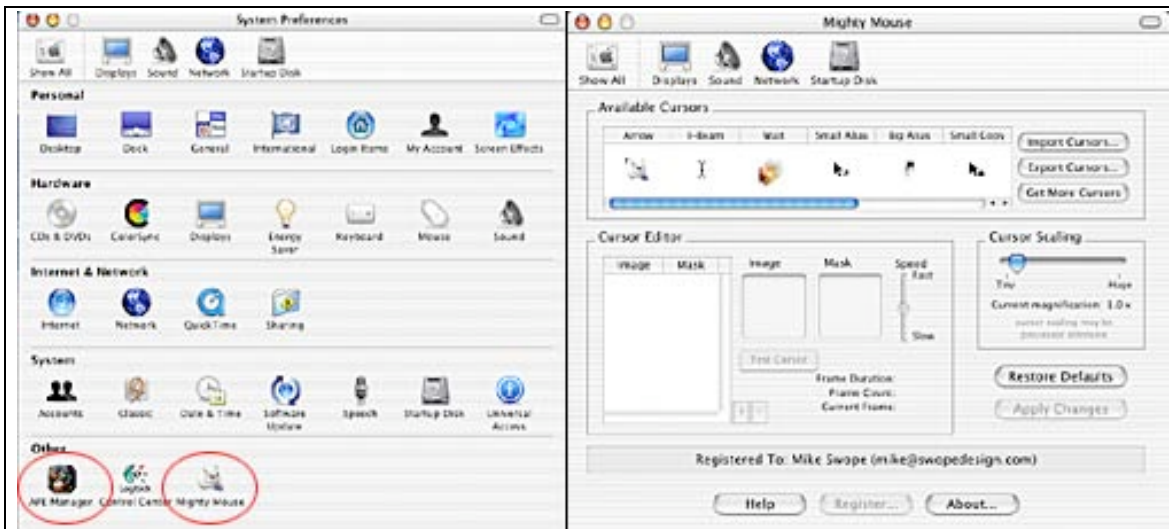
Uninstalling Mighty Mouse is likewise thoroughly painless. One click on the Uninstall button in the first window of the installer and the installer clearly warns that Mighty Mouse files will be moved to the Trash, not deleted, and lists the exact folders and files that will be moved to the Trash. In a brilliant move, Unsanity has elected NEVER to delete files from users' hard drives with Mighty Mouse, and I suspect with their other software as well. I'm certain that other software authors have similar policies, but this is the first time I've ever seen it explicitly stated that files will never be deleted from the user's machine.

Unsanity has also taken a similar safety-first approach in how Mighty Mouse operates (and likely its other software as well). Unlike other Haxies, Mighty Mouse does not modify any system files. None. Zip. Zilch. Nada. It simply installs its files and does its business. It does not insert cursors into the system. It does not delete cursors from the system. It doesn't change the system files in any way. It just changes the appearance of the system's cursors when told to do so by the user, at the user's discretion.

Even if Mighty Mouse, for some reason, were to make a user's system unstable, the user simply need only uninstall Mighty Mouse because the original system files were NEVER altered by Mighty Mouse. While preparing for this review, I ran Mighty Mouse in demo mode for weeks. The only problem I encountered (and Mighty Mouse may be designed to work this way) was that Mighty Mouse in demo mode would forget which cursors I had imported after a short time and simply default on-the-fly to the original OS X cursors without so much as a pause, stutter or hiccup. It just happened. In some cases, I didn't even notice for several minutes that the change had occurred. Then it was a matter of just re-importing the same cursors I had been using, and I was back on my merry way.
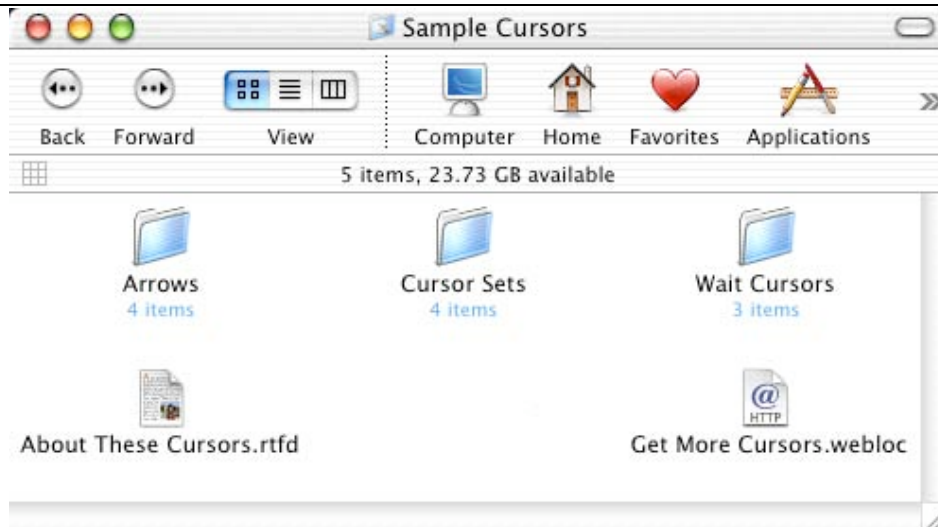
Changing System Cursors

The Mighty Mouse installer actually installs two System Preference Panes, APE Manager and Mighty Mouse. APE Manager is Unsanity's Application Enhancer, required by some of Unsanity's Haxies to work their magic, including Mighty Mouse. The Mighty Mouse user doesn't need to be concerned with APE. It just installs and helps Mighty Mouse do its stuff.

The Mighty Mouse preference pane, split into 3 sections, is where all the magic happens. In the top section, Available Cursors, users find buttons to import one or more saved cursors that have either been exported from Mighty Mouse or downloaded from the Internet, and export cursors that the user has created or edited with Mighty Mouse. In addition to exporting cursors as cursors, Mighty Mouse can also export animated GIFs from animated cursors. A third button in this section takes users to the ResExcellence web site to download cursors http://www.resexcellence.com/cursors/ for Mighty Mouse. Many of the Mighty Mouse cursors here are nicely done. Users, however, should not overlook the sample cursors supplied with Mighty Mouse for either use or inspiration. They are as good as most that can be found at ResExcellence. The sample cursors with Mighty Mouse include 4 arrow cursors, 6 cursor sets and 3 wait cursors. No matter the changes made in Mighty Mouse, Unsanity has provided a Restore Defaults button to reset all cursors back to those of Mac OS X.

Editing and Creating Cursors

The second section is the Cursor Editor. When a cursor is selected from the Available Cursors above, the cursor editor displays the frame and mask pairs that make up the selected cursor. For non-animated cursors, there will likely be only one frame-mask pair. For animated cursors, each frame-mask pair that create the animation (masked portions of each frame are transparent when displayed). Each cursor also has its own "hotspot" – the point of the cursor that makes the intended selection. For some cursors, this hotspot is in the upper right corner instead of the standard upper left corner. For others, it's closer to the middle of the cursor. The hotspot should make logical sense for each individual cursor. Of course, users can edit this hotspot with the Cursor Editor, too, and may also test the selected cursor, adjust its animation speed, and insert and delete frames with the Cursor Editor as well.

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For good animated cursors, changes likely aren't necessary. But if a user wishes to edit the selected cursor or create an entirely new cursor, the user must first know a few things about image creation, alpha channels and frame-based animation, because Mighty Mouse isn't an image editor or animation package. It's more a cursor assembler. Creating cursors, both static (non-animated) and animated, is similar to creating static and animated GIFs for a web site. As a general rule, it is also recommended to make cursors as small as reasonably possible with little wasted space for margins. Larger cursors require more processing power and may cause performance hits for users of older, slower machines. Unsanity advises that cursors should be no larger than 48x48 or they're more likely to cause performance problems.

For a static cursor such as the standard arrow, a single frame-mask pair is common, though a static cursor can have multiple (but wasteful) frames. The user creates an image and a mask for the image (the where the cursor will be transparent), saves the file as an RGB TIFF with transparency (alpha channel mask) and copies (from the Mac OS X Finder) and pastes this TIFF (or drags the TIFF from the Finder) into the selected Available Cursor. Mighty Mouse automatically creates the static cursor, complete with transparency. Users can create such transparent RGB TIFFs in the latest releases of most popular image editing applications, including Photoshop and Graphic Converter. In Photoshop, layer masks become alpha channel masks automatically when saved as a TIFF with transparency.

If an RGB TIFF with transparency isn't available, the user can still edit and create cursors. The trick here is to create the image and mask and copy and paste them (or drag and drop them from the Finder) separately into the image and mask wells as appropriate in the Cursor Editor. The image itself can be in any color space (index, RGB, CMYK) to be pasted. The mask can likewise be in any color space, but it is converted to grayscale when pasted. Areas that are 100% white will be visible; areas that are 100% black will be transparent; areas that are gray will be correspondingly semi-transparent based on gray value (which can create some really cool effects, as in Sven Chambone's Fire-Wait cursor http://www.resexcellence.com/cursors/index_10.shtml). Just as the RGB TIFF method, it

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is important that all graphics used to create a cursor are the same size, or the smaller graphic will be scaled to the larger size by Mighty Mouse.

Animated cursors require more work but are created with similar techniques and limited to 15 frames (a limit posed by OS X). For an animated cursor to be pasted into the Available Cursors section from an RGB transparent TIFF, the image must be created in a specific way. The user must create a single graphic containing all frames of the animation distributed evenly within the image area so that each frame takes up equal space with size restrictions as noted earlier. This graphic should also contain an alpha channel mask (layer masks in Photoshop become alpha channel masks when saved as a transparent TIFF). Frames will be imported from the top of the graphic to the bottom. For example, if a graphic for an animated cursor is intended to be a 24x24 pixel 6-frame animation, the graphic will need to be 24x144 pixels. Each 24-pixel vertical segment will become a cursor. The contents of the top 24 pixel segment will become the first frame of the animation, the contents of the next 24 pixel segment will become the second frame of the animation, and so forth. When pasted into the Available Cursor section of Mighty Mouse, Mighty Mouse will ask how many frames should be created and automatically slice the graphic into the required number of equal-sized frames. In this example, the graphic would be sliced into (6) 24x24 frames.

Scaling Cursors

The third section is Cursor Scaling. This is a simple but potentially powerful feature for users with poor eyesight or other vision problems. Adjusting a simple slider here adjusts the size of the selected cursor from .6x (Tiny) to 5x (Huge) its original size in increments of .2. For example, a typical 24x24 pixel cursor can be scaled to just more than half its original size, or up to 144x144 pixels. If a cursor is already relatively large (say larger than 24x24 pixels), then the largest scaled dimensions will be greater than 144x144 pixels. Mighty Mouse reflects the scaling dynamically beneath the scaling slider. Mighty Mouse also notes that cursor scaling may be processor intensive. Running on a 500 MHz dual-USB iBook, I noticed an appreciable delay when using a cursor scaled to the maximum amount. Unless a user has a reason for scaling a cursor, it is recommended that the user not do so.

Double the Fun with CursorXP Themes

CursorXP http://www.cursorxp.com is a shareware application to enhance cursors in WinXP, and uses themes like Mighty Mouse. CursorXP themes are named "filename.CurXPTheme". Although there are many more cursor states in WinXP than in Mac OS X, Mighty Mouse can use the Arrow, IBeam, NO and Wait cursors from CursorXP themes, both static and animated cursors. To access the cursors in a CursorXP theme, the Mac user needs to drag the CursorXPTheme file to Stuffit Expander [http://www.aladdinsys.com]. This will produce a folder containing the cursors in the expanded theme. Then the Mac user just drags this folder to the Mighty Mouse Preference Pane, and the Arrow, IBeam, NO and Wait cursors are imported into Mighty Mouse automatically. Works like a charm.

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Animated CursorXP cursors, however, pose a technical problem for Mighty Mouse because CursorXP animated cursors may exceed the 15-frame limit of OS X. Mighty Mouse uses frame-interpolation with CursorXP animations with more than 15 frames, but advanced users can change the default interpolation method from Multiframe to Nearest Neighbor or Localized for best results. Multiframe, the default method, is suitable for animations with little difference between adjacent frames. The Localized method produces the same results as Multiframe unless the source animation contains more than 30 frames, in which case the resulting Mighty Mouse animation contains less motion blur. The Nearest Neighbor method produces no motion blur but does not represent all the original frames in the final Mighty Mouse animation. Advanced users may wish to experiment with these methods for best results on a case-by-case basis. If an advanced user wishes to change the interpolation method, instructions to do so reside in the Mighty Mouse Read Me file.

In preparing to write this review, I did some searching on Google for Windows XP cursors. Naturally, I didn't locate any files usable with Mighty Mouse. I found mostly executable (.exe) files that were probably self-expanding or self-installing. But then I reread the Mighty Mouse documentation and discovered that I should have been searching for CursorXP themes, not Windows XP cursors. Armed with this information, I found the following sites with some passable themes, such as Batman, Lightsaber, Be My Valentine, and Luck of the Irish, to use with Mighty Mouse.

http://www.wincustomize.com
http://www.skinsmith.com
http://www.skinplant.com
http://www.velocityart.com
http://www.artuproar.com

A Few Areas for Improvement

While working with Mighty Mouse, I discovered a few things to add to the Mighty Mouse 2.0 wishlist. Importing cursors is a bit cumbersome because they cannot be previewed before importing them. Perhaps Mighty Mouse 2.0 could gain a means by which to preview cursors before making the decision to import them. An image editor would also be helpful when editing and creating cursors instead of having to jump back and forth into another applications to create and test proposed cursors. Another useful feature of an image editor would be a tween feature similar to those in GIF animation applications to help create animated cursors. It would also be helpful to be able to import animated GIFs as cursors if one so desired, and to import CursorXP themes from the original CurXPTheme file without having to expand the file into a folder and then dragging that folder to Mighty Mouse. In fact, it would be useful to be able to select a cursor state and then import any cursor from a CurXPTheme into that state, instead of relying solely on the 4 states that WinXP and OS X share (Arrow, IBeam, NO and Wait).

A Pleasant Rodent

Despite some room for improvement, Mighty Mouse 1.1 is simple, well-behaved and entertaining, and more feature-rich than expected. Novice and advanced users alike can install Mighty Mouse for OS X with confidence and change their OS X system cursors as much as they wish, downloading static and animated cursors from the Internet or borrowing same from CursorXP. Adventurous users can also create their own static or animated cursors as they please, in conjunction with their favorite image editor, though the process is a bit clumsy. Mighty Mouse 1.1 lets Mac OS X users do things with their cursors that they likely hadn't imagined, without sacrificing stability. Mighty Mouse is rock solid for an initial release. Get it from Unsanity http://www.unsanity.com .

This review was posted earlier in AppleLinks.com http://www.applelinks.com/

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Software

clipEdit 2.7

By Harry {doc} Babad

Wade Cosgrove
Everyday Software
support@everydaysoftware.net
http://www.everydaysoftware.net
$5 USD via Kagi or PayPal
http://www.everydaysoftware.net/clipedit/index.html
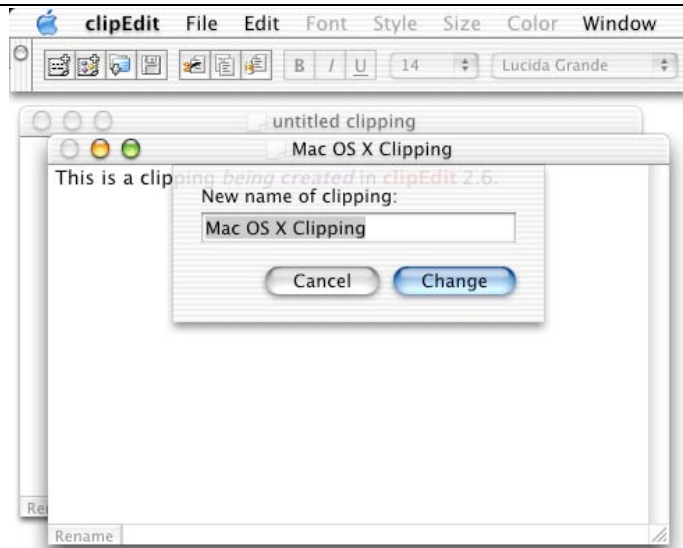2.7 MB of RAM (2.5 MB recommended) for OS X
Jaguar and QuickTime

Strengths: Meets my needs.

Weaknesses: Doesn't allow inserting graphics into text clippings in OS X, as it does in OS 9.
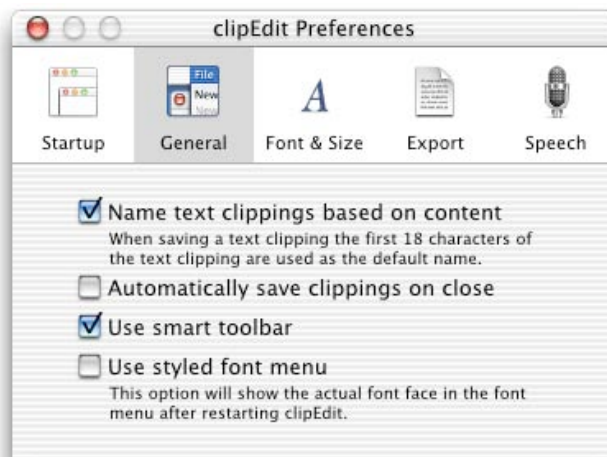
There are lots of ways to grab and save items I continue to need for future use. And thanks to Apple's system software gurus, the easiest method is by creating a clipping file by dragging and dropping selected text in a open document onto your desktop.

But such a text clipping cannot be directly edited, or printed or reformatted unless one goes through the awkward route of converting the clipping to a "textEdit.rtf " formatted document.
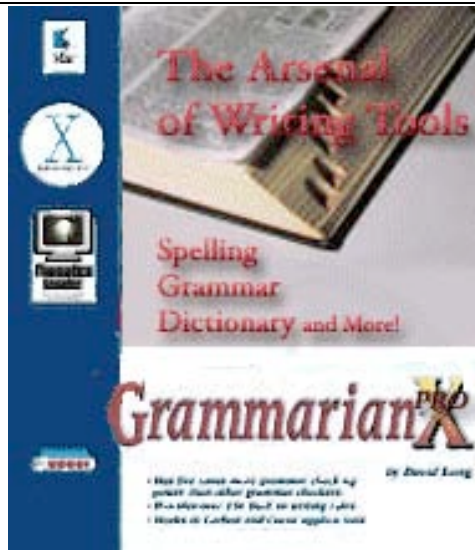
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Wade Cosgrove's clipEdit 3 MB application does these things and more. It makes text clippings even more useful than they already are. clipEdit is a small and convenient application that allows you to create and edit text and picture clippings. Yes, you read correctly...edit clippings directly! clipEdit also exports any internet address in the text file as an internet clipping. clipEdit is very flexible with many customizable settings. And now with the new handy toolbar, editing a text clipping is even easier yet! Try it, if you frequently use text clippings to collect bit and bytes. You'll wonder how you lived without clipEdit for so long. The application requires 2.0 MB of RAM in classic mode (2.5 MB recommended).

The only feature I miss from the OS 9.x version is being able to insert graphics into a text clipping to make them more "purty".

The software does allow you to create & edit all clippings: text, picture and URL clippings. It comes with a great Readme file. It is an acceptable scratchnotes-level text editor with its comprehensive find & replace capabilities. I keep an alias of clipEdit on my desktop and use it as a scratch pad for collecting tidbits and snippets of information I

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sure to need later. Oh, I own scratch pads and know about post-it notes, but scraps of paper on my desk migrate to never-never land or the worlds of "Let's Pretend".

Grammarian Pro™ X 1.5b6, final beta version

Reviewed by Harry {doc} Babad and Julie M. Willingham

Linguisoft Inc.
PO Box 111
Dallastown, PA
17313-0111
USA
info@linguisoft.com
http://linguisoft.com
Free to try; $40 USD to buy
Requirements: Mac OS X 10.2, tested with
Jaguar OSX 10.2.6, 11.3 MB download
and uses 39.3 MB of disk space.
Uninstaller included — Yes

Strengths: At under $40, GMPX is a MUST buy for anyone who cares about looking literate in print, whether you do it in common, academic, technical business or personal styles.

Weaknesses: Remember, this is still beta, so don't worry about it.
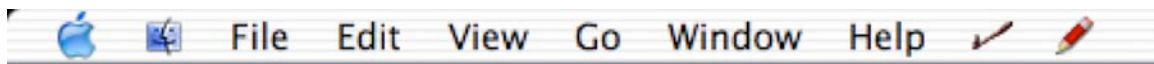
Grammarian Pro X 1.5b6:

- checks spelling, grammar, phrase usage, and punctuation;
- has an AutoCorrect typing feature and AutoType macro tools;
- allows as-you-type corrections or batch processing of errors;
- analyzes readability and human interest of your document.

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Although it cannot replace a human editor, GMPX can provide a relatively clean copy that allows your editor to focus on context, document logic as a whole, and whether or not your target audience is likely to get your message.

As those of you who are avid readers of this and our predecessor eZINE well know, I do a great deal of writing. Not only on things Macintosh (a serious addiction), but also as a consultant on managing and disposing of nuclear waste generated by the nation's defense programs during the Cold War. In the good old days before I retired, most of the time I had enough "rank" to get the services of the best technical editor that corporate America could provide at the Hanford site. But that left my belly exposed in e-mails, memos, and all the rest of the paperwork I generated before, during, and, at times, after completing a project and finalizing the associated reports. In those early days programs like CC: MAIL had no spelling checker, so I was forced to either prepare (longer) e-mail messages in MS Word, or hope I was not so wrapped up in the message that I remained blind to the errors in spelling, grammar, and syntax.
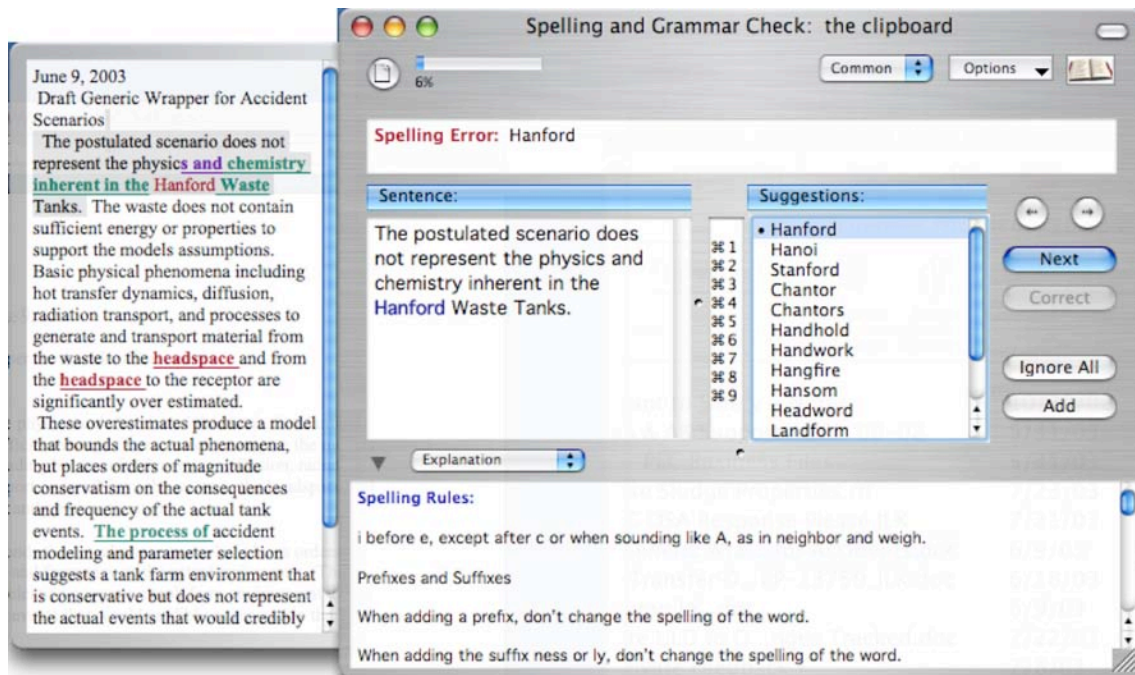
As both e-mail and word processing programs evolved, spelling-associated features were added, but grammar-related features lagged behind. Having tried many now defunct spelling and grammar checkers; struggled over awkward and, at times, ambiguous interfaces; and fielded arbitrary and capricious suggestions on how to change my "purple" prose, all I can say is "thanks" for Grammarian Pro X. Its features, which I describe below, are instantly available at the top of the screen on the Jaguar menu bar from any folder or document window I open.
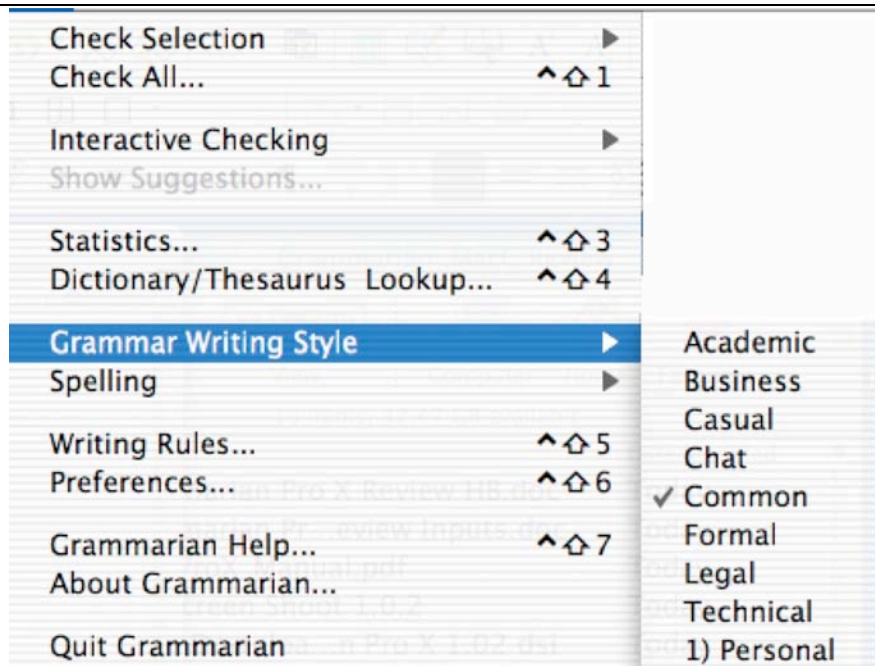

As the ReadMe file says, "Grammarian PRO X contains an arsenal of professional writing tools to combat those embarrassing writing errors that everyone tends to make." Here is a summary of its features:
- Interactive (check-as-you-type) features with "AutoShow" spelling and grammar, or universal batch spelling and grammar checking from any document whose source application has an Edit menu feature.
- Dictionary: This integrated feature contains over 400,000 words, each with definitions, parts of speech, and inflections. The dictionary acts as an integrated assistant for document spelling and grammar checking.
- Grammar: Checks phrase usage, grammar, and punctuation with the most comprehensive commercial grammar-parsing engine ever developed. Checks for dangling modifiers, subject-verb agreement,, comma splices, homophones, and many other error types that were too esoteric for me to care about. GMPX has, according to the publisher, over 150 built-in spelling and grammar-writing rules compared to only 26 such rules in MS Office. While delighted with the extra capability, I tend to ignore the more esoteric suggestions because I don't know what I'm being asked.

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- **AutoCorrect**: This interactive feature automatically corrects spelling mistakes as you type, such as "teh" when you meant to type "the". I find this a distraction so have the feature turned off.
- **AutoType**: This interactive macro tool automatically types out your personal commonly used signature phrases.
- **Interactive "squiggles"**, red for spelling and green for grammar, are seen in Cocoa applications. This is similar to what one sees in MS Word, with the interactive spelling and grammar check feature.
- **Statistics analysis**: readability indices used by publishers [e.g., the FOG INDEX of creative writing classes days], reading ease, human-interest ratings.
- **Homophones**: Checks words that sound the same but have different spellings, such as "sore"/"soar", and "blew"/"blue".
- **Works in any application that has an Edit menu** and can copy text to the clipboard, even if it already has its own built-in spelling checking and grammar correction features. This includes Adobe products as well as Carbon, Cocoa, and Java applications.
- **Provides an uninstaller** application, something too often lacking in software products. It flawlessly removed the previous version from my hard drive so I could do a clean install.

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GMPX thoughts from our *macCompanion* editor

NB: I am not an editor by way of training or education: I have degrees in chemistry and agronomy and have worked in those fields. However, I paid enough attention in high school and college English classes to earn A's and remembered a lot of what I learned, and I know when something doesn't make sense.

I've read a lot of books in chemistry, agricultural science, health care, and science fiction. I read magazines on airplanes, horticulture, and finance. I read newspapers. Therefore I see, and have seen, a lot of text that has been edited by professionals. It is my goal to edit like the best of them.

"Way cool!" I thought as I edited this review. "Finally there is something that can reduce the wear on my red pen by letting my authors fix their own spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors before I receive their documents. No more replacing "its" with "it's", "form" with "from", or figuring out how to make certain authors' flowery prose more sensible. No more tired eyes." But, this particular beta version of GMPX didn't do nearly as much work for me as I had expected, nor did I find it as easy or convenient to use as Harry did.

I tested GMPX on the September CEO Letter in this issue. I checked spelling and grammar with the common, casual, and technical styles, all on the "English Writing Rules" setting. I also tested the technical style with the "Proofreading" Rule Group and "Grammar and Punctuation" Grammar Style. I ended up with 4 files that had identified most of the same errors. Each file also asked me to correct 2 or 3 items that did not appear in the other files. It seemed to me that most of the corrections were either fairly minor (add or delete commas), words not yet in Grammarian's dictionary (typical of all word processing software), or items that I thought did not need correction (see below).

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Here are some examples where I thought GMPX performed poorly:

1. Original sentence: "<u>And this was before the East-coast blackout (which no one is admitting could have been caused by a computer system glitch yet as of this writing.)</u>"
   > GMPX suggested I change "as of" to "at" to reduce unnecessary words, while ignoring the convoluted sentence structure and the fact that "East Coast" is the correct wording for "East-coast". (MS Word did catch the latter error.)
   > My version of this sentence: "<u>And this was before the East Coast blackout, which no one yet is admitting could have been caused by a computer system glitch (as of this writing.)</u>" While not perfect, it's probably easier to read.

2. Original sentence: "<u>The constant CDs form Microsoft are flowing—again.</u>"
   GMPX suggested I change "are" to "is" for subject-verb agreement, apparently because it misidentified the subject. I ignored this suggestion. GMPX also ignored "form", a typo of "from".

3. Original sentence: "…<u>IT departments are very concerned about loosing their power, budgets,…</u>"
   GMPX wanted me to rewrite "are very concerned" because it is a weak passive-voice verb. I rejected this change as nonsensical.
   GMPX incorrectly ignored "loosing", which means to let loose, set free, untie, , etc. "Loosing" is *not* a homophone of "losing", which means to be deprived of (something). I think it should have asked me to change the spelling.

4. Original sentence: "<u>We had had our hard drives replaced…</u>"
   > GMPX told me that the word "had" was repeated. I ignored this remark, complaining that GMPX could not recognize a sentence written in past perfect tense.
   > (On the other hand, in the sentence "I also tested…", GMPX correctly pointed out the error.)

As an amateur editor, I'm not that impressed, but Harry said GMPX helped him find and fix a lot of problems. However, he still left a lot of them for me to discover. I found that I often had to put in some punctuation marks and delete others, even though GMPX probably has stricter rules than I do. (And in many cases, rightfully so.) I had to correct misspelled words because GMPX didn't identify a misspelled or mistyped word from context (e.g., "loosing" and "losing", "form" and "from"). But, it seems that all software that checks spelling has the same problem of not being able to distinguish a typing error from a true spelling error.

I had hoped for help with Harry's huge and wildly wandering sentences, but usually GMPX said only that they were lengthy, not that there were too many dependent clauses, nor that they lacked subjects or verbs. GMPX also failed to notice when words were missing from sentences. But, MS Word seems to have these same faults.

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Maybe I didn't understand the software's limitations as well as I should have because I didn't spend much time learning it. (I had OS X problems!) I know I didn't investigate it thoroughly. But, Grammarian might be helpful to authors who can take the time to understand and pay attention to its more general suggestions.

My biggest disappointment was in discovering that it was faster for me to proofread and edit a printed document—even one this long—plus correct the electronic version, than it was for me to use GMPX, follow or ignore its suggestions, and then still have to edit what GMPX missed. I guess Harry will be getting GMPX so that I won't have to read his roughest drafts, but I'm not ready to trust it as much as I do my own judgment.—JMW

More of Babad's Ramblings...
I have not checked out Grammarian Pro's "AutoType" ability, nor have I evaluated its ability to analyze the readability and "human interest" of a piece of writing. This is due to the fact that the main focus of my writing is technical, and, therefore, so are the style settings I select. My audience is, for the most part for most, college graduates. However, since obfuscation seems to be a built-in aspect of writing professional and/or government-contracted reports, perhaps I should try the feature after all. (I have used the common style setting for this review since we're all just plain folks.)

I've checked a number of documents that MS Word X has "blessed", and by following many of GMPX's recommendations, have been delighted with the documents' improved readability. I have used and verified the robustness and ease of use of all the features in GMPX of interest me, which you can read as fitting in well with my approach to writing. But I do look forward to trying some of its other features (e.g., AutoShow and AutoCorrection) as time or impulse permits.

Manual and FAQs
My normal procedure when doing software reviews, an admitted aberration for a Macintosh user, is to check out a product's manual. Tidbits contained in the well-written and clearly illustrated manual include: "Grammarian PRO X takes full advantage of Mac OS X and supports Carbon and Cocoa applications. Grammarian works in such Mac OS X applications as: Adobe GoLive, **AppleWorks**, BBEdit, **Eudora**, **FileMaker Pro**, **clipEdit OSX**, Mail, Microsoft Office, Tex-Edit Plus, **TextEdit**, and more." (I've checked GMPX with the software highlighted in bold text).

Unlike other software products I use and many that I've reviewed, the FAQ section, found on the developer's web page, is focused, well written, and instantly useful. In fact, so far I've not had to use the Help feature.

Author Feedback on Selected Topics
Since I'm prone to entering misspelled words into custom {mine, all mine} dictionaries, especially when in a hurry I wanted to know how to fix this. David Long, the software's developer, provided me with that information, and I'm guessing that this might make it to the FAQs listing. Here's how:

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(Go to your Users Folder=> Library=> Application Support=> Grammarian=> Grammarian Dictionaries=> Spelling=> US English-Additional Words)

The "US English-Additional Words" document contains an alphabetic listing of all the words you entered while spell checking. (It's comparable to the custom dictionary in MS Word.) Remove it to your desktop, remembering the path back so it can be replaced after correction. Recheck all the words on your list or delete the ones that are obviously wrong. Put it back where you found it and you're done.

A Cautionary Note
One of the powerful features of GMPX is the ability for a user to change the software "Writing Rules." This feature allows you to customize style of writing that you want to achieve. Selecting Writing Rules from the Grammarian menu will bring up the Grammarian Writing Rules window, in which you can customize the way Grammarian analyzes your writing. Although I have written and published several hundred articles, technical documents, and other stuff during my career, I do not consider myself competent to drastically change these settings. Fortunately, David Long has included the ability to restore the original settings.

Two Minor GMPX 1.5 Concerns
On occasion, I found the proposed grammar rules a bit arcane, but I'm not an English teacher. However, it was easy to move on to the next item that made sense to me and that I felt competent to handle.

One area where it took a couple of tries to make the software do what I wanted was when I checked the text sections of an Excel spreadsheet. When I chose "Check the Document", corrected the errors identified by GMPX, and pasted the results back into the document, the results changed the column arrangement of the document. In the original uncorrected version, the text areas were composed of merged cells to allow for easier readability. GMPX pasted the changes into the first "column" of what was a set of merged cells. A work-around was easy—I checked each text section individually. Yes, one at a time, by individually selecting it. The pasted results were perfect.

Conclusion
The software is easy to install and use, and is accompanied by a clear 28-page manual for those of us who don't like to blindly install a product and then do trial-and-error features testing.

It is accompanied by an excellent FAQ sheet on the publisher's website and detailed installation guides, both in the installer package and with more detail in the FAQs. It also provides good fixes for occasional problems associated with installation of Jaguar software updates. As a final note, this review would not have been possible without both the clearly written, logical manual that accompanies the software and the responsive feedback provided by David Long, its developer.

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At $40 USD, GMPX is a MUST buy for anyone who cares about looking literate in print, whether in common, academic, technical business, or personal styles. When David Long posts the final 1.5 version, it's a "must get" product. It gets a macC5 rating.

(Footnote: *macCompanion* does not usually review beta versions, but this was so close to the final release form that I succumbed—HB.)

Intaglio 1.3.2
Reviewed by Seth Matheson

Purgatory Design
P.O. Box 2483
Durango, CO 81302
USA
info@PurgatoryDesign.com
http://www.purgatorydesign.com/Intaglio/index.html
http://www.purgatorydesign.com/Intaglio/download.html
(2 MB download)
Price: $90 USD (single user license), special introductory $60 USD price at time of review. Purchase through Kagi.
OS X Jaguar or later

Strengths: Good OSX drawing/illustration program for someone on a tight budget. Contains many of the same advanced features as more expensive programs including extensive AppleScript support.

Weaknesses: Lacks some features, but most of what you would expect from a good drawing application is there. Slight learning curve, however it is fairly intuitive.

The lack of a good drawing program for the Macintosh operating system has been a problem for some time now. With the exception of expensive products like Photoshop

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and Illustrator from Adobe, nothing quite matches the ease of use and features of Intaglio while having such a small price tag.

If you're looking to create something simple for a presentation or something, look no further then Intaglio. Being a fairly new program, it doesn't have all the features under the sun, but it has most of the basics and even a few advanced features that will surprise beginners and please experienced users.

Helvetica Bold

Apple Chancery

Four levels of design complexity

Four levels of design complexity

Four levels of design complexity

Four levels of design complexity

Vertical Text

Drop Caps

HoeflerText Black

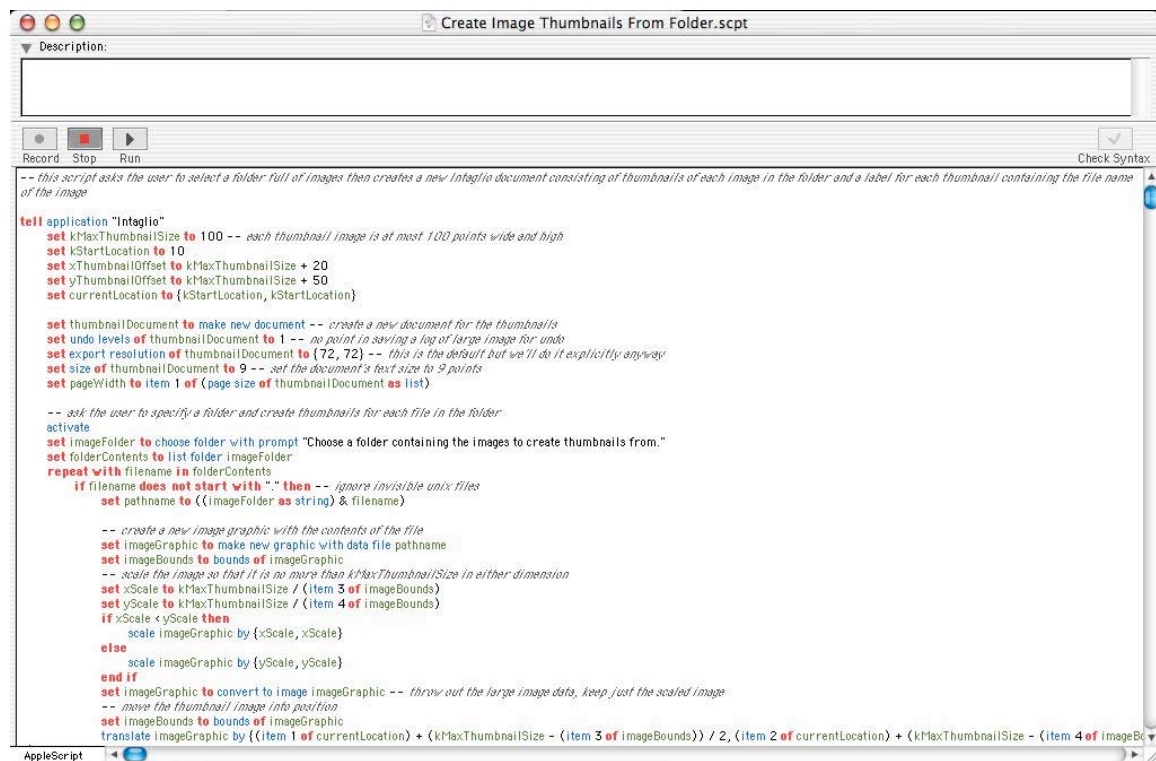Lucida Grande

$$m = m_0 e^{-\lambda t}$$

Apple LiSung

Rotated Text

Are you used to using a program like Photoshop? You might be a little surprised when just starting out with Intaglio. Lacking are such familiar things like an eraser tool, pencil, airbrush, paintbrush, etc. Intaglio does offer a pen (path), line, arc, several shapes, and various measurement tools. Also offered is an advanced text tool with the ability to make extremely crisp and smooth fonts that are on par with similar tools in $500-600 programs.

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Intaglio takes Apple's Type Services to the limit, providing complete and intuitive access to all the features provided by OS X, from ligatures, to kerning adjustments, to alternate characters and letter case.

Purgatory Design also used Quartz and QuickTime graphics to enhance the performance and usability of Intaglio. Intaglio uses QuickTime to import and export its images, allowing for many various graphics formats to be supported. Intaglio also has the ability to convert vector PICT graphics, better known as QuickDraw, into its own Quartz based graphics, allowing them to be edited in and altered. This handy feature allows you to import all your old ClarisDraw and MacDraw files with no complications.

One feature that is being seen on a lot of new OS X applications is the addition of scriptability over various functions using AppleScript. Not to be outdone, all graphics operations in Intaglio are scriptable. This allows users to assign scripts to repetitive and mundane tasks, allowing the users to spend their time elsewhere. Examples included with the program show the user how to combine Intaglio features to perform more complex tasks.

You can download and try Intaglio in demo mode before you purchase it.
 In demo mode, Intaglio has the following restrictions:

   You can't save drawings.
   Printed drawings contain an "unlicensed" watermark.

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Drawings exported as PDF or bitmap images contain an "unlicensed" watermark.

NetNewsWire

Reviewed by Ted Bade

Ranchero Software
Email: info@ranchero.com
Seattle, WA (Ballard)
http://ranchero.com/
http://ranchero.com/netnewswire/
Cost: full version $40 USD - 30 trial version available.
Lite version available as Freeware.

Strengths: Simple "point-and-click" interface. Allows easy access to thousands of news feeds. Truly makes accessing news and information a breeze.

Weaknesses: Data overload. There are soooo many sources of information. One can spend hours investigating what they all contain and if they are of interest. Not really NetNewsWire's problem!

NetNewsWire is an application that draws news from various web sites that offer RSS feeds, directly to your computer. You choose from the sites available and NetNewsWire automatically checks for new items and updates. This program makes it easy to keep abreast of the information you find most useful.

RSS stands for Really Simple Syndication. Syndication is a news media term meaning "the sharing of news information among various publication groups", generally for money. RSS adds to general syndication since a variety of information can be shared (not just news and news photos) and generally there is no cost (for the information items) to the user.
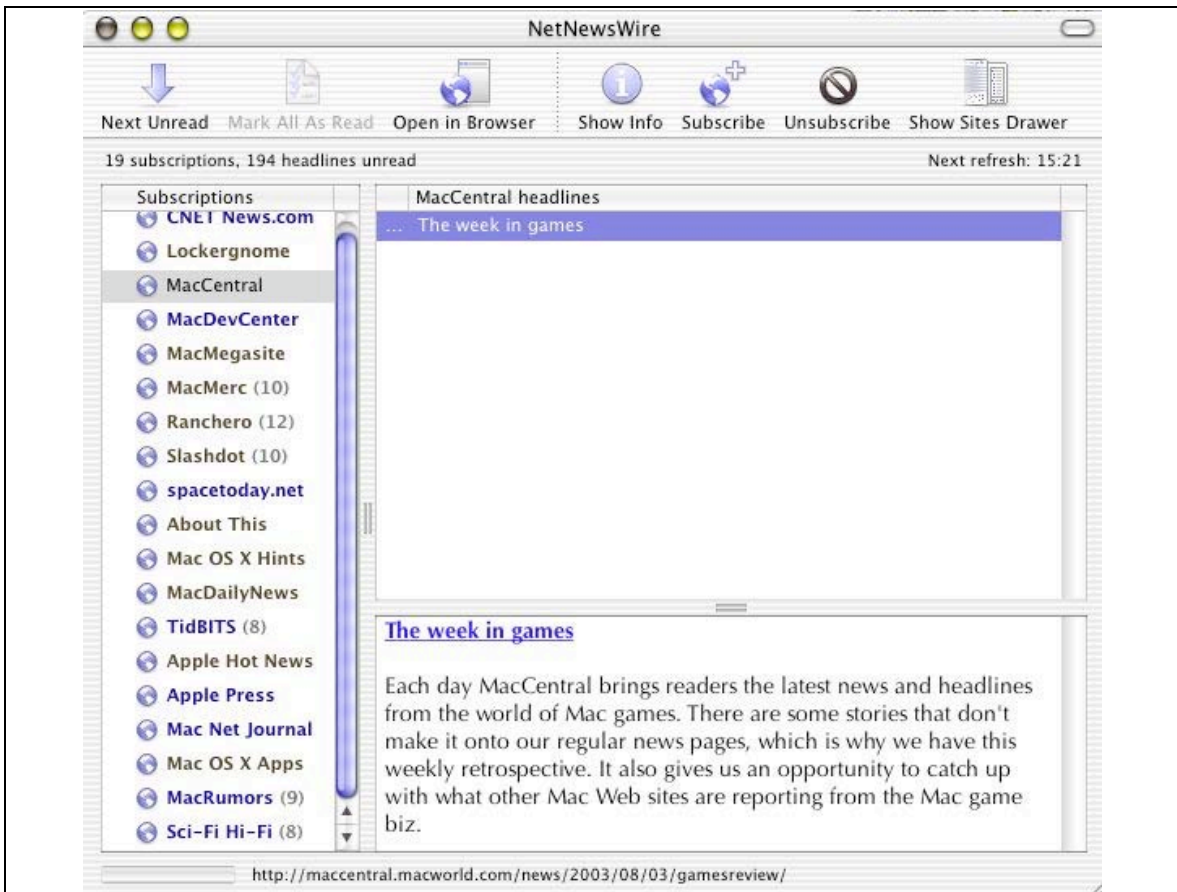
The Internet is all about information. There are literally thousands of web sites offering

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news and information about almost any topic one can imagine in many different languages. You could create a group of bookmarks and visit each site every day to discover what is new, or you could use NetNewWire to search for you.

If your favorite sites offer RSS feeds, (and lots of sites do), you can subscribe to those feeds using NetNewsWire. Then NetNewsWire will check those sites either manually or at regular intervals (you set the preferences on this). It then provides you with a list of "headlines" which can be clicked on to open the full article in your browser. Depending upon how a particular site handles the RSS feed, you'll either get a headline only or a headline and a paragraph describing the article.
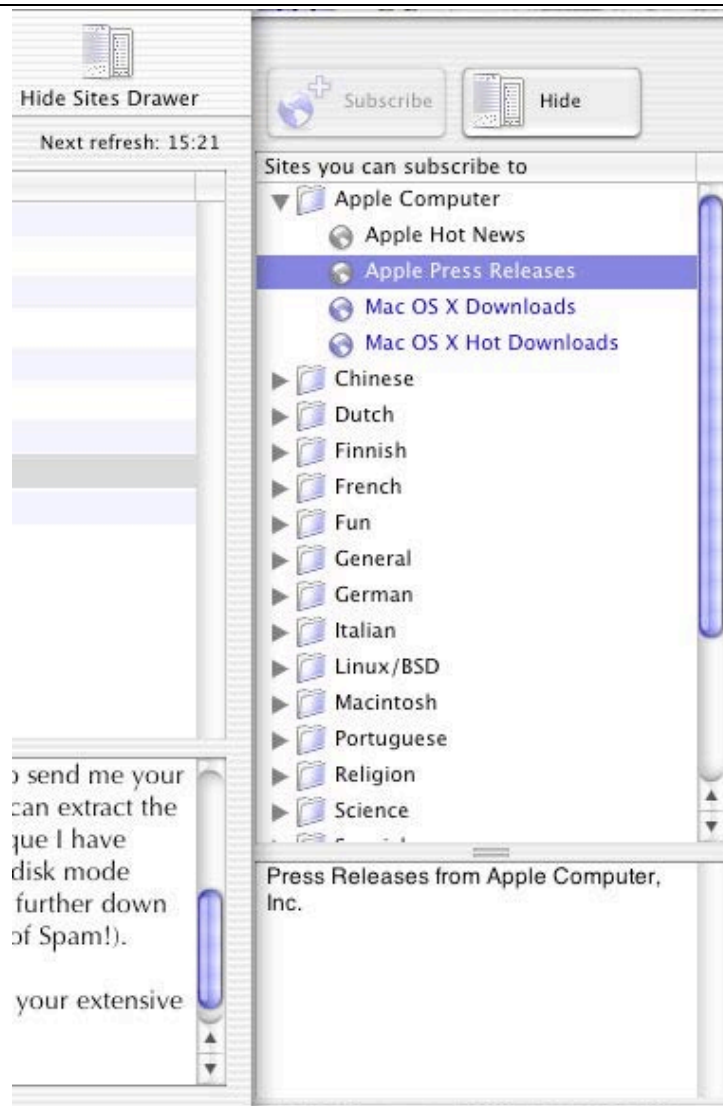
In addition to RSS feeds there are these things called WebLogs that appear to be a variety of thoughts, comments, and information posted on the Internet. Not exactly news, it is more like people sharing their personal thoughts and experiences. WebLogs can be interactive, allowing the reader to comment back and NetNewsWire lets you do this.

NetNewsWire's interface is very basic and quite easy to use. The main window consists of three panes (see image 1). The side bar lists the particular sites that you "subscribe" to. Numbers after the subscription name indicates unread articles. You can set the preference list to change colors based on the number of unread articles as well. For instance the subscription name stays blue as long as there are less then 10 unread articles, but once there are ten or more, the color changes to red.

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The headlines section provides a list of headlines from the site you select on the side panel. Again you can select a color for read and unread headlines. To read a headline, you click on one and in the third panel the text associated with this headline is shown as well as a link that directs your browser to this web page. The information in both of these panels is created by the site providing the RSS feed. The information could be simply the link to the web page or a paragraph of information in addition to the link.

Add NetNewsWire to MacOS X's Login Items preference pane, so when you login to your account it runs and checks for new items. It also places its icon in the Dock. A neat feature is that NetNewsWire's Dock icon displays the number of unread news items in your subscriptions. Since you can set it up to check for new news at regular intervals, a quick glance at the Dock will alert you to the arrival of new items.

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A side drawer is a normally hidden fourth part of NetNewsWire. This drawer lists all the sites and weblogs available to you through NetNewsWire. The sites are organized into folder by topic. Some included topics are: Apple Computer, Macintosh, Science, Technology, and a variety of non-English-based feeds. WebLogs are listed alphabetically by name. Inside the folders are the individual feeds you can subscribe to. Clicking once on a particular site provides a short description of the site. Double-clicking on a site adds it to your subscription list.

NetNewsWire offers several ways to customize it to your liking. You can change colors, transparencies, and even rename feeds. Subscriptions can be organized into folders or just listed separately. It also includes a NotePad feature to keep track of your thoughts on things and to upload to weblogs.

This program is simply terrific! I find I have significantly better access to the news I find interesting and spend a LOT less time getting it. This can be a real boon to busy people

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who have only so much time to spend on searching for information.

NetNewsWire comes in two varieties. The Lite version is freeware (although a donation is suggested and not a bad idea for such a useful program). It lacks some of the features of the full version but is still very useful. The full version costs only $40. There is a 30-day free trial on the full version.

For more information and to download a copy of this excellent program visit their web site: http://ranchero.com/netnewswire/.

{Editors Note: Version 1.0.4 is now available for download – and yes, we paid for our copies! And it deserves a **macC5**! The latest rev uses WebKit from Apple http://developer.apple.com/documentation/Cocoa/Reference/WebKit/ObjC_classic/index. html#//apple_ref/doc/uid/TP30000745 and htmlDiff from Aaron Swartz http://www.aaronsw.com/. }

That's it for this issue of macCompanion. Come back often!

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