macCompanion
YOUR GUIDE TO ALL THINGS MACINTOSH

How Secure Do You Think You Are?

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Cover created by James Meister

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Letter From the CEO

Mac OS X Safety and Security

Our hearts bleed purple peanut butter (and I mean that in a nice way, okay?) for the many folks that have been turned off by computing due to bad experiences in the WinTel world relating to malware (applications designed to harm your computer system) issues. In a WinTel-centric world, networking is so difficult, that practicing safe computing is nigh near impossible! Turn on a new machine without a firewall between it and the Internet and "poof!" before you can count to 30, it has already been "owned" by the darkside. There is a multi-billion dollar business generated in combating evil online, whether the triad of Viruses, Trojans and Worms or the 4th dimension of SPAM with phishing being hardly reeled in. Malware eradication efforts combine to reduce the well over 1 trillion dollars in lost productivity annually, due to maliciousness online. This includes a new genre of software known as "Patch Management". There are organizations dedicated 24/7 to eradicating online evil, but they are not winning the war. Many folks have become battle-weary and are giving up the fight by not even logging on anymore. They have become the walking wounded. Something that was promised to make our lives so much easier has, in fact, done exactly the opposite. What is a poor mother to do?

Drum roll please…

Well, Apple, the mistreated and neglected Super Hero, has not gotten much respect in the past. But with Mac OS X, it has been able to show that it is possible, over the last 5 years to develop, maintain and use an Operating System that is free from the evil triad that has infected the WinTel systems worldwide. It does not profess to be all things to all people, in that it cannot be held responsible for the human element in regards to SPAM and phishing. However, it has tried to address part of those issues (SPAM with the Junk Folder in Mail.app). It can't do much about us giving away our personal banking information or in combating identity theft. There is a lot it can do for us however.

Even with a class act of having 5 years free of malware, can Apple keep this record immaculate? And is it really true that Mac OS X is all Apple says it is with the body count numbering well over 90,000 (and counting) for WinTel platform miscreant activities? Are Apple platforms using Mac OS X still be a BIG FAT ZERO on the malware scoreboard? Is it true that because Apple commands "only" 5% of marketshare each month that it is not considered low enough hanging fruit for crackers and malware coders to even consider attacking?

Let's investigate why many Linux users and system administrators who have quietly, secretly and without much fanfare over the last 3 years, have glided over to the Macintosh platform now and are proudly declaring it as THEIR system of choice with the release of Tiger. Those who bad-mouthed for so long the system they loathed and feared as it possibly taking away their jobs, now extol its virtues. Those of us who have known all along about the "superiority" of Mac OS X have been vindicated!

Malware and Mac OS X

First, let's make something perfectly clear. Can Macs get malware and have rootkits (apps designed to control or "own" a system such as rootkit109 or "Opener") been created to compromise the Operating System? Absolutely! Are Macs affected by such dark code? The answer is an unequivocal "No" for malware and "Sometimes" for rootkits. What happens is that if the Apple machines do not have anti-malware installed, the bad-nasties get passed on to other platforms that are adversely targeted and affected. Many who use the Mac get anti-malware applications, usually at a much higher premium cost than the Wintel crowd has to pay for the same protection. Why? Because those who are good netizens *act* as good netizens by not being either Typhoid Maries or do not indulge in the online social diseases that have maligned, nay, paralyzed, other platforms. Apple platform citizens do not want to be known as the source for spreading the online diseases. Instead, they go out of their way to not be a part of that sub-culture and revel in playing safe computing. The anti-malware apps are not for them alone. They install it to protect the ones they love.

Sweet soothing violin music…

Vulnerabilities and Exploits

Mac OS X was designed from the bottom up with security in mind. All services are turned off by default and you need to turn on the ones you want to use. Conversely it took Microsoft with the latest releases of XP Pro Service Pack 2 and Microsoft Server 2003 to finally come around and do the same thing, but only after duress and many legal rumblings and threatenings amongst Microsoft consultants.

Is Mac OS X perfect? No, but that is why Apple has created Software Updates under the Apple logo up in the left-hand corner of the screen. As each Apple app gets updated we know about it and can download accordingly. The Mac OS X system checks to see if we need any updates and then gives us the option to add those or not. The latest as of this writing, were the updates to Keynote 2 and Mac OS X 10.4 1 Tiger. (The link is listed under **Resources**.)

As John Gruber has pointed out, a vulnerability can be described as like having an unlocked car. An exploit is where a thief steals the car. There have been vulnerabilities that have been exposed to the public mind, but Apple has closed them relatively quickly by both updating the Operating System and by distributing updates to iApps. So far, there have been no publicized exploits other than proof-of-concept examples such as *Opener*.

If you are concerned about network access from the outside, you can always check your system by using Steve Gibson's *ShieldsUP!!* services to find out if you are running a stealth machine or not. Symantec also has a tool for testing if a system is left insecure.

Why Is Mac OS X More Secure?

As mentioned earlier, Mac OS X was designed with security as a basic component of the Operating System. How has Apple been able to do this? UNIX has a long history and Apple literally capitalized on it by using the FreeBSD version, then modifying it as a Darwin Open Source project when it was the OS for NeXT (an earlier company that Steve Jobs founded and Apple later bought), so anyone can view the source code and point out any discrepancies.

- The Mac OS X architecture uses the Common Data Security model the *root* user is not enabled by default so malware cannot attempt to install itself as *root*.
- Communications ports used by the system are the only ones open by default.
- A FileVault panel has been installed in the Preferences section to be used to encrypt/decrypt home folders.
- Keychain access is done through the Utilities folder in the Applications folder. It stores sensitive data for authentication services. Password data is protected using Triple Digital Encryption Standard (3DES).
- The integrated firewall is based on IPFW, another open source FreeBSD technology. A "stealth mode" has been added to block outgoing traffic not originating from the computer itself.
- Both the Mail.app and Safari browser use SSL2 and SSL3 along with Transport Layer Security for secure encrypted channeling.
- Mail.app uses Secure Multipurpose Internet Mail Extensions (S/Mime).
- LAN and Wireless can be secured using OpenSSL and OpenSSH.
- Virtual Private Networks can use Layer 2 tunneling Protocol or Point-to-Point Protocol.
- The 802.1X standard is used and all necessary settings are imported into the Internet Connect function for secure wireless communications.
- And of course, as previously noted, the Software Update function helps us stay current.
- Applications now are identified in the Finder so they can be examined before they are run.
- Safari examines content as it downloads and notifies if it is an application or not.
- Auto-install has been un-defaulted to avoid any possible widget auto-runs as they are downloaded and not automatically installed into Dashboard.
- Access Control Lists are enabled on a per-volume basis, but require manual manipulation in Terminal Mode.
- Fast User Switching has been enabled. (More than one user on a machine can log in quickly.)

The Anti-Virus manufacturers have been caught more than once over the last 5 years trying to pour Fear, Uncertainty and Doubt (FUD) into the minds of those who use Macs, but for the most part, those manufacturers have been caught with their pants down around their ankles, as they keep trying to drum up business in the Mac community. Yes, those of us who use Macs do need to not become complacent when it comes to security, but we tend to ignore the "cry wolf" mentality we hear after one or two times. We are accustomed to not having malware issues with our machines. And believe me when I say that if any do attempt to trash Macs, we will be on it like white on rice.

You may try in vain to find the "37 Mac OS X vulnerabilities" report that Symantec posted last year. Frankly, much of it was smelly nonsense, so they removed it from their website after being taken to task, as far as I can tell. "The potential exists", but should we be afraid of water, knowing that we could choke to death on a spoonful of it? We should treat Mac malware reports with healthy skepticism and consider the source. We also tend for the most part to ignore sensationalism from the same sources and those software developers that try to do that get hit with pretty nasty backlash from the Mac Community. "Burn me once, shame on you, burn me twice…"

Jaws2 Music…

Due Diligence

Now that we have pretty much burst the "Danger! Danger Will Robinson!" hysteria balloon regarding Mac Security and Safety, it is time for some due diligence. Yes, it is possible to choke to death on a spoonful of water, so it pays to take some preventative measures to reduce the choking hazard, right?

And like the Scout Motto says, it always pays to "Be Prepared". So what can we do?

Matt Willmore addressed this nicely with 3 installments on complete Mac security in the Tutorial section of MacZealots, but his information was superceded by later updated versions of the Mac OS X with his 3rd installment still being left intact. Ming Chow also discussed some security enhancements over on O'Reilly:

- First, make sure the machine is in a safe location. Think 5-finger pickup and act appropriately. If you have a portable, make sure you have something like what Compute Security Products has available or the XTool computer tracker in case the system gets relocated without your knowledge.
- Second, make sure you have the login process enabled and not bypassed with auto-login. This is done through *Apple > System Preferences > Accounts*. Use the Fast User Switching function if more than one user works the machine.
- Third, enable FileVault by going to *Apple > System Preferences > Security*.
- Fourth, Secure Disk Images by going to *Applications > Utilities > Disk Utility > New Image*. Set for AES_128 encryption and it will ask you to password-protect it.
- Fifth, Secure Empty Trash by going to the *Finder > Secure Empty Trash*. To really delete what is in there or elsewhere a 3rd-party cleaner probably should be used to erase free space.
- Sixth, in Safari, disable AutoFill.
- Seventh, if you haven't done so already (and you should have, unless this is a fresh install), turn on the Firewall and turn off filesharing by going to *Apple > System Preferences > Sharing*. And go into *Advanced* and turn on blocking UDP traffic, enable Stealth mode and enable Firewall logging.

That said, what is the platform of choice for those in the Computer Security Industry? Many are using Macs. If you don't believe me, then go talk to Kelly Martin over at *Security Focus*. Or even Winn Schwartau at *The Security Awareness Company*. Why not use the system the security professional use for a living?

Oh, and don't forget that there are Parental Controls in Tiger as well…

Resources

Many of these have been "captured" in the *macCompanion* Blog under the category of Security:
http://www.maccompanion.com/ExpressionEngine1.2/

A Simple Guide To Macintosh Security- Larry Loeb
http://www.informit.com/articles/article.asp?p=335882&rl=1
Apple's Big Virus – Kelly Martin
http://www.securityfocus.com/columnists/319?ref=rss
Apple Security
http://www.apple.com/support/security/
Apple Security Updates:
http://docs.info.apple.com/article.html?artnum=61798
Be Prepared
http://www.scouting.org/factsheets/02-503a.html
Complete Mac Security, Part 3 – Matt Willmore
http://www.maczealots.com/tutorials/security/3/
Detecting and Avoiding Malware and Spyware - Dr. Smoke
http://www.thexlab.com/faqs/malspyware.html
Enhancing Security and Privacy in Mac OS X Tiger – Ming Chow
http://www.oreillynet.com/pub/wlg/7007
"Kid-Safe" Computing
http://www.apple.com/macosx/features/family/
Macintosh OS X Security (dated information) – Understanding the Platform and Usage - Nicholas Raba
http://www.securemac.com/macosxsecurity.php
Macintosh OS X Security – Second Lesson
http://www.securemac.com/macosxsecurity2.php
Mac Malware Status? – Robert Pritchett
http://www.maccompanion.com/archives/may2005/Columns/MacMalwareStatus.htm
Opener, Closer and Watcher MacInTouch Reader Reports
Opener – http://www.macintouch.com/opener02.html#oct31
Closer and Watcher – http://www.macintouch.com/opener03.html
Security Cannot be Spun – John Gruber
http://www.daringfireball.net/2004/05/security_cannot_be_spun
Security, Reliability and Compatibility – Tiger Review
http://www.macintouch.com/tigerreview/tiger3.html
The Tiger Report: The Parental Controls System Consumer Reports Didn't tell You About – Gene Steinberg
http://www.macnightowl.com/newsletters/2005/05/287.htm#covered
The Virus and OS X - Graham K. Rogers
http://www.extensions.in.th/post/viri/viri.html

Some Tools for Protection

Many of these have been reviewed in *macCompanion* at http://www.maccompanion.com. Just add the item of interest to the search engine located there for more details.

ClamXav
http://www.clamxav.com/
Computer Security Products
http://www.computersecurity.com/macsecurity/
HenWen –Snort on Mac OS X by Nick Zitzmann
http://seiryu.home.comcast.net/henwen.html
Internet Cleanup
http://www.allume.com/mac/cleanup/index.html
Little Snitch
http://www.obdev.at/products/littlesnitch/index.html
MacAnalysis (no longer available for purchase)
http://www.macanalysis.com/
ShieldsUP!!
https://www.grc.com/x/ne.dll?bh0bkyd2
Symantec Internet Security checker
http://www.symantec.com/mac/security/
XTool Computer Tracker
http://www.apple.com/downloads/macosx/networking_security/xtoolcomputertracker.html

Letter From the Editor

Now It's Personal: CherryOS vs. DrunkenBlog by Robert Pritchett

Here at *macCompanion*, we've been following with interest the CherryOS Soap Opera. And I suspect you have too. The latest attempted fallout has to do with Michael Bell (DrunkenBatman) of *DrunkenBlog,* who is being sued by the pretended makers of CherryOS for libel. Is it going to stick? Methinks not, but that isn't going to stop the legal engine from running its course.

Here is the link to past CherryOS episodes including the Blog entry ""The Pits in CherryOS" (copy/paste if the link breaks):

http://www.maccompanion.com/ExpressionEngine1.2/index.php?/weblog/comments/foss_and_pearpc_to_go_after_cherrypc/

And this is the link where DrunkenBatman pretty much lays out the case with all the witnesses (or many of them anyway) and also lays out the evidence, such that a lawyer could pick up where he left off and carry the ball the rest of the way in this game of "it wasn't' me!" by the team (or what's left of it) at Maui X-Stream. BTW, if you would like to donate to his defense, go to his website:

http://www.drunkenblog.com/drunkenblog-archives/000534.html

And what is going on with the so-called CherryOS developer? He is bagging it and has since switched to Tiger and the Mac, stating the emulator effort wasn't worth it (copy/paste if the link breaks):

http://www.maccompanion.com/ExpressionEngine1.2/index.php?/weblog/comments/cherryos_developer_switches_to_tiger/

And we were looking forward so much to an emulator that would have competed nicely against Virtual PC 7! Or not. It would have allowed Mac OS X to run in emulation mode on WinTel boxen instead of allowing WinTel OSxen (WinApps) to perform on a Mac. The promise was that it would work better than anything else so far, in emulator-mode. We wondered why the legal eagles at Apple didn't go after Maui X-Stream months ago.

Then came the Mac mini. Sweet. Can you see the irony? I can! Why use an emulator when you can get a Mac, connect it to the same mouse, keyboard and monitor used by the WinTel units and nearly for the price of Virtual PC? And WinTel boxes are dropping even further in price and a unit can be had for not much more than $200, as of this writing. Why mix, when you can match?

While all this activity was going on, Apple was going after so-called Rumor Sites instead, and the hot debate over whether a Blogster was also a journalist (hey, you got chocolate in my peanut butter! No, you got peanut butter in my chocolate!). A certain Judge ruled in Apple's favor against *ThinkSecret* and against the US Constitutional freedom of the Press, with her fine line of what is published online as a non-recognized credentialed writer really being the issue, ad-nauseum…

Anyhow, DrunkenBatman dispelled any such notion that Bloggers aren't Journalists with his excellent investigative journalistic approach to the shenanigans at Maui X-Stream and then posting his findings online. So now the so-called defense lawyers have thrown a hissy-fit against him crying, "Libel suit! Libel suit"! Have you ever heard such potheads calling the kettles black before? It would appear with all the evidence *against* Maui X-Stream, that those lawyers from the firm Stuart & Branigin, LLP, are running in front of the ambulance instead of behind it - and they are about to be run over.

So what is the issue? The creators of CherryOS plagiarized code from many other sources and then proceeded to sell their work as their own. They grabbed Open Source code and tried to resell it. They outsourced work and took credit for the outsourced effort, got rid of them and claimed their work as their own. And apparently they (the outsourcees) were also guilty of lifting code and calling it their own too. Hey, you play with fire; you are going to smell like smoke.

So here we have a situation that has a twisted plot that any mystery writer would love to write, and any made-for-TV movie mogul would like to run. Only the chips haven't all fallen yet, so it may be a while before we see the video presentation. DrunkenBatman has a front seat view, but if anyone can fill in the missing pieces to the puzzle that he hasn't already uncovered, would you please get in contact with him and give him one or two more juicy morsels? Or if you have a dime or two to spare, add those to his defense, since he hired a San Francisco lawyer from the Rubinstein Law Group to defend him against the outrageous claims being made against him.

And in conclusion…

Ian Betteridge has done a follow-up at http://www.publish.com/article2/0,1759,1815060,00.asp.

Erika Engle wrote in the *Star Bulletin* that CherryOS got pulled off the market:

http://starbulletin.com/2005/05/10/news/index4.html

Meanwhile PearPC (CherryOS competitor) is now one year old:

http://emaculation.com/

doc_Babad's Macintosh Tips By Harry {doc} Babad

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Half Lies and Benign Neglect

I have been using a Logitech wireless optical keyboard, the model number of which I've lost. This is a great keyboard, one that has served me well the last two years, at least until my last lemonade spill. I checked out the Logitech site and there was little of interest for the Macintosh. I was looking for a keyboard with more features than the usual $30-60 wonder, specifically an F-key lock, keyboard audio controls and quick one button access to my email client. Although all the items of interest I checked on the Logitech website were list as PC only, their customer support assured me that the Logitech LX-500 would work with my Macintosh. A short search later for Panther and Tiger compatible Logitech control center software, I found that their software version 1.5 supported (posted 05-04-0) would meet all my needs. Therefore, I went Internet shopping [Froogle, MacWarehouse [CDW.com] looking for the best price. Much to my chagrin, every cite I checked; including those that sold Macintosh products list the Windows as the only OS for this keyboard-mouse combination. After double-checking a second time with Logitech, I ordered the product, but my sense of unease remains.

My main gripe about this wild goose chase was that even when a hardware product is Macintosh compatible, none of the usual lower-cost vendor sites acknowledge that fact. (Harry Babad)

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A Bug in Eudora 6.2.1

I received an email recently from Derek, a former macC staff member that MacInTouch readers [http://www.macintouch.com/newsrecent.shtml/%5D] had discussed a bug in Eudora 6.2.1. The discussion was accompanied by with a note from Qualcomm's Steve Dorner explaining the scope of the problem and how a diehard Eudora user like me could deal with it.

> "Qualcomm has confirmed a bug in Eudora v6.2.1 that will randomly delete mail in your Inbox. This random deletion will happen even if you have junk mail filtering turned off. This bug is fixed in Eudora v6.2.3, but that version is still in beta and Qualcomm has no release date at this time. For now it is recommended that you stay with Eudora v6.1 for the Mac."

> [Steve Dorner, Qualcomm] — The truth of the situation is that there is a bug where Eudora 6.2.1 running in IMAP mode can become confused about which message it is trying to delete. This is an extremely rare bug. Even when it occurs, the most likely outcome is a crash, which, while not pleasant, does not lose mail. Rarer still is the possibility that it will not crash but in fact delete the wrong message. We have *never* been able to reproduce this, but it does remain a theoretical possibility.

> We do not think this bug poses a significant risk, as it is quite rare. However, users who are concerned about it have two options:
> 1   Install the Eudora 6.2.3 beta or
> 2   In Eudora, open the Mailboxes window, select the Inbox, and from the "Options" menu at the bottom of the window, select "Show Deleted Messages".

> Going back to Eudora 6.1 would be very counterproductive for users, as 6.2 contains many fixes and improvements over 6.2. Also, please note that this bug is *entirely* irrelevant for users using POP mail servers. This affects IMAP only."

Now, not realizing that by using One World Telecommunication as my mail service, I am on a POP server, I decided to downgrade to Eudora 6.2.0. This was the start of a small installation adventure. Fining and downloading the earlier version was easy. However, when I attempted top install v.6.2.0 over v.6.2.1, nothing happened. The well-trained Eudora installer will not install itself over a more current version. Okay, plan 2 — after backing up the complete contents of my Eudora folder, it trashed the Eudora 6.2.1 application. Nothing else, just trash the application itself. The v.6.2.0 installer did its thing and I'm now safer than I needed to be. POP or IMAP, who pays attention to such details, that's what I pay my IP to take care of. . (Harry Babad)

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Quite a Character [Tips By Christopher Breen] Mac 911 Help Desk

I've been having problems when opening documents created, mostly by my PC user friends, in PowerPoint 2004 with error messages associated with 'fonts not installed. I just ignored the error message since there seemed to be no problems with the presentations themselves. None-the-less I was delighted when I found Christopher Breen's 911 March 2005 article in MacWorld.

"I just upgraded to Microsoft PowerPoint 2004, and now when I launch the program I see an alert that displays what appear to be Asian characters and a message that claims this font is unavailable on my computer. My presentations don't use this font, so why the substitution? — Ken Chupp"

"PowerPoint 2004 displays this error message when it's missing an Asian font that's installed with OS X or a font that Microsoft Office installs when it first runs. The missing Apple font is likely to be Hiragino Kaku Gothic Pro, and the Microsoft font is MS PMincho."

"At this point, you have a couple of options. You can enable the fonts (or install them if they're missing), or you can tell PowerPoint to live without them."

To lean how to install the missing Asian fonts check out the complete 911 Tip at
http://www.macworld.com/2005/03/secrets/marmac911/index.php

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Recycle CDs… Don't Throw Them Away

Years ago, when in undergraduate school my friends would play a game designed to test which of us was more intelligent. The rules were simple. One of us named an object such as a brick or a safety pin, and we all had to writ down as many uses for a brick as we could in 5 minutes — longer if we had had a few glasses of wine. The person with the most entries got to choose the next topic. After 3-5 rounds the individual with the most, not necessarily plausible — just imaginative ideas, won. This tip took me back to my more carefree youth.

"What do you do with your old CD-ROMs? Why not recycle them. Here are a few suggestions.

Coasters — Use a piece of tape to cover the center hole.

Reflectors — On a rural mailbox or as driveway markers.

Christmas Tree Decorations — Glue 2 CD-ROMs with printed side together and add string for hanger -or- hang CDs outside on a tree at Christmas time. They can stand up to any weather and will reflect lights.

Garden Row Markers

Rifle Targets

Sun Catchers

Mosaic — Break by hand or with hammer, glue to board with tile mastic, then add grout.

Mobiles — Hang CDs with string or fishing line and balance from hanger, dowels, or branches.

Clock — Buy battery-powered clock workings, use the CD-ROM for face, then either add numbers or leave the face blank.

Hidden Plug Help — Put double stick tape on the non-mirrored surface of the CD, line it up with the plugs you need to find, and attach it to the wall behind the appliance to use as a mirror.

Wall Decorations — Use a tack in the center hole or use double stick tape to attach them to the wall.

Game Pieces — Make a giant checkerboard, 8 squares by 8 squares. Mark CD-ROMs with marker or paint: 12 black, 12 red. For chess, mark or draw chess pieces on blank side of CD-ROM.

Carpet Protectors — Place under sofa or chair legs to protect carpet/rug from furniture indent (replaced with CD indent!).

Disco Ball — Cut into small squares or break into pieces. Glue pieces onto large foam ball. Use unbroken CDs for a HUGE disco ball. Hang from ceiling by string or wire. Play loud music. Dance.

Scarecrow — Hang CDs in your garden to scare away the crows. This doesn't work! However, you can take several CDs and wire them together to look like an owl. Hang it so that it moves in the breeze. This will scare small woodpeckers (downy, red-bellied) away; keep them from girding your favorite trees. It won't keep flickers from hammering on aluminum downspouts at dawn.

Bird Entertainment — Sometimes cardinals and other birds will attack their reflections in a window or car mirror. This makes a mess on the glass. Hang up a CD, and birds will attack that instead of the window or mirror.

Light Switch Cover — Use a standard light switch cover as a template. Cut a hole for the switch with Dremel tool or by hand with a mat knife or tile cutter knife. Drill holes with slow drill and sharp drill bit.

Desk Lamp — Stacked CDs with neon light at center

Survival Reflectors — Stow in pocket accessible to signal for rescue while hiking or boating."

Musings From Mars

Why Buy A Mac Instead Of Windows? By Leland Scott

[Reprinted by permission from Leland Scott's "Musings From Mars" article posted at http://www.musingsfrommars.org/2005/05/why-buy-mac-instead-of-windows.html. (The original version also has a couple of Bill Gates quoted video clips.) Expect to see more of Leland in future issues of *macCompanion*.]

> "It's hard for me to see choosing Apple over Microsoft as striking some great blow for populism just because Apple is a smaller company... In my mind, choosing Apple is substituting one greedy corporation for another."

It's a sad commentary on my peers when I hear them voice opinions like this. What it means is that they think Microsoft's behavior is the norm, and that all companies would behave like Microsoft if they could. This is the same cynical view that destroyed our faith in politicians after Richard Nixon's crimes. For some reason, rather than understanding that Nixon was a political outlier, we adopted the view that all politicians would behave like Nixon if they could. And many people appear to be making the same mistake with Microsoft.

Good grief, to a man from Mars this looks like mass insanity. Microsoft is no more the norm than Richard Nixon was. But what they have in common is substantial:

- A total disregard for the truth
- A willingness to engage in dirty tricks against enemies
- Corrupt management from the top down
- A paranoia about--and intolerance of--deviations from any standards they have set for the world.

If you're a Microsoft fan who's just wandered into this article, you'll no doubt think this is pure hyperbole. And though nothing I can say is likely to convince you otherwise, I do intend to try.

The question at hand is, "Why should I give my dollars to Apple instead of to Microsoft, since they're both evil in the end?" And the answer to that is like a magnet, with a strong positive force on one side, and a strong negative force on the other. On the positive side, you have the significant contributions Apple has made and continues to make to personal computing. On the negative side, you've got the damage done so far by Microsoft. This is too large a topic to cover in one article, so I'll need to split it up. This first article largely covers the positive side--the factors that should attract users to Apple's computing platform. A later article will cover the negative side--the factors that should repel users from Microsoft's platform.

Before I start saying nice things about Apple, though, please permit me to reveal a few more unpleasant things about Microsoft. It's just so timely that I can't resist. You see, like Nixon, Microsoft and its top management are willing to say just about anything, whether true or not, in order to win. If they can fan the flames of customers' fears at the same time, all the better. And those Microsoft boys have been on the road lately saying all kinds of nasty things about Apple.

Microsoft's current beef with Apple has nothing to do with competition, really, but is instead about control: The control of computing standards. Returning for a moment to Richard Nixon, he was a guy who was also openly hostile to any deviations from his personal values, but he never had enough power to get megalomaniacal about trying to enforce them on society. Microsoft, on the other hand, has more than enough power to think it can, and should, set the standards for how computers work and interoperate. And the company is openly hostile to any third party that attempts to develop a technical standard outside of its control. Because, you see, Microsoft perceives every non-Microsoft standard as a threat to its dominance. And as more and more of our lives get digitized, the parts of our lives Microsoft insists on controlling continues to expand. Which explains why Apple's runaway success with the iPod and the iTunes music store is driving Microsoft crazy this year.

Besides having to endure Apple's rogue success with a non-Microsoft standard for digital music, Microsoft's cozy bear-hug on the world's computer desktop has been shaken this year by a rash of negative publicity about Windows. I mean, who hasn't talked about computer viruses, spyware, and adware lately? Some people have actually penetrated Microsoft's FUD on the subject and realized that these things don't have to be a source of continual worry and expense. That you can switch to Mac OS X and go on a download spree again without fear of what those files might contain. Because the Apple platform has ZERO viruses and ZERO adware/spyware, and it's not just because Apple holds only 3-5 percent of the market as Microsoft would like you to believe. It's because Windows is fundamentally flawed, while Mac OS X is brilliantly secure. More and more Windows users are switching to Mac OS X and shouting, "Super ultrafast DSL broadband connection, get ready to party!"

Oh, and then there's the next version of Windows that Microsoft keeps talking about. And talking about. When did Microsoft first start talking about "Longhorn"? According to Paul Thurrott--keeper of the infamous "Supersite for Windows" and one of Microsoft's top publicists for its FUD--Microsoft began talking up Longhorn in June 2001. Yep, that's right--the same year that Apple released the first version of Mac OS X. Which was FOUR YEARS AGO. Paul must be so sad, cause according to Microsoft he still has at least another year and a half to wait before he can start bragging about Longh.... But wait! Not in Paul's case. If you visit his site, you'll see that he has already filled a deep and stagnant trough with brags about the promised features of this bloated vaporware called Longhorn. And though Thurrott may be able to maintain his cheery pro-Microsoft stance, a lot of other folks who've been watching this l-o-n-g-h-o-r-n show are a bit discouraged. After all, the rest of us don't make our living by selling Microsoft.

But I'm being too hard on Paul. To quote from Paul's review of the latest preview release of "Longhorn," "I have to be honest here." Paul says that he, too, has gotten discouraged with Microsoft:

> "After a year without a single new Longhorn build and very little concrete information about what was going on with the project, I had high expectations for build 5048.... It gets worse. Apple's Mac OS X, recently upgrade[d] to version 10.4 ... is more than "good enough." In many ways, OS X is simply better than Windows, especially for experienced computer users, and Tiger rubs Microsoft's nose in the embarrassment of shipping a key Longhorn feature--instant desktop search--a full year ahead of the software giant. That's right folks. We already knew that Microsoft was facing smaller, nimbler competitors. But those competitors are now starting to outperform Microsoft in the feature department too.... Longhorn build 5048 is pretty boring."

Boring is definitely not a characteristic of Apple's latest operating system, Mac OS X 10.4 (Tiger), which by the way is the fourth major OS release from the company in the 5 years Microsoft has spent thinking about Longhorn. This technological lag is even more notable when you recall that Longhorn represents Microsoft's latest attempt to copy Apple's ideas and sell them as its own. They've had 4 years to get there, but Apple keeps sprinting ahead, perfecting its previous advances and introducing new ones. (It's humorous, and a little sad, to read reports that Microsoft employees think Apple is stealing ideas from them, when clearly it's the other way around.)

Tiger is actually attracting a lot of interest from former Windows users, helped along by Apple's recent strategy of building products for the lower-price tier of the computer market. That, together with the "halo effect" surrounding Apple's extraordinarily popular iPod platform and bolstered by Apple's hugely successful retail strategy, has given Microsoft and its fans like Paul their first genuine worry in years that the Windows market share will start falling instead of rising, possibly even threatening Microsoft's desktop monopoly.

What to do?

Well, where some companies might actually try some original thinking and put those billions of research dollars to work on exciting and useful new products and technologies, Microsoft sends its top corporate executives on the road to spread fear and loathing of its competitor. Honestly, when was the last time you heard the chairman of Citibank say nasty things about a competitor one-tenth its size? Now, it's true that other top technology executives engage in bashing their competitors' technology--Larry Ellison of Oracle, Scott McNealy of Sun, and of course, Steve Jobs of Apple are all pretty outspoken. However, there are two crucial differences here. First, the only bashing they really do is directed at Microsoft, which after all started the "nobody can throw an insult better than me" behavior that now infects the industry. And second, none of those guys has a market monopoly or enough clout to follow up their verbal bashing with equally threatening actions. By contrast, when Bill Gates or Steve Ballmer do it, people assume the company has some kind of "hit" in the works. After all, it was a taunt directed at Microsoft that got Marc Andreessen and Netscape in trouble to begin with. They didn't realize that Microsoft is a big bully... a huge Goliath ready to squash David for looking at him cross-eyed, let alone pulling out his slingshot.

Now, bullies bashing weaker foes would be less objectionable if they were actually making an honest point. But

Gates and Ballmer think consumers are so stupid they can say whatever they want.... whatever will sound good and make Microsoft look good. For example, earlier this month Gates set out to try to talk the iPod down once again, telling a German audience "You can make parallels with computers: Apple was very strong in this field before, with its Macintosh and its graphics user interface -- like the iPod today -- and then lost its position."

Now, Gates knows that there aren't genuine parallels between the Macintosh and the iPod, but he's hoping that you'll think so. The lack of parallels is extremely well documented, but the story sounds good, and a superficial understanding of the facts may lead one to think there are parallels. However, I know Gates is a bright guy. He knows, for example, that the peak market share of the Macintosh computer was only about 20%, whereas the iPod has about 90% of the market for hard-drive music players. He also knows that the success of the IBM PC against the Macintosh in the mid-1980's had nothing to do with people's desire to use Microsoft technology instead. Rather, it was because IBM had this huge installed base of commercial customers who went with IBM's product rather than risking operations on a young, unconventional company like Apple. Bill Gates' genius lay in his opportunism, for if IBM's PC hadn't been relying on Microsoft's awful, text-only MS-DOS operating system (which Microsoft merely acquired from another vendor), Microsoft would never have had the advantage to transition DOS users to Windows over so many years. So the story is radically different with the iPod. And besides, the iPod is strictly a consumer device used for playing digital music that, thankfully, is available in formats that are totally agnostic of computer operating systems. And that's just the start of the argument....

This is hardly the first time Gates has tried to spread this lie. He did so in January in an interview for CNET, and also last fall, in this article for the New York Times. How curious it must seem to Microsoft that despite its almost constant iPod-bashing since Apple opened the iTunes music store in April 2003 and then, in October, ported iTunes to Windows, the iPod has not only survived, but also actually increased its market share! I'm sure each passing month without some Microsoft-supported "iPod killer" accomplishing its mission must ratchet up Bill Gates' worry index a little bit more.

On a related front, many analysts believe that the upcoming convergence between computers and entertainment centers will be a huge victory for whoever gets there first with a workable solution. Naturally, Microsoft is convinced that it's a shoe-in for that victory, especially after it was "first to market" with its much-ballyhooed Windows Media Center PC last fall. Only, no one really likes the Windows Media Center, which seems a little like Microsoft's ill-fated "Bob" interface--a concept that simply doesn't mesh with people's notion of what they want. In the wake of the new product's bad publicity, Steve Ballmer was dispatched to do a little dirty work. At a press briefing in London he announced that "There is no way that you can get there with Apple... The critical mass has to come from the PC, or a next-generation video device." Oh really? The fact is, the Macintosh is **already there**. With a couple of simple add-ons, you can turn a Macintosh into a device that can stream video, audio, photos, and the Internet to any television in the house equipped with a suitable receiver. Microsoft just doesn't want you to know that, since its own solution for this technology is so lame. (You could use the same kind of add-ons with a regular PC, but (a) that bypasses Microsoft's control points and (b) there's no such thing as a "simple add-on" to a Windows system.) And besides, the crucial point is that they want to control the format and the delivery mechanism--the only suitable technology is one that uses, as Ballmer said, "Microsoft Media Player 10, the ... Microsoft Network (MSN), and Microsoft's Portable Media Center."

But I digress. I was going to focus in this article on the positive side of the magnet--Apple Computer.

To begin, I need to set a little more context by observing how difficult it is for Apple to reach consumers with the positive story about its computers. Twenty years down the road, there are simply too many computer users who have one ingrained attitude or other about Apple and/or Microsoft.

- Some, like my friend, see two companies in a bitter struggle for domination. It doesn't matter who wins in the end, because they're both greedy corporations just out to make a buck. As you'll recall, my friend also thinks Apple would "go for the gold" in the monopoly sweepstakes if it could, following Microsoft's example in dominating as much of the market as possible, gleefully swatting would-be competitors with either buy-out offers (to the lucky) or predatory pricing policies (to the unlucky).

- To others, there's really no choice to be made. Microsoft won the OS wars long ago, and it's somewhat annoying that Apple users still exist at all. Microsoft is a shining example of the best in American capitalism, and to not support the company would be almost unpatriotic. They're the same folks who earlier in the 20th century believed that what was good for General Motors was good for the country. To the extent that Apple poses a threat to Microsoft, Apple is bad, and Apple users are bad for being so nonconformist. This is the dangerous mindset that leads to fascism... you know, "If only we could just eliminate those [inferior | different | odd | liberal | commie | homo | long-hair | colored | etc] people, the world would be a better place." A subset of this group has grown openly hostile to Apple, and they seem to believe they can simply insult the company and its users to death. Their arguments typically reflect a total lack of experience actually using an Apple product, and all the writers seem to know is that they're sick of hearing Apple users putting the company and its products on a pedestal. (Gee, I hope they don't read *this* article!) Perhaps these are people who'd like to buy an Apple, but had to make do with a cheaper PC or MP3 player, and resent a friend or colleague who forked over a few extra bucks for a really well made system. An article by a writer at some paper called the RhinoTimes, based in North Carolina, is typical of this drivel. Read one of his article's many insults--this one directed at the iPod--and you'll see what I mean:

- Then the iPod comes out and it doesn't do anything that I needed and didn't already have. Not only that, but it was deeply ugly, a plain ivory-colored box with pathetic controls that looked like it should hold generic earswabs. Compared to my Rio Riot, it was a piece of junk and looked like a piece of junk.

- I mention his article only as a way of illustrating this group's hostile attitude... it's definitely not worth the visit unless you're a like-minded individual who needs to know you're not alone in your hatred for the company.

- Many other people do have a positive appreciation for the contributions Apple has made to the personal computer market since its inception in the 1970's, and a recognition that the company is still doing innovative things today. Nevertheless, the market has spoken, and Windows is the winning operating system. It's not so bad anymore, either. Much better than before. It's too bad about Apple, but very often the superior technology loses in the marketplace. The worst you can do is to go with what you intellectually believe is a superior technology, only to be caught in the Betamax nightmare all over again.... investing your life in a platform doomed to extinction. Note that this is one of the groups that Apple probably should be able to win over, and it's this group that Microsoft targets so intently with its subliminal Apple-is-like-Betamax messages. Why do I think so? Well, I was hearing this kind of argument way back in 1996 when I bought my first Mac. Here it is, 9 years later, and the Mac still hasn't done its Betamax thing. This group of people is smart enough to soon realize that it never will, and that it's finally safe to buy a Mac.

- And then, of course there are humans who simply don't pay attention. They don't know who makes their computer, and they really don't care. And it's not that they *actively* don't care, it's just that it would never occur to them to do so. You know who these folks are. If Apple ever gets Wal-Mart to start carrying its product line, a few of these folks might start walking out with a Mac.

- I've even encountered a disturbing number of former Apple fans that are angry with Apple for loosing the OS wars and for *allowing* itself, through gross mismanagement, to lose. As a result of which, they will never buy another Apple computer, and they'll always be angry. Like hurt children who can never forgive a father that walked away when they were young. Or the sports fan whose team has let him down once too many times and has been dazzled by the new team that seems to always win. (There really are a lot of Apple fans who set themselves up for emotional trauma by pinning too much of themselves on the ups and downs of the charismatic Steve Jobs.... or of any other human or team.) To be fair to this group, a lot of them remain Apple loyalists. They deserted the platform in the 1990's because the OS became stagnant, the hardware uninspiring, and the shopping difficult. Meanwhile, Windows had finally reached the point where it wasn't so bad anymore. It was in the late 1990's that some big computer retailers stopped carrying Macintosh software, and many stopped selling Apple computers, including mega-stores like Price-Costco. A resurgent Apple could probably win back some of these folks, especially with its wonderful new retail stores which make Apple-shopping so easy and enjoyable.

- A smaller group of anti-Apple people consists mostly of techies who've either lived through or who instigated a pogrom of Apple computers at their workplace. These purges of non-Windows machines typically took place within the last 10 years, and they involved messy, emotional reactions from the Apple users, who simply refused to be assimilated. None of these techies wants to go through that again, and they have totally closed minds about non-Windows platforms and a blind faith in the virtue of an all-Windows desktop environment. This, despite the fact that closed-mindedness in information technology is a trait that will get you and your company killed in the long run.... This, despite persuasive evidence in the last few years that a heterogeneous computer environment is much healthier than a homogeneous one when it comes to virus attacks, among other biological parallels... And this, despite the ever-rising cost of defending the corporate desktop against attack due to the clear security weaknesses in the Windows platform. The kicker? Many of these head-in-the-sand types are now the ones running your organization's IT department. Fat chance of Apple getting a foot in the door there.

- Oh, and don't forget the huge number of people who are Microsoft shareholders, either owning individual shares or shares through mutual funds. Don't laugh... I'm serious! It's clearly in the self-interest of Microsoft investors to put down Apple and other competitors and to keep the gravy train rolling for everyone's favorite monopolist. Support for Microsoft is subliminal for most of these folks, but even so I'm sure they've noticed how Microsoft shares have stagnated in the last couple of years while Apple stock has soared. (I'm putting the chart comparing indexes of the companies' stock price here just to annoy any die-hard Microsoft fans who are still reading.)
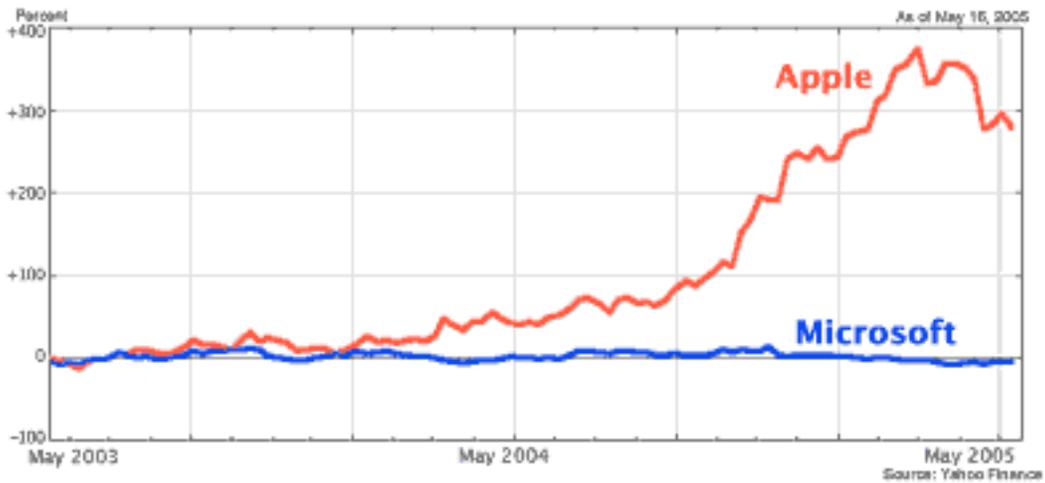
- By the way, a map of all the above groups would undoubtedly be a Venn diagram, with most of the Microsoft shareholders overlapping with the other anti-Apple groupies.
- And then there are people from Mars, like me.

We are people who admire and appreciate a company like Apple that clearly encourages its employees to push the envelope of personal computing, a company willing to take chances on new ideas that might further the possibilities of the human-computer interaction, a company that understands the importance of good industrial design in consumer products. With Apple hardware products and user interfaces, there's a sense of intelligent design and lack of compromise that you just don't find in most PC products.

Apple's approach to design has parallels in great art and architecture and in intelligent zoning. Like Frank Lloyd Wright, Apple's designers understand that elegance in everyday objects is a necessary attribute, and should not be just an afterthought. Human beings appreciate good design, whether they know it or not, and Apple cares enough about its products to make them beautiful as well as functional. It's the same impulse that led the first human potter to create a **lovely** bowl... not just a plain one. And the lovelier, the better.

Similarly, humans can tell when they've walked into a town that cares about its appearance. Rules have been established that dictate how and where signage will be placed, how wide the sidewalks will be, where and what kinds of trees will be planted, what substance will be used for curbs and gutters, how the lampposts will look and what kind of lighting they'll use, and so on. In the best towns, the rules will not be so bureaucratic as to restrain creativity, so that houses and buildings can blossom in a multitude of beautiful styles. But there's a strong underlying order that governs growth in an intelligent and sustainable direction. I live in such a community (Arlington, Virginia), and I think everyone here appreciates the fine planning of current and former town leaders. This kind of planning is inherent in the design philosophy of Apple computers: Intelligent design extends across the entire framework, with clear methods for extending the platform in both hardware and software. It's one of the reasons Apple insists on providing an integrated hardware/software package, rather than sticking to *just* hardware or *just* software. You can achieve a far more sublime design if the folks who create the software architecture and user interfaces are the same ones who create the hardware architecture and interfaces.

Humans can also tell when they've wandered into unfettered suburban sprawl. These places look like no one cares at all about them--neither how they look nor how they function. Or at least, they didn't care until they'd handed out too many building permits without building enough roads, and now it's too late. In such communities, it can take half an hour to get to the grocery store only a mile from home. And while you're sitting in traffic, you have to endure the monotony and visual cacophony of garish signage, unkempt median strips, telephone and many other kinds of wires, sparse and neglected greenery, and ugly, boxy buildings. This is the design of the Windows PC platform and reflects the same basic laisse-faire attitude: Provide a basic black box, stick an Intel chip and a Windows OS inside, and let customers worry about the rest. If you're a geek who likes to build and dismantle PC's, and you ca troubleshoot Windows pretty well, this is fine. There's definitely a place in the market for such a system. But it has no business being the dominant system.

Unlike its competitors, Apple also stresses the importance of providing immediately useful technology that doesn't require taking a course or reading a book. Somehow, Apple's culture has fostered programmers who put usability before programmer convenience in designing a user interface to their software, which means always trying to find the simplest interface possible to enable a particular job by both novices and experts. One of the reasons people think so highly of Steve Jobs is that you get the sense that he personally tests everything Apple creates and weighs it against his intuition about what will be both easy and functional, both powerful and elegant, for Apple's customers.

As someone who relies heavily on intuitive decision making, I understand this approach completely, and Apple under Steve Jobs is an affirmation that such a style can be successful in business. Unfortunately, most American companies are headed by CEO's who are the "show me" types, who are only comfortable with ideas that are well baked and ready to serve. Or by CEO's who think their intuition is correct, but are sadly mistaken. Apple at the moment is blessed with a CEO who, despite his many shortcomings, has an intuition about software and computer hardware that's working overtime and appears to be spot on.

But admiring the company for its great ideas and innovative thinking in 2005 is only part of the reason why we buy Apple products. Our support is also fed by pride in recalling that the company making today's innovative iPods, iMacs and PowerMac G5s is the same one that led us into the brave new world of personal computing in 1977, with the original Apple II, and then into graphical computing in 1984, with the Macintosh. A man from Mars who visited the United States in 1984 at the unveiling of the Macintosh and who learned of the remarkable achievements of this small California company since its inception, would not have been wrong to conclude that he had glimpsed the future of personal computing. For today, in 2005, virtually everyone uses computers that look and behave roughly like the Macintosh did in 1984. (Not counting the fact that hardware capabilities have gone through the roof. I don't think anyone in 1984 had an inkling about what powerful hardware we'd be using 20 years down the road...)

The man from Mars who pays a return visit today would be shocked to learn that the company that pioneered all of these great ideas and showed the world how to build an operating system and applications that use them, had been relegated to a small corner of the market. Rather than reaping the rewards of its efforts, the company ended up being trampled on by another one whose primary motivation was wealth and power, not excellence in computing. Here we enter the realm of morality, and there's no way of avoiding it. For many others, and me Microsoft broke the rules of civilized business practices to achieve their aims. They were a corporate pirate with no qualms whatsoever about stealing what they couldn't create themselves. And then behaving as if it was their idea all along. Unfortunately, the courts condoned the behavior, which only led Microsoft to bolder acts of technological thievery.

Oops! Sorry, I'm veering off topic again. I'll cover more of Microsoft's misdeeds in a later installment. However, it's pretty clear that the historical injustice Microsoft perpetrated against Apple is part of the motivation behind the perceived "evangelism" of Apple users. It largely explains why we Martians keep popping up periodically to remind people about these inconvenient truths. The Web is filled with our lists, compiled over the years in attempts to explain why you should support the Mac platform over Windows. Many have been motivated by the desire to convince a company or school system to not switch to an all-Windows environment. Most failed. But the truths they point out remain. And what are these truths? OK, get your pencils ready...

- o **Windows XP is really just a species of Macintosh.**
- o **Virtually every aspect of your computing life was pioneered on a Macintosh and only later, if ever, adopted by Windows.**
- o **In terms of software capabilities, Windows XP is today about 3-4 years behind the latest Mac operating system, "Tiger."**
- o **Virtually everything you think is wonderful about your computer is something Microsoft either stole from the Macintosh user interface or first developed for a Macintosh--including Microsoft Word and Excel.**
- o **Virtually everything that is wrong with Windows is an example of some mistake Microsoft made when it veered away from the Mac OS model.**

Like I said, many have made these points before, so I'm not going to list all the facts underlying these truths here. But a few more examples will help illustrate what I'm talking about, and then I'll provide some links to much more detailed lists you can explore on your own. Here is an edited list of Apple innovations "introduced or popularized with the original Macintosh" in 1984, adapted from the Wikipedia entry for Apple Macintosh:

- ▪ A graphical user interface, icons, a desktop, trashcan, etc.
- ▪ The use of a mouse or other pointing device in personal computing
- ▪ The "double click" and "click-and-drag" behaviors to perform actions with a pointing device
- ▪ WYSIWYG ("what you see is what you get") text and graphics editing
- ▪ Long file names, with whitespace and no file extension
- ▪ The 3.5" hard-shelled floppy disk as a standard feature
- ▪ Audio as a standard feature, including a built-in audio-quality speaker
- ▪ Standard shortcuts and behaviors for copy/paste, undo/redo, and use of a "clipboard"

Now, you gotta admit that's a lot of what we take for granted in the modern personal computer, and it was all there for the taking by the end of 1984 with the early Macintosh operating system. Before that guy in the back of the room gets his back up and starts shouting, let me remind everyone that nobody ever argued that all of these ideas were Apple's. But I do argue that Apple's engineers had the vision to actually put the ideas together into a user interface that advanced the technology. Apple showed the world how it could be done, and they contributed unique ideas as they adapted ones that had not been fully fleshed out in earlier non-commercial products.

Back in 1984, our man Bill Gates made no effort to conceal his admiration for the Macintosh.

Like the Martians who visited and saw the future of computing, Bill Gates saw it, too. He was in fact quite vocal about it, and Microsoft was one of the first to enter the new Macintosh market with GUI software (first Microsoft Word, and then Excel). Yes indeed, Bill was a true visionary. In November 1984, he told *Business Week*, "The next generation of interesting software will be done on the Macintosh, not the IBM PC." Only thing was, he wasn't content to just write software for that platform. He wanted to own it. Had Microsoft been the Goliath then that it is today, he no doubt would have done just that. Instead, he pursued a different, but in the long run equally effective, strategy. (There are a lot of web sites and books that have tracked the whole saga... This one is kinda ugly, but it's chock full of interesting material. For just the facts and an excellent timeline, visit Ken Polsson's Chronology of Personal Computers.)

It took Microsoft many years to mature Windows into an operating system as elegant and useful as the Macintosh was in 1984. Contrary to popular belief, Apple didn't stop innovating and simply rest on its laurels in the years Microsoft was consolidating its hegemony of the corporate desktop. However, in the years leading up to Windows 95, Apple and its users clearly committed the "sins" of arrogance and condescension as the competition started warming up. Apple's pace of innovation simply wasn't fast enough, as the company's corporate leadership seemed to lose its appetite for risk-taking, instead following the pattern of many other American companies into managing for short-term financial reports rather than for the long-term.

Still, Apple's contributions since 1984 have been plenty significant to earn the admiration of users and fans. Here's a partial list of "innovations introduced or popularized with later Macintosh models or software" since 1984:

- The PostScript laser printer
- Desktop publishing
- The SCSI interface
- Audio input/output as a standard feature
- A CD-ROM drive as a standard feature
- Ethernet support as standard feature
- FireWire, also known as IEEE 1394
- The first commercially available computer to rely primarily on USB for peripheral connection
- The first affordable DVD-R drive ("SuperDrive")
- First notebook computers with built-in pointing devices and rear-mounted keyboards
- IEEE 802.11b and IEEE 802.11g wireless networking, branded AirPort and AirPort Extreme
- User interface advances that have never evolved Windows equivalents, so you Windows folks won't know what these are, including "spring-loaded folders," "pop-up tabs," "Expose window management," "Folder and document color labels," "sheets," "drawers," and so on.
- Integrated, comprehensive, real-time desktop search.

For further reading on Apple's many innovations in the design and functional operation of personal computers, check out the following links:
- [Mac OS And Windows Evolution](#)
- [Mac/Apple Contributions](#)
- [75 Mac Advantages](#)
- [Mac Advantages Over Windows PCs](#)
- [The Study of Why Macs Are Better Than PCs](#)
- [OS Shootout: Mac OS X vs. Windows XP](#), which maintains a current and painstakingly objective numerical score of the OSes. The site has detailed descriptions of each of the systems' respective features as measured against an exhaustive list of operating system attributes. By the way, according to today's score, out of a total ideal score of 1140, Mac OS X leads Windows XP 794 to 718 for XP "Pro" and 794 to 691 for XP "Home". From this, it's easy to see that the Mac OS is about 15 percent better than Windows. (If only it were that easy to "prove"!)

Of course, one thing you'll notice is that Microsoft didn't copy the entire Mac user interface verbatim. They have actually tried to innovate here and there. Most of the differences are just annoying confusions to users who try to switch from one platform to the other... like using the "Control" key instead of the "Command" key in standard keyboard shortcuts. And the "Start" menu which was such a big deal in Windows 95 was simply an adaptation of the Apple menu in Mac OS... except the Start menu was in the lower-left corner of the screen, while the Apple menu was in the upper-left corner. Oh, also, Microsoft called the button "Start." This is innovation?

Actually, the lack of a menubar is one of the biggest shortcomings in Windows. It's one of my favorite Mac features that Microsoft still hasn't decided to copy. In Windows, every separate window has its own menubar, but only one menubar can be active at any one time. So the proliferation of menubars in Windows just adds to the generally cluttered appearance of the desktop. On the Mac, you have one menubar, and it's always at the very top of the screen. It changes depending on which application you're working in. Not only is this a cleaner look, it's far less confusing for users. The menubar is always in the same place, and it always has the appropriate menus.

Other advantages inherent to the Macintosh platform are powerful keyboard shortcuts, and a powerful and easy-to-

learn scripting language, AppleScript. It may seem odd to your average Windows user who's never driven a Mac to learn that some Macintosh power users don't use a mouse much at all... as little as possible, in fact. Some of the most popular add-on utilities to the Macintosh are ones that extend the keyboard to the point that you can do virtually everything without ever touching the mouse. This, despite the fact that until Mac OS X, Apple's operating system didn't have a text-based interface, as the IBM PC did (MS-DOS). The ability to easily build and invoke powerful multi-step keyboard shortcuts is one of the most beloved features of the Mac. Combine that with AppleScript, which enables extremely powerful natural-language programming, and you've got a productivity-enhancing powerhouse of a computer. For those inclined to utilize such power, this encourages workers to dream up creative ways of working faster, of running 7 routine steps by hitting one key.

In "Tiger," Apple has introduced an even easier-to-use layer on top of AppleScript, a program called "Automator." Automator will allow and encourage creative thinking about productivity enhancements by non-programmers, and it's already giving Macintosh software developers a new way of adding value--by building and selling pre-built "Automator Actions" beyond the ones Apple provides by default.

There are several other new features of Tiger, as well as preexisting capabilities of the Mac OS, that I'll be writing about in future articles, so stay tuned.

Returning to Windows for a moment, one of the differences between the Mac and Windows operating systems has always been the matter of file, directory, and volume naming. It used to be much more lopsided in the Mac's favor than it is today. It took Windows 10 years to add the capability of handling names longer than 8 characters, which led Windows users to develop some very creative (but unnecessarily frustrating) file-naming conventions. However, one of the Windows stupidities that persists even to now is the concept of lettered drives. I mean, huh? What is the advantage of labeling the drives with letters? Back when you were stuck with just 8 letters for a directory name (plus 3 letters for the extension), perhaps this was useful. But nowadays it just means that it's hard to attach more than 26 drives to your system at a time.

Another of my favorite Windows "innovations" is the system registry, where every software package you install is supposed to write information about itself so you can manage it later on. There are many detailed rants about the registry on the web--including this one from one of my favorite Mac nerds at Daring Fireball, and I don't have the space or time to replicate those arguments here. Suffice it to say that in practice, the registry appears to be one of the worst ideas to enter mainstream computing. It's basically the win.ini file from Windows 3.0 all grown up, which simply made a bad idea worse.

On the Mac, you have no need for a "registry", especially in Mac OS X. Applications all live in their own directories and don't ever install little pieces of themselves all over the system directory. The only exceptions are things that aren't integral to the program and its functioning... like contextual menus, application support items, and preferences, which can be trashed without rendering the software nonfunctional. What this means is that on a Mac OS X system, all you need to do to install most software is drag a directory or file from a CD to your applications folder. No need for an "installation" program at all, unless there are setup or component options you want to offer users. What an elegantly simple solution, a product of Mac OS X's Unix heritage.[1] I honestly haven't tried to keep track of the "innovations" coming from Microsoft in "Longhorn," but if they're smart, they'll find something more stable and secure to replace the registry.

Now, I'll concede that a couple of Microsoft's ideas have actually been good ones.

In my early years as a Windows user, the only Windows GUI innovation I missed when I started using the Mac was the very geeky secret shortcut "Alt-Tab." It wasn't until Mac OS X 10.3 "Panther" that Apple adopted something similar. I still remember what a time saver it was when I first discovered Alt-Tab, as well as my continued mystification that it was such a hidden feature. Now, Mac users had numerous other ways of using the keyboard to navigate applications and windows, but nothing quite as convenient or reliable.

And the only other standard feature of the Windows world that I wish Apple would adopt is the multi-button mouse. It's just too big a boon to productivity to not at least make this an option for customers. The absence of a second button on Apple's default mouse has unfortunately also given Windows users the impression that Mac OS doesn't

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[1] Mac software developers also have the capability of adding "frameworks" to the Mac OS. In this case, they utilize information from the frameworks directory that the framework developer includes with the software installation. However, most Mac software utilizes the frameworks built into the OS rather than third-party frameworks.

support a two-button mouse, and that Mac users don't use contextual menus, which of course is nonsense. The Mac OS has had contextual menus forever, but Apple just hasn't provided a second mouse button for activating them. (For Windows-only folks: On a Mac, you typically hold the control button as you click the mouse in order to see contextual menus. In earlier versions of the OS, you could also just hold the mouse down for a couple of seconds rather than clicking to activate the menus.)

So the PC's contributions to the art of personal computing can be summed up as the Alt-Tab shortcut and the two-button mouse. Virtually everything else was pioneered or popularized on a Macintosh, or it was a bad idea.[2] Now, don't you think Apple deserves a little more credit than it gets for this? Don't you think Microsoft deserves a little less, if any? From this perspective, it's easy to see why people like me see Apple as the "good guys" and Microsoft as the "bad guys."

And why we continue to root for Apple. The last few years have been a very exciting time to be Macintosh users, and the future looks bright indeed. This year, with the introduction of Tiger and the Mac Mini, against the backdrop of an iPod platform that continues to thrive despite the many "iPod killers" thrown at it by Microsoft and its clan, we finally see the opportunity for Apple to actually gain a few "switchers."

Now if only Apple would get out there and market "Tiger" as aggressively as they've been marketing the iPod, those of us who write articles like this one could retire from the "Apple Boosters" club for good!

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[2] In case anyone thinks I'm a Windows newbie, let me set the record straight: I'm not. I started using Windows in 1987, with Windows 2.0, and have used every flavor of Windows since then (except Windows ME), usually on the most powerful hardware available at the time. It wasn't until 2 years ago that I finally talked my boss into letting me have a Mac to supplement my Windows desktop. I hardly ever use my Windows machine anymore, though I keep it running and am so grateful I'm not suffering through the slowdown that occurs every time I hear that darned MacAfee antivirus software start poking around. Good grief, what a time-waster that was!

Rants, Raves and Revelations

Word 2003 Personal Trainer – A Second Look by Harry {doc} Babad and edited by Julie M. Willingham

CustomGuide, Inc.
Published by O'Reilly
Series: Personal Trainer
Released: February 2005
Pages: 464
$30 USD, 44 CND
ISBN: 0596009364
For Word beginners and intermediate users only.
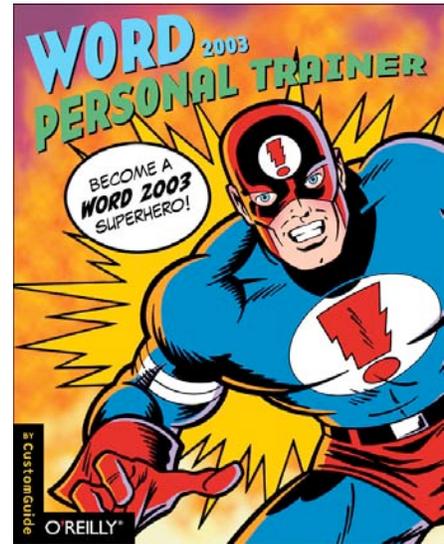
Product and company names and logos in this review may be registered trademarks of their respective companies.

Introduction…
In last month's *macCompanion*, Robert Pritchett reviewed this tutorial on Microsoft Word (MSW) 2003. It earned a well-deserved 4.0 macC's and Robert accurately described the book's overall scope and strengths in his summary-type review. So why should I should I rant or rave about it? There are two reasons for my studying and working with this book and its accompanying CD:

> *First*, when I initially skimmed the book, I found it easy to visualize the instructions for activities I already knew how to do, despite the fact that the book is oriented to Word 2003 (PC) users.

> *Second*, although I have never formally reviewed any books about MSW other than quick project guides, I knew enough about the software's capability to want to learn how to use features such as text wrap, become more skilled with style sheets and creating templates, and use its strong outlining features as an organizational tool.

So, let me share with you my experiences with this book as a tool for furthering my ability to use the rich features of MSW on my Macintosh.

My Background as a MSW User—A Self-Motivational Driver…
During my career, first as a chemist and research manager specializing in nuclear waste management and disposal, and now consulting in that same area, I have spent the last 20 years of my life working in a Wintel environment. As a lone Macintosh user, my rank in GOCO contractors did gain me a few privileges; I did get first a Lisa and then Macintoshes on my desk. However, only support provided was associated will 'granting' me email privileges. It therefore behooved me to become conversant with the MSW software on a PC platform as well as on my beloved Macintosh.

In the past, although I limped by using MSW on the PC, I felt either intimidated by or inadequate in my knowledge of this word processing program. Until reading *Word 2003 Personal Trainer*, I had not realized how much of what I do on my Macintosh could be translated to work on a PC. This is despite the fact that many of my PC-using friends, all brilliant scientists or engineers, knew few keyboard shortcuts and used less than 5-10% of MSW's features. They all needed help to finish their documents, essentially text-processed drafts. And they all relied on their secretaries or administrative assistants to convert their inputs to polished, professional-looking documents that were needed as project documentation.

While working with PC-bound colleagues, I was uncomfortable with the Windows-oriented MSW interface. Of course, by using my Logitech 3-button scroll mouse, control-clicking was easy, and shortcuts using the Control key rather than the Command key, if awkward to my fingers, worked. After all, the shortcuts I used on my Macintosh (before I completely customized my MSW interface) worked on the PC. In addition, I noticed at times that despite being a Mac user, I could teach my colleagues shortcuts that saved them time while creating the technical documents we were being paid to produce.

Using the Book and CD...
There are a number of ways to use this book and CD from the perspective of a Macintosh user:

OS and General System Configuration	Mode of Use
1. OS X 10.2 & 10.3/MSW X and 2004 Installed	Read the book and do the lessons by transferring the exercises to a practice folder on your hard Macintosh hard disk. Yes, you're using a set of PC instructions on your Macintosh MSW documents.
2. OS X 10.2 & 10.3/Virtual PC 7 and *with* Word 2003 installed	Drag the lessons from the CD to your PC Volume and do the lessons directly with the exercises provided. This ignores the Interactive Content feature. The latter is a show, tell, and mostly click process.
3. OS X 10.2 & 10.3/Virtual PC 7 *without* having Word 2003 installed.	First, one needs to install the Interactive Content and the Practice Files needed for the exercises in the book. Using the Interactive Content mode results in a semi-passive mode tutorial. It revolves around having each lesson read aloud, and following the prompts provided by the sound and video effects (including a eye-catching arrow pointing to each button or menu item to be clicked). I gave that only a few minutes. Duh, I quit!

Anyway, since I have Word 2003 installed under a MS Virtual PC 7 (VPC 7) partition, and MSW 2004 on my G4, I chose to ignore interactive lessons when checking out the lessons under Windows XP. Even then, after playing for a chapter or two on the PC side, for sanity's sake I reverted to doing them on my Macintosh.

For this column and for my personal training (enlightenment), I studied the chapters or chapter sections that interested me, all on the Macintosh side. My focus was to develop skill in areas of the MSW interface that I had previously ignored or underused. Working only by reading and highlighting the book itself and practicing on the lessons provided by CustomGuide, Inc. led to the comments that make up the remainder of this column.

The Content of the Book Itself...
The topics covered in the fifteen chapters are:

1. The Fundamentals
2. Working with and Editing Text
3. Formatting Characters and Paragraphs
4. Formatting Pages
5. Working with Tables
6. Working with Templates and Styles
7. Drawing and Working with Graphics
8. Performing a Mail Merge
9. Document Collaboration
10. Working with Outlines and Long Documents
11. Working with WordArt and Charts
12. Working with Other Programs
13. Working with Forms
14. Creating Web Pages with Word
15. Advanced Topics

As noted by Suzanne S. Barnhill at
http://word.mvps.org/Tutorials/Books/Word2003PersonalTrainer.htm — Each chapter contains 4–18 lessons or "workouts." Each lesson gives detailed step–by–step instructions to accomplish one specific task. Interspersed with the steps are tips that point out alternative ways to accomplish certain things (using menus, keyboard shortcuts, and toolbar buttons), while notes warn of potential pitfalls. Tables and figures further illustrate concepts. Each lesson ends with a Quick Reference section that summarizes, in large print, the techniques learned in the lesson. Each chapter ends with a review section that includes a summary of what users should have learned in each lesson, a quiz, and a homework assignment.

Alas, the interactive version, which I loathed, is the only way, short of using MSW itself, to get a look at Word's user interface in full color. The illustrations in the book are all grayscale, and because they are limited to half the page width, most of the screen shots are so reduced in size as to be almost useless. (See the figures below.) But I own MSW on both platforms and use a 22" monitor, so legibility was no problem.

Figure 4–13. **The Break dialog box**	**Figure 4–14. You can apply different page formats to the same document using section breaks.**
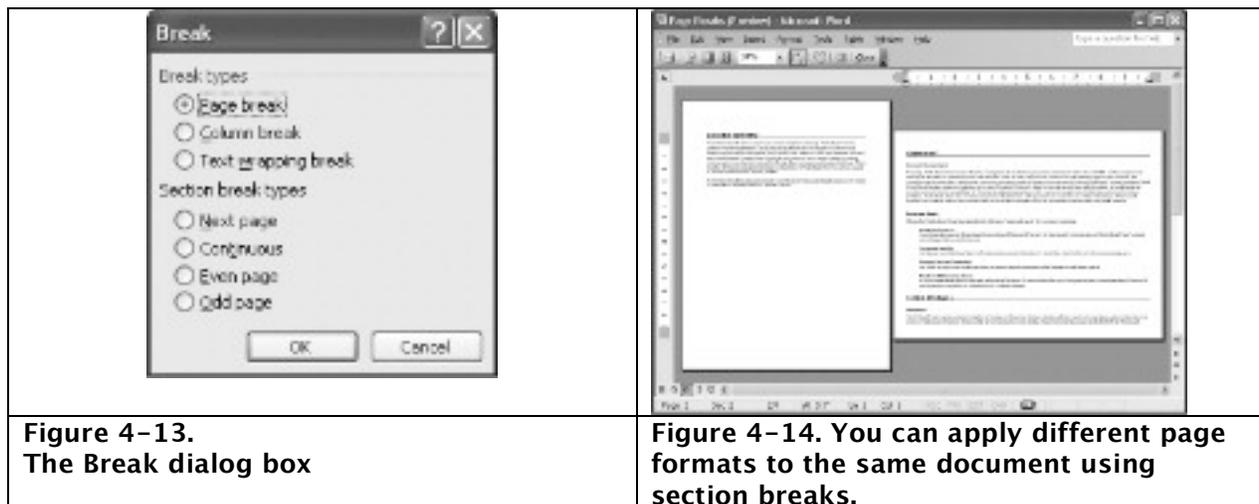
Thoughts, Findings and Observations...
The following section lists a stream of consciousness thread of thoughts and findings, items that struck my fancy, when using this book:

There are interface items in Word 2003 that don't exist, or I couldn't find, in the Macintosh version (e.g., a task pane found in Word 2003). In some instances the appearance of an interface (e.g., the formatting palette) is different on each platform. Live with it. It doesn't downgrade the usefulness of this book to Macintosh users.

There are a number of instances where the book's illustrations did not agree with the text, but a good technical editor working on the second edition could easily fix those.

I am not, at times, a fan of Microsoft. However, I was delighted to find that in MSW 2003 and the Macintosh Word 2004 almost anything I wanted to do on my Macintosh could be done with the PC version and vice versa. This often necessitated remembering to use the Control (not Command) key for shortcuts, and, if necessary, using my mouse to search for a needed menu bar item. For example, the task bar configuration and contextual content at the bottom of the document window differ somewhat between platforms, but for the most part there are easy menu-oriented alternatives available for the Macintosh user working with the lessons in *Word 2003 Personal Trainer*.

I was concerned that the book (section 2.14, page 68) did not let the user know that the multiple undo (redo) features of the program work only to the last *save*. That is, you cannot *undo* anything prior to that point. Since not saving, even with MSW Auto Recover feature set to 5 minutes (my preference) or saving the file when a thought or document section is completed becomes the better part of valor.

The section in Chapter 7 on drawing and working with graphics, particularly the information on positioning objects, is particularly useful to me when doing macC reviews. Prior to my working with this book, I used MSW's table feature to place text (in borderless cells) and graphics in a side-by-side positions. Depending on the size of the paragraph of text and the graphics, this sometimes resulted in some awkward juxtapositions of space.

Next to learning how to wrap text around graphics, the most overall useful section of the book was Working with Outlines and Long Documents [Chapter 10]. There are many other topics discussed in *Word 2003 Personal Trainer* that I've not yet needed. When the need arises for mail merge and setting up a webpage, this book will serve as my initial tool for learning them.

Another gripe about this book, because I'm a fan of Robin Williams' books on graphic and text design, is the fact that the authors fail to warn the readers about too many stylistic bells on stylistic whistles in their documents. Using all the eye-catching tweaks that MSW can create is counterproductive to a document author's mission. This author's bottom line — get people to read what you write!

Finally, perhaps because I'm neither a newbie nor an expert on MSW, I found the topics listed below too terse and narrowly focused to serve my needs:

- Managing styles, one of MSW's most powerful and difficult to learn features, was under-explained.
- Using formulas in a table contained too little information for me to use formulas effectively. (I hate using Excel.)
- Comparing and merging documents.
- Using Table of Content Fields was too terse — I just didn't get it.
- Delegating the discussion of customization, particularly using AutoText and AutoCorrect to chapter 15, seemed unreasonable. They should have been introduced earlier.
- The omissions of discussions of the MS Equation Editor, and the use "diagrams" on the Drawing Menu, were noticeable. Since I often need to include both equations and organization charts in my technical reports, I will need to search elsewhere for that information.

Conclusion...
This book is, as claimed, likely the most complete and engaging tutorial available for Microsoft Word for Wintel users. In my review I found that it could also serve as an outstanding tool for Macintosh users to learn MSW. The book is wonderfully laid out, easy to read or study, and was a pleasure to work with on both platforms. If anything, the book was too enticing and resulted in a longer review cycle that I'd planned. Although I was left with the impression that past Chapter 8 the book seemed to lose steam (e.g., contained a lower level of detail that than Chapters 1-7), there was much useful content in the second half of the book. Overall, I agree with Robert Pritchett's assessment of the book's worth.

This excellent guide can assist both beginning users and those with intermediate skills. One proviso: the newbie user needs to have acquired basic Macintosh interface skills and be aware of the differences between the Mac OS and Windows metaphors and conventions. Now if only *CustomGuide Inc* would port this and the other Office 2004 application related "Trainer" books to the Macintosh. O'Reilly, can you hear me?

Views from the Ivory Tower By Ted Bade

We have been seeing a lot of media press related to the Macintosh concerning the concept of the iPod "halo" effect. the concept is this: people interested in the iPod will check out Apple, and may even consider buying more from them.

I saw an interesting example of this recently. A coworker, PC users, had purchased an iPod for her granddaughter. She liked it so much, she decided to buy one for herself. Then came the issue of speakers for it. I suggested that she visit the local Apple store to check out speakers for the iPod (this store, as I imagine many other Apple Stores, have a great display of speakers which can actually be tried in the store.)

What made this interesting was when she grabbed me on Monday after going to the store. She was completely blown away. She couldn't believe that the store people were so helpful and knowledgeable. Apparently they answered her questions, told her about seminars held at the store (which she found interesting), and left her with a solid positive attitude about Apple.

This got me to thinking about the old days. A good while ago, the people evangelizing Apple (to quote the term coined by Guy Kawasaki), were the User Groups. We were always pleading with Apple for support and to give us the tools to better sell the Apple dream. While Apple never really provided the support that the MUGs wanted, apparently we had an overall good positive effect. And eventually the concept of groups of people evangelizing Apple all over the country sunk into the Apple Corporate mind.

Today, while the MUGs are still around, Apple has finally supplied all that support and more, but to a controlled and somewhat commercial environment, the Apple brand stores. And this is a really good thing. You can really wow people with all that technology to demonstrate. They can train and qualify their employees, something they couldn't really do with the MUG members. They even run the seminars and demos the MUGs once took pride in. Ultimately this is good for Apple, the Macintosh, and the Macintosh user community.

By the way, my friend was quite annoyed she hadn't heard about the Apple store before I told her about it. She didn't like the store she bought the iPod at, and was very happy to have an Apple store to shop in. Who knows, perhaps she will buy a Mac someday…..

Stolen iPod recovered - You might have heard that iPods are beginning to become something people like to steal. I heard that this is becoming a real problem in NYC, where the police have suggested people use some other type of ear buds. Apparently the white ear buds are a dead give-away that you have an iPod on your person. What a sick society we are part of. I sometimes consider inviting the Vogons to a poetry read hoping they will actually build that "Intergalactic throughway"!

In any case, one person who had an iPod stolen from her house managed to get it back. The Washington Post reported in mid-May. Once the iPod was gone, she and her husband searched eBay listings for the iPod which had a special statement engraved on the back. After some searching they discovered a listing of an iPod showing that particular inscription.

After contacting the police, they traced the seller to a Sports Cards and Memorabilia store. Police contacted the store and discovered the person who had sold it to the shop, then arrested the thief. There was no word in the article if the thief was forced to pay back the money he got from the store owner. Although the thief did get a reward, a stay in jail during his birthday.

I am really happy for this family who used the Internet to find the item taken from their home. The moral to this story? Use the Internet for good things and good will come of it.

Microsoft – Well, the battle between Microsoft and Apple seems to be building up again.
In one case, Bill was quoted as saying: "I don't think the success of the iPod can continue in the long term, however good Apple may be..." This was said at a presentation in Germany. His feeling is that, like with the computer, Apple innovated a wonderful thing, now the rest of the industry (perhaps Microsoft?), will take the concept and market from Apple. Who knows, history might repeat itself. You can read the full article on this by visiting:
http://story.news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20050512/ap_on_hi_te/germany_gates_apple.

If I was running Apple, I know I would like to take as much of any market I could away from Microsoft. In my opinion, it is their business policy that has moved the computer world away from innovation and fun to just another way to make money and cheat people.

While I am in the mood to bash MS, did you hear about the Online security contest Microsoft hosted? Apparently they had to shut it down when the participants discovered an easy way to cheat. If one answered a question on the test wrong, all one had to do was use the browsers *Back* button to try a different answer. And thus, we have in a nut shell, the philosophy of MS security, give them an easy back door!
To read the complete article from the InfoWorld site visit:
http://www.infoworld.com/article/05/05/20/21OPcringely_1.html.

Tiger - The upgrade to Tiger (Mac OS X 10.4) was an okay upgrade. It added a few new features, but it isn't anything breath-taking. A lot of noise was made about the Widgets. They are interesting (especially the eye candy effect of placing a new one on the screen), but not so unique that there isn't already something that already does that available for the Macintosh.

Well, there was one earth-shattering part of the Widgets. For the first time in Macintosh history, you can now use the backspace key on the calculator (the one included with the Widgets). Wow! I am not being facetious here, really. Of course, there is the current controversy about Widgets. Apparently some people feel that they produce a big security hole in Mac OS X. I have read a number of articles on this and there is some conflict. I don't really know if it is true or not. What I do know is that the fear is that a Widget can be installed that will have Admin level privileges. If this is the case, it could use "sudo" to access "root" level commands. If this is true, such a piece of malware could really cause some problems. Apple hasn't responded to the claims this could happen. This either means they don't think it is a real threat, or they don't know how to fix it without killing the whole Widget thing! [Editor: Fixed in Mac OS X 10.4.]

The improvements to QuickTime were pretty cool, but you can get most of them by updating QuickTime alone. If you have the bandwidth, catch one of the HD quality movie trailers or other movies on the Apple web site. They are really cool, especially if you have your Mac connected to a 5.1 or better surround system. Wow! This makes me believe that downloading movies (legally for a fee, of course) just might be a reality in the near future.

As for Spotlight, I found it more annoying then anything else. I really, really enjoy my quiet G5 Mac. As a general rule the fan noise is significantly less then the hard drive noise, so if the room is quiet, I hear the drive crunching as it moves about. With Spotlight on I hear a lot more random hard drive noise. Not only is this annoying, but I wonder if it is good for the drive? Most annoying to me is the fact that there is no way to turn it off. Okay, you can make a drive private, which means Spotlight won't analyze it any more, but this causes a bigger problem, you then cannot search the drive at all. There is just no basic search function in Tiger. [Editor: Spotlight *IS* the search function. It has saved me lots of time.]

Personally, I don't loose many files. On occasion I will run a search to locate esoteric files used by a program I am dumping, hoping to remove the unwanted items. I don't think I have ever had a need to search the contents of a file for a particular word. Perhaps it's only me, but it just doesn't seem like it has a lot of value. [Editor: It will grow on you. Believe me.]

But I do like the fact that Tiger appears to be perky on my G5 Mac. Also, I enjoy the widgets and the promise of newer and more interesting ones in the future. I have already downloaded a few interesting ones, such as the Yahoo one that alerts me to traffic problems in my area. I also think some of the new aspects of QuickTime 7 are terrific.

Security - I discovered an interesting article when visiting the MacNews Network site http://www.macnn.com. Apparently the Wall Street Journal was having a "All things digital" conference. During this conference Intel chief executive Paul Otellini was asked by Walt Mossberg about security in the WinTel platform. He admitted that he spend an hour each weekend removing spyware from his daughter's computer. He also implied that he believes the only immediate solution to the problem was to buy a Macintosh. (I paraphrased the short article, visit http://www.macnn.com/articles/05/05/26/intel.chief.on.security/ for exactly how it was presented at the MacNN site. It has to be quite an annoyance to be one of the head people in the computer industry and to have to deal with such problems. If I were in his shoes, I would buy my daughter a Mac, so I would have more time to run my company! But then perhaps, cleaning up her computer might be one of these periods of quality time with his daughter, who knows?

Well, we know what computer we like. We don't spend a lot of time concerning ourselves with spyware or other forms of Malware. Which is how it should be! Perhaps someday the rest of the world will be there too. It is a nice thought. [Edtor: Read the *Letter from the CEO* in this issue of *macCompanion*.]

Until next month, keep on using your Mac!!

Books

Mac OS X Technology Guide to Automator – eBook Reviewed by Robert Pritchett

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eBook Released: May 02, 2005
eBook $15 USD; Print, $30 USD http://www.lulu.com
Pages: 219
ISBN: 0974434450
Requirements: Mac OS X 10.4 Tiger or later. A desire to automate your own actions and develop new ones.
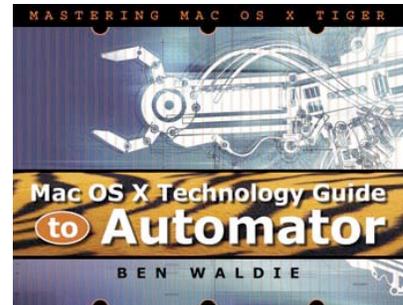
Strengths: First book release on Apple's Automator.

Weaknesses: Some links need more content.

http://www.apple.com/downloads/macosx/automator/
http://www.automatoractions.com/

Mac OS X Technology Guide to Automator by Ben Waldie is the first published book (eBook actually) that has been released on Automator. There are two parts to the book. The first half (Chapters 1-7) walks through building and using Automator Actions. The 2nd half (Chapters 8-18) teaches how to create Actions with Xcode 2 (XTools) and AppleScript or Cocoa (Objective-C).

This is definitely a How-To kind of book, laid out logically in landscape format to fit most computer screens. It arrives as an 8MB .sit download file that includes a few Automator samples, references, links, e-lists, Automator Action sites and links to other books associated with developing code under Mac OS X.

If you have itchy fingers, you can jump right to the Appendices. Appendix A has a 15-step-by-step development process on 2 pages.

To get into the nitty-gritty, go back to Part One to learn about workflows and working with Spotlight, AppleScript and other actions.

Part Two gets into planning an action, building an action project, going through an action property list file, constructing an action interface, retrieving an action's setting and adding code, testing and debugging and then pulling it all together.

As of this writing the http://www.automatoractions.com didn't have any content. That is why I also gave the Apple link above, because if you are not ready to "roll-your-own" yet, look there before you "re-invent the wheel". If you thought of it,, more than likely someone else has already taken "action".

DARKNET: Hollywood War Against the Digital Generation Reviewed by Robert Pritchett

J.D. Lasica
http://www.wiley.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd-0471683345,descCd-authorInfo.html
http://www.darknet.com
Wiley
http://www.wiley.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd-0471683345.html
Released: April 2005
Pages: 320
$26 USD $34 CND £17 GBP €26 Euro
ISBN: 0471683345
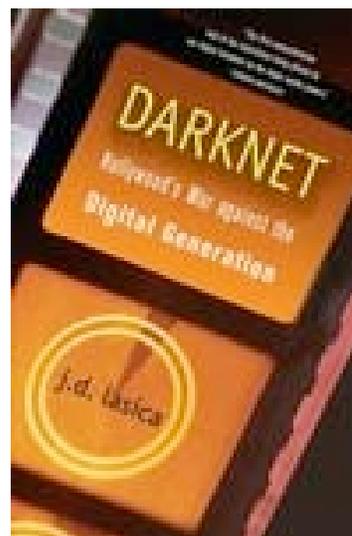
Strengths: Balances both sides of the argument.

Weaknesses: One swearword found. The Darknet website needs tweaking.

Man, you are going to so love this book!

DARKNET: Hollywood War Against the Digital Generation by J.D. Lasica gingerly balances Hollywood media controls against the concept of shared multimedia.

The premise for the book is based on the age-old concept that we own what we buy and that once bought, we can freely give away what we obtained. The laws as they stand now and for the foreseeable future point to lobbying efforts by mass-media moguls making all acts illegal that they don't control.

This attitude is so reminiscent of a conversation I had with a bank president in El Salvador shortly before the civil war began there back in the late 1970s. His attitude was that *all* transactions outside his bank were black-market activities and how *dare* I transact business (changing Colones for US $ currency) outside the walls of his bank! Within a matter of hours of me walking away from there shaking my head in bewilderment, the bank was blown up by anti-government rebels. I'm sorry to admit I wasn't the least bit upset about that. I was treated like a criminal there. I heard about it in the news on the radio later that day. The draconian policies were beginning to take their toll and it turned into more than 12-year civil warfare that El Salvador still has not recovered from. Could the same thing happen here in the USA? Without a doubt. Only today we label it as "terrorism" when dissent is heard against big business control. "Cyber-terrorism" when uncontrolled media is freely distributed.

DARKNET tells stories. Stories of folks who never dreamed their efforts would be labeled as illegal in earlier times. Dissent has always met with control issues. Now that control has permeated the digital environment with a vengeance. Revealed are the attempts by business and governments to control what you watch, when you watch it and catalog what you see, hear and read. Big-brotherism to the max!

We see within these pages the multi-dimensional Digital Generation and its attitudes towards the media industry consortium's view of monolithic one-dimensionalism. Read this as "culture clash" between fair-rights entitlement revolutionaries, creative freedom and participatory culture against corporate bias and customer alienation in the entertainment industry and the battle for intellectual property rights.

Corp-think treats customers are thieves, not deserving of capturing information, repurposing it and redistributing it without compensation – over and over and over again, my friend.

Computer systems, both Mac and non-Mac alike, give us the ability to mix, remix, copy and paste and re-author media. The Hollywoodite naysayers are forcing installation of both hardware and software shackles to prevent that. J.D. Lasica shows time and again that the corporate alarmists were and are wrong each time new technology was and is presented to the entertainment-hungry public, grabbed with both hands and instead of sinking an industry; raise it to even greater heights. "Hollywood" hates technology it cannot control.

Lasica even outlines some guidelines that would help industry prosper, if they would but treat the public with trust instead of distrust and lowering their prices and opening their constrictive policies. He points to Apple as an example of how it is done (but even Apple has been pressured to put cobbles on their software and hardware horses so they don't wander too far – and they have complied). And maybe that is why I was picked to review this book. Apple pretty much leads, and the other computer and software industries of the world follow. And these issues may be why Apple has not revealed an Apple solution to media centers just yet and why SONY's CEO was recently replaced. Meanwhile, Microsoft is eagerly taking on the role of copyright cop.

The book is full of memorable one-liners. The darknet is a one-touch digital jukebox made from shared digital content. We are our own media. You don't own stories, you share them. The only thing holding broadcasting together today is inertia, marketing and copy protection. As Broadband succeeds, broadcasting will fail. Consumers won't care. Users will.

Learn who some of the technology innovators and digital provocateurs are that are shaping the industry and crippling technology so we can't have everything we ask for in equipment and software. It isn't because it can't be done. It is because "they" want total control and are quickly taking away our constitutionally given freedoms.

Find out how the Digital Generation copes using darknets to skirt past obstacles an dhow corporate entities use underground spies to fight back.

Recently Microsoft even bought Groove Networks, a darknet that allowed for government dissent and information dissemination. This does not bode well.

SONY and others (Panasonic) were strong-armed to remove certain jacks (FireWire) so that repurposing could not take place as easily a s it would have been. The "a-hah!" light kicked on and now I understand why Walkmans never had Record buttons. Or why the entertainment industry has distributed CDs and DVDs that self-destruct after so many viewings (probably inspired by "Mission Impossible" episodes). Or why there are 6 worldwide regions that "Hollywood" designed to not allow media to be played, if bought in other "regions" of the world.

At issue and at stake are copyright vs. "piracy". But these issues go much deeper than that. When it becomes illegal to show news regarding certain freedoms or loss thereof to the general public and Blogging or other forms of distribution are no longer allowed, and people are incarcerated or killed for distributing said material, we have lost much more than our property rights. "They" have made it illegal for morally upbrought families to filter out objectionable material for skipping, muting or changing verbiage and graphical material. By the way, did you know that the remake of *Dr. Dolittle* had no less than 41 cusswords and *Independence Day* had 83?

The digital tools we have today allow us to make our own shared, collaborative entertainment. "Hollywood" is taking that right away from us. "We" tell stories and train traditions. "Hollywood wants us "spoon-fed". The multimedia environment expects interaction. "Hollywood" wants a passive, their-way audience based on media coercion.

The endnotes alone are worth the price of the book.

Meanwhile, look here: http://creativecommons.org/find/. This is one way we can get past the "we didn't create it - so you can't use it" mentality that existed in the minds of control-freaks in El Salvador over 25 years ago. Literal lives don't have to be sacrificed to maintain our digital freedoms, do they? Do they?

For more of Lasica, go to http://www.ojr.org/ and search on his name to learn his take on "citizen journalism".

Authors: Christina and Wayne Palaia
http://www.oreillynet.com/cs/catalog/view/au/2012
http://www.oreillynet.com/cs/catalog/view/au/2013
Paraglyph Press, Inc.
1238 East Cambridge Avenue
Phoenix, AZ 85006
1-602-749-8787
Fax: 1-602-971-0327
http://www.paraglyphpress.com
Booksite: http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/1932111956
Released: April 2005
Pages: 350
$25 USD, $37 CND, £18 UK, €20
ISBN: 1932111956

Requirements: Office 2003 (not Mac Office 2004).
Novice to Intermediate.

Strengths: Shows where to clean up MS Office 2003.

Weaknesses: No Mac Office 2004 helps.

Degunking Microsoft Office by Christina and Wayne Palaia walks us through the care and feeding of Microsoft Office 2003. If you are using Mac Office 2004, apparently you don't need to degunk.

The degunk format formula is followed in this book, but it is "PC-only", so much of what is here either doesn't apply to the Mac environment (Macro virus issues takes a disproportionate amount of space in the book) or a Mac is the furthest from the author's minds. It is like Microsoft never made Microsoft Office for the Mac as far as this book is concerned.

Now if you are using MS Office 2003 on the PC side of your Mac under VPC7, then this book has merit – but after reading this book, I wouldn't want to use MS Office on the PC side. It just isn't worth the hassle. No, it isn't!

It is like the WinTel box is a gunk-magnet. Now if you have been tasked by your office to use WinTel boxes, whatever the cost, then you will need this book to survive MS Office. Much of the book is more about degunking the WinTel box and not as much about degunking MS Office. Cleaning files, hard drives, uninstalling programs, fixing desktop and start menus, dealing with SPAM in Outlook, cleaning the Registry, improving security, doing backups and even doing a clean install.

Derek has a routine where he does a clean install every 3 months on his WinTel boxes, but since he discovered Macs, he confessed that he only uses the WinTel systems for gaming purposes. Think about it.

Think of this book as a companion piece to the *Degunking Email* book we reviewed back in January. There just is a lot of cross-over of information between the two. There just seems to be an inordinate effort for troubleshooting and securing Office issues on a WinTel box and since I am in a situation where I have to use a WinTel box to do my other job, this book is valuable to me. It is just that it could have been of much more value if the authors had included MS Office for Mac OS X, where real productivity is accomplished.
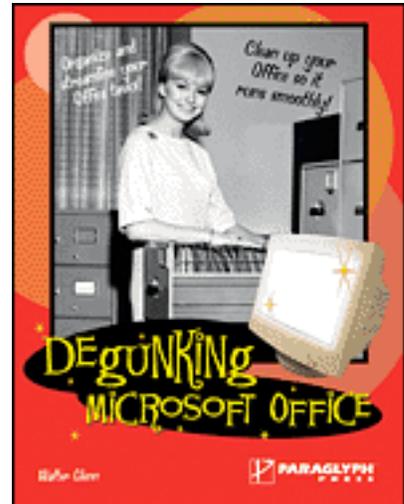
Digital Audio Essentials Reviewed by Robert Pritchett

Authors: Bruce Fries
http://www.oreillynet.com/cs/catalog/view/au/1774
Marty Fries
http://www.oreillynet.com/cs/catalog/view/au/1889
O'Reilly
http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/digaudio/index.html
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http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/digaudio/downloads.csp
O'Reilly
http://www.oreilly.com
Book Link: http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/digaudio/
Released: April 2005
Pages: 384
$35 USD, $49 CND, £25 GBP, €28.50 Euro
ISBN: 0596008562
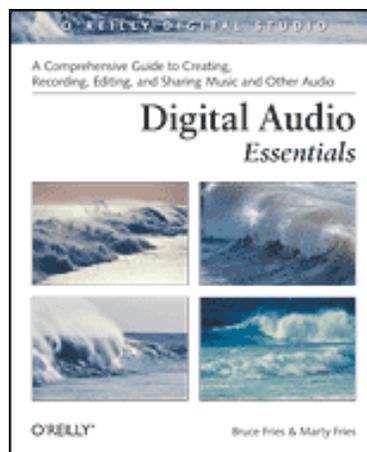
Strengths: Covers the gamut and history of audio recording technologies.
Cross-platform focus.

Weaknesses: Nothing on PodCasting – yet. Maybe the next edition?

Digital Audio Essentials by Bruce Fries and Marty Fries does an excellent job covering aspects of audio recording over the years bringing forth tidbits of knowledge regarding media formats, recording techniques and restoration processes that have been gleaned from nearly a century of analog and digital media processing. At least it gets us up to just before Podcasting.

These two guys really got their groove on discussing recording media I had long since forgotten about or had never paid much attention too in the past. As I read about the recording industry media history, I had a flashback where in more than one city I lived in there were fund-raising activities where kids were given baseballs to throw at old records that would shatter upon impact. I almost felt sick thinking that if they had kept those records, how much they would be worth today. Or not.

Bruce and Marty Fries (oh, it is so tempting to have fun with their last name!) discuss various ways to optimally play those old discs as they instruct us on shellac, vinyl, acetate, wax-coated recording materials, 78s not being 78s, needle types and sweet spots, cleaning techniques, magtapes, software jukebox programs, digital recording issues of clicks, pops, crackles and rumbles, and what to do about them, and in what sequence to remove them, issues associated with digital signal processing and noise reduction, software and hardware restoration systems, history of digital formatting and recording industry laws and regulations (I hear more hissing, but of a different kind), CD and DVD technologies and links (yes!) for getting even deeper into the groove. Oh yes, they even discuss Internet radio stations and webcasting before jumping in with both feet into the digital audio and copyright laws. There is even a 13-page or so glossary at the end and a good Index as well. They do this in 17 chapters and no Appendix.

I found myself marking lots of pages for future reference and weighed it against the other book I reviewed this month about the Darknet. They really ought to be companion books.

If you want to know how to work with older media and convert it into the digital age on whatever platform you desire, these guys have it down pat. Believe me, you won't feel left out as they discuss the pros and cons regarding iTunes, Media Jukebox, Musicmatch and other software applications, or even adding a hard drive (other than an iPod) to your mode of transportation.

I give these two authors a high 5 for showing us how to ride the audio waves from the past into the future.

eBay Power Seller Secrets: Good Advice for Everyone Selling Anything on eBay or Starting a Small Business
Reviewed by Mike Swope

Authors: Debra Schepp & Brad Schepp
Technical Advisor: Michael Kalser

Publisher: McGraw-Hill Osborne Media
Publisher Web Site: http://www.osborne.com/
Book http://shop.osborne.com/cgi-bin/osborne/0072258691.html
Released: September 24, 2004
 Pages: 408
$25 USD, $37 CND, £15 GBP, €21 Euro
ISBN: 0072258691
Target Audience: Readers who dream of becoming financially independent by operating a business with revenues generated on eBay, the world's largest online marketplace, by becoming eBay Power Sellers

Strengths: Later chapters (starting with Chapter 4) of *eBay Power Seller Secrets* really heat up and make this reviewer's juices flow, as these chapters contain the most useful information about using eBay to its full potential to not just sell items but develop professional habits and attitudes of a successful business. These are the chapters that are most valuable and a must-read for all eBay sellers! Buy the book if you're selling on eBay at all!

 Weaknesses: First 4 1/2 chapters are illogically placed for its target audience, and in some cases, can be condensed considerably to get right to the heart of the matter, which would better serve its readers. In its current state, the book is a lot of work for those readers who are business-minded with little or no time for starts and stops, and in some cases even less patience. Until they get to the second half of the book, that is.

Got Sales?

I'm probably like the majority of eBay sellers. I have some experience buying and selling on eBay (since 1996), use the Internet daily, purchase supplies and equipment from e-commerce web sites, and would like to make more sales on eBay so I could quit my regular job and just do what I love to do. If you're an eBay seller, chances are high you'd like to do the same. *eBay Power Seller Secrets* is one book with sound advice to help you increase sales and, if you're lucky, live and play on the profits from your auctions. It just takes a while to get to the sound advice, if one begins reading at Chapter 1.

Chapters 1-4: A Slow-Starter

eBay Power Seller Secrets is a slow starter for its target audience. The first 4 1/2 chapters are the dullest in the book. They cover the pre-planning and strategies necessary to start a large eBay Power Seller business – or any small business for that matter, in most regards. Though they make sense and the topics are interesting to sellers with a high number of sales who need to source more inventory to keep up, I don't think they make sense for most readers, because they begin where few readers will: at the beginning of their eBay selling career. It may be best if eBay sellers begin reading at Chapter 4 and then come back to Chapters 1-3 when their sales are up.
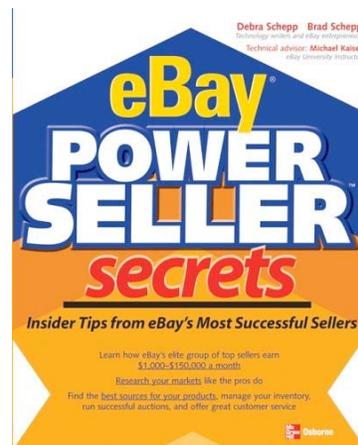
The first 3 chapters are, unfortunately, also long-winded, again missing the target audience, especially if that audience already has a roaring eBay business and can use the information in these chapters. The choice reader is likely to have considerable previous experience with eBay, with the Internet, with computers, etc, so I believe they would appreciate brevity and conciseness over all else so they can start learning the Power Seller secrets immediately. The tone of these early chapters is conversational and attempt to hold the readers' hands, when doing so is likely unnecessary. Business owners I know personally don't have or take time for leisurely reading. They like to get to the heart of the matter.

The perfect reader will begin with some positive experiences with eBay so they believe that eBay has the potential to become a larger and/or continuous revenue stream for them, and that they are capable of making a commitment to that revenue stream to turn it into a full-time business, but just aren't too sure which step to take next, especially if they've had several disappointing years with eBay's markets. These first 4 1/2 chapters, I feel, would be better if they were sharply edited and positioned towards the back of the book, perhaps even some of the information as an appendix. If the book were restructured, it would better coach average eBay sellers into Power Sellers, step-by-step. Which is what the book's title seems to want to do for those prepared to be Power Sellers.

The authors make several false assumptions that help make the book a slow-starter for its intended audience. Chapter 1 (37 pages) assumes that readers don't know themselves very well and may not be prepared to spend and probably not already spending a great deal of time on the Internet in front of their computers. In contrast, I believe that people interested in starting a business on eBay are in fact likely spending a lot of time on eBay and buying from e-commerce web sites, too. They likely have an extended history of such experiences. Else they wouldn't be convinced that being online or selling on eBay in particular has the potential to free them from their day-to-day employers and make them Power Sellers.

eBay Power Seller Secrets also assumes in Chapter 2 (50 pages) that readers will be willing and able to purchase inventory which they would naturally Power-Buy. Sounds like large quantities to me, even after I've read the book. I've never power-bought anything, and I don't have thousands of dollars sitting around waiting for me to do something with it. Most readers, I believe, will be in the same financial situation as I and looking for specific tips to help them become a better eBay seller and, if all goes well with the secrets in the book, eventually an eBay Power Seller with everything that entails. This path does not require a huge investment in inventory so early. Chapter 2, IMHO, could easily be a later chapter, when readers are financially and emotionally prepared to stock real inventory as the next logical step in their eBay evolution.

Chapter 3 (30 pages) offers similar potentially expensive advice as Chapter 2. Buy computers. Automate everything. Build a computer network. Purchase and use accounting software. Buy or build a web site. Set up a photography studio. Buy a digital camera. Purchase a digital scale. Buy a printer. Whew! That's a lot of money to spend before even posting a single auction! The advice in Chapter 3 could, like that of Chapter 2, be moved to later pages and in doing so get to the book's Power Seller Secrets much more quickly.

Chapter 4 (20 pages) finally begins to reveal some Power Seller Secrets to help readers make more sales on eBay without spending thousands of dollars to do so. For this chapter, the authors advocate automating eBay auctions, so that readers can effectively manage both small and large volumes of auctions. Though some of these automation tools require some investment (some an ongoing investment), it is clear that this chapter is time well spent for all eBay sellers. Chapter 4, for the first time, is succinct and can be read in a single sitting, the information clearly organized for easy consumption and recall by readers.

Chapters 5-11: Foundation for Success!

It is in the last half of the book that *eBay Power Seller Secrets* comes into its own and builds steam and interest – for every eBay seller, not just Power Sellers. Chapter 4 introduces some tools to help eBay sellers manage higher volumes of auctions, but these later chapters help guide sellers about professional habits and attitudes, which make all the difference between success and failure. Anyone can sell an item. Successful businesses create and foster relationships.

Chapter 5 (52 pages) reveals some helpful advice that eBay sellers can put to use immediately, but the chapter could also be condensed, like the first three chapters. Create an About Me page on eBay. Decide and set your auction rules. Spend time on the eBay Q&A boards. Both share and learn on the Q&A boards. Be neat. Don't be cutesy. The hard information in this chapter includes how to information about creating an effective listing title, choosing categories, grading items for sale, finding effective key words, taking photos that help sell product, and more. There's much useful information here in Chapter 5. *eBay Power Seller Secrets* really begins to take shape at this point with the how-to secrets disclosed in the last 25 or so pages of this chapter. This helps readers pick up steam and grow hungry for its information. Reading the book becomes more invigorating and empowering.

The Schepps recognize that auction listings are just one step towards success on eBay. Chapter 6 (40 pages) explores how some Power Sellers court their customers (their words, not mine). At heart, the authors believe in long-lasting (sales) relationships, not just a quick buck. This gives *eBay Power Seller Secrets* the humanity and depth that makes it tower above less useful books. Chapter 6 encourages eBay sellers to develop sales relationships using an e-mail database, a custom e-mail signature, and a monthly newsletter, and to use tools already at their disposal, such as PayPal, SquareTrade, eBay's ID verification program, coupons and small "thank you" rewards, to further reassure customers about the sellers' professionalism and integrity, especially for repeat sales. This book also suggests that sellers can begin to gather and use sales statistics to help them make better business decisions.

PayPal is an important part of eBay's business. eBay itself recognized this when it purchased PayPal. Chapter 7 (36 pages) discusses the ins and outs of collecting payments from buyers and making payments to sellers (you buy items over eBay, too, right?). While PayPal is an obvious choice for many reasons, Chapter 7 also discusses payments by personal check, money orders, cashier's checks and even wire transfers. An important part of buying and selling on eBay is to be an educated buyer and seller. In this case, Chapter 7 also reveals secrets about doing business internationally, using escrow services, identifying spoof e-mails, what to do about unpaid items, avoiding problem bidders, and the like. It also educates readers about the most common buyer scams and how to avoid them. Another worthwhile chapter for all eBay sellers!

No book about Power Selling would be complete without a chapter on shipping. How else are customer's to receive their winnings? Chapter 8 (20 pages) the importance of good shipping practices, including packaging, invoicing, determining costs, insuring shipments, and choice of carriers. Though a short chapter, Chapter 8 is not short on useful and valuable information. The authors recognize that professional shipping practices have a significant impact on buyer perception and, therefore, on repeat purchases. Packaging and shipping are no place to skimp.

In a perfect world, every buyer would be 100% satisfied with his/her purchase. But we don't live in a perfect world. So *eBay Power Seller Secrets* is wise to acknowledge that customer dissatisfaction is inevitable. For those sellers who have or have had a brick-and-mortar experience, customer dissatisfaction can become emotionally charged before anything is ever discussed, and things can be said and things can be done that both buyer and seller may regret, almost immediately. Chapter 9 (36 pages) helps sellers navigate this unpleasant minefield to best resolve each customer complaint, regardless of the reason, but also recognizes that documentation is important should a need ever arise for it to be provided to eBay or others, including authorities.

The least exciting aspect of operating any business, in this reviewer's humble opinion, is record keeping. All other business activities are exciting because they can help grow sales and put more money in the coffer. Keeping a business's books, though, is just as important. So *eBay Power Seller Secrets* reminds us. It is not only important to record sales, but also to record deductions. The authors suggest hiring an accountant. I cannot think of any better advice here, if a seller can afford to do so. This also has the added benefit of freeing up the seller to focus on growing sales, which is really what the seller wants to do anyway. But if the seller can't afford an accountant, Chapter 10 (18 pages) offers some practical advice about keeping track of business transactions to keep sellers out of hot IRS water.

Chapter 11 (10 pages) is not only where readers will end up, it is also where readers should want to end up. Opening a profitable eBay store. But how does a seller know when it is time to open an eBay store, or how much it costs? *eBay Power Seller Secrets* serves up some advice to help readers determine the answers for themselves. While Internet marketing is a whole other topic altogether, *eBay Power Seller Secrets* also provides a starting point for readers to drive traffic to their new eBay store.

Practical Advice for Any Business

eBay Power Seller Secrets is a useful book for all eBay sellers, not just Power Sellers, and for readers who expect to start their own small business, including brick-and-mortar businesses. Though the first 3 or 4 chapters are misplaced, lengthy and off-target for the intended audience, the remaining chapters get right to it, for the most part, with practical advice that every small business owner can put to use immediately, from identifying and purchasing wholesale merchandise; taking photographs for eBay, web sites and catalogs; and developing professional habits and attitudes to create long-lasting sales relationships to many other important aspects of operating a small business, including basic advice about accounting practices. If the reader has just opened or intends to open a small business either online, on eBay or on the corner, the reader should take time to read *eBay Power Seller Secrets* and put its information into practice. They'll be off to a running start above those who have not received the practical advice of other successful business owners. In this case, eBay Power Sellers.

Hacking Exposed: Network Security & Solutions 5th Edition Reviewed by Robert Pritchett

Authors: Stuart McClure, Joel Scambray, George Kurtz
McGraw Hill Osborne
http://www.osborne.com
Booklink: http://shop.osborne.com/cgi-bin/osborne/0072260815.html
**Released:** April 19, 2005
Pages: 692

$50 USA, $67 CND £30 GBP €41 Euro
ISBN: 0072260815

Strengths: Touches on just about everything related to network security and solutions.

Weaknesses: Website shows nothing of interest related to the book.
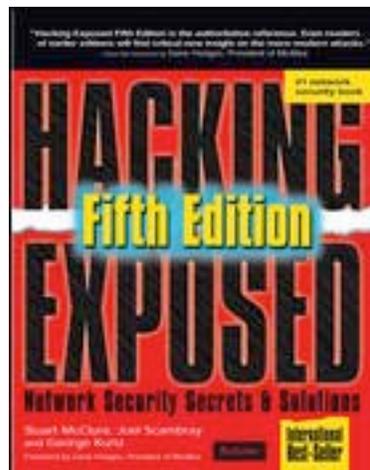
Hacking Exposed: Network Security & Solutions 5th Edition by Stuart McClure, Joel Scambray and George Kurtz is the latest in a series of *Hacking Exposed* books on vulnerabilities and what can be done to negate them.

Believe it or not, their sense of humor does show through on occasion, even as serious as security is online.

There is plenty to chew on here regarding what black-hats do for a living and countermeasures can be used to nullify their actions.

There are 6 Parts covering footprinting, scanning and enumeration, system network and software hacking and a couple of short Appendices with one listing most-used ports for hacking and a 1-page diagram of 14 security vulnerabilities related to networks.

There are about 2 pages worth of stuff tucked between chapters 3 and 4 as a "case study" regarding Macs. It mentions open ports Apache and Open SSH and then goes on to say we should study Chapter 5 on hacking UNIX if we want to dig deeper. Really , that's it for Macs. The rest of the book pretty much exposes all the various vulnerabilities and workarounds regarding WinTel, Linux and UNIX systems, heavy on Microsoft issues/ What I found to be rather humorous and it may not have been intentional is that after they spend pages and page sand pages on Microsoft vulnerabilities, they defend Microsoft software stating that because it has been hacked to death it may be more secure than alternative options because it has been played with so much by hackers. Nearsighted, or are they afraid they could loose their jobs if they moved to less vulnerable platforms?

This book is a tribute to all the issues associated with non-Mac environments. It makes me want to run, not walk, from the XP Pro platform I have to use at work with fear and trembling. The efforts needed to keep out the bad guys is mind-boggling.

One thing I like about the way the set up the book is that every so often they have either an attack icon or a countermeasure icon (or both close together) with a table on popularity, simplicity, impact and a risk rating based on the first three items.

I spent most of my time going through the Software Hacking section in coding, web server and application hacking, and internet client vulnerabilities in Chapters 11 through 13. Superstitious?

I also appreciated the part where they included links to phishing issues.

The cover for the book is the typical one for pirates – Red and Black. Symbolic?

Not once in the book do the authors refer to the bad guys as Crackers, so this accentuates the "Hackers are bad" mentality. On the other hand, they do expose the underbelly and do provide solutions to a myriad of issues for some of the most obnoxious software on the planet.

After reading this book and looking at the links they offer through the book, I was left pondering what I was told years ago by the good folks at W3C when I tried sending them a Word document, just before I got slammed with the Melissa virus; "Microsoft is a virus. Don't force us to read any file in their format". Arrogant? After my system was trashed and the virus spread through our network like wildfire, I didn't think so.

Is this book really a "modern day bible for networking and systems security professionals"? I'll just say that it covers a lot of territory and makes me feel much better about the platform I choose to use.

iCon Steve Jobs: The Greatest Second Act in the History of Business Reviewed by Robert Pritchett

Jeffrey S. Young, William L. Simon
http://www.wiley.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd-0471720836,descCd-authorInfo.html
Wiley
http://www.wiley.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd-0471720836.html
Released: May 2005
Pages: 368
$25 USD $35 CND £17 GBP €25 Euro
ISBN: 0471720836

Strengths: Annotated research.

Weaknesses: The Preview copy had way too much profanity.

No, you can't make this stuff up. Do you see Steve Jobs as a modern culture icon? This book does.

iCon Steve Jobs: The Greatest Second Act in the History of Business by Jeffrey S. Young, William L. Simon is better known as the "unauthorized" book that got Wiley Press thrown out of all the Apple Stores in May 2005. Apple committed an act of Book-Spurning instead of Book-Burning. http://www.maccompanion.com/ExpressionEngine1.2/index.php?/weblog/comments/apple_pulls_wiley_books_from_shelves/. Of course, you could just to the wikipedia instead and read much about Steve Job's life: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Steve_jobs. So now the "bio" has become "Forbidden Fruit" and everyone wants a copy to learn why Steve Jobs has taken the draconian measure to yank all of Wiley's books off the shelf at all 104 Apple Stores. Hello Amazon, Barnes & Noble, "make my day"! Even the Internet TalkRadio commentators were having a field day with "Get the book Apple banned"!

I had the honor and privilege of reading a prepress review of *iCon* I'm hoping they cleaned up the text both figuratively and literally. I found way too many expletives that would have made loggers and Marines cringe. But with Steve Job's undisciplined, salty potty-mouth, could the real reason the book was banned is because it was co-authored by William L. Simon, who also wrote Gil Amelio's "On the Firing Line: My 500 Days at Apple"? Or is it because of the other earlier out-of-print, excellent book Jeffery S. Young wrote entitled, "Steve Jobs: The Journey is the Reward" http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/0673188647/002-3061878-2582465?v=glance?

Since I have not yet seen the final print version, I can assume my prepress commentary submitted to Wiley may have been excised. In it I gave praise to Steve Jobs, thinking this was an excellent 50-year birthday present and wished him another 50 great years in mortality.

So what if Steve Jobs has some character flaws? He'll mellow over time. He is the quintessential "American Success Story come-back-kid", having started out as an adopted bastard son, law-breaking youth visionary who was kicked out of his own company only to make another (and created a daughter who he rejected, in a play that mimics his own personal history), came back as a white-knight-hero and through lesson's learned with another company that he founded, brought Apple out of virtual ashes, rising as a Phoenix to be reborn again as a company that has turned each succeeding project into successful real gold. Steve Jobs has evolved into a modern Midas. *iCon* chronicles his rise to power as Apple bought NeXT, released both the iMac and the iPod and also presents the establishment of Pixar, as well as Steve Job's own personal challenges.

Could the reason Steve Jobs is miffed is because of the title of the book? The made-up word *iCon* can probably be taken in three ways, okay, maybe four. An icon is a symbol of religious devotion or a graphic on a computer screen or as an iApp (iCal, iDVD, iLife, iMac, iPod, iWork, you get the iDea….), from Apple. Or with, in this case,

perhaps a negative connotation of "Con", not as in entomological terms for knowing, learning, studying or under close examination, but rather as in con-artist or ex-con.

Steve Jobs may be a hard negotiator, but he is no ex-con, having served no time for his misdeeds earlier in life. However, he could very well be painted as a con-artist or con-man, having taken advantage of others (noted not just by the angels in heaven, but by men on earth) in his charismatic, yet dizzying roller-coaster ride towards fame and fortune. Think "Reality Distortion Field" (RDF) as he sells products with polish and panache. Listen to his "Stevenotes" during MacWorld. Look at the first of the Stevenotes and you decide: http://209.237.48.45/~btman/1984macintro.mov.

Or perhaps the reason Steve Jobs wants this book to be forgotten (fat chance now!) is because it also points out his posture as a "control freak" or his stance regarding loyalty (you cross *The Steve* in any way, shape or form on a personal level, you join his long list of "non-existent persons".

Much of the book isn't so much about "His Steveness," as much as it presents the lives of those he touched and touches and also towards the back of the book, those with whom he competes.

Yanking a publisher's books because of a disagreement about a soon-to-be-released one that lauds Steve Jobs is so typically "Steve". Throw a tantrum and then get away with it. Well, this time, he is not going to get away with it. Free trade and a free press override personal vendettas and repression. *iCon* paints Steve Jobs in a positive light. Pulling all of the Wiley books off store shelves in retaliation does not.

I laud John Wiley & Sons for backing both the author of icon and in sending all the other Wiley Press authors letters, notifying them that Steve Jobs had their books pulled. They were standing united and strong behind Jeffery S Young and William L. Simon. Those other authors give nothing but praise to Wiley Press for their actions.
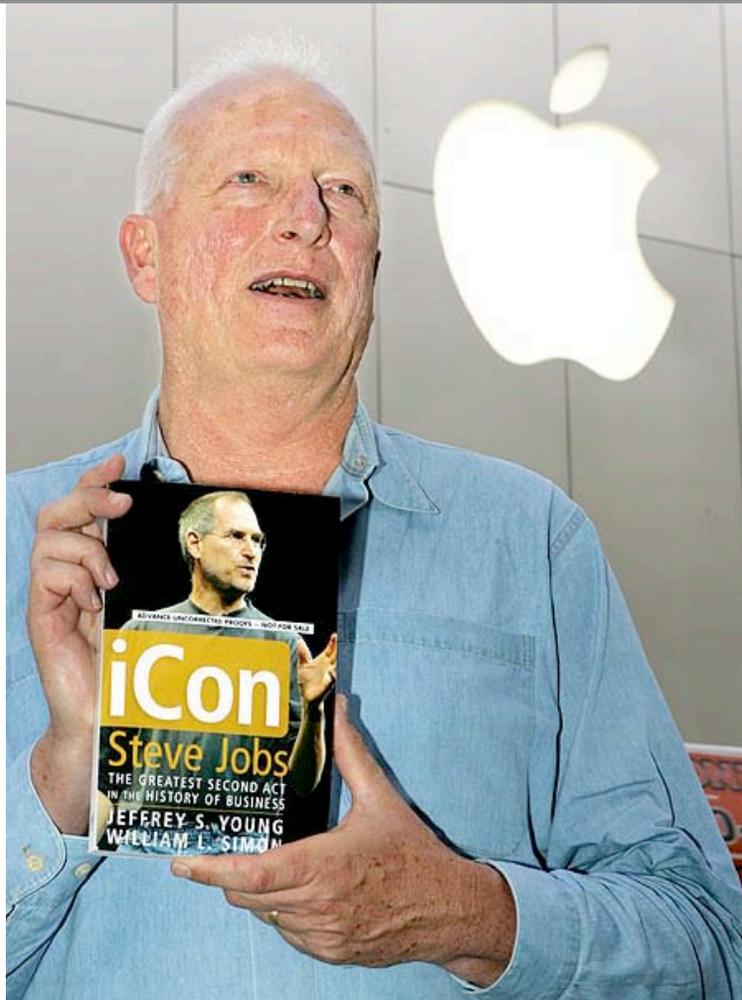
Author Jeffrey Young holds up his new book "iCon Steve Jobs: The Greatest Second Act in the History of Business," in front of an Apple Computers Inc. store in San Francisco. (Paul Sakuma - AP)

Jeffery S. Young wrote; "I thought the book was pretty positive and laudatory. It covers his personal life and there is something about his illness. I wouldn't call any of it outrageous. I'm totally bewildered." Me too.

Lori Sayde, a spokeswoman for the publisher wrote;

> "We're hoping that they will re-evaluate their position because we have worked very hard to establish a good relationship with Apple. We're empathetic to all our tech authors who will lose out in this but we support our publisher's decision to publish this book."

Because of the "Forbidden Fruit" aura around *iCon*, Wiley has ordered a 2nd printing. Steve Jobs has "touched" this book and turned it into gold too. And maybe that is part of the strategy all along. Controversy brings press and there is no bad press. Once you pick up this book, you won't want to put it down.

iPod & iTunes Garage Reviewed by Robert Pritchett

Author: Kirk McElhearn
http://www.mcelhearn.com/
Prentis Hall
http://www.phptr.com/garageseries
Booksite: http://www.phptr.com/title/0131486454
Released: December 6, 2004
$25 USD $36 CND £20 GBP €20 Euro
Pages: 456
ISBN: 0131486454
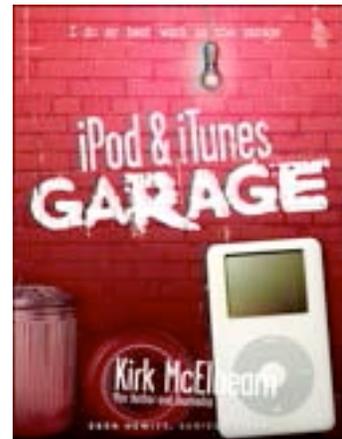
Strengths: A "Do–It" book.

Weaknesses: Goofy "dirty" font theme (garage style).

iPod & iTunes Garage by Kirk McElhearn takes a different approach to exploring both iTunes and the iPods. Kirk digs into compressing files, burning CDs, walkthrough for both iPod and iTunes and even has one page dedicated to the RIAA, while discussing the file-sharing issues. He also covers other uses for such as using it as a contact manager.

If you want to know Kirk's taste in music, he sprinkles the book with "Essential Music sidebars, interspersed with FAQs and other items.

He also discusses managing playlists and turning the iPod into a total music system with accessories. There is even a section on using Linux on the iPod. He even has pointers on buying music from the iTunes Music Store and storing photos, etc. on the iPod.

There are 5 parts to the book covering iTunes, iPods, Filesharing, iPod software and iPod hardware and accessories, but what sets this book apart is Kirk's love for music. It shows.

The book is not obsoleted by time, because Kirk keeps the info updated on his website listed above.

It's only "downside" would be the "theme" font process of "dirty font". It is countered by occasional footnotes that span pages.

Enjoy a little humor and learn from Kirk how to really use the tools given us through iTunes and the iPod so we can enjoy and explore music and other media.

Mastering FreeBSD and OpenBSD Security Reviewed by Robert Pritchett

Authors: Yanek Korff
http://www.oreillynet.com/cs/catalog/view/au/1874
Paco Hope
http://www.oreillynet.com/cs/catalog/view/au/1875
Bruce Potter
http://www.oreillynet.com/cs/catalog/view/au/990
O'Reilly
http://www.oreilly.com
Book Link: http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/mfreeopenbsd/
**Released:** March 2005
Pages: 464
$50 USD, $70 CND, £35.50 GBP, €42 Euro
ISBN: 0596006268
For System Administrators.
Strengths: Shows in no uncertain terms what can be done to tweak FreeBSD and OpenBSD environments to be even more secure.

Weaknesses: None found.
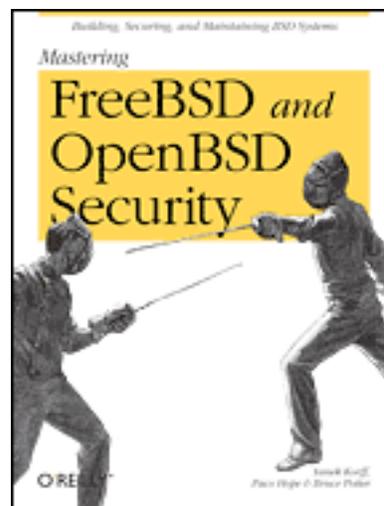
Mastering FreeBSD and OpenBSD Security by Yanek Korff, Paco Hope and Bruce Potter, answers the age old question about why *BSDs are inherently more secure than their Linux cousins and practically anything else found in the WinTel environment. I obtained this book because I wanted to know how to answer questions regarding Apple Mac OS X security, since naysayers believe the myth that the main reason Mac OS X has not been cracked, hacked and riddled with malware is because it is way down on the Internet radar for exploiting and darkside manipulation.

To take the mention in the book (page 33) further in regards to Mac OS X as a variant on the *BSDs, see Brad Slavin's "Darwin/Mac OS X: The Fifth BSD" at http://www.bsdatwork.com/2002/04/15/os_x_the_fifth_bsd/.
 But never fear, since Apple is free-basing on FreeBSD and they open-sourced Darwin, there is much here to learn if we look to the FreeBSD side of the yin and yang the authors use as they compare FreeBSD and Open BSD security.

If you hear another "Mac OS X is secure because it has less than 5% of the installed User base" nonsense, refer them to this book, okay? Oh, and it also resolves the so-called "Linux is more secure" silliness as well. How? The *BSDs are simply cleaner, more robust and more stable than other OSes. The NeXT OS was developed from that environment and became what Mac OS X is today.

This book dedicates itself to the most compelling aspect as to why the folks who deal with networking situations are migrating magnet-like to the se systems – Security.

Comparing solid, hardened, FreeBSD and OpenBSD security "building blocks", especially in the critical permissions and file system areas are done to help us understand the strengths and weaknesses of these systems and how to deploy them intelligently.

To appreciate this book, you have to be more than casually acquainted with *BSD and network administration. This is not a beginner book by any stretch of the imagination. It discusses server functions such as DNS, Mail Web, Firewall, Intrusion detection, System Audits, Incident Response and finally, Forensics. I wished that last part of the book was bigger, but true to form, just like all the 11 Chapters and 3 Parts in the book, there are plenty of links at the end for us to learn more.

Granted, this book doesn't cover the "latest" releases of either Open BSD and FreeBSD, but it is general enough, I think, to cover topics that are not superceded by OpenBSD 3.7 or FreeBSD 5.4. Heck, even Apple has released version 10.4.1 of Mac OS X Tiger since this printing, so don't let revision numbers stop you from getting this book.

For a basic understanding of either OpenBSD or FreeBSD, there are two other books that would provide a solid foundation before getting into this book; *Absolute OpenBSD* and The *Complete FreeBSD*. Call them "prerequisites". Get all three from O'Reilly.

Network Security Tools Reviewed by Robert Pritchett

Authors: Nitesh Dhanjani
http://www.oreillynet.com/cs/catalog/view/au/1714
Justin Clarke
http://www.oreillynet.com/cs/catalog/view/au/1896
O'Reilly
http://www.oreilly.com
Book Link: http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/networkst/index.html
Released: April 2005
Pages: 352
$35 USD, $49 CND, £25 GBP, €28.50 Euro
ISBN: 0596007949
For advanced Security Professionals.
Strengths: Walks through open source network security tools.

Weaknesses: None found.

Network Security Tools by Nitesh Dhanjani and Justin Clarke is a book on writing, hacking and modifying open source security tools.

A telling note is that the first part of the book shows screenshots with the tools running under Mac OS X, so I don't have to ask if they work there.

This book is not for the beginner. It is intended as a resource book for those who already have a working knowledge of any or all of the following open source security tools and want to learn how to write plug-ins or add extensions for them; Nessus, Ettercap, Hydra, Nmap. Nitko, LibWhisker, Metasploit Framework, Toolkit 101 and PMD. And can do some customization.

Part 2 of the book shows how to write your own security tools with Linux, developing web assessment tools, building and designing a scanner, building a log parser, running automated exploit tools and writing network sniffers with lipcap and Perl, and writing packet-injection tools with libnet and a Linux wireless packet injector, AirJack.

Are you ready to lock down your network yet? And there are some cautions like; "don't practice on a production environment" if you know what is good for you.

Add this book to your arsenal, if you know what is good for your network.

Snort Cookbook Reviewed by Robert Pritchett

Authors: Angela Orebaugh
http://www.oreillynet.com/cs/catalog/view/au/1325
Simon Biles
http://www.oreillynet.com/cs/catalog/view/au/1978
Jacob Babbin
http://www.oreillynet.com/cs/catalog/view/au/1980
O'Reilly
http://www.oreilly.com
Book Link: http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/snortckbk/index.html
Released: March 2005
Pages: 288
$40 USD, $56 CND, £29 GBP, €36 Euro
ISBN: 0596007914
For Snort Administrators.

Strengths: Shows Snort code configuration for all platforms.

Weaknesses: None found.

Snort: http://www.snort.org
**HenWen:** http://seiryu.home.comcast.net/henwen.html

Snort Cookbook by Angela Orebaugh, Simon Biles and Jacob Babbin is a book that doesn't get piggish or snooty about Snort. It does go whole hog into how it can be implemented on all platforms though.

There are a few options presented on how to rulify and signaturize Snort. More precisely, it shows how to build rules for detecting Internet and network traffic and there are even some other barnyard antics going on in this book. Hey, you can go whole hog if you want to! You can even track Instant messaging traffic. Just be sure and have some giant porker-sized hard drives to store log information.

Managing a Snort system could turn into a full-time job if you aren't careful. Think you can mange without Snort to monitor production environments to make sure no malware is present or that attackers stay away? Can you handle traffic analysis and packet logging on your own?

The Snort Cookbook follows a recipe format with descriptions of problems, their solutions and a discussion section too.

A whole barnyard of solutions have been gathered together in one place for easier management of networks for security gurus. The book is divided up into 7 sections on installation and optimization by platform (Unix, Linux, Solaris, Windows, Mac OS X), tapping into and sniffing Ethernets, and wireless networks, logging alerting and outputting to Email, pagers or cellphones, building rules, detecting malware, viruses, Instant Messaging, person to person and even IDS evasion and countermeasures, preprocessing and detecting stateless and fragmentation attacks, detecting, normalizing and decoding traffic, managing and configuring ODS Center, SnortCenter, Snortsnarf, ACID, Swatch, Barnyard and HenWen, generating statistical output from logs and databases, testing signatures, analyzing, graphing and writing logs, monitoring network performance, creating reactive IDS, port knocking, obfuscating IP addresses and doing passive OS fingerprinting, working with honeypots and honeynets, performing forensics and using Snort as legal evidence in the US and UK and using it as a Virus detection tool.
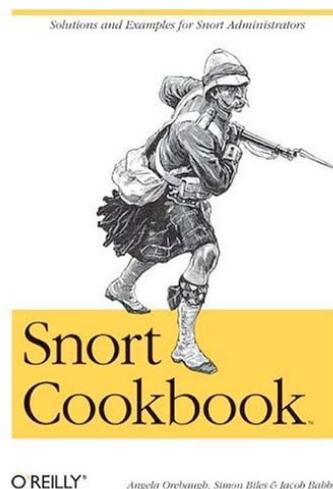
What I liked most about this book is that there is a whole section (it is really short!) just for me on installing Snort in Mac OS X (HenWen even has been updated to work with Mac OS X Tiger) and another administering Snort with HenWen (a few pages longer).

The meat of the book is really the section on Rules and Signatures, but there are links everywhere for getting deeper into and wallowing around in the Pigsty-like environment are we all know as network security. This book shows that virtual pigs can fly (if the pig is named Snort).

Sockets, Shellcode, Porting & Coding: Reverse Engineering Exploits And Tool Coding For Security Professionals Reviewed by Robert Pritchett

S Y N G R E S S

Author: James C Foster
http://www.oreillynet.com/cs/catalog/view/au/1865
Stuart McClure
http://www.oreillynet.com/cs/catalog/view/au/2164
Mike Price, Niles Heinen, Marshall Beddoe, Tony Bettini
Chad Curtis, Russ Miller, Blake Watts and Vincent Liu
Syngress Publishing
Booksites:
http://www.syngress.com/catalog/?pid=3270
http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/1597490059/index.html
$50 USD, $70 CND, £30 GBP, €41 EURO
Published: March 2005
Pages: 700
ISBN: 1597490059
Advanced.
Strengths: Heavy into solutions to hitherto unknown problems.

Weaknesses: None Found.
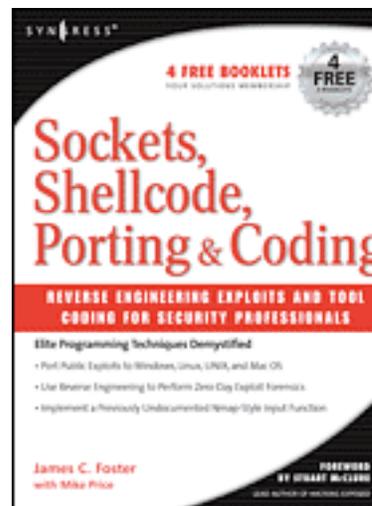
Sockets, Shellcode, Porting & Coding: Reverse Engineering Exploits And Tool Coding For Security Professionals
by James C Foster and Stuart McClure is a formula book for folks who are "Elites" in programming languages. It is
designed to help us appreciate exploits and to recognize them depending on which programming language we may
decide to use. It goes way beyond where the *Programmers Security DeskRef* leaves off.

If you don't know programming, you will not appreciate the security gems cataloged in this book. If you do, then
you will. And it isn't all about WinTel environments either. It is about cracking methods associated with coding
scripts in C/C++, Java, Perl and NASL.

The authors came from MacAfee backgrounds and they divided the book in to the five areas in the long title to the
book; Sockets, Shellcode, Porting, Coding and Coding Security Tools.

Downloading Code Samples from the book requires registering and submitting the registration number located in the
instructions for registering the book only after buying the book.

I was rather surprised to learn how vulnerable software is by leaving holes where code can be hidden in the mortar
between the payload bricks. And believe it or not, there are even exploits listed for Macs!

Perhaps most importantly to me anyway, is being shown how to reverse-engineer, modify and re-automate Zero Day
exploits.

There are 14 Chapters and 5 Appendices (Glossary, Security Tool Compendium, Exploit Archives, Syscall
Reference and Data Conversion Reference).

Each Chapter follows the Syngress Format Formula of Solutions, Summary, Solutions Fast Track and Frequently
Asked Questions with a few having Links to Sites and Mailing Lists for digging even deeper.

If you want to protect your systems, you have to know what the bad guys know, because they already know it and
are just laughing themselves silly, because just about everyone is leaving their doors wide open. Learn how to close,
lock and throw away the key as you do due diligence by first, recognizing there is a problem, and second, knowing
what to do about it. Why make it easy for them? Make it easy on yourself.

Games

KnightShift Reviewed by Ted Bade

Freeverse Software
447 West 24th Street
New York, NY 10011
(212) 929-3549
mailto:info@freeverse.com
http://www.freeverse.com/
Product Link: http://www.freeverse.com/knightshift/
$40 USD
Download: http://www.freeverse.com/knightshift/ (Look for the "try it" button.)
Requirements: Mac OS X 10.2.4 or higher; G3 800 MHz; 256 MB RAM; OpenGL 1.3; 1.5GB hard drive space; Internet Connection for online play.
Experience needed: basic to intermediate.
Strengths: Fun game, offbeat humor, easy user interface. Doesn't require at CD in the drive to play. Excellent cut scenes and fun audio.
Weaknesses: Can be a bit slow when reloading a saved game. Voiced comments can become repetitive.

KnightShift is a game that combines aspects of Role Playing games (RPG) and Real Time Strategy games (RTS) into one box. The graphics are good and the cuts scenes are interesting, fun, and humorous. For that matter, the game itself is a bit "tongue-in-cheek", in a refreshing way (rather then silly). But what would one expect from a publisher (Freeverse) that brought us Jared and Burning Monkey Solitaire?

KnightShift offers several different aspects of game play, combined together in one box. My favorite aspect of the game is the Role Playing part. You get two types of games here. First, you can play one of several different character types such as a Knight, Archer, Amazon mage, Sorcerer, and so forth.

As one of these heroes, you embark on a series of adventures to, well you know, save the world. Actually, you are sent on a mission to save the wizard mage who was responsible for freeing the Prince (see below). Obviously, this wizard's good deeds got him in some trouble with the evil wizards.
In the Strategic adventure aspect of this game, you play the good Prince who is abducted by a clumsy evil wizard. The evil wizard manages to loose the Prince (with the help of a particular good mage, see above). Once released from prison, you must work your way back into your kingdom.

This game ties together various aspects of RPG and RTS. (i.e. Role Playing Game and Real Time Strategy). First you must find your weapons and armor, which means traveling the countryside, helping the locals and searching for your equipment. As this game progresses you then have to resolve the RTS aspects of the game, you take charge of a troop of warriors, run the village to develop resources, and so forth.

In the Skirmish aspect of Knightshift, you play against the computer AI or other people (LAN or Internet). This is a true RTS type of game in which you build up your resources and forces, then go abroad to conquer the other players. KnightShift allows up to 7 opponents (either real or AI).

You can see that there is a LOT of game in this little box. It will satisfy a person who likes either type of game. But, you may ask, how good is the game? Its a lot of fun, although it doesn't draw me in like Neverwinter Nights does. In the Strategic adventure game, some background information is provided by cut scenes before each level. These cut scenes are as entertaining as some cartoons I have watched! The scenes are long enough to entertain but not so long that one gets impatient to get back to the game.

During game play, your view of the world as you play is from overhead. You can zoom in or out using your mouse as well as change the vertical angle . You control your avatar by clicking on the screen where you want him or her to go. If you click on a beasty, you attack it, if the object is a person you learn something from, the interaction begins, and so forth.

As with all good RPG games, as you play you gather thing. Healing items, gold, equipment to use in battle, magical equipment, and so forth. You use the gold, to buy better equipment. Standard RPG fair.

I tried this game on a G5 Macintosh. I was a bit surprised with one slowdown during the game. When you click on a game person whom you need to interact with, the screen zooms in to view the person you are interacting with. There is then a pause while the program loads the audio of the dialog. On a number of occasions, the pause was long enough that I thought the game might have frozen.

The Avatars (either the Prince or one of the heroes you can choose to play), have canned dialogs they say as various events happen around them. While at first they are a bit funny, this quickly wears off. Not that the words are annoying in any way, just repetitive.

Find the Prince's shield on the island to the north-west.

The game graphics are very nice, the avatars each look unique (each type that is) and they change as you change equipment. The scenery is also pleasing and very detailed. Because one aspect of this game allows for the destruction of buildings, you will find "health" bars on structures when you pass by them. I found this odd when I first played the game, but soon realized what it was.

The audio effects in this game are nice. You get a while array of environmental effects and sounds, voices that speak the words of an interaction and music (which I found very pleasant). On my surround system, I found that the dialog voices we often hampered by the music and environmental sounds. I was able to find a balance but the voice audio was often hard to catch. Perhaps it is just my system. To avoid missing the information spoken during these interactive dialogs, you can turn on text balloons, than read along.

Death is a common event when playing RPG games. The game's built-in method returns your avatar to the game, minus all your equipment. It is then up to you to pick up your stuff (assuming you can survive the monsters that took you out the first time. Not the best solution. My preferred solution is to reload the last point I saved the game at, and try again. Knightshift lets you do this, but it seems to take an excessive amount of time to get back to the game. (Perhaps they don't want users to use this method?)

Another minor annoyance is the inability to transfer progress made with the "demo" version to the full version. Most people will probably try the demo game before buying the full version. The demo lets you create a couple of the hero types and play through the first level of the RPG aspect of the game. If you decide you like the game and then go buy the full version to continue, you then find that all the progress you made in the demo version is lost and you have to start over. Bummer. :-(

I found playing the game a lot of fun. The challenges are typical. Several easier interactions leading up to one tough interaction. As with most RPGs you build up your experience and improve your equipment as you go. Eventually your avatar can handle the tough interaction at the end of the level.

Knightshift loads all of itself onto your hard drive, and you don't need a CD in the drive to play, a nice things for people who play on PowerBooks. It takes up 1.3 gigabytes of hard drive space, pretty typical for a higher end game these days.

Overall I found KnightShift to be a fun and entertaining game. While it has a few minor flaws, it is worth buying. Because it has different aspects of games built into it, you actually get three standalone games and multiple ways to play online. Considering the price, this game is a great deal! I recommend it to anyone who likes RPG or RTS games. Knightshift offers a refreshing attitude (it's a game, let's not take it too seriously), and entertaining game play. Definitely go buy this one!

Hardware

iMove Positioning Table for the iMac G5 Reviewed by Robert Pritchett

501 Darby Street
Corona, CA 92879
(951) 278-0832
mailto:sales@MaxUpgrades.com
http://www.maxupgrades.com
Product Link:
http://www.maxupgrades.com/istore/index.cfm?fuseaction=feature.display&feature_id=4
$100 USD.
Released: October 15, 2004

Strengths: Solid, with glide anchors.

Weakness: None Found .

There are two colors of the iMove and two sizes designed for either the 17 or 20 " models of the iMac G5. Pictures of the earlier models released back in October are here: http://www.maxupgrades.com/imoveimacphotos.htm.

Notice anything different below from the picture above?

There are two thumb-screwdown pads, one on each side of the newer units. They don't stop the iMove from being moved around on the 4 grey rollerballs, but they do give a feeling of assurance that the iMac isn't just going to start rolling off on its own and decide to jump off the table. Without the screwdowns, the iMove really glides!

Now why would you want to get one of these for your Cinema Display or iMac G5? Maybe you don't want to scratch your tabletop when moving the system or maybe you want that next degree of movement (horizontally) you enjoyed with the earlier "desklamp" iMacs.

Frankly, my first concern when I saw this was that the iMac G5's clamfoot would loose stability and perhaps fall over. Nothin' doin'. The iMove cradles the foot perfectly, but the iMac G5 has to be slid front-to-back to be seated properly before screwing down the friction pads when installing the iMove to the base.

I obtained the white iMove instead of the black and I love the choice. The one-inch-thick by 8-inch long iMove is a solid piece of plastic and weighs about a pound. The 4 plastic roller units are solidly affixed and apparently are held in place with ballbearing and metal ring skirts and it really can be rotated 360 degrees, if necessary.

The unit is a solid piece of work, but I might haggle over the price for it. Is $100 for the emotion of side-to-side-and-rotate motion worth it? If you do presentations or there are many people who use the same screen and they are all different shapes and sizes, than I would say, "Yes". Raising the height of the unit nearly 1.5 inches really has made a difference and I'm not as low in the seat as I once was, so this is more than just an ergonomic choice. It gives that full freedom of movement that has been missing since the lamp-style iMac.

I don't see the iMove so much as a "positioning table" as it is a pedestal-pusher. What do you think?

iProtect MAXupgrades Micro Screen Cleaning Cloth Reviewed by Derek Meier

501 Darby Street
Corona, CA 92879
(951)278-0832
mailto:sales@MaxUpgrades.com
http://www.maxupgrades.com
$9 USD.
Released: January 22,2005
Strengths: Cheaper than other cloths, Well made, Very Useful. Come with storage case.

Weakness: None Found works as advertised

One of the flaws of the old titanium PowerBooks screens in the imprint of the keyboard from the screen resting too close to they keys. Now I don't know of and have not heard of any problems with the aluminum line of PowerBooks but I did not want to take the chance and immediately purchased a screen protector/cleaner. MaxUpgrades, creators of the excellent MaxSleeve have just recently released the iProtect Cleaning Cloth.

The iProtect Cleaning Cloth is made of ultra fine micro-fibers safe for use on LCD's. One side with the vanquished surface is for cleaning dust and other particles. The other side has rough and interlacing strands that are for cleaning, fingerprints and marks. It also can be place between the keyboard and monitor to prevent oils from the keyboard protecting the screen. The cloth works as advertised safely cleaning your LCD and if it gets dirty you can throw it in the washer and dryer. It also comes with a nice plastic carrying case to store it in.

For $9 plus shipping, you can add a bit of protection and have a nice cleaner for your portable or LCD which can be used for cleaning a multitude of other things. Comparable cleaning/protector cloths range from $5 to $10 more. The price is very little to take care of your Apple Hardware investment.

LaCie d2 DVD±RW with LightScribe 16x Reviewed by Robert Pritchett

LaCie USA

22985 NW Evergreen Parkway

Hillsboro, OR 97124

Tel: (503) 844 4500
Fax: (503) 844 4508
http://www.lacie.com

Released: April 2005 (announced in January).
$180 USD, (For Macs, $200 with Titanium 6 & only FireWire)
Specs: Capacity up 4.7GB to 8.5 GB DVD video, records to double-layer DVD+R, DVD±RW (16x4x16x) and CD-R (40x) CD-RW (24x); Digital Audio extraction – 40x CAV; Buffer 2MB; Access Time DVD 140ms, CD 130ms; 6.3x1.7x10.6"/ 17.3x4.4x26.8cm.
Requirements: Mac G4 500MHz; 256MB RAM; Single-layer - Mac OS 9.1 or later, Double-layer – Mac OS X 10.2.3 or later, LightScribe printing – Mac OS X 10.3.2 or later; WinTel Pentium 3 500MHz, 256MB RAM; Single-layer - Win95SE or later, Double-layer and LightScribe – Win200 or later.
Comes with: Easy CD & DVD Creator 6.2, and 7; DVDMax Player; SilverKeeper 1.1.2; Toast Lite 5.2.2 and 6; LightScribe Labeler; 6to6-pin FireWire cable; USB 2.0 cable; SunFone power supply - AC 100-240Volt, 50-60Hz 1.0Amp, 5 v 2.0 Amp, 10 Watts, 12v 2.2Amps 26.4Watts; Users' manual on CD, 1 CDR LightScribe; 1 16x DVD+R; 1 year warranty.

Strengths: Has HP LightScribe technology to write labels directly on the disc. Tiger-ready now.

Weaknesses: Slow LightScribe burn process. Media prices are higher than for regular media.

Doublelayer Technology Whitepaper:
http://www.lacie.com/download/more/DoubleLayerWhitePaper.pdf

LightScribe: http://www.lightscribe.com/

LightScribe FAQs: http://www.moserbaer.com/ca_lightscribe.asp

Review from a PC perspective:
http://www.cdrlabs.com/reviews/index.php?reviewid=251

LaCie d2 DVD±RW with LightScribe 16x by LaCie is a new DVD/CD read-write unit that also does labels on the same media. It does it by using the LightScribe software from HP.

Way back in January 2005, both LaCie and LightScribe announced their partnership to support both Macs and WinTel systems.

LightScribe Labeler templates range from simplistic to sophisticated as in Baby, Doggy, Music, Portfolio, Title, Content, Documents, Flowers, Gradation, Pebbles, Road, Bliss, Bow, Full, Office, Party, Travels and Wooden. All are editable. All we have to do is supply content, flip the disc and print the label. To me it looks like a reverse-reverse negative. The colors are shades of gold instead of shades of gray. The iridescent silk-screen quality label is a result of the laser changing the die properties, so no inks are involved in the monochrome-changing process.

On my iMac G5 with Tiger, I got the following in the profile:

The unit also comes with *SilverKeeper*, a LaCie software package that copies, compares, synchronizes, restores files and directories from a source to destination from any media to any media including DVD-RAMs as long as they are mountable writable volumes.

http://www.lacie.com/silverkeeper/

And Roxio's Toast Lite is a come-on for Toast Titanium but Toast Lite works just fine.
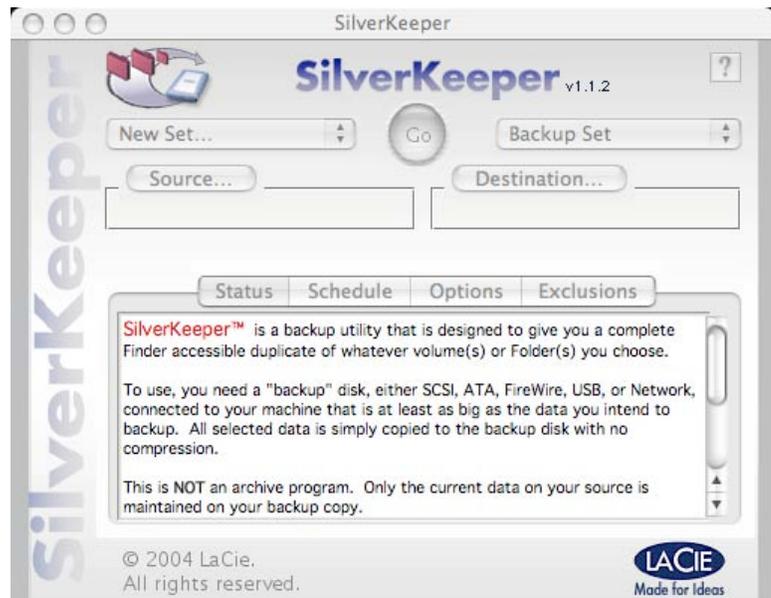
The LaCie d2 DVD+RW is a heavy little unit designed to stay on a desktop. It is cast aluminum and looks like it is designed for rack-mounting. The base-plate is a graduated-hole design that looks like it was intended to be for letting the drive breath, but the plate under it is solid. Perhaps it is for heat dissipation – More surface, more rapid dissipation.

The drive itself supports the new dual layer media from the DVD+RW Alliance, which does the 8.5GB single-side, http://www.dvdrw.com/. LaCie's PDFed 4-page whitepaper on double-layering is posted above.

On the back-end of the drive, there are 2 FireWire 400 ports and one USB 2.0 port. The Mac-only drive that costs $20 more is FireWire only, but has Toast Titanium included.

Money Matters
Supplies for LightScrbe media via LaCie are either $13 for 5 DVD-Rs ($2.60 each) or $49 for 20 ($2.45 each). http://www.lacie.com/products/product.htm?pid=10254 Imation makes LightScribe media for CD-Rs. And Memorex makes LightScribe media for DVD-Rs. Moser Baer in India announced they also are making LightScribe media, http://www.moserbaer.net/newsroom_pressreleases.asp. DVD double-layer copying takes about 5 minutes for 4.7GB compared to 14.5 minutes for regular 18 to 25-cent single-layer 4X media. I recently paid $32 for 100 DVD-Rs, including tax and shipping. So, if you can obtain the LightScribable DVD-Rs somewhere nearby, they are going to cost $150 for a stack of 100? The price better go down. Think Catch-22. What comes first, the media or the media player? Remember what DVD-Rs cost when they first came out?

Tigerized Software
Late in May, LaCie finally made the LightScribe driver for Tiger. I ran the "Travelers" label and it took no less than 30 minutes to etch the label using LightScribe. I ran that one because it was the largest, busiest label and I like the *WorldWide macCompanion* label I put on it.

It looks cool with the coppery-gold look, but a ½ hour to burn a bitmap-based label? I really do hope all it takes is a firmware upgrade to speed things up a bit. And isn't there a rumor that Apple is going to include LightScribe drives in the next versions of their computers? Or did I just make that up?

Otterbox for iPod Reviewed by Ted Bade
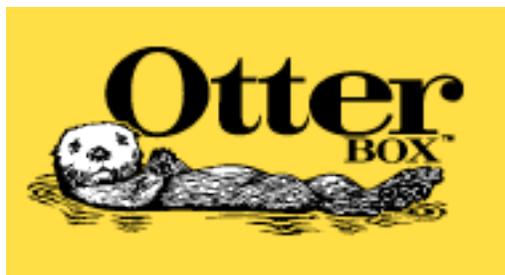
Otter Products, LLC
Bldg 1 Old-Town Square
Suite 303
Fort Collins, CO 80524
1-888-695-8820
Fax: 1-888-695-8827
email: (use form on this URL to contact them:
http://www.otterbox.com/contact.cfm]
http://www.otterbox.com/
Product Link: http://www.otterbox.com/category.cfm?Category=36
$50 USD
Requirements: You need an iPod.
Strengths: Rugged watertight case. Allows user to plug in headphones without exposing the iPod to the environment.
Weaknesses: Case is larger and bulkier then most.

The Otterbox for the iPod is a rugged, waterproof case designed to protect your iPod, when you take it into an environment that would not be good for it. It would be very useful for dedicated hikers people who participate in other outside related activities. People who like to go out and enjoy the environment, probably want to take their iPod along. But the iPod is an electronic device and not designed for moist, dirty, dusty environments. When you place your iPod into the Otterbox case, it is sealed safely away from these threats.

I found the headphone connection the most interesting aspect of this case. When you place the iPod into the case, you connect it to a headphone like jack inside the case. This jack provides a regular socket for a headphone connection on the outside of the case, so your iPod's headphone connection is completely sealed off from the environment.

The case itself is constructed of heavy translucent plastic. A softer easy to use membrane is located over the iPods controls, and a clear plastic membrane over the display screen. It was easy to control the iPods controls with this membrane and the display was easy to see through the screen area.

I tested the case's ability to keep out water with two tests. First of all I dropped the case in a bucket of water. I had placed a soft tissue in it before hand, knowing that the tissue would suck in any moisture that got in and make it easier to see. The case floated on the water, and when I opened it (after carefully drying the outside), there was absolutely no moisture on the tissue. Cool.

The second test was to fill the case with the weight of an iPod, then to dump it into the bucket again. I had intended to only let it sit for a few moments, but something caught my attention and it sat at the bottom of the bucket (about 12 inches of water), for several long minutes. Again, there was no moisture inside. My test doesn't in any way qualify the Otterbox case for use under water, but it ensures me that if I dropped it into a puddle, the iPod would survive the experience!

After these two tests, I am certain that the Otter box would easily keep the moisture of just about any type of activity. I am also certain that this would keep all types of dust, sand, and whatever from affecting an iPod if taken into such an environment.

Because of the nature of the case, you loose access to the iPod's lock button. This means if you want to lock the iPod, you have to open the case and pull out the iPod. Obviously doing this exposes the iPod to the environment. Also note that the case is tight, operating the latch isn't super easy, but that is a good thing!

In my opinion, the bulk of this case makes it a little difficult to justify for you daily safe environment use. But I you want to use your iPod in a less then clean environment, you definitely need to check out this case.

I use my iPod and a set of homemade ear protectors (with speakers inside) when I mow the grass or work with noisy yard equipment. I used a soft case that protects the iPod somewhat, but no where near as well as the Otterbox does. Not only does it protect the iPod from moisture whether from rain or sweat, it also protects the iPod from the many bumps and bangs it normally receives as I wander about my yard pushing the mower or doing all varieties of yard work!

If you are looking for a really safe case for your iPod, definitely consider the Otter box. While it is a little bulkier then other cases, it provides a level of water, dust and impact protection no other case I have seen can offer. I think it is a great way to protect your investment and still be able to enjoy your iPod on the road!

*doc_* Babad's Shareware Toys

Great Software Tools and a Tip for Panther Users Reviewed By Harry {doc} Babad

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This month I continue sharing my shareware finds with you, focusing in part on dock extender software. I must to wean myself from tiny icons in my increasingly expanded dock. Over the last several months, I've reviewed both Yellow Button [macC January 2005] and SwitchDock [macC May 2005]. This moth I've found a few other goodies that will give you expanded dock capabilities, Like many other things Macintosh, dock extenders are a personal the — it's the interface dummy!, So check my new collection and see if these are better for you then the other tools I've reviewed. I'm not into doing a side-by-side comparison of these tools, but don't let that sop you from doing so and submitting the results to Robert Pritchett our editor-in-chief.

As is usual, I continue to pursue my interest in shareware esoterica and somewhat eclectic tidbits... so read on! Remember, there is no rhyme or reason for my choices other then what appears interesting, amusing, or heavens forbid, useful

Note that although it do a quick test run, at the very least, on each of the shareware items I review in this column, that review is never as complete as are the individual in-depth software reviews I do for macC. Indeed, where I agree with the developers' description and other comments, I unabashedly use them in this column. If not, you'll read about it, load and clear! [Aren't mixed metaphors wonderful?]

Oh, I almost forgot! Unless otherwise noted, all the software I review in this column deserves 4.0 to 5.0 macCs and *all* the tidbits I share work on my system.

The software was tested on a 1 GHz dual processor PowerPC G4 Macintosh with 2 GB DDR SDRAM running under Macintosh OS X 10.3.9.

Items Reviewed
- dockDoubler X 1.1
- *DockExtender 3.1.3 – I've found, when testing this otherwise great piece of software, what may be a significant glitch in the product. I'm delaying publishing my 99% completed review until I get feedback from its developer.*
- DockSwap 2.1
- Fidget Menu 1.3.4

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dockDoubler X 1.1 Reviewed By Harry {doc} Babad

Developer: Daniele Krahenbuhl
daniele@heark.com
http://www.daniele.ch/downloads.html
Freeware:
Requirements: Mac OS X 10.1 or later. It works with Panther OS X
10.3.9   Size 653 KB
Release date: August 7, 2002

The software is simple to install and use, as is. Its simply makes a copy of the default Dock (the Dock you filled up) and it allows you to switch between the two Docks. Obviously, as its developer noted, the extra (duplicated original) Dock ['myDock] is fully customizable. Ms. Krahenbuhl wrote this little application for her use because the default single Dock was soon full. I'm testing for the same reason since I've crowded my dock with about 80 icons and I hate the bounce–bounce game needed to find the application of folder that I need.

Installing the product is easy. Just drag the dockDoubler application to you hard disks application folder. Then drag one end of your Dock and open it. The first time you start dockDoubler you will be asked to duplicate the default Dock, confirm (clicking the 'Clone' button), and you're ready to juggle between two independent Docks: the 'default' dock and the new one: 'myDock'.

Daniele notes that when you clone a Dock, her program first creates the folder dockDoubler in your ~/Library/Preferences folder, then it copies the default dock to that folder and renames it 'myDock'. Its now up to you to customize the new dock, by removing and/or adding items to it. I have not only saturated my dock, but also almost exhausted the 84–button capacity of *Yellow Button*, a dock extension program I reviewed in the January 2005 issue of macC.

Working With the Product — When you switch docks, the program will swap (and do the necessary renaming) the files from the dockDoubler folder to the Preferences folder and vice versa. To complete the dock switch the dock has to be restarted an automatic action that takes only few seconds.

The major interface to the program is through its *file* menu where you'll find 5 options.

- Switch Dock, does what it says...
- Show active Dock, dimmed if the dockDoubler is already open otherwise open the dockDoubler mini window
- Reset, this will delete the active Dock and force the System to create a new one with the default items and settings
- Reset, to reset the active Dock to the default state
- Restart, to quit and reopen the active Dock

As the illustration shows you can delete the dock; that deletes the inactive dock. To enhance dock switching, the developer suggests that you keep a copy of dockDoubler

in each Dock, at the left side {next to the finder}. This makes switching it's very easy: just one click on the dockDoubler icon to activate it followed by a *Command + '* to switch, or open the window more fully by changing the "triangle".

I had a little bit of problem understanding Daniele's, too brief, discussions of the default (reset) options but other than that the software ran smoothly and the interface is attractive and easy to use. One suggestion, switch some of the icons in you Mac OS X dock to 'myDock' and resist loading both docks with 70–80 icons each. [Harry Babad]

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DockSwap 2.1 Work with multiple Docks in Panther Reviewed By Harry {doc} Babad

Developer: Jim McKay   piDog Software
jim@pidog.com or support@piDog.com
http://www.pidog.com/OSX/
Shareware: Free to try; $12.00 to buy

Requirements: Mac OS X 10.2 or later. Size 3.3 MB

DockSwap for OS X allows you to create and access multiple dock setups. The software extends the usefulness of the OS X Dock. It allows you to save different Dock conjurations, to allow easier access to all of your files, docklings (whatever they are), and folders. You new saved docks retain all attributes, hiding, pinning, size, magnification, as well as retaining documents, apps, folders, and docklings. DockSwap allows you to save multiple Dock settings and access them later. Pressing "Control–ESC" accesses the simple dock–switching interface. DockSwap saves all Dock settings, including hiding, magnification, and persistent applications/files.

Installation — Simply drag the application to your Applications folder or wherever you'd like to install it. Double click and go! You may also want to add DockSwap to your *StartupItems* by opening "System Preferences" and selecting "Login". Then click "Add.." and locate your copy of DockSwap.

Working with DockSwap — To activate DockSwap at any time, click the DockSwap icon in the dock and the control window will appear. To create a new Dock preset, click "Create New Dock". To active a saved dock, simply click and hold the DockSwap icon in the dock (or ctrl–click the DockSwap icon in the dock) to access the *dockmenu*. Alternatively, click the DockSwap icon and double click the dock you'd like to launch. Alternatively, you can double click a shortcut contained in "DockSwap Files" in your preferences folder, at Users *username* > Library >Preferences >DockSwap Files".

The DockSwap Window

You must then relaunch DockSwap. Press *Command-Q* to quit, then double-click the DockSwap Application. You can then access DockSwap by pressing *Control-Escape.*

When DockSwap runs without a Dock icon, you can access the program by double-clicking the app icon or by using either the control-escape shortcut or through the menubar extra available in the settings window.

The publisher reminds us that when you alter the dock by adding or removing items, the changes will be reflected in the currently selected dock the next time you activate it.

To gain the maximum benefit from DockSwap add it to your login items via System Preferences – Login. Click and hold DockSwap's Dock icon for quick access to saved Dock alternatives. You can also disable DockSwap's Dock Icon to save space.

Summary — The publisher suggests creating a dock for work and a dock for play! Alternately, I prefer to focus my docks by project [e.g., Harry's OS X home dock, household, cooking and collecting, computer and last but not least my technical consulting related activities.] The product works as claimed. A clean and simple to use interface with no glitches, as I worked with the product, give it high scores. Jim McKay's other product, ScreenShot Plus [May 2005 macC] also was well designed and easy to use. I would welcome a short help file to help new users and a translation of the word docklings, which I still cant figure out. Since neither of these flaws affected my use of the software, I can unequivocally recommend it to you as a simple and stable dock enhancer.

Now if I could only figure out where to enter my serial number. [Harry Babad]

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Fidget Menu 1.3.4 Reviewed By Harry {doc} Babad

Developer: April Gendill of *FOR neXtSoft*
Support: Direct Message Lings on the website
http://www.fornextsoft.com/
Shareware: $15 [USD]

Requirements: Mac OS X 10.2 or later.
Tiger Compatible   File Size 1.1 MB
Rating: 3.5 macCs

Fidget Menu [FM] is fully configurable menu bar item. Add web links, applications, documents and more. The only limitation to this product is that it does not allow one to add folders, but that would surely clutter thing up. Fidget Menu allows including System Preferences related items into your pull down menu directly from within the software. You can also include some Finder controls such as shutdown, log out, start classic and more; those appropriate to your hardware. You can also create menus from any folder on your hard drive.

Fidget Menu also features a POP email monitor with a variety of available actions to choose from when new mail arrives. The application can be configured to run on the right side of your menu bar (my choice) or directly from the dock. You can use a custom icon or text to label your menu items, as well as being able to turn those menu item icons on and off.

Fidget Menu can be used as an all-purpose launcher. It can start Applications, open web links, or open documents from its menu item. Fidget Menu runs on the right side of your menu bar, giving you quick access to anything you need.

A Configured Fidget Menu, 'menu.'

Fidget Menu comes with a number of preconfigured items like System preferences and a Sleep command. Uniquely, Fidget Menu offers POP email monitoring with several options for what needs to be done when you get new email. I could not get this feature to work, but since my email client, Eudora, provides me with notification a preference option, it did not matter.

➢ Fidget Menu's Features
➢ Specifically, the product allow you to:
➢ Add documents, Web addresses or applications to the menu
➢ Preconfigured Home folder, System preferences, Finder controls
➢ Easy organization of your documents, applications or links by creating groups, which are comparable to finder's folders.
➢ Drag and drop addition of items to the menu
➢ Configure multiple email addresses for monitoring
➢ New mail subjects are displayed in the menu prefixed by the account name
➢ Configurable actions when new mail arrives.

Conclusions — Menu is easy to set up and easy to use. It would adequately serve those of you who are neither application junkies, have no need to access tens of constantly varying documents a day, or daily reach out to dozens of web links. Such a load would saturate Fidget Menus simple and effective interface. I would have like a bit more information than is provided in the readme file, particularly on email associated capabilities and relative to not being able to add folders to a group. Otherwise, this is a simple and easy to use product that is worth you while. [Harry Babad]

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Software

Dash Monitors 1.2 Reviewed by Derek Meier

GAUCHO SOFTWARE

 PO BOX 1415
Mount Pleasant, MI 48804-1415
mailto:info@gauchosoft.com
http://www.gauchosoft.com
$10 USD
Download:
http://www.gauchosoft.com/Software/Dash%20Monitors/Download/

Strengths: Customizable. Inexpensive. Looks nice.

Weakness: None found.

Being a techie and a bit geeky I love system monitors and other utilities, which could be deemed useless to the casual user. Dash Monitors a Widget from Gaucho Software fits the bill very nicely. For me there a very few really useful Widgets and I am very happy to find Dash Monitors.

Dash Monitors displays your CPU usage, Memory usage-Wired, Active, Inactive and Free memory, Used Network Bandwidth and Disk Read-Write speed. The Network Bandwidth monitors not only your onboard network card but also monitors your Airport Extreme.

You have three ways to view the monitored items graphical, simple and text. My personal preference is simple. While the graphical is nice it seems to take too much space for my taste with unnecessary graphics while the text is simply to boring. Mind you these are personal preferences which everyone opinion will be different. The CPU monitor in graphical mode looks like a car RPM gauge, which is kind of neat. What would be nice would be a way to change all monitored items at once, instead of one item at a time.
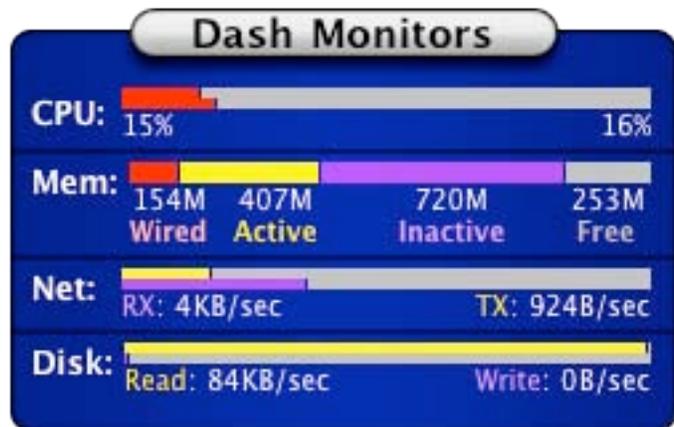
While not being free like most widgets, Dash Monitors is well designed, laid out nicely and is customizable. It is one of very few useful widgets that I find myself going back to time and time again. For anyone interested in a very nice useful widget for his or her dashboard it's a worthwhile purchase for the price.
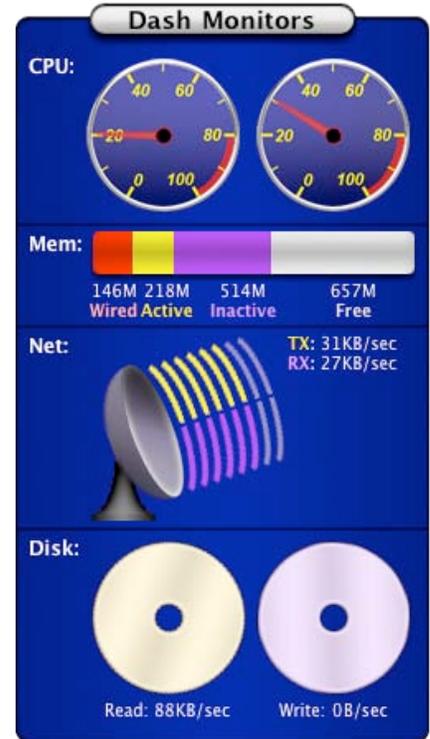
FotoMagico Version 1.2.4b10 Reviewed by Robert Pritchett

GeBE Computer &Peripherie GmbH
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82110 Germering
Germany
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Fax: +49 89 89 43 99 11
Fax US: 1-866-GOBOINX (toll free)
mailto:sales@boinx.com
http://www.fotomagico.com/
Released: First in October 2004, 1.2.4b 10 Beta; May 13, 2005
$80 USD through Kagi
Try before you buy (5 days): http://www.fotomagico.com/demo/ Download
3.2 MB
Requirements: Mac OS X v10.3 or later; 64 MB Video RAM.
FAQs: http://www.fotomagico.com/facts/faq.html
Known Issues: http://www.fotomagico.com/facts/knownissues.html
Tips & Tricks: http://www.fotomagico.com/facts/tips.html

Strengths: Does stuff better than Apple's iApps.

Weaknesses: Music bought from iTunes Music store will not play when using this app directly. The QuickTime updates also negated the ability to export those songs.

If you have iDVD5 and iPhoto, why would you go and pay for FotoMagico? This might provide a clue…

http://www.macintouch.com/idvd5.html#mar30 or here http://www.macupdate.com/reviews.php?id=6970 and go to Kevin Stone's review of iDVD5 at http://www.kenstone.net/fcp_homepage/idvd_5_stone.html

Or knowing that it won 1st pace in the O'Reilly's 2004 Mac OS X Innovators Contest in the International category might be another clue.

I got to play with the beta for 5 days on this iMac G5. I saw a demo of iDVD 5 earlier and saw some similarities, but what FotoMagico does, it does well. There is a good reason why Boinx picked the magician's hat as a logo for this app. It really is magic!

Now about the music: The workaround is to burn the iTunes songs to CD and import them back in again. However, the latest QuickTime updates block exporting those pieces of music. (See our book review of the Darknet for more on these ridiculous activities as Apple tries to toe the line with the Music Industry.) You can still run songs from iTunes library, just not the ones bought in the iTunes Music store. Go figure!

In spite of that, Fotomagico has some neat features for authoring and playback. Values can go into text fields for zooming. Multi-panning and zooming, scaling and rotating turns stills into animations. Working in audio brings them to life. Slideshows can be controlled interactively. Slideshows can be ported to other Macs using the Slideshow Package, but the other Mac will also need a copy of FotoMagico to view the show or burn to a DVD or export to QuickTime. And it plays nice with the iLife iApps.

Titling allows for more freedom of movement than in using Apple's iApps. That's right, it allows the text to move and resize.

The 1.2.4 beta 10 also works with High Definition and H.264, QuickTime 7 and Tiger. Speed settings are "Old", "Hare" and "Tortoise". Transitions work independently per hi-res photo (but there aren't many styles yet) , unlike in iDVD 5, which apparently transitions all photos the same in a slideshow.

Do like I did and get the demo to do the try before you buy.

PDFpen 2.1 Pro — A potential alternative to Adobe Acrobat 7 Reviewed by Harry {doc} Babad and Edited by Julie M. Willingham

SmileOnMyMac
PMB 281
25 NW 23rd Place, Suite 6
Portland, OR 97210-5599
510-289-4000
mailto:philip@smileonmymac.com
http://www.smileonmymac.com
$95 [USD]; free upgrade for existing PDFpen Pro users. PDFpen
2.1 $50 [USD]. Both versions have a 30-day free demo.

File Size: 3.8 MB
Requirements: Mac OS X 10.2.5 or later.

Audience: For all who are interested in creating and
manipulating PDFs.

Strengths: With PDFpen Pro you can create fill out and save PDF
forms; split, combine, and reorder pages; and mark up and
augment your PDFs with text and image overlays. All of this
functionality at one-fifth of the list price of Adobe Acrobat Pro.

Weaknesses: Although the software interface is easy to use and
well implemented, as I worked on this review I couldn't
determine whether it is a more-or-less complete substitute for,
or merely a rich enhancement to, Adobe Acrobat Pro. It appears
to be the former, but the publisher never specifically mentions
PDFpen Pro as an Acrobat replacement.

This software was tested on a 1 GHz dual processor PowerPC G4
Macintosh with 2 GB DDR SDRAM running under OS X 10.3.9.

Product and company names and logos in this review may be
registered trademarks of their respective companies.

Software Overview
Portable Document Format (PDF) files are a simple and elegant approach to distributing forms,
instructions, and other information. However, manipulating PDF files and filling out or creating
new forms can be difficult, unless you're using a utility like PDFpen 2.1. (Note: PDFpen has the
same features as PDFpen Pro, EXCEPT that PDFpen Pro can create PDF forms, whereas PDFpen
can only fill out and save PDF forms. PDFpen Pro 2.1 also includes an option to compress
uncompressed images when saving. The pro level augments Adobe Acrobat Pro 7's features.) In
this review, I will be referring only to PDFpen Pro.

Introduction

I do a lot of with Adobe Acrobat Pro, which I recently upgraded to version 7. (Some of you will remember that unless driven by income-generating needs, the only way I get serious about learning software is by reviewing either the software itself or a book about it.) I've had problems meeting my needs for PDF content consolidation as well as adding additional material to an existing PDF file when using Acrobat 7, so when I read about PDFpen Pro, I jumped at the chance to review it.

Since I download a variety of materials using the "Print to PDF" feature of my operating system, my major use of Acrobat Pro tends to be cleaning up the extraneous materials that fill downloaded pages. Whether using Acrobat Pro's touch up object tool [Tools > Advanced Editing] or the crop pages tool [Document > Crop Pages], I am often left with a page worth of material scattered over 2-3 pages of the PDF file... Ugly and space wasting!

In addition, when downloading a recipe from the Food TV Network, I have two choices. First, I can download (print to PDF) the main recipe page. This contains the recipe, at times a picture of the dish, and lots and lots of extraneous Food TV Network-associated information and advertising. Alternatively, I can capture a printer-friendly version, but in addition to getting rid of the extraneous material including advertisements and kinks to others web pages, this eliminates the recipe image. Neither provides me exactly the information I am looking for in the downloaded file. Therefore, I started experimenting with PDFpen Pro. When I separately drag the recipe illustration to my hard disk, as a jpg file, that image becomes available for pasting into the printer-friendly PDF using PDFpen's rectangle tool.

I've illustrated stages of this process below.

You can find the complete recipe at
http://www.foodnetwork.com/food/recipes/recipe/0,,FOOD_9936_27271,00.html

Grilled Shrimp in Lettuce Leaves with Serrano-Mint Sauce- Raw Web Page *Food TV Network*

Image of Grilled Shrimp in Lettuce Leaves; an enlarged JPEG version of the recipe image file

Printer-friendly Version: Grilled Shrimp in Lettuce Leaves from Food Network

Inserted Graphic into Printer-friendly Version of Grilled Shrimp in Lettuce Leaves with PDFpen

Working With the Product

Managing an existing PDF file with PDFpen's well-designed user interface is effortless. To re-order pages, simply drag and drop individual pages to their new locations. To add pages, use the Insert command, or drag a page into the document from another PDF file. Divide a multi-page document by choosing "Split PDF" from the Apple Script menu, and PDFpen Pro creates individual PDFs for each page in a folder of your choice. You can also search PDFs using PDFpen's fast Find tool. PDFpen 2.1 Pro offers a variety of tools to let you easily create, use, and alter PDF documents and forms. It provides additional tools to create easy to complete Acrobat-compatible PDF forms, something that is more difficult to do in Acrobat 7.

PDFpen Pro Features — I have divided the features of PDFpen Pro into a table of those important to me and of those, you might find more useful than I do. In addition, if you own the $450 Acrobat Pro, its features overlap those of PDFpen Pro, which costs only $95.

Things I Often Need to Do	Things I Don't Need to Do
• Crop pages.	• Fill out and save PDF forms.
• View, create, and edit PDF notes.	• Create cross-platform PDF forms that allow data entry. (Requires PDFpen Pro.)
• Show PDFs in single, facing-page, multi-page, and multiple facing-page views.	• Overlay text and images onto PDF (e.g., sign purchase orders by applying signature image).
• Select and copy rectangular areas. Including graphics into an existing PDF file.	• Use with the developer's *Page Sender* fax software for a complete fax solution.
• Re-order pages in a PDF with drag & drop.	• Automate PDF manipulations with AppleScript.
• Insert pages from one PDF into another (drag & drop or copy/paste).	• Compress uncompressed images when saving imprinted images and retain compression settings. (Requires PDFpen Pro.)
• Remove pages from a PDF file	

Editing PDF Files — There are three significant ways of editing and working with PDF documents in PDFpen. The first, according to its publisher, is text selection and form filling. The second one is Document Editing, as it allows you to make overall document changes. The third is called Editing with Imprints, as these allow you to make additions to single pages of a document by overlaying graphics and or text onto any page. The extensive Help file associated with this subject was clearly written and easy to use.

According to the publisher, you can cut, copy, and paste pages into, and elsewhere within a document. You can and paste pages into another PDF document. This works very effectively. When you paste pages into a document highlighting the material you want altered, the selected pages are automatically replaced with the contents of the clipboard. If you select a spot between pages, your pasted pages will be inserted between the existing pages. That, of course, worked well, as it does in Acrobat Pro.

However, I had difficulty using this feature when trying to consolidate two previously cropped half-pages into one PDF page. I was able to consolidate them by using PDFpen's Text Imprint tool as long as I had a full blank PDF page to work with. Unfortunately, this did not work on pages I had previously cropped and saved in Acrobat Pro format. When importing such a file into PDFpen and attempting to add text from the clipboard to a cropped page, I was able to capture only part of that text in the space available. *Unfortunately, that was not the result I wanted to achieve.*

I did find a workaround by adding, in PDFpen, a new page between the two half-pages. I then used the Text Imprint tool to move the text in a two-step sequence. That gave me a three-page file, which, after deleting the original half-pages, gave me the file I wanted. If this sounds convoluted, it was; but the process was simpler than cycling back and forth from a PDF file to MS Word and then back again. (Note: I could not make this process work in Acrobat Pro, but I'm still trying.)

Other PDFpen Capabilities

<u>Working with Forms</u> — Although I have not yet needed to work with form-containing PDF files, the Help file on editing forms (PDFpen Pro only) was well written and appeared easy to follow.

<u>Importing Images</u> — I also found that importing images into an existing PDF from a separate file is easy to do. According to the developer, "you can import both bitmap and PDF images into a PDF document in PDFpen." I actually was able to import a JPEG file and a TIFF file into a text PDF recipe file, so I don't understand the developer's limitations on importable graphics formats. It was as easy as the Help file describes: "to import an image by choosing *Insert* from either the toolbar or the *File* menu, and then selecting the file you want to insert. If the file you choose is a multi-page PDF, then the pages are inserted after the current page in Page View. Alternatively, they replace the selected pages in either of the Document views. In Document view, you can also select a gap between pages if you want to create a *pure* page insertion." This all sounds more complicated then it is.

Software Limitations

There is no reviewer's guide for PDFpen, but the developers have created a well-written Help file. It is not as detailed and complete as I would like; however, it is likely adequate for most users.

Conclusions

This is an excellent product, somewhat marred by the lack of a manual. I was able to transform documents I'd downloaded by merging pages, inserting graphics and relocating text from one page of a PDF file to another, when <u>page</u> space was available. I had not been able to achieve the same results, to date, when using Acrobat Pro 7.

It would be unfair of me to judge this product in comparison to the more expensive Acrobat Pro, but had I not already owned the Adobe product, PDFpen Pro would have gone a long way toward meeting my needs. Therefore, I rate this product 4.0 macCs. Had the developer enclosed a detailed user manual, the product would have rated higher in score.

PDF-associated Wishes

Now, if only someone would find a replacement for Adobe Capture that will work on the Macintosh. I will be the first in line to test it. To make my recipe collection complete, what I need is a means of capturing a scanned image directly to an editable file without using an intermediate step via OCR software. If one could capture Postscript-associated page information directly from a GRAPHICS file, in principle the accuracy of the copy would be higher than that I can achieve from Omni Page X Pro. PDF2Office v.2.1, which I've previously reviewed for *macCompanion*, can convert many PDF files into well-formatted MSW documents, but deals with files scanned (as opposed to printed) to PDF only as image files; so back to my OCR software.

For those who have not studied the software's limitations, Adobe Capture, which requires both a PC and a dongle, does not work in Microsoft's Virtual PC mode. Adobe describes it as an OCR package, but friends who use it have commented that it is more accurate than the other products they've used on their PCs.

TheRecipeManager 1.1.1 — A recipe management tool that is well worth using Reviewed by Harry {doc} Babad and Edited by Julie M. Willingham

TheDataManager, Inc.
mailto:support@TheRecipeManager.com
The Chef: mailto:theChef@TheRecipeManager.com
Review Support: I've worked with three members of the TRM development staff. They are more responsive that any team I've interacted with during my macC and other reviews.
http://www.therecipemanager.com
$40 USD [Available as a download or a physical product.]
File Size: about 20.6 MB
Available recipe base contains over 740 recipes.
Users Guide provided in searchable PDF format.
Requirements: Macintosh G3 or higher with 256 MB RAM (512 MB recommended). Mac OS X 10.2 or later, including Tiger. Also available for Windows NT 4.x, Windows 2000 or Windows XP.

Audience: All user levels
The software was tested on a 1 GHz dual processor PowerPC G4 Macintosh with 2 GB DDR SDRAM running under OS X 10.3.9.

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Software Overview
TheRecipeManager [TRM] is a robust recipe organization tool, driven by a well-exploited high-end database engine, which is capable of handling thousands of recipes. Each recipe can contain multiple layers of pertinent information like staging (preparing a recipe over several days), variations on the basic recipe, and the ability to add background information about the recipes. The application also has a complete *Kitchen Helper* section, which allows you to add *Cooking Tips* and *Measure(s) Conversion* information, and often offers ingredient substitution, as well as cooking and serving suggestions.

The product has a large capacity for adding your own favorite recipes. Its publisher notes that the number of recipes you will be able to add depends on the size of your hard disk, as well as the number and resolution of photos you add to your recipes. If your photos are very large, it will reduce the number that your computer can handle comfortably. The developers have run TRM *comfortably* with as many as 30,000 recipes, a significantly greater number than my modest 6,000 item collection.

Strengths — This is the first recipe software package that lives up to the claim that it makes it easy to add and organize all my recipes in one place. Its powerful search capabilities make it a trivial task to find just the right recipe quickly, based on single or multiple criteria. Although adding new recipes from my collection is not yet an automatic process, it is easy to carry out. At the end of this review, I discuss testing a beta-version that simplified the import of recipes, even with recipes copied to your clipboard from a web page.

Weaknesses — Nothing significant. In dialogues with the developer, I found that they are eager to receive feedback from users and continuously strive to make the product easier to use for all types of recipe collectors.

Introduction
Although this product has been previously reviewed by Dr. Eric Flescher, (macCompanion January 2005, Volume 3, Issue 1), after seeing a demonstration at the Mid-Columbia Macintosh Users Group and working with Eric on the 3Rs column cited above, I decided it needed an additional look.

I pointed out, in a recent 3Rs Column [*In Search of Perfect Recipe and Cooking Software,* macC March 2005, Volume 3, Issue 3] that I have long collected recipes, capturing them in many forms and formats. These include those from our families' collected books, pamphlets, and accumulated individual recipes on paper. In this age of the Mac, I've routinely captured recipes in PDF format from many food websites. I've also used optical character reading (OCR) software, directly scanning documents to create editable text versions of my favored recipes. Therefore, by picking and choosing from the all too many cookbooks my wife and I own, I've enriched my electronic recipe collection.

However, there is a significant problem with recipes accumulated as individual documents in different formats, even when they are stored in narrowly focused folders on my hard disk. First, I can't search those documents for their contents (only their titles) to find that special recipe I want to cook later in the week. (But I've not tried using the Mac OS X index feature because almost half my collection is in PDF format.) The most direct way to allow me flexible access to a large recipe collection is to add, consolidate, and store the recipes in a cookware (recipe) software program's database.

As noted in the 3Rs column, robust database-oriented software is the only way to go. A flexible cooking tool, such as TheRecipeManager, which is built on a robust database engine, provides me with the tools I need to centrally and efficiently store, find, and sort the recipes I add to it. It also allows me to flexibly specify categories of information associated with my recipes. With a recipe's *attributes* defined by flagging the appropriate *categories and subcategories*, I can flag each individual recipe. That, as my TRM collection grows, makes them easier to find.

As the folks at TheDataManager, Inc., recognized, a database is a superior tool for recipe collectors because it allows you to search your recipe collection by multiple criteria all at once. (But then, the developer is a professional database developer and manager.) In a flexible database, you can search not only by key ingredients, but also by cuisine, cooking method, or information type.

In TheRecipeManager, you can define (*categorize*) information about your recipe's contents and create searchable fields that define that recipe in a unique manner. Such fields' cover all of the *kinds* of information you might want to search for that could be contained within the thousands of recipes you've accumulated. Many of these are already built into TRM, and additional ones are easy to add.

After a bit of initial confusion about the *definition* (the focus of their subject matter), I was able to translate the information in my folder names from my recipe collection into searchable keywords using TRM's *administration* tools. (More on my confusion later.) It took less than 90 minutes, including false starts, to deal all of my 81 top-level folders. (Part of my time was spent double-checking that new categories, types, and classification "bins" I was creating were not already associated with the 740 recipes the vendor provides.)

My 81 recipe-containing folders that inadequately organize my 6,000-item recipe collection contain at least one additional set of nested folders. Therefore, I still have work to do; but without needing to repeat my learning curve, it should go faster.

With the advent of TheRecipeManager, importing my *mmmRecipes* has suddenly become a much less daunting task. Indeed, instead of just browsing and downloading recipes when I need a stress or work break, I may spend up to 2-3 hours a week importing my favorite goodies into TheRecipeManager. Nevertheless, even for me, a Type A compulsive personality, transferring an ever-growing collection, now containing 6000 files, may be too much of a challenge. After all, there's my tips and shareware goodies column to write and jazz and blues to listen to.

Working With the Product
Installing the software was easy, as is typical for any Mac OS software. Double-click on its application icon or an alias in your dock and you're ready to use the 740 or so recipes provided by the publisher or to add your own favorites. An easy to use, thorough Users Guide and Help files support the user. However, for this compulsive collector, they were not sufficiently detailed help explain some of TRM's more advanced features. (See Software Limitations.)

There are many routine tasks associated with accessing your collection, which TRM makes painless:

Browse through the collection.	Export a shopping list for a selected recipe.
Find a vaguely remembered recipe, searching from its characteristics.	Create a menu for a meal and export a shopping list for a selected meal (e.g., a collection of recipes).
Search for a recipe to cook with the items available in your kitchen. Sorry, corn flakes and milk don't make an exciting basis.	As your palate changes, modify a recipe. After all, hot and spicy is an acquired taste.

All of these are easy to do when using the product. Importing your own recipes is a bit harder, but once you learn to do it, it is a straightforward effort. Now this is not a tutorial on using TRM. Buy it and try it; it's almost intuitive to use. Just wait till the next—free to current users— update is finalized. A little bit of what seems like artificial intelligence makes importing your collection even easier.

My Take on Some of the Program's Features
Here are a few of the programs many easy to use features identified by its publisher. I've tried them all; they work painlessly.

Recipe Browser — TheRecipeManager main window gives one full control of hundreds or even thousands of recipes. (After you've got them entered, of course.) You can quickly browse or sort your recipes and define applicable meals using them. From that, you can access a quick search interface that allows you to type a word or phrase and search the database for any Name, Source, Category, Type, or Origin that matches. The program is also equipped with an advanced search option allowing you to search based on a myriad of self-flagged search criteria as I note below.

Cooking View — The 'Cooking View' presents you with a full screen version of the recipe's ingredients and instructions. You can work on a portable computer from across the kitchen and still read your monitor. Better yet (my preference) is to print the recipe, cook the dish, and give the printed recipe to a friend.
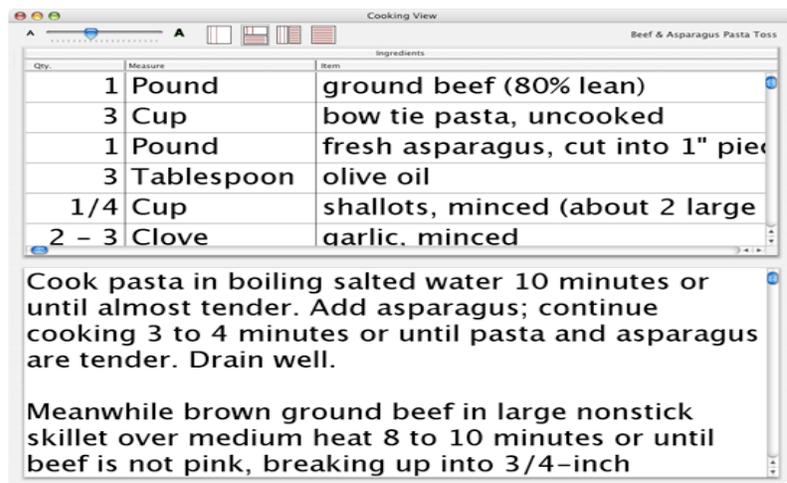
Modifying Your Collection — You can modify or delete any of the included recipes, and add your own. I found modifying an existing recipe easy to do [Menubar Recipes > Modify recipes (command-M)]. I found I had accidentally added a duplicate set of recipes, imported from the vendor's website. Deleting the 150 duplicates was easy, but after I shift-clicked to select them, the deletion process felt too slow. *I learned in a discussion with TRM's Kelly Burgess, that this is so because it's deleting a lot of little records for each ingredient, classification, etc. – not just a single record per recipe.*

One glitch: when I entered new ingredients into an existing recipe, they automatically were added to the bottom of the list. I often make two types of modifications to recipes: First, I may add new essential ingredients. Second, I may add optional ingredients. I want the former items to be where they belong in the ingredient list sequence. The second can remain on the bottom of this list. Of course, variations on your favorite recipe can be entered into a field of their own. *[**Flash**... Kelly noted, during his review of my draft, that by control-clicking the ingredients list in modify mode for a context menu, I could insert ingredient lines where I wanted them to be or to move them around.]*

The Meals Creation Window — This feature allows you to create and save the individual recipes for an entire meal from those contained in the application. Once you have created a meal, you can add all of the ingredients for your whole meal to your Shopping List with one click.

The Kitchen Helpers Window — This useful feature gives you access to a wealth of information. These include suggestions for ingredient substitution, conversions for units of measurement, recommendations for cooking temperature, and more.

Importing Your Own Recipes — TheRecipeManager allows you to input recipes individually or import them in groups from other recipe organizer programs and file formats that are supported by the product's API filters. In addition, I have been able to import recipes, when manually formatted correctly, by cutting and pasting 'text', both from downloaded print-to-PDF files (Acrobat 7.0) and from MS Word documents. The API-based template does not care whether the data with which you fill the template came from a formatted source. Once entered into the template, it's all text.

That is changing as the developer continues to work to make the import process easier to use. There is also an effort to more easily import recipe collections created with other cooking software.

TRM also supports importing plain text laid out to match their API (Application Program Interface). Have no fear, there's an almost easy to use template provided that shows you where and how to enter a new recipe into your TRM collection. As a result, you can appropriately format (or reformat) your recipes using a range of text-extractable sources.

The software allows you to import correctly formatted recipes directly from your clipboard, making it convenient to import any *correctly* formatted recipe(s). I've included a partial copy of the correct format for entering new recipes to illustrate the format of the API, only eliminating nutritional information and the formatting of food exchanges. The template also serves to highlight some of the basis for my wish list items, provided later in this review.

After the clipboard information has been imported to TRM, the new recipe(s) will be highlighted. You can then modify them as much as you like. Since I have no recipe collections provided by the supported programs, mostly inactive products, I could not test this feature

Name of your recipe – 50 chars max

Source: source – 50 chars max
Origin: [origin – 50 chars max]
Category: Category – 20 max
Type: Type – 20 char max
Classifications: Classification 1
        Classification 2   Classification 3. 25 chars each max

Description: [menu description – 500 chars max]

Qty   Measure   Ingredient
----
1   [cup   Ingredient Name

Instructions: instructions – 10000 chars max

Staging: Qty   Period   Task
----
1   [hour [what to do then]

Variations: 5000 chars max

Background: 5000 chars max

Serves: [#]
Prep Time: 15 chars max
Cook Time: 15 chars max
Total Time: 15 chars max

Recipe Sharing — TheRecipeManager's architecture allows you to import, export, backup, and print your recipes. Attach the exported recipe(s) from your hard disk to an email and share it with your friends.

Advanced Searching — The product's rich *indexing* feature allows you to find recipes fast. Search by classification, source, category, type, origin, and even individual ingredients! This is my favorite TRM feature, an essential capability when you have more than 500–1000 recipes. It's a powerful, multidimensional recipe attribute index. It is even more effective because of the way the developers make it easy to add categories and subcategories with which to flag recipes. As I noted earlier, it's all done with the Administration function.
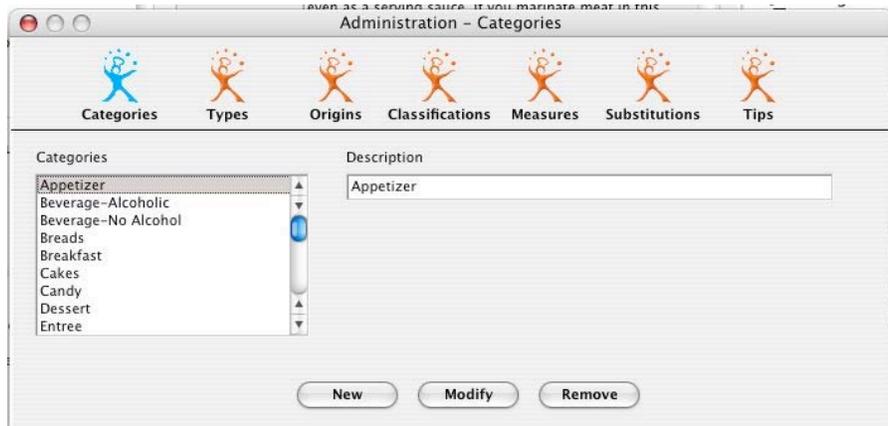
The table below was a part of the macC 3Rs column I've previously mentioned:

Categories and Subcategories Make Recipe Searches Easier in a 6000-Recipe Collection that is Growing.
Meal Category [e.g., Appetizer, Snack, Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner]
Cuisine [e.g., European, Chinese, Mexican, Island, Greek and Turkish]
Main Ingredients; Select up to 4 or 5 items
Food Genre [e.g., Appetizer, Beverage, Snack, Side Dish, Desert, Sauce, Dressing, Sandwiches, Soups]
Primary Cooking Method [e.g., boil, braise, stir fry, bake, broil, grill, pan fry]
General Applicable Meal [e.g., Appetizer, Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner]
Category [e.g., Cooking Hint, Formulary, Recipe, General Food Article, Menus]
Special Cooking Tools: [e.g., Steamer, Wok, Smoker, Panni Press]
Other… you name it!
Expanded and clarified from: *In Search of Perfect Recipe and Cooking Software*
By Harry {doc} Babad & Dr Eric Flescher in macC March 2005, Vol. 3, Issue 3

Supported Import Formats — You have the ability to import recipes from relatively unsupported cooking software like those listed below. Now, if only I could import the recipes from *CookWare Deluxe* from Digital Fried Chicken in one fell swoop!

A Cook's Book
<http://www.3caam.com/products.html>

Mastercook [Now only as a PC Version]

The Cooking Light application (not CookingLight.com recipes.)
[Note: I could only find the PC Product *StarChef Light 1.3*].

Yum (was the Recipe Librarian)
<http://www.nixanz.com/>

Software Limitations

Adding Recipes from the Vendor Website — I wish the software could scan the existing recipes in my program's database and download only those that I do not yet have. As noted previously, when searching for additional collections, I accidentally added duplicates — a serious no-no. *For recipes supplied on the TRM site, Kelly Burgess clarified that the duplicates problem has been improved recently with a second downloadable file that doesn't include the duplicates.* However, duplicates control, as I nibble away at adding my recipe collection to the software, remains a problem.

Backing Up Your Collection — I would like to see a more prominent reminder, in the Help files or manual, that the recipe database is stored in User > Library > TheRecipeManager User Data

folder > TRM.df1. Since it needs to be backed up routinely if you actively add your recipes to the software, this is important! *Kelly agreed that that is important for doing Finder backups, but not so important when using the built-in backup command, which knows where to find your collection. However, it is not an excuse.* Folks, I found the backup feature under the software's File menu.

Drag and Drop Capability — I would welcome the developer adding drag-and-drop both within an ingredient window and in the cooking instructions window. It's so much faster than cut and paste. Since I've routinely used drag-and-drop in both Macintosh and PC applications, this would benefit all users. I received an interesting response from the developer team on this item. *Agreed. Our development platform (Omnis) is limited in this regard, but we may be able to build a plug-in extension that could handle text clippings dragged in from another application. Omnis now tells us that a file was dropped – but since it's a 'virtual' file, there's no path, and no way to get at the data. An extension might be able to intercede and bypass this glitch, while waiting for a fix from Omnis.*

Administration Window, Definitions, and Examples — As an experienced, but not yet expert, database user, I know that proper data entry depends on limiting or focusing entries into various data fields. There are many ways to provide advanced search capability to your recipe collection. In TRM, these are created in the *Administration* window. However, I had a great deal of trouble understanding the differences between *types*, and the *classification* "bins." The developer provides no definition with examples to help the advanced user to fill these fields. Therefore, I created my own.

Redefining with the Type and Classification Fields [Administration]	
Types (a general 'category')	**Classification** Specific subsets of the specific Type entry
Meat	Beef, Veal, Lamb, Pork, Goat…
Fish	Salmon, Cod, Trout, Halibut, Red Snapper…
Eggs Mostly	Egg Dishes, Pancakes and Waffles, Soufflés, Eggy Toasts, Frittatas…
Shellfish	Shrimp and Prawns, Crab, Lobster, Scallops, Crawfish…
Vegetables	Artichokes, Asparagus, Beets, Broccoli, Legumes, Green Beans, Mushrooms, Eggplant, Squash…
Poultry	Chicken, Ducks and Geese, Turkey, Game Birds…

I also found that the contents of the Types and Classification fields overlapped, likely the result of the sequencing of the recipe sets provided with TRM. That was easy to fix: I just modified or re-created them where I thought they belonged. It's all a question of maintaining consistency and control over the way you enter data. Data dictionaries are helpful okay, okay; I'm getting too technical for this task.

Entry Field Character Limits —The allocation limit for characters in the recipe information fields are not sufficient for my needs. I would prefer to set limits to alternate values, in the software's 'advanced' preferences, if the developers create an advanced preference pane in their next major update.

Character Limits — Humbug!	
Character Limits	My Problem!
Name of your recipe – 50 characters max	Grilled Beef Tenderloin Steaks with Roquefort Rosemary Sauce – A limit of 100 characters would work better for titles
Source: source – 50 characters max	Name of chef and the URL or other source (magazine) where the recipe was found does not fit here. Alternately, I could create a reference category in the administration window, if I knew how. 100 characters, please.
Origin: [origin – 50 characters max]	Not a problem

Type: Type – 20 characters max	50 characters better meets my needs
Category: Category – 20 characters max	50 characters better meets my needs
Classifications [25 characters <mark>each</mark> max]: Classifications 1, 2, 3…	50 characters better meets my needs

One Last Idea — If wishes were horses, beggars would… As I continued to work with the program, starting to enter my recipes, I had other ideas I'd like added to the administration window. I've listed them below.

Wishes–Wishes — **Two More Buttons in the Administration Window**	
Cooking Methods (Items 1–6)	Braise, Boil, Bake, Grill, Pressure Cook, Smoke, Stir Fry…
General Nutrition & Health (Items 1–6)	Low Fat, Diabetic–Low Carb, Healthy Heart, High Protein, Low Calorie, Vegan…

This would allow more rational and more systematic separation of the items now listed under the 'classification' button. It would free that 'field' to better reflect my definitions of the 'type' and 'classification' fields and use the new fields for the categories I've tabulated.

Note: I've interlaced other suggestions into earlier part of my review. There's not much to dislike about the product's interface, usefulness, or features.

Conclusions
I must have tried a baker's dozen cooking/recipe software products these last three years. None pleased me. I began to think my only course of action was to create my own, using FileMaker Pro. Whenever a significant update of some of the products I'd tried was posted, my hopes were rekindled. My ongoing frustration with existing products poured out into my recent 3Rs column. Then along came TheRecipeManager. Although there are tweaks that are needed to satisfy my wants as a recipe junkie, TRM meets all of my core needs.

As you can tell from my review, the developers care about their product and respond rapidly to questions. In addition, although I've never worked with their database engine, Omnis, they've done an outstanding job creating a product so that all of us can add to, use, and manage our recipe collections. Now, if I could only manage my waistline as easily.

A technical question to TRM technical support was answered overnight, and, as expected, the answer worked. The product's modest cost and rich and flexible features make it a "must" buy. It does not matter whether you have only a hundred favorite recipes or many thousands; TRM is the place to store and access them.

I rate this product <mark>4.5 macCs</mark>,

<u>Beta Testing an Enhancement</u> — In version 1.1.1 of TRM, in order to import a recipe, you must reformat it to meet the API's interface. Larry Barcot, the developer, provided me with a new ''beta filter'' that enabled me to capture randomly formatted recipes on the clipboard (in text, of course.) Instead of the present error message that the content of clipboard is not correctly formatted, you get a chance to import your recipe working on it using a recently

developed filter. Although it still is in beta form TRM's Jefferson Eckert kindly installed and taught me how to use. Isn't it great when a developer lives in your community?

Needless to say, the new change to the software dropped my import time by an order of magnitude. Jeff and Larry then assured me that in the next version, importing will be even easier — *I can't wait.*

Training

InSide Editing with Final Cut Pro 4 Reviewed by Robert Pritchett

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Digital Media Training Series
http://www.digitalmediatraining.com
Product Link:
http://www.digitalmediatraining.com/products/fcp4/index.html
Released: Prior to May 10, 2004. Get Inside FCP5.
http://www.digitalmediatraining.com/products/fcp5/index.html
$70 USD; Inside FCP5 is $100 USD available in June 2005.
Requirements: Mac OS X; DVD Player, 256MB RAM; screen resolution 1024
x 768. QuickTime. Oh, and a copy of Final Cut Pro 4 or later by Apple.
Final Cut Pro itself requires either a G4 or G5 with 512 MB RAM or if using
FCP HD, 2 GB RAM; and Mac OS X 10.3.9 or later; 1 GB Hard drive space to
install and 10 GB to use – and a DVD player.
Contains: 1 DVD with over 7 hours of instruction, project files.

Strengths: Great information on video technology in general and FCP in
particular.

Weaknesses: The audio feed varies as if the instructor is close or far away from
the mic.

Dig Deeper: http://www.kenstone.net/fcp_homepage/fcp_homepage_index.html

InSide Editing with Final Cut Pro 4 presented by Evan Schechtman, is one of the Inside series by Magnet Media and
the Digital Media Training Series.

In 10 sections we are introduced to Final Cut Pro 4, given a basic tour, setup, capturing and editing media, learning
about color correction, compositing, animation and audio editing, media management and workflow for output.

DMTS
magnet media
1-877-606-5012
www.digitalmediatraining.com

TABLE OF CONTENTS

View the Final Project:
The Magic Hour

Help
Project Files
Additional Information

Minimize Training   Exit Training

Evan Schechtman takes the time to not just show off Final Cut Pro, but also goes into depth regarding video terminology, the differences between NTSC (Not The Same Color) and PAL (Perfect At Last), DV 4.1.1 and Digital Beta 4.2.2 for color space, superwhite vs. absolute white, video capture cards, transfers between 24 frames per second and 29.97 frames per second between video and film, Telecine transfer processes and even DVD progressive scan. Oh, and he takes the time to also discuss the differences between workflows with film vs. video.

There are even trivia tidbits such as knowing why certain rules were established. Did you know that older CRTs could be fired or blown up by increasing the signal with brightness to make the CRT too hot? Or two ways to optimize Mac OS X by turning off Directory Access protocols so Final Cut Pro works with fewer "beachballs" or by going into Terminal mode to shut off CPU-robbing processes?

Evan wraps up everything with the final product, "The Magic Hour Project". This training DVD is fast-paced, great information that is quite an education in video editing in general and FCP in particular.

I look forward to Inside Final Cut Pro 5 or Final Cut Studio, which is what you should be buying instead, now that it has been released by Apple.

InSide Motion and Inside Motion 2 Reviewed by Robert Pritchett

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http://www.magnetmediafilms.com
Digital Media Training Series
http://www.digitalmediatraining.com
Product Link:
http://www.digitalmediatraining.com/products/motion/index.html
Released: October 29, 3004, Inside Motion 2, June 2005.
$100 USD
Requirements: Mac OS X; DVD Player, screen resolution 1024 x 768.
QuickTime. Oh, and a copy of Motion by Apple.
Motion itself requires a Dual 2 GHz PowerMac G5 with 2 GB RAM
and Mac OS X 10.3.5 or later with an ATI Radeon 9800 Pro graphics
card.
Contains: 1 DVD with over 5 hours of instruction, project files.

Strengths: Quick, clean walkthrough, showing functionality from
someone who helped with the beta of the product.

Weaknesses: No bookmarking. Does not automatically advance to the
next lesson.

InSide Motion presented by Megan Cunningham, is one of the Inside series by Magnet Media and the Digital Media
Training Series.

Motion is Apple's motion graphics real-time package that integrates with Final Cut Pro and Megan was part of the
beta team, so she has a few insights on the product.

What she discusses is Audio, Objects and Animation, Particle Systems, Filter & Blend Modes, Masking,
Roundtripping (interoperating with DVD Studio Pro and Final Cut Pro), Keying Gestures (requires a Wacom tablet)
and Output. She does this in 12 easy lessons, using a pleasant, easy-listening voice.

What I learned was how Apple handles text behaviors and Motion's own dashboard for controlling and customizing
behaviors. Megan also shows how to optimize rendering performance, since most systems that can run Motion do
not meet the requirements listed above. I'm going to assume that Motion 2 resolves some of those issues. (Find out
more about Motion 2 here by Mark Spencer: http://www.applemotion.net/.) Megan also shows a few roundtripping
tips and strategies between Motion, DVD Studio and Final Cut Pro.

The DVD comes with Project Files so if we have a copy of Motion, we can work alongside Megan as she goes
through each of the various aspects of the program.

The DMTS screens begin with QuickTime video and I quickly discovered that I really needed to open each lesson in
a Separate window so that I could navigate between lessons better. Otherwise I had to keep the Table of Contents
open and walk down through each Section and Sub-lessons individually.
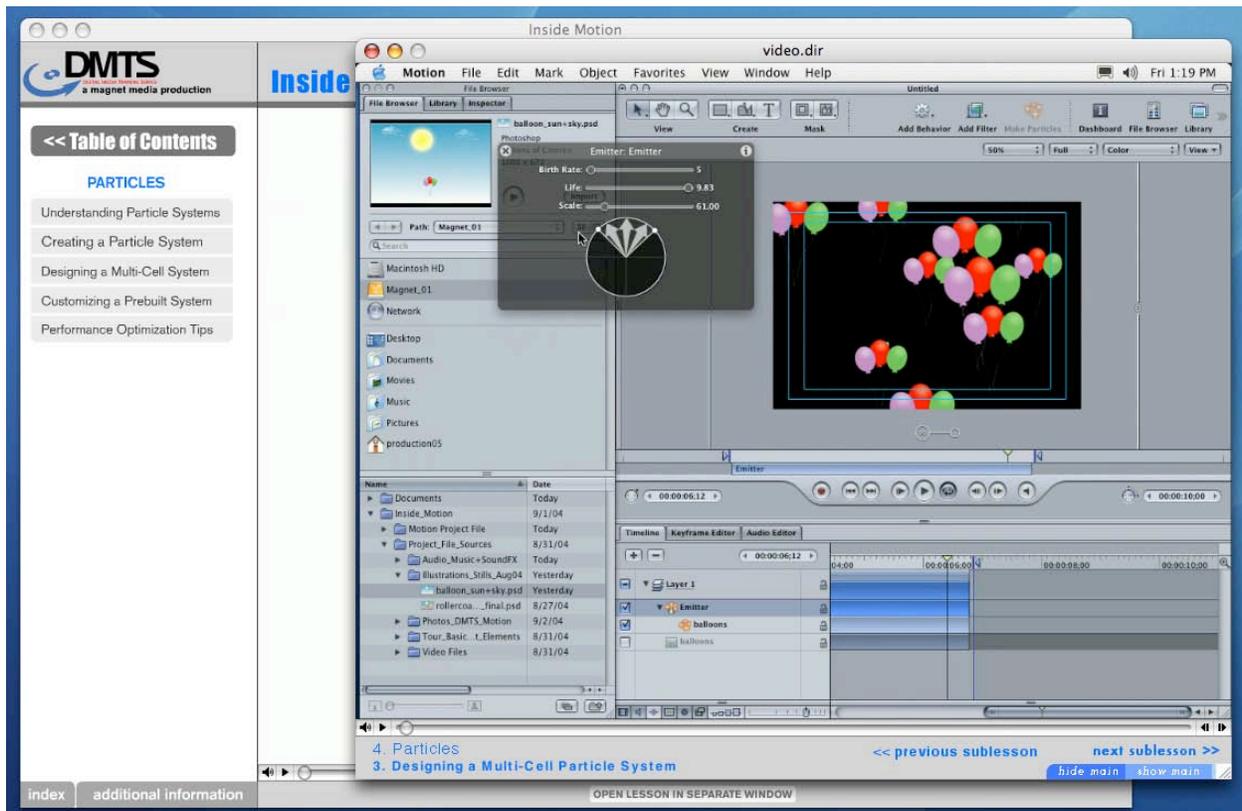
Unlike Total Training, there is no separate Interface program to load with each DVD. There also is no bookmarking function so you can pick up where you left off by opening the DVD. Nor are there Advertisements at the bottom of the screen to link you back to the DMTS website as Total Training does with their training sets.

What Magnet Media has to its advantage in competition with Total Training, is clean design that flows nicely and quickly gets us in, has us working and gets out of the way so we can get to work immediately.

If you would like to dig even deeper into *InSide Motion* besides going to the DMTS website to run a sample chapter, then go to Alex Alexzander's excellent review at
http://www.kenstone.net/fcp_homepage/review_inside_motion_alex.html.

Apple obviously likes DMTS, because they sell *Inside Motion* along with Motion. I think you might want to jump forward to Apple's Motion 2, however and get Inside Motion 2 instead at
http://www.digitalmediatraining.com/products/motion2/index.html for the same price. You get this DVD, plus another DVD with the Motion 2 updates and this will be made available in June, 2005.

Total Training For: Adobe® Illustrator® CS2 Reviewed by Robert Pritchett
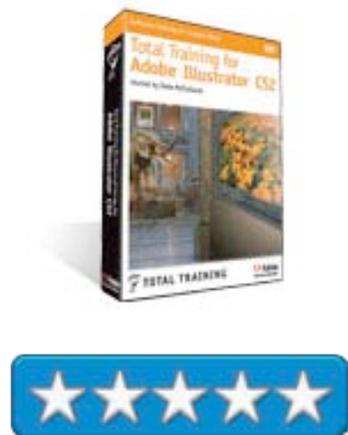
Presenter: Steve Holmes
http://www.totaltraining.com/bios/steveholmes.asp?mscsid
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1-888-368-6825
mailto:sales@totaltraining.com
http://www.totaltraining.com/
Product site:
http://www.totaltraining.com/prod/adobe/illustratorcs2.asp?mscsid
Released: April 05, 2005
$200 USD.
Requirements: Adobe Illustrator CS2. A computer system (Mac or WinTel) that has plenty of RAM (256) and hard drive space (600 MB) and has audio output. Video resolution should be 1024x768. QuickTime 5.0l.2 or later. Oh, and a DVD drive. Web connection.
Contains: 2 DVDs and the Total Training run-time interface player program and comes with Project files. 18 hours run time.
For Beginners through Advanced.

Strengths: Cross-platform. Well-organized.
Weaknesses: None Found.

Reviewed under Mac OS X 10.4 on an iMac G5 and 1 GB RAM.

Total Training For: Adobe® Illustrator® CS2 is presented by Deke McClelland. Of course, you need a copy of Illustrator CS2 to get into this training, otherwise, why are you here? This is really one of a 3-set bundle with Photoshop CS2 and InDesign CS2 being the other two parts of "Phase 1" or Standard Edition. "Phase 2" will come later as the Premium Edition and will contain training modules from "Design to Delivery" and GoLive2.

This package has 2 Parts; Part 1 contains 12 lessons and Part 2 has another 12 lessons, plus a Bonus Lesson on Tips, Tricks and Real World Files. And like the other training modules in the series, registration is required to view the Bonus training lesson.

As with *Total Training For: Adobe® Illustrator® CS2,* the Training Application is installed to run the training videos (TILCS2 Launchpad Mac in my case). And as I said in the *Total Training For: Adobe® Photoshop® CS2* review, the interface has been markedly improved. Thanks, Total Training!

What I enjoy the most from Total Training is that the Launchpad is smart enough to remember where I left off so I could pick up where I stopped. There is no way you can sit down for 18 hours in one sitting and absorb everything. Total Training understands that and acts accordingly.

Illustrator CS2
There are some excellent on-line reviews of Adobe's Illustrator CS2 application and hopefully ours will appear in the July issue of *macCompanion*. Deke points out the parts he loves the most about this version and demystifies the others. It is readily apparent that Deke loves Illustrator CS2.

We learn that the Bridge is used extensively in Illustrator CS2 and there are a lot of incremental improvements.

If you upgrade to CS2, you will find that the CS2 training packages from Total Training are first-rate!

I'd really like to know how they got such advanced notice and copies of Adobe CS2 so they could do the Adobe CS2 training series since the final product wasn't released until late May and these training videos were released back in April. Obviously they have an inside track. And they do such a good job, is there any wonder?

Total Training For: Adobe® InDesign® CS2 Reviewed by Robert Pritchett

Presenter: Steve Holmes
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1-888-368-6825
mailto:sales@totaltraining.com
http://www.totaltraining.com/
Product site:
http://www.totaltraining.com/prod/adobe/indesigncs2.asp?mscsid
Released: April 05, 2005
$250 USD.
Requirements: Adobe InDesign CS2. A computer system (Mac or WinTel) that has plenty of RAM (256) and hard drive space (600 MB) and has audio output. Video resolution should be 1024x768. QuickTime 5.0l.2 or later. Oh, and a DVD drive. Web connection.
Contains: 2 DVDs and the Total Training run-time interface player program and comes with Project files. 16 hours, 34 minutes run time.
For Beginners through Advanced.

Strengths: Cross-platform. Well-organized.
Weaknesses: None Found.

Reviewed under Mac OS X 10.4 on an iMac G5 and 1 GB RAM.

Total Training For: Adobe® InDesign® CS2 is presented by Steve Holmes. Of course, you need a copy of InDesign CS2 to get into this training, otherwise, why are you here? This is really one of a 3-set bundle with Photoshop CS2 and Illustrator CS2 being the other two parts of "Phase 1" or Standard Edition. "Phase 2" will come later as the Premium Edition and will contain training modules from "Design to Delivery" and GoLive2.

This package has 2 Parts; Part 1 contains 20 lessons covering Design, Typography and Layout. Part 2 involves us in Production Magic and Streamlined Output.

As with *Total Training For: Adobe® Photoshop® CS2,* the Training Application is installed to run the training videos (TIDCS2 Launchpad Mac in my case). And as I said in the *Total Training For: Adobe® Photoshop® CS2* review, the interface has been markedly improved. Thanks, Total Training!

At the end of Part 2, there is a Bonus Lesson that can be accessed only after registration at totaltraining.com for an unlock code. It covers Poster Design with 13 sections and runs another 59 minutes.

Steve Holmes carries his English accent throughout this set and it is obvious from over 15 years of experience that he knows his topic well, as he shows us step by step how to create an interactive brochure of the Berliner Museum of Art that includes some QuickTime Movie clips in the final PDFed version.

InDesign CS2

There are some excellent on-line reviews of Adobe's InDesign CS2 application. Our reviews will hopefully appear next month (July). Steve really loves the CS2 version as he says time and again "finally" some thing he has asked for years to be included has been added. He obviously loves Snippets and footnotes and Adobe's own Jepson font, not among the 40 OpenType fonts included with InDesign CS2, and Kepler's OpenType Standard font (also not included).

I'm hoping that with time we can use InDesign CS2 in the next issue of *macCompanion,* as we discover more treasures in Adobe's truly awesome Creative Suite 2 Premium.

If you want to get quickly up-to-speed with InDesign CS2, then you really ought to invest in Total Training's Professional Series that includes this package.

Total Training For: Adobe® Photoshop® CS2 Reviewed by Robert Pritchett
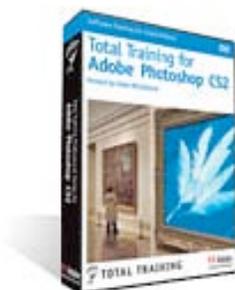
Presenter: Deke McClelland
http://www.totaltraining.com/bios/dekemcclelland.asp?mscsid
Total Training, Inc.
1819 Aston Ave.
Suite 101
Carlsbad, CA 92008
1-888-368-6825
mailto:sales@totaltraining.com
http://www.totaltraining.com/
Product site: http://www.totaltraining.com/prod/adobe/photoshopcs2.asp?mscsid=
Released: April 05, 2005
$300 USD.
Requirements: Adobe Photoshop CS2. A computer system (Mac or WinTel) that has plenty of RAM (256) and hard drive space (600 MB) and has audio output. Video resolution should be 1024x768. QuickTime 5.0l.2 or later. Oh, and a DVD drive. Web connection.
Contains: 3 DVDs and the Total Training run-time interface player program and Project files. 21 hours, 50 minutes run time.
For Beginners through Advanced.

Strengths: Cross-platform. Well-organized.
Weaknesses: None Found.

Reviewed under Mac OS X 10.4 on an iMac G5 and 1 GB RAM.

Total Training For: Adobe® Photoshop® CS2 is presented by Deke McClelland. Of course, you need a copy of Photoshop CS2 to get into this training, otherwise, why are you here? If you have an older copy of Photoshop, this isn't going to do you much good. This is really the first set of a 3-set bundle with InDesign CS2 and Illustrator CS2 being the other two parts of "Phase 1" or Standard Edition. "Phase 2" will come later as the Premium Edition and will contain training modules from "Design to Delivery" and GoLive2.

This package has 4 parts; Part 1 contains 12 lessons introducing the Bridge and other navigation and setup activities to get us familiar with the application. Part 2 discusses a few advances in 12 more lessons such as opacity, blending, masking, transforming warping and actions. Part 3 has 10 lessons on making adjustments, filtering and finally, liquefying. The last part has two bonus lessons on vanishing points and smart objects.

To use the Training package, the Training Application be installed to run the training videos (TPSCS2 Launchpad Mac in my case). The interface has been markedly improved. Thanks, Total Training! The obnoxious in-your-face Total Training advertising has been seriously subdued. I guess they realized that we already bought Total Training and don't need to be constantly reminded where the package came from.

The Bonus Lessons require registration at totaltraining.com for an unlock code.

Deke McClelland begins with an expensive set after leading us through a Renaissance-Themed Michael Angelo/Leonardo Da Vinci approach to learning. I noticed that Deke seems to have switched to a Mac while working on this presentation, but occasionally shows the WinTel screens in Photoshop. I find the presentations more "balanced". "Who needs Magellan, when you've got McClelland!"

The flow is so much better than earlier Total Training presentations. And I noticed that Deke gives the Mac key combos before the WinTel key combos this time. Sweet! Also sweet is the option to run forward in the TPSC2 interface at either 2x or 4x in each lesson if you want to skip through the audio, even if Deke has an excellent command of the English language and a great sense of humor and you enjoy his colloquialisms. Navigation has been improved considerably for getting to both lessons and topics.

The package comes with 3 DVDs (ergo, Parts 1, 2 and 3) and one double-sided accordion-folded menu sheet. Total Training has really done an excellent job paying attention to detail. Even the case that holds the DVDs is quality.

Photoshop CS2

There are some excellent on-line reviews of Adobe's Photoshop CS2 application and hopefully ours will appear in the July issue of *macCompanion*. Deke points out the parts he loves the most about this version and demystifies the others.

We learn that the Bridge replaces the File Browser in Photoshop. Image sizing is done with a slider now. Navigation, though still not quite Mac-like has improved with tabbing (docking well) and drag&drop activities. There are a lot of incremental improvements.

If you upgrade to CS2, you will find that the CS2 training packages from Total Training are first-rate!

See Ya!

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macCompanion Media Kit

We are the Macintosh® Professional Network (MPN), Limited Liability Corporation (LLC). MPN, LLC continues to evolve, ever since its creation in 1996 as a way to reach out to those who use computers for a living in an effort to make their lives easier and their work both enjoyable and profitable.

Besides consulting efforts, we also provide monthly book, hardware and software reviews at *macCompanion*. We offer ways and means for folks to get comfortable using the Macintosh™ created by the Apple® Corporation in the multibillion-dollar computer industry. We know that bad software doesn't live long in the Mac™ environment. On the other hand, good computer equipment and software becomes great as the word spreads, and we are very good at helping to spread it. Our suggestions over the years have also helped improve many successful products in use today. Through kind and gentle efforts, we have been able to help many people move to better tools-of-the-trade so they can be more productive in their work.

Besides our website, we also create *macCompanion* as a freely available PDF-based monthly. It averages about 100 pages per month. July 2004 is the first-year anniversary of this labor of love. The *macCompanion* staff is an all-volunteer team of writers and reviewers from many parts of the globe, and they also have a great wealth of knowledge and experience in their backgrounds. That base of talent also continues to keep growing as the Macintosh Professional Network expands.

Statistical Analysis

We are very excited about our site statistics! The multilingual-capable *macCompanion* website surpassed 1 million hits a month, starting June 2004 and readership continues to increase rapidly through our "whisper campaign". Last October we switched over to our current host. They have provided us with excellent support and tools to help us do our job. They have the right tools to do theirs too. It is a great, robust relationship and we are very proud of them.

We continue to get greater visibility every day. Many of the various 35 computer operating systems (with many moving towards the Mac® OS X™ environment), 115 online search engines, 269 countries and domains and 319 online robots have discovered us – and continue to do so. So far, over 201 other websites have also linked to us. Many of our readers have made our site one of their favorites. While nearly 70% of our readership stops by for a quick visit via RSS feeds, over 23% spend between 1/2 to 1 hours at a time going through over 250 different pages on our site (mostly archives). Many of those who quickly drop by, come to get the monthly PDFed issue of *macCompanion*. Over 8GB of bandwidth was used in June 2004 alone for download purposes. Previous months have averaged around 6GB. Trend analysis indicates that will continue to increase.

Advertising with *macCompanion*

We have four advertising options you may choose from, and multiple months will receive a 20% discount for both website and PDF-based ads. All advertising must be paid in advance. We accept credit card payments via PayPal, checks, money orders by regular mail and cash in US currency by hand.

Site Ad Rate

We offer site ads for a fixed-budget price of only $100 per month on our site. Following the KISS principle, we accept banner ads in only one size at this time - 468x60 pixels (per the Interactive Advertising Bureau standards for a Full Banner Ad Interactive Marketing Unit.) The ad will be rotated through with other ads, and there is no limit to how many you want to include.

The billing cycle begins based on the first day the ad placed on the site and is renewable on a monthly basis. This can begin immediately or at any time.

(If you want us to create those online-ads for you, the cost is $100 per hour, with a minimum 2-hour base fee.)

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The published monthly version of *macCompanion* has a closing date of the 25th of each month for ads. Our target date for distribution begins the 5th of each month. Placement of the ads will be at our discretion, but we do listen to your suggestions.

Each ad will require a site link so our readers can click on the PDF ad and go to your site. Ads need to be submitted as PDFs with at least 300 DPI resolution.

(If you want us to create those ads for you, the cost is $100 per hour, with a minimum 2-hour base fee. You will then need to send us proofs, etc. in JPEG or GIF formats.)

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1/3rd Page Horizontal	$70 USD	7 1/4 x 3 1/4 in	7.25 x 3.25 in	18.4 x 8.3 cm
1/3rd Page Vertical	$70 USD	2 1/4 x 9 7/8 in	2.25 x 9.875 in	5.7 x 25.1 cm
2/3rd Page Horizontal	$150 USD	7 1/4 x 6 1/4 in	7.25 x 6.25 in	18.4 x 15.9 cm
2/3rd Page Vertical	$150 USD	4 3/4 x 9 7/8 in	4.75 x 9.875 in	12.1 x 25.1 cm
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If you are as excited about our *macCompanion* readership as we are, please download the contractual terms and conditions documentation that are online in PDF format, or we can send them to you as an attachment. We'd enjoy having an ongoing working relationship with you too.

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Email works best.

Well that's it for this issue and this year. Please come back again!