macCompanion
YOUR GUIDE TO ALL THINGS MACINTOSH

The Redmond Syndrome

In this issue...

- Photoshop CS 2 Tips
- Adobe InCopy CS2
- iDrive 1.5 w/ Mosaic
- LEGO Builders Guide
- OS X Tiger : Missing Manual
- and MUCH MORE!

VOLUME 3 ISSUE 11 November 2005

Cover designed by James Meister

Table of Contents

Masthead

Letter From the CEO

Redmond Syndrome and Adobe by Robert Pritchett

As a discussion point countering John Dvorak's earlier diatribe against Apple and Macs (where he refers to folks who use computers to write for a living as "all using Macs" and thus give MS short shrift and Apple unbalanced praise. He has to be doing this kind of journalism "tongue-permanently planted in cheek". However, he sounds like he has a pretty good grasp of humor listening to him on Leo Laporte's; This WEEK in TECH weekly program.

A For-Instance of why folks migrate to the Mac:

The Stockholm Syndrome (http://lists.essential.org/1998/am-info/msg01084.html)

"It is usually during the termination that a relatively common phenomenon, popularly referred to as the Stockholm Syndrome or as the Hostage Identification Syndrome, takes on some importance. Many hostages become *emotionally involved with their captors* due partly to the extreme stress of the situation and partly to the complete dependence of the hostage upon his or her captor for survival."

Winn Schwartau calls a similar non-Mac computer-based tendency the "Redmond Syndrome".

> **Definition: the constant frustration in dealing with Windows with "complete dependence" - having to wait for the next version to fix *current* problems.**

I have a Masters Degree in Computer Systems and I'm also a former Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer (remember the NT version?) and issues with Windows-based computers still baffle me sometimes.

I spent more than a week of unproductiveness on my XP Pro at the place that pays me for my attempts at trying to be productive, going back and forth between MS Office and Adobe Acrobat 7, because I wasn't smart enough to figure out that instead of uninstalling and reinstalling software, all I really needed to understand is that the PDFMaker app is a MS macro!

Apparently what I had done was that I turned off MS Macros in order to practice safe computing. I should have left the macro function turned on in unsafe mode and I would have been "all right".

My frustration level went way up as I did the old "Polish joke scenario" of chasing myself around and ending up with the same results. Again and again. Completely uninstall Adobe Acrobat Professional. Reboot. Uninstall MS Office 2003. Reboot. Reinstall Office. Reboot. Reinstall Adobe Acrobat. Reboot. Do the security updates. Reboot. Same results. Uninstall both. Reinstall both. Same results. I guess I was suffering from the Redmond Syndrome.

Our office tech was going to have me reformat the hard drive and start over instead. The so-called "repair" functions in both apps didn't clue me in to what was really going on. Final solution? I googled for "Missing PDFMaker error" and got my answer online at http://pdfzone.com/article2/0,1895,1834394,00.asp.

I also have an older copy of MS Office Professional with Front Page. I can't uninstall it because I don't have the original disk anymore. We stopped participating in the MS Tech program and we received a letter from MS legal saying we had to destroy all software we received over the last few years under that program because we refused to continue paying for the annual subscription. So we did just that. We prefer not to give MS Legal Eagles any reasons to soar over us looking for any juicy morsels.

Thus the wish by our tech to reformat the drive (which is the final solution for any MS Operating System problem, by the way – and he schedules time every 3 months to replace his operating systems on his Windows-based computers so he "doesn't have problems") instead of fixing the other issue between being able to create PDFs with Adobe Acrobat 7 from Word documents.

Why didn't either the Adobe app or the MS Office app just say the issue was that I had to turn on macros to get the Adobe macro to work?

Previously, we have linked to Winn Schwartau's article last month with his free Total Cost of Ownership tools at:
http://www.maccompanion.com/archives/october2005/Columns/MadAsHell.htm

Gartner posted their TCO Tools at:
http://www.gartner.com/4_decision_tools/measurement/decision_tools/tco/tco_eoc.html

Now go take a look at *Total Cost of Ownership (TCO), Is Not Just A Buzzword Anymore* by James R. Stoup published Jul 08, 2005 at:
http://www.applematters.com/index.php/section/comments/tco_its_not_just_a_buzzword_any_longer/

He looks at:

> 1. *Original cost of the computer and software*
>
> 2. *Hardware and software upgrades*
>
> 3. *Maintenance*
>
> 4. *Technical support*
>
> 5. *Training*

I like this quote from James Maguire posted way back on November 22, 2003 4:00AM at
http://www.newsfactor.com/story.xhtml?story_title=Mac_vs__PC__The_Truth_About_TCO
in his article, *Mac vs. PC: The Truth About TCO:*

> There are many more Windows technicians than Apple technicians, so their services are less expensive, says analyst Roger Kay. Then again, "an apple technician may cost twice as much, but he comes to see you half as often."

Jem Matzan posted thoughts on *TOTAL COST AND BENEFIT OF OWNERSHIP at:*
http://www.thejemreport.com/mambo/content/view/32/42/ on December 05, 2004 and emphasized Total **Benefit** of Ownership as criteria for getting a new system – or keeping and updating an old one.

I quote, but do not necessarily agree with his comments, because his axe is grinding about Linux on Windows-bases computer systems;

> "One major benefit that is implied here is time. How much time are you willing to spend setting up and configuring a system, or repairing it if the software crashes and needs to be fixed? How much is your time worth to you? How quickly can you learn a new OS? If you need hassles to be at an absolute minimum, an Apple OS X system may be the right choice if price is no object. If you need optimum reliability and don't have the time to mess with a system once it's up and running, SuSE or FreeBSD are the best choices. There is also the ubiquity factor: can you get along without Windows? As mentioned, there are many Windows emulators available, some difficult to configure and some quite easy. In most cases you won't need Windows software once you get used to the Free alternatives, or the OS X proprietary software, which is parallel to Windows (such as MS Office, Adobe Photoshop, etc.). There are many personal factors involved, and these are the sort of questions you have to ask yourself before purchasing a new computer for your home or office; only you can answer them."

My machine at the office I work at needs to be replaced, but due to the nature of the software we produce, it is decidedly Windows-centric – only because the Insurance industry hasn't moved to the Mac yet. Perhaps we need to focus attention on Total Benefit of Ownership so we can be productive instead of submitting to "Redmond Syndrome"?

Letter From the Editor

Thanks for the Memories by Robert Pritchett

November is a month for reflection and remembering the past and thanking Providence for the blessings we have been given over the past year or so. We even celebrate it with a Holy Day known as "Thanksgiving" on this continent.

I'm thankful for a lot of things, including Apple Corporation and it's current innovative healthy situation.

I personally can praise the Lord for pretty much keeping me out of physical and mental harm's way so far this year. Many others have not been so blessed and we must remember them and offer financial and moral support as they dig out from natural and man-made disasters around this planet we affectionately call Earth.

I'm also thankful for a great staff that continues to amaze me with their articles and reviews. They really do a great job don't they? Please express your opinions in our macCompanion Forum or send your views to feedback@maccompanion.com.

And we continue to get great participation from the rest of the Mac environment as we morph into becoming the *Reader's Digest* of the Mac Community.

Tim Verpoorten has joined us this month with his new monthly column – *Freeware for the Mac* based on his Mac ReviewCast podcasts and Dennis Sellers has also debuted to offer his opinion pieces from Macsimum News – "Your Leading Apple News Alternative". Please give these gentlemen and the other recent columnists, a warm welcome to *macCompanion*.

We are also finishing up our latest contest on switching to Mac OS X Tiger that concluded October 31st. Stay tuned to find out who the contest winners are in the December issue of *macCompanion*! We will also be posting the results in our Blog.

Meanwhile, go to our website at macCompanion to review past issues, buy products from our Bazaar and link though our affiliates so we can keep *macCompanion* viable.

I'm especially thankful to each of you for visiting us and downloading our/your magazine. Our goal was to reach 2 million viewers by January 2006. By the end of October, we had nearly 58,000 unique visitors, nearly 1.8 million "hits", 1.4 million page views and nearly 35 GB of bandwidth used in access and downloads. Only 4 GB of that were "bots". Over 80% of viewers came from non-Mac systems. October 2005 has been the busiest month so far because each of you have been spreading the word about us.

Thank you! May your memories be fond ones.

According to Hoyle...

Cross-Platform Software Development from a Macintosh Perspective, Part III: wxWidgets
by Jonathan Hoyle

mailto:jhoyle@maccompanion.com

Two months ago, we began our series on cross-platform software development for the Macintosh [http://www.maccompanion.com/archives/september2005/Columns/According_to_Hoyle_1.htm]. Our goal is to examine the many solutions available to the Mac programmer, whether he be a professional developer or just a hobbyist. We started first by examining cross-platform C++ frameworks, with a review of Qt last month [http://www.maccompanion.com/archives/october2005/Columns/According_to_Hoyle_2.htm]. This month, we will review another C++ framework, the open source project wxWidgets [http://www.wxwidgets.org].

wxWidgets History & Overview

Through most of its history, this framework was known as *wxWindows*. In early 2004, Microsoft applied legal pressure against the organization alleging copyright infringement to their *Microsoft Windows* product name. Although it would be ludicrous to think anyone could confuse these two products, the decision was to bypass legal battles by renaming the project as *wxWidgets.* Frivolous lawsuits notwithstanding, wxWidgets' user base has remained fiercely loyal, making it a popular alternative to the commercial Qt [http://www.trolltech.com].

wxWidgets began in 1992 by Julian Smart, in an attempt to create an open source GUI framework for cross-platform development, targeting (at the time) the Windows and Linux operating systems. In 1998, Stefan Csomor began the initial Macintosh port (called *wxMac*), and over the course of time the Mac port slowly matured. Until fairly recently, wxMac remained somewhat buggy and was not truly available for prime time. In 2004, version 2.6 of wxWidgets was released, which was a very stable and functional release.   Version 2.6.2 was released this summer, which updated wxMac for compatibility with Intel-based Macintoshes. It was also announced that 2.6.x will be the final versions supporting Classic/Mac OS 9.

Creating Applications with wxWidgets

wxWidgets is a very large and fairly complete application framework. It comprises several hundred C++ classes abstracting away OS-specific implementations. Although wxMac is written to the Carbon API specification, there is a separate initiative called *wxCocoa,* which is an implementation of wxWidgets written to the Cocoa API. (Since this latter framework is still under development, we will be focusing on the former only.) wxMac can be compiled under either Xcode or CodeWarrior, the latter being required for Classic support. When compiling under Xcode 2.1 or higher, wxMac can be compiled as a Universal Binary (that is, to run on both PowerPC and Intel-based Macintoshes).

Unfortunately, application development with wxWidgets is tailored more for Windows MFC programmers than it is for Mac developers. Its set of classes have almost a one-to-one mapping with equivalents in MFC; most in fact have the identical name, save for the "wx" prefix. The similarity is quite obvious, down to the very Windows-oriented *wxTaskBarIcon* class. Even ugly MFC macros have been duplicated here. The wxWidget class hierarchy can be viewed at: [http://www.codeproject.com/useritems/wxWidgets/wxposter.png]. Although Stefan Csomor has worked very hard to try to bring wxWidgets to a comfortable user experience on the Mac, it is still feels very much like a Windows product. It's clear that the decision early on was to design wxWidgets for ease of portability of MFC applications, rather than designing from scratch what the best cross-platform approach should be. For this reason, I recommend for anyone choosing to use wxWidgets as a solution to not go it alone and pick up the book *Cross-Platform GUI Programming with wxWidgets* [ISBN: 0131473816, July 2005].

For GUI design, Mac OS X users are accustomed to creating nib files with *Interface Builder*. Unfortunately, there is no facility in wxWidgets to import such files. There are however some GUI generating tools available for wxWidgets, including *wxDesigner* and *DialogBlocks*. Although they pale in comparison to Interface Builder's user experience, they do have the benefit of being cross-platform. The very un-Mac like feel is evident from this screenshot from *wxDesigner*: [http://www.www.roebling.de/wxDesignerX.gif].

wxWidgets is not nearly as well known as Qt, yet a surprising number of projects have adopted its use. Some notable applications written with wxWidgets include *AOL Communicator, AVG Anti-Virus* and Xerox's *VIPP PostScript Printware*. There are a number of wxWidgets games as well, such as *Hugo*, *Chess Commander*, and *Nyko AirFlo*. Corporate users include AMD, CalTech, Lockheed Martin, the US Navy, NASA and many others.

Support

Without question, wxWidgets is a huge open source success story. With community help wxWidgets has the widest support base of any C++ framework. It supports not only Mac OS 9/X and Windows, but also various flavors of Linux, Solaris, AIX, HP-UX, Irix, SCO Unix, FreeBSD, OpenVMS, 16-bit Windows and 64-bit Windows. It even supports OS/2. Embedded systems are currently being targeted, which include Windows CE and Palm OS. For a complete list of supported platforms, visit http://www.wxwidgets.org/platform.htm. Compiler support is also impressively complete, supporting CodeWarrior, Xcode, Visual C++, Borland C++ and a number of the Linux compilers.

wxWidgets' licensing is also extremely generous. First of all, it is open source, and therefore perfectly cost-free. And unlike Qt's restrictive GPL licensing, wxWidgets' license allows you to use it for commercial development, with no requirement to release your source code. There are no costs, royalties or any hidden charges anywhere. About the only thing you can't do with it is repackage it and claim it as your own.

The newsgroup comp.soft-sys.wxwindows is actively monitored and responses are given in a very timely fashion. Being part of the Open Source community, wxWidgets source code is available for all to see, and bug reports and fixes are submitted continually. In addition, commercial support is available to those who wish to have it. Also on the web site are bug "bounties", in which developers are offered money to submit fixes (many of these bounties are priced in the $200 range).

Conclusion

wxWidgets is free, unrestricted and can target more platforms than you could possibly wish for. In this way, wxWidgets seems almost too good to be true. Unfortunately, the significant down side to it is its very poor Macintosh user experience. Furthermore, wxWidgets is not quite as rich in capabilities as Qt, and you can expect to run into more bugs along the way than you would in Qt. For this reason, GPL developers using Qt's Open Source Edition would probably not have any reason to switch to wxWidgets. For commercial development, there are a number of inexpensive cross-platform solutions which are much more Macintosh-friendly. In light of that, it hardly seems worth the effort to learn wxWidgets, in spite of the fact it is free. If your needs are a free cross-platform environment, then wxWidgets is your best and only solution. However, for under $100, you can find a cross-platform environment with a much better Macintosh user experience than wxWidgets.

Coming Up Next: Part IV: **CPLAT!**

http://www.jonhoyle.com/resume/

http://www.adhocconference.com/cgi-bin/blosxom.cgi/Speakers/#Hoyle

"The Mac Attack" - Mac Tips, Tricks, and Hints

Keeping your Mac running it's best by Steve Stanger

http://themacattack.us
http://www.stevecom.com
sstanger@maccompanion.com

This month's article is about using freeware and shareware applications for OS X maintenance. First you will need to download <u>one</u> of the following applications. All of these applications allow you to perform Mac OS X maintenance, cleaning and optimization tasks:

Onyx - http://www.titanium.free.fr/pgs/english.html
Cocktail - http://www.macosxcocktail.com/
Macaroni - http://www.atomicbird.com/
MainMenu - http://www.santasw.com/products.html - (This is the application I use)

Always back up before doing any kind of maintenance on your computer.

Note: Be patient while running the following tasks, some can take a few minutes to complete depending on the speed of your computer.

Task 1: Repair Disk Permissions
Repair Permissions verifies System file permissions on the hard disk and repairs them as necessary. Incorrect permissions can result from certain installers or after a System crash, and might cause unexpected behavior. They can sometime slow down the computer considerably and impede the opening of a file or an application. I highly recommend that repairing disk permissions become part of your regular routine before and after you install any system updates or software applications.

Task 2: Run Maintenance Scripts
Mac OS X includes a task manager named "cron," which automates system cleaning by executing the "periodic" utility. There are three scripts that OS X must run regularly.

The *Daily Script* removes scratch and junk files, backs up the NetInfo database, checks subsystem status, and rotates the System.log file. By default, this script is executed every day at 3:15 AM, if the computer is turned on and not sleeping.

The *Weekly Script* rebuilds the Locate and Whatis databases - The "whatis" and "locate" are two databases used by the subsystem. The "whatis" database contains a description of all system commands. The "locate" database contains an index of pathnames to files stored on the computer and is used to quickly find files and folders. By default, this script is executed every Saturday at 4:30 AM, if the computer is turned on and not sleeping. This operation might take a few minutes when you run it manually.

The *Monthly Script* restarts the syslog daemon, runs login accounting, and rotates a number of log files. By default, this script is executed the first day of every month at 5:30 AM, if the computer is turned on and not sleeping.

Task Note (the un-task): Update Prebindings (sometimes referred to as optimizi*ng*) <u>does not need to be performed manually</u>. Starting in 10.2, prebinding information is automatically updated as a normal part of system operation. There is no need to ever manually update prebinding information.

Applications on Mac OS X, like applications on every modern operating system, are composed of more than just a single file that is executed by the computer. When an application is prebound, it means that the application, various components, and dynamic library contains a cache of all of the parts it needs in an already bound state. Prebinding only affects application launch times and only for native OS X applications.

Task 3: Update the Whatis, Locate, and LaunchServices databases
The *whatis* database contains a description of all system commands. The *locate* database contains an index of pathnames to files stored on the computer and is used to quickly find files and folders. The *launchservices* database is a set of software functions applications use for accessing services provided by the system.

For those of you who used Macs before OS X, rebuilding the launchservices database is similar to rebuilding the desktop in OS 9 and should correct application associations, remove old or duplicate entries in "Open With" contextual menu and restore default icons. You should restart your computer after rebuilding the launchservices database to force the Finder and other applications to refresh.

Task 4: Cache Cleaning
A cache is a place to store something temporarily so the OS or a program can retrieve and use it quickly. OS X uses disk-based caches that hold copies of graphics, frequently performed calculations, and the contents of dynamic menus. If a cache gets corrupt it can cause some tough to diagnose problems with the OS and applications.

You will want to "clean" the User and System caches. Other tasks I would recommend in this step are empting you browser cache, clear browser history, clean font caches. In many of the system maintenance applications all of the cache cleaning is listed in the same window.

Task Note: Side Effects of Cache Cleaning
- Your first restart after System cache cleaning will take longer than normal as important System related cache files are rebuilt.
- Notifications to again approve previously approved applications may appear. Once you have approved the launch of the application, no further alerts for that application will be seen.
- Under Tiger, fonts disabled in Font Book may become enabled. If you have disabled hundreds of fonts with Font Book, having all such fonts enabled could result in slow performance of your Mac.
- I strongly recommend rebooting your computer twice before running any applications after cleaning the user and system caches on your Mac.

Additional Notes
Some of the Mac OS X maintenance applications allow you to rebuild the Spotlight index. Rebuilding the index forces the computer to re-index the locally connected hard drives. This is not necessary unless you are having problems with Spotlight.

Warning against deleting cookies. Cookies are packets of information sent by a server to a browser and then sent back by the browser each time it accesses that server. Cookies are used to keep track of your online sessions. This is essential to many bulletin board (forums) features, like passwords, post tracking and various viewing preferences.

Your mileage may vary on how often should perform these maintenance tasks. I would recommend every two to three months. If it seems like your computer starts acting sluggish sooner, then run the tasks once a month. Any more then once a month and you are not allowing OS X to take advantage of it's caching system.

Remember - *Always back up before doing any kind of maintenance on your computer.*

Click away. Be safe. Have fun!

For more information about this topic and other Mac tips I invite you to listen to my weekly podcast - "The Mac Attack"

MacNightOwl

Apple Reliability: A Look at the Chaos Theory by Gene Steinberg

So I was hanging out in The Tech Night Owl LIVE chat room the other night talking with some listeners, when one began to speak about USB-related problems with this 17-inch Apple LCD display. Earlier that day, a client dropped off his 700MHz eMac, complaining that he couldn't get it to recognize his FireWire backup drive after upgrading to Mac OS 10.4.2. A few of you out there, a very vocal few I might add, have suffered from broken LCD displays on your brand new iPod nanos. During a brief conversation with a guest after recording an interview for the radio show, he went on to explain how his first-generation iMac G5 experienced a serious hardware failure.

Is there any connection between these events? Well, I haven't even started and I could mention that vintage PowerBook I once owned, where some sort of adhesive would keep leaking from the bottom of the screen bezel. But that's another era, long before Steve Jobs returned to Apple to rescue it from almost certain doom.

Let's not forget iTunes 5, which shipped with serious bugs in both the Mac and Windows versions, or a certain Apple Security Update that broke 64-bit applications. Consider the serious flaws that seem to erupt in every single Apple product release. What makes matters worse is that these problems aren't consistent. Not everyone is affected. For example, I installed iTunes 5 when it first came out and encountered no performance anomalies whatever. I had a 17-inch Apple display, and it functioned perfectly, even though it was a refurbished model. Oh well, maybe they addressed the bugs before it came my way.

Oh did I forget a certain Power Mac G5 model, with a 1.8GHz processor, which suffered from problems ejecting media, waking from sleep and other ills?

It's not that these issues and the countless others that fill the pages of Mac support sites around the world impact everyone. Some are afflicted, some are immune. In fact, you can look at every single product Apple has ever released, from hardware to software and find a few people who confront serious problems of one sort or another. At the same time, you can find others who encountered no difficulties whatever, and continue to extol the incredible reliability of items bearing the Apple label.

Now I suppose you can attribute this chaotic situation to the sample-to-sample variations of hardware. From computers to cars, you are dealing with complicated devices that can and do fail from time to time. Software? Don't get me started. The more sophisticated the program, the more problems exist. But again, not everyone is affected. One person says everything is fine, the next that the flaws are fatal and how could anyone release something so incredibly buggy?

It's not that there are no solutions. In nearly every case, there are workarounds or fixes. Take that eMac. When I sat down and spent some face time with the computer, I found the owner had, over time, installed various and sundry third party system add-ons, some of which were old long before Tiger came about. I systematically uninstalled them one-by-one, and soon the FireWire drive mounted normally, and operated flawlessly. The iPod nano? Well, supposedly only 1,000 out of every million units suffer from flawed LCDs, and Apple will replace them, cheerfully one hopes. The iMac G5? Well, there is an extended warranty program covering some of those defects so if the failures occur within the appropriate time frame, you can be assured the product will be repaired.

Did I mention that I know several clients who bought an iMac G5 and never encountered a lick of trouble, and the screen on my iPod nano is perfect? Or perfect so far at least. Did I mention that Tiger seems to impact Mac users differently? Some love it, others are flummoxed by the rampant bugs and unpredictable behavior. It sounds like betting on the gaming tables in Las Vegas is more dependable, because you can usually depend that you'll lose.

Lest we forget, Apple continues to maintain the reputation of having the most reliable personal computers on the planet. Yes, folks, if you think your Mac or its operating system is prone to trouble, you can be secure in the knowledge that other computers are worse, sometimes far worse. And let's not forget the software bearing the Microsoft name on it. Yes, perhaps the Mac version of Word is more reliable than its Windows counterpart, but can did you happen to check out the user reports about the consequences of the most recent update to that program and the rest of the Office suite?

Just saying that it always gets worse before it gets better is an understatement. But, seriously, you wonder whether the random reports of trouble with nearly every product you can think of reflects the philosophy that disorder is the norm. Order is the exception. What a strange world we live in.

[Editor: Hop on over to Gene's website and drop a coin or two his way at: http://www.macnightowl.com/]

Macsimum News

Photo Booth, Front Row should be unshackled from the iMac by Dennis Sellers

http://www.macsimumnews.com/index.php/archive/photo_booth_front_row_should_be_unshackled_from_the_imac/

Photo Booth and Front Row are two fun new features of the "media center" (my words, not Apple's) iMac G5 introduced on Oct. 12 (look for our upcoming review). While they're consumer oriented and will certainly add to the appeal of the system, Apple should unshackle them from the revamped iMac and make them available to other Mac users.

Photo Booth is an entertaining new app that lets you take quick snapshots with the iMac's built-in iSight video camera, add visual effects with the touch of a button, and share them via Mail, save them in iPhoto, or use them as icons in iChat or Address Book. Goofy? Sure, but it looks to be a hit with end users. When I was at my local Mac dealer, the Mac Authority in Nashville, Tennessee, several folks were busy taking photos of themselves and playing around with the Photo Booth effects.

However, if I buy a stand-alone iSight for an older iMac, an eMac, a laptop or a Power Mac, I should be able to download Photo Booth to use with it. Apple should bundle the software with new iSights, as well.

More impressive than Photo Booth is the iMac G5's Front Row "media experience," which uses a bundled Apple Remote to let you control the content you have on your iMac—including songs from your iTunes music library, slideshows of your photo albums in iPhoto, videos including podcasts, iMovies and DVDs, and movie trailers streamed from apple.com—all from up to 30 feet away. It's really cool and the Apple Remote is elegant. I'll offer more details in the upcoming review, but, again, this is something that should be offered to other Mac users. Surely, bundling the remote and the Front Row software would be an attractive package that Apple could sell.

And it certainly should be an option for the new Power Macs. Of course, the pro systems should also come with Bluetooth and AirPort built-in. But I'll save that for yet another review: that of the Power Mac G5 Quad monster.

For now, c'mon, Apple free the Photo Booth and Front Row products and spread the love (and fun) to other Mac users.

Thoughts? Write me at dsellers@macsimumnews.com

[**Editor:** Also check out the comments on Dennis Sellers' opinion-piece at the weblink posted above.]

Musings From Mars

Nothing Short of Astonishing by Leland Scott

http://www.musingsfrommars.org

Apple's latest surprise announcements were so over-the-top that I wanted to write a few paragraphs about them. Once again, a highly anticipated product (this month, a video-capable iPod; last month, an iTunes-capable cell phone) is upstaged by a product no one anticipated. Last month, the iPod nano took everyone by surprise in its sheer audacity and beauty. This month, the new "media center" iMac is an even bigger surprise, and in some ways even more audacious.

The VIDEO IPOD

Why it's cool:

Video support!

Apple's product timing for the last few years has been nearly flaw

iPod, and I think had the rumors proved false--or had Apple waited until 2006 to add this in--sales of the full-size iPods would have had no reason to grow this holiday season. As it is, Apple has now provided just the incentive many users (like me) who bought the first iPod photo models a year ago needed to upgrade. I was relieved to see that the display is larger to support this.

iTunes 6

Having upgraded to Verizon's new FIOS service last month, it's clear to me that as broadband support like this expands, more and more people are going to be collecting videos like they earlier collected digital music. I'm delighted to see Apple taking the first steps into opening up the digital-video download market like they originally did for digital audio. An incredibly smart move that I'm sure will be highly successful as they expand the store's stock of video content. Together with QuickTime's vanguard support for the incredible h264 video compression technology, Apple is now far ahead of the pack in getting the consumer products in place for the digital video revolution that's coming.

Smaller, lighter

I just got back from a small trip with my 60gb iPod photo, and though it's wonderfully small, the device weighs my shirt pocket down just a wee bit more than I'd like. So when I see that the new model is almost a full ounce lighter (5.5 oz, down from 6.4) and 1/5 inch thinner (.55 inch, down from .75 inch), it's definitely cheer-worthy!

Why it's not:

No FireWire!

My son got a new 4th gem iPod recently... one of the iPods that came with both FireWire and USB 2.0 cables. He was having pretty inconsistent luck synching up until I suggested he try the FireWire cable instead of the USB 2.0. Now, I don't have any hard facts on that... but I do know I've never had any trouble at all synching over FireWire, and I'd just as soon continue doing so. For one thing, my USB ports are all pretty much claimed by other peripherals. I suppose loosing the FireWire option has something to do with slimming the iPod, but I'm not happy about it.

Incompatible peripherals

I was about to spring for a new iTrip, and it's just dumb luck that I hadn't done it already. I'd be pretty pissed if I had and then found I couldn't use it with the new 5th gen iPods. I'm sure other peripheral owners will feel the same. Of course, we've seen this problem before, and you can chalk it down to the price of progress. However, the last time Apple made such a drastic change in connectivity options, the iPod hadn't yet made the leap from minor cult status to full-blown Walmart-worthy ubiquity. Once you get to that stage, the end-user benefits of changes like this had better be clearly explained. Cause you not only have customers to worry about, you've got the whole iPod peripheral industry now as well.

No 80gb model

I know it's coming eventually, but with my huge music library, I really don't have room for many photos, and I sure won't have room for many videos with "just" 60gb. I'd really hoped 80gb would be one feature of the new models. Frankly, I'd say Apple missed the boat if they have the chips available and just chose to hold them back. I would have been quite willing to pay an additional $100 for another 20gb, and I suspect others would, too. Would it have been so hard to have 30, 60, and 80gb models?

OK, so that's three scores, and three strikes. How do I call it? Oh, it's a clear winner... no doubt! The video support and size change more than outweigh the fewer connection options and failure to add hard-disk oomph. In fact, I'd say the video support will prove to be a huge long-term win for Apple, and it will be clear that the company's timing was right-on.

The "MEDIA CENTER" IMAC

Why it's cool
iSight built in!
Frankly, there are so many great things about this secret project that initially caught my eye, it's hard to say which I was most impressed with at first. However, I'd have to say that building a video camera directly into the iMac is going to be another one of those Apple firsts that will seem obvious once all PC's have them, yet right now is simply breathtaking. Clearly, Apple doesn't think people are taking advantage of iChat AV the way they should... and they're right! I for one just haven't been able to justify spending $130 to equip my Macs with iSight cameras. Yet I'm really looking forward to having video capture capability built in as part of my system. Apple is so far in front with this technology, it's got the ultimate video-phone in the making if enough people are able to communicate with them. And with momentum building for Macintosh usage, what better way to demonstrate superiority than to not only give people iChat AV, but the video tool you need to take full advantage of it as well? Simply genius, in my book.

And if that wasn't enough, I can't wait to see this new Photo Booth application Apple's adding. Up until now, the iSight has been sold primarily as a *video* camera. With Photo Booth, Apple is saying, Hey, you've also got a still camera built in! Best of all, Photo Booth sounds like another Apple innovation that adds a bit of fun to computing. If only Windows PC users understood that computing can be fun! Apple has understood this all along, and whimsy--as well as elegance--in the Mac's user interface and applications is one of the things I love most about my computer.

Apple remote
Once again, here's a tool that's been talked about since the Airport Express came out last year, but finally sneaks in as part of a new iMac. It's the core component of the new Front Row software, which is Apple's take on a user

interface for casual sofa-surfing. My family's been using Elgato's amazing Eyehome (http://www.elgato.com/index.php?file=products_eyehome&PHPSESSID=c00e1e603eab41dd27ce79e854e9bd65) the last few months, so Front Row itself isn't all that novel. (There are a couple of other excellent open-source projects to provide a "media center" interface like Front Row... in particular, Center Stage (http://www.centerstageproject.com/). However, Apple is first to market with an interface that's actually complete.) Of course, part of what Apple has done is to seriously show up Microsoft's lame attempt at building a "media center" PC. For one thing, Apple has proven what I've been arguing ... you don't need a whole separate computer to turn your PC into a TV set. You just need the right software. On the PC side of the house, Microsoft and its clan have been trying to convince consumers that such a PC requires an additional $1,000 or so of investment. Apple's just shown that it costs nothing at all. If you buy a Mac, that is. :-) This will be huge as a selling point to potential switchers, if Apple gets the word across.

Oh, by the way... contrary to what I've read from other commentators today, the Apple remote comes standard with both new iMac models. You won't have to pay separately for one.

Mighty Mouse standard

Okay, it's still not Bluetooth-enabled, but it's a pretty big deal that Apple's throwing this in as part of the deal as standard equipment. Again, particularly for potential switchers who see that one-button mouse as a roadblock.

Smaller, lighter!

Apple says the new iMac is "noticeably lighter" than the original model. I'd say that's an understatement if the written specs are accurate. You know how much lighter they are? Three full pounds! I'd say that's a bit more than noticeable. The 17-inch model drops from 18.5 to 15.5 pounds, and the 20-inch from 25 pounds to 22. Not exactly a laptop yet, but still much lighter than your average TV set! Moving these puppies from room to room as needed to play back DVD's or music isn't going to seem like a big deal at all. I've been doing that with the current model as it is... at least, I was until I got EyeHome set up.

Beefier specs

Normally, this is where Apple gets all the attention in a product upgrade. With all the other amazing features of this new iMac, though, these will elicit a slight yawn at the end of the presentation. Still, a bump in the processing speed (to 2.1 GHz), hard disk space (top end option goes to 500gb), front-side bus (to 700mhz), optical drive (a faster Superdrive is now standard in both models), faster RAM (the first Mac model to use DDR2 SDRAM), and better graphics support (support for PCI Express, and a bump in video card to ATI Radeon X600 from the 9600) (video RAM stays at 128mb) are clearly icing on the cake. (Apple had added Bluetooth and Airport Extreme as standard

features in the last revision, but it's still worth noting that you don't have to buy those anymore.)

Lower price!?

Yes, somehow Apple is managing to release this package at a lower price point--for the top-end model--than before. The iMac line now has 2 models, with the lower-end 17-inch model staying at $1,299 (but getting Superdrive and all the rest added to it!), and the top-end 20-inch model dropping $100, from $1,799 to $1,699.

Why it's not:

Let's see... Oh yeah, a modem

This may be a big deal to some of you, but I've been ordering my Macs without modems for a few years now. So it's no big deal to me that you now have to buy an external USB modem if you want to add one to your Mac. Still, if you really have to have one, you'll now have to fork over $49 to get it, and it'll have to take up one of your USB ports.

No TV tuner

True. I think the Windows "media center" PC's have these, but I have no idea how well they work and doubt it's worth the extra cost. For the Mac, there are so many options to add TV-tuner capability externally, I don't think I'd want one inside if it meant a larger, heavier machine. I highly recommend Elgato's [EyeTV](http://www.elgato.com/index.php?file=products_eyehome&PHPSESSID=c00e1e603eab41dd27ce79e854e9bd65) (http://www.elgato.com/index.php?file=products_eyehome&PHPSESSID=c00e1e603eab41dd27ce79e854e9bd65) models, which are great TV tuners, but so much more besides. Scheduling and editing TV shows and movies has never been simpler. Thank god I can throw that damn VCR player away! Still, I wouldn't be surprised to see Apple come out with something similar one of these days.

So... do you see how brilliant this is? Here is Apple, less than a year from unveiling new hardware running on Intel chips. Everyone is wondering if they can sustain sales of existing PowerPC-based hardware. Christmas is coming. What to do?

This is a perfect example of "pulling a rabbit out of a hat," and a perfect reason why you would do so. With the new iMac, I predict Apple will so dazzle both its existing customers and its potential customers that sales of desktop Macs will continue making gains in market share. Fresh from a jump from 4.3 percent to 6.6 percent (http://macdailynews.com/index.php/weblog/comments/apple_grabs_66_market_share_of_us_personal_computer_retail_market/)through August 2005, the Mac's share of retail computer sales looks likely to grow again in the months ahead.

If we want to be able to videophone our friends any time soon, that's got to be a good thing!

Oh, and Apple has yet to show us the rabbits it's holding in its hat for the expected PowerMac and PowerBook upgrades. I can't imagine that they would be as astonishing as the iMac rabbit, but I'm confident they'll not be duds. For us long-time Apple customers who suffered through the embarrassing 1990's, when neither Apple's marketing nor its technical strategies were well conceived, it's a joy to behold the spot-on decisions it's making nowadays.

Bring on the rabbits, Alice!

More Musings From Mars

New iMac Keeps Apple Way Ahead of Dell in Price/Features by Leland Scott

http://www.musingsfrommars.org

Following up on my gushing article about the new iMacs and iPods from yesterday, I sat down to do the math on price/features between Dell and Apple. I once again revisited the "High End Consumer Desktop" (http://www.musingsfrommars.org/dellvsapple/hiconsumerdesktop2.html) specs and pricing to see what impact Apple's new line has on that shootout. You can read the details, but very briefly, the gap has widened dramatically in Apple's favor, both in price and in features.

Last time around, the price gap was about $250, but now it's roughly $300. That doesn't count the now-free built-in video camera you get with the iMac, which is worth at least $100. And for $300 (or $400) less, you not only get Mac OS X 10.4 ("Tiger") and all of its benefits over the aging Windows XP, you also get a worry-free computing existence with no viruses, worms, or spyware to disrupt your life and, as you'll see, quite a bit more besides. As before, I'm working from Apple's 17-inch model offering and its Dell equivalent, which today appears to be the Dell Dimension E510.

Here are the upgrades in the new iMac line, which has been simplified from 3 models to 2. The high-end model is $100 less, while the low-end model stays at $1,299. All models now have the following standard specs:

- 512MB RAM, same as before, but now using the beefier DDR2 standard.
- The ATI Radeon x600 Pro video card with 128MB of memory and PCI Express support, an upgrade from the Radeon 9600 used previously.
- The built-in Bluetooth receiver now supports the faster 2.0 standard
- Processor upgraded to 1.9 or 2.1 GHz G5, though eliminating the middle model means the faster processor is only available with a 20-inch display
- Built-in iSight camera, previously a $149 add-on
- Magnet-attachable remote control, used to operate the new Front Row "home theater" interface
- In addition to Front Row, Apple adds a new package called "Photo Booth" to turn the built-in iSight into a cool still camera.
- Somehow, Apple managed to shave 3 pounds off the weight of each machine, which is a huge difference.

In addition, Apple now offers a faster frontside bus and a standard 8X dual-layer Superdrive on both models. The Dell model was more or less unchanged, except in name. Today, Dell was offering a free upgrade to 1 GB of RAM, though you get there by using all 4 slots. A 160GB hard drive was now standard, as was a 16X dual-layer DVD burner. Pretty much everything else had to be added on, so the "bait and switch" price of $951 didn't last long. No free printer this time around either, but Dell's interface for choosing options is a bit snazzier than 6 months ago. Still way too complicated for my taste, though. And why change the model's name all the time? I hate that in TV's, stereos, and pretty much everything else. Apple's simple product lineup is a model for how it should be done... Now if only they could get others to follow!

So when you get to the bottom line in the detailed shootout page, you'll see that the iMac costs $1,299 (I didn't need to add anything to the base this time), and the Dell costs $1,592 after wading through three pages of options, each of which was delightfully complicated. Yet if you buy the iMac--*even though it costs less than the Dell*-- you'll still wind out ahead on these cool capabilities, which aren't priced into the Dell:

- Built-in video camera
- Built-in Bluetooth 2.0 wireless (not even an option with the Dell)
- Incredible software for creating, revising, and managing digital content.
- The world's most advanced--and easiest to use--operating system, "Tiger".
- Zero viruses or worms, and no adware or spyware either. A complete lack of Windows-style "ghosts in the machine."

- A tiny footprint in a case that's not only beautiful and functional, but light. The Apple model in this comparison weighs only 15.5 pounds, whereas the basic Dell Dimension 510 weighs 31 pounds--not including the separate monitor! It's hard to price such a benefit, but I don't think anyone would doubt that 15 pounds lighter is worth *something*. Especially if you're intending to use the machine as a second TV. With the new iMac, this is an obvious use. With the Dell, it'll always be a PC even if you hook a TV tuner to it.
- An all-in-one design that's just one step up from notebook status. With one of these iMacs, if you need to move your computer to another room, it doesn't take a dolly and a bunch of guys to help. With everything built in, setup is as simple as can be. This is an intangible benefit that's impossible to price.

This is precisely the move Apple needed to make to keep retail momentum going toward the Mac as a result of the iPod's "halo effect." And I predict it's also the tonic to keep Mac desktop sales rising even as Apple plans a huge transition from PowerPC chips to Intel ones.

Next up, Apple's laptops and PowerMacs! I'll be back to look at those soon, I'm sure.

Music and the Mac

Music Creation Techniques by Daphne Kalfon
http://www.ilovemymacthesong.com/

Last month I talked about my own introduction to GarageBand, and about how I came to write the song "I Love My Mac". This month I'll talk about techniques that I often use when I'm arranging a song using Apple's GarageBand.

One of the things that GarageBand or any digital software tool has a tendency to do is to remove the human factor from the music. The following techniques help to make digitally created music sound more human:

Velocity adjustment: If you are wanting as natural sounding a performance as possible, it is important to vary the velocities of your music notes. If for example you are inputting one note at a time manually, you should make sure that the notes aren't all of the same velocity, otherwise your music may end up sounding very stilted. It is also important to keep in mind that the velocities shouldn't necessarily be randomly varied either. Variations in velocity are dictated by things such as the rhythm/meter of the music and phrasings or "sentence structure" of the music. Just as we employ accents and rhythms in our own speech depending on what we are saying, the same goes with a musical phrase.

If on the other hand, you are not inputting the notes manually, but you are playing the part in yourself while recording, the velocities will most likely vary quite a bit anyway, just due to the human factor in any performance. However, too much of a variation between notes can end up sounding sloppy, even if the timings happen to be exact (the latter of which rarely happens as you probably already know). You may for example have pressed a key much too hard or much too lightly, so you will then have to go in and make the necessary adjustments to the velocities in order for the notes to flow more smoothly and sound more natural. These changes can be made either by using the "Note Velocity" slider or by entering the desired numerical velocity value in the "Note Velocity" window.

I should mention that if you want to change a particular group of notes that are all or about the same velocity value to another velocity value, you can select them all, enter the new velocity value either by using the slider or by typing in the number in the *Note Velocity* window, press the return key, and they will all change to the new velocity. To de-select certain notes within that group, simply press down the *Shift* and *Option* keys simultaneously and then select those note(s).

Note lengths: Note length can also play an important role in allowing your music to sound more akin to a natural performance. If all the notes are of the same length, no matter where you are in the song or instrumental, your music may come out sounding a little on the automated side, so depending on the melody/musical phrasing, you can apply variations to the length of the notes in order to achieve a more spontaneous sounding performance. To change the length of a note, select it and hold the pointer over the far right end of the note; the pointer will then become a length adjustment tool.

If you want to change the note length of a certain group of notes, select the notes you want to change, hold the pointer to the far right of one of the selected notes and apply the note length tool. All the selected notes will then change their lengths accordingly.

Metronome: Use of the metronome depends on what you are trying to do. If you can play the part yourself but not

at the tempo of your song or instrumental piece, simply reduce the song's tempo enough so that you can actually play the part, but at the same time, that allows you to maintain a natural flow to your playing. This applies only to certain styles of music that tend to sound better if all of the notes aren't necessarily right on the beat, such as certain types of jazz, especially that of an improvisational nature, or for a solo type of performance. If you reduce your recording tempo too much, you may find that you lose a little bit of the natural performance; if that is the case, you can always go in later and make adjustments to note velocities, lengths and timings as mentioned above.

However, for the pop style of music for example, you can input notes with the pencil tool or record your playing at a very slow tempo, because by and large, that kind of music requires pretty tight timings or else it may end up sounding sloppy because the members of the "band" aren't all coming in together on each beat. In this case, after you've entered your notes either by pencil tool, keypad or reduced recording tempo while you play, you can go in and manually move over your notes so that they start right on the beat whatever that happens to be. It will be easier to make those adjustments if you first choose a suitable note value for the track editor grid before you proceed.

And if you are aiming for a more spontaneous or "live" performance, you can simply record at the actual tempo or close to it, and a little bit of cleanup can be done afterwards if necessary.

Here's a few other techniques that I use to save time and also to augment overall sound quality:

Track or part doubling: To save time, if you are going to be needing close to or exactly the same thing that you did in a certain track/instrument, for another track/instrument, which essentially means you are doubling the part in some way, simply choose *duplicate track* under the track menu. When the new track appears, choose the instrument you want to have for that new track. If only minor changes need to be made to the new track, you can then make the edits as desired.

I often find this to be a very helpful technique both in my songwriting and in my instrumental pieces when I either want a richer, fuller sound, which can be achieved by doubling two different basses for example, or for variety when I am repeating a section of music, which is achieved by doubling two different instruments, perhaps at the octave. Even a small change such as this can be very refreshing to the ear and keep the music moving forward.

If it is just a part or several parts you want to double, and not the whole track, simply choose "new track" from the track menu, select the parts you want to copy using the "shift" key, and using the *Option* key, move them to the new track.

At that point you'll probably find that the new parts still carry the name of the original instrument. You can change the name of the parts to that of the new instrument by selecting the parts, and in the *Name* window, type in the name of the new instrument, press the *Return* key, and the new name should now show in each copied part.

If you then find that the copied part is an instrument that is now an octave too high or too low for example, you can make the necessary adjustments by selecting the notes in question, and in the *Region Pitch* window, you can change them to the pitch you want. Another way to change the pitch is to simply select the part(s) and, using your mouse, move them up or down the track editor grid to the desired position.

If you need to have a duplicate track but with an effect on it, just choose "duplicate track" from the track menu, and apply whatever effect you need, to the new track. And if for example you need to either fade in or out the original track or the new track for a more interesting doubling effect, just use the track volume tool to make those volume adjustments. This results in something similar to what you would achieve when you use the automation control of an effects insert/send in high-end software.

And if you find that you need yet another duplicate of the original track because you either want to apply another effect, or add in more instrument doubling, simply repeat the process above.

Speaking of audio effects, I recently attended a Logic clinic, and although I'm not a Logic user, I was told that both Logic and GarageBand have basically the same engine under the hood, so if you prefer to first arrange your music in GarageBand, you can do so, and then you can easily import your finished music into Logic where you can apply more advanced audio techniques and use the more sophisticated sound processing units available to Logic.

Often times people can get so bogged down in audio processing and sound effects that the music itself is neglected when in fact it is the music that plays the most important role in overall quality than anything else you could do.

The better the piece of music, the less effects you will probably find that you need to apply.

For an immediately more natural sound for example, simply add some reverb to each track. It gives the music part a presence that has instant appeal to the ear. Chorus can also be easily applied and depending on the instrument and what it is doing, can add just what the music needs at that moment.

Panning: I've been talking a lot about duplicating entire tracks or parts to save time and achieve a better overall sound, or applying an effect or effects to duplicated parts or instruments, and the same can be said for panning. When recording an electric guitar sound for example, I've often found that panning the same part/track hard left, another duplicate part/track hard right, and having a third in the default position, gives a much richer, fuller overall result than having just one track in the default position.

Also, I often use panning if I want to differentiate two similar parts from one another, as I did for example when I wrote a piece of music for two pianos. I used a slightly different piano sound for each track, and additionally, I panned one slightly left and the other slightly right, so that it sounded like they were on opposite sides of the "stage". Adding reverb helped create that presence I mentioned earlier, as if they were really playing in a concert hall.

Panning is also helpful if you need to separate out parts for easier listening. I used panning in this way for a piece of music that contained competing spoken parts. I found that panning one voice a little to the left, and one a little to the right, really helped make each one easier to hear, as in this particular case, they were both speaking at the same time. This use of panning also gave the music more presence, in the same way reverb does. On the other hand, I wouldn't necessarily recommend panning of voices if they are singing in harmonies, unless you are going for a specific effect.

These are some tips and techniques that I have often found to be very helpful and useful in my music creation. The same principles can be applied in other music creation software programs.

Next month I'll talk about swapping files with other GarageBand users so that you can collaborate with others, and third-party plug-ins and instruments that you can add to your toolbox. Many are free!

The Pourhadi Perspective

The Pourhadi Perspective

Web Browser Roundup: Part 2 reprinted with permission from Dan Pourhadi
http://www.pourhadi.com

Last month, I reviewed three Web browsers for the Mac -- Firefox, Camino, and OmniWeb. My point was to show you, dear readers, that there are some good alternatives to Safari and Internet Explorer; alternatives that many would never think to use.

Well, it turns out that many readers actually *enjoyed* reading *helpful* information. This unusual -- and arguably *unholy* -- reflection forced me to pause and contemplate my goals when writing this column: Do people want to read my incessant, opinionated diatribes regarding the Mac World, or do they want to read "useful" articles that "assist" them when "working" with their Macs? Apparently -- and call me crazy here -- it's the latter. Who'da thunk it?

Since response to last month's column was so positive, I decided to extend it and look at three *more* Web browsers available for the Mac platform. I bet you didn't even know so many existed, did you?

Opera
Opera is a fairly-powerful Web browser designed to be a full-blown alternative to Internet Explorer, on both Windows and the Mac. Like most other browsers, Opera sports tabbed-browsing, sophisticated bookmark management, and a quick-search field next to the address bar.

And, um, yeah. That's Opera.

Truthfully, Opera is pretty unimpressive. It offers nothing Bed-Wettingly Awesome -- like the advanced tab-management in OmniWeb or the full range of plug-ins for Firefox -- and is not very intuitive compared to simpler browsers like Safari. Keyboard shortcuts, which are typically uniform across different browsers, are sporadic and inconsistent, and fiddling with bookmarks can be a Royal Pain In The Rear.

But not all's brain-numbingly la-la in Opera Land. Opera does comes with an integrated e-mail and RSS client, both of which rest in a sidebar next to the Web page viewing area -- a nice feature if you're inclined to constantly check your e-mail; but it takes up a good of deal space and is tedious to continually open and close. …

 OK, that's it.

See, folks, this where I elaborate on all the extra neat-o features in Opera, like the e-mail client thing, the note-taking doohickey, and the various browser toolbars. But as I'm sitting here, trying to figure out what that button does and why it's placed *Here* as opposed to being *There,* and why a particular sidebar disappeared and where the heck to find it…well, it's occurring to me that this app wholly resembles a bureaucratic Board of Directors: dozens of good ideas smashed into a single project, but no idea really presenting itself well. It's so disorganized and counter-intuitive, finding what you want to find and configuring it to work the way you want it to work is like training a cat to sit -- it'll stare at you, taunting your every effort, then walk away and pee on the carpet.

My best advice for those of you eager to find a browser that doesn't rhyme with "Ferrari" or "Ballot Box" is to go to www.opera.com and check it out for yourself.

Following the trend of Web Browsers That Start With The Letter "O," Opera, like OmniWeb, is not free. They do offer a "free" version (wink, wink, nudge), but there's a big-honkin' banner advertisement at the top of the browser window.

Purchasing Opera will set you back $39 -- a wad of cash better spent elsewhere.

Shiira

Shiira is a browser that just *screams* "Computer Science student with too much time on his hands." The best way to describe the intent of this browser is to think of a timid, weakling Safari on steroids. Unfortunately, the intent was better than the execution.

Shiira boasts most of the features common in many other browsers, and takes a special interest in out-Safari'ing Safari: it uses the same Konquerer engine, and has designed its tabs to look and operate very similarly (i.e., each tab has a close button and a load-indicator).

But Shiira does offer some interesting doo-dads that set itself apart from the browser we all know and love. Take, for example, "Tab Exposé": if you have a window full of tabs, finding The One That Has What You're Looking For could be as tedious as scratching an itch on your own back; in Shiira, however, clicking F8 magically takes those tabs and presents the pages across the screen the way Exposé presents regular windows. Select the page you're looking and blammo: no more exhaustive searches.

Another impressive feature of Shiira is the ability to load multiple links with a single click. If there's, say, a paragraph of text with links here and there, just highlight the whole paragraph, right-click, and select "Open All Links in New Tabs" -- it will do exactly as it says, saving you from having to click, click, click, *click* to view every page linked in that paragraph.

Shiira, however, has its problems. The Tab Exposé is slow and clunky, and the browser window itself seems bulky, primitive, and even amateurishly designed. The Google search box doesn't the infamous "SnapBack" feature that so many seem to love, and RSS support is nowhere to be found.

But if, for some reason, you're looking for a Safari-like Safari replacement, Shiira's for you. And for the great price of $0 (from http://hmdt-web.net/shiira/en), it's worth every penny.

iCab

iCab's website describes this app as "a web browser for the Macintosh"…and that's pretty much all that it is.

 The *one* feature that seems to distinguish this old-fashioned browser that sounds like a menu item at Red Lobster from other, more mature browsers is what the developers call the "Filter Manager." What is the Filter Manager, you ask? To put it simply: It's *something you want to avoid.* It's a sophisticated set of configurations that you can set for specific Web sites, tweaking them to behave the way you want. Unfortunately, doing so requires reading through a lengthy tutorial and a master's degree in Computer Science. iCab's Web site offers a set of pre-configured Filters, but I can't figure out what the heck any of them do.

Some of you may say that's bad reporting on my part. I say it's good warning to you users out there who are too busy with actual *work* to fiddle around with things that baffle even the pros. (Hey, I hear that snickering. Shut up.)

iCab offers very little else in terms of an unique browsing experience. It's technically in beta, and free, from www.icab.de. But be warned: when, or *if,* it's ever completed, the developers do plan to charge for a "Pro" version.

The Conclusion

 While there are plenty of Web browser alternatives out there, it seems smart to stick with the popular ones: Safari, Firefox, and OmniWeb. Supporting the Little Guy is good and all, but when you're looking for something dependable, modern, and simple, you can't go wrong when using a browser that *everyone's* concerned about. In the end, it really comes down to preference: if you pick the one that feels right -- like a brand new car that handles just the way you want -- then you'll be happy. If you get one simply because it's "cool"…well, that's why car dealerships don't have decent return policies.

Dan Pourhadi is a freelance technology writer from the Chicago suburbs. Aside from writing for Passages, he has contributed to MacAddict Magazine and writes a weekly column for Macteens.com. He maintains a fitfully-updated, though semi-interesting Blog at http://www.pourhadi.com.

SurfBits

Freeware for the Mac by Tim Verpoorten
http://www.surfbits.com/

All great Mac software has three things in common; it's functional, attractive and unique. In fact, that's one of the reasons I advocate switching to the Mac from the PC is the great software available for Mac users. I especially like to use great software if it's free. So that brings us to the purpose of this monthly column that Robert asked me to write, I'm going to talk about the best of the freeware for the Mac.

Each month we'll look at the new and updated freeware programs that I think you'll find useful. If you have any special freeware that you enjoy, please drop me an email at surfbits@gmail.com. For a week-to week-listing of the new freeware available, listen to our podcast at http://www.macreviewcast.com. Now let's look at the last month's best freeware offerings:

Graphic Software

Cenon: http://www.cenon.info/frame_gb.html
Cenon is a freeware vector graphics program. Cenon is a graphical tool of a special kind. Build upon a modular graphical core, Cenon offers a wide variety of possibilities and applications.

Color Schemes: http://customsolutionsofmaryland.50megs.com/misc.htm#Color%20Schemes%20Anchor
Color Schemes lets you put together up to nine color schemes, each with up to three colors. There are two modes. In "Manual" mode you select all three colors; in "Automatic" mode, you select one color and two colors are generated for you using 120-degree color wheel separation. Red, Green, and Blue components of each color are selected using sliders, typing in decimal values or using the Color Picker. A hex to decimal converter can be accessed from the menu bar. Color data is saved between sessions. This is a handy tool for website designers and graphic designers.

Utilities

Tiny Alarm: http://www.pixelatedsoftware.com/products/tinyalarm/index.php
TinyAlarm is, as the name suggests, a tiny alarm clock for your menu bar. It will play your chosen alert at some time in the near future. The configuration is done using the status menu item. Clicking around should reveal all there is to know about TinyAlarm.

SilverKeeper back-up: http://www.lacie.com/silverkeeper
SilverKeeper is a freeware application from LaCie that automates backups to external storage devices like hard drives, and other removable storage devices that have IDE, ATA/ATAPI, SCSI, USB, or FireWire interfaces. Essentially any read/write device that can mount a writable volume on the Macintosh Desktop can be used with SilverKeeper.

MiNews: http://www.js8media.com/minews
MiNews is a freeware newsreader. With MiNews, you will always have your favorite news at your fingertips, providing a tightly-integrated application with Safari that work hand in glove. Scan all the latest news, information and articles from thousands of web sites in one simple-to-read window. You will get the scoop in no time and go on to the next news item as if this was the way you always read the news.

MacTracker: http://www.mactracker.ca
Mactracker provides detailed information on every Apple, Motorola, PowerComputing, and UMAX Mac OS computer ever made, including items such as processor speed, memory, optical drives, graphic cards, supported Mac OS versions, and expansion options. Also included is information on Apple mice, keyboards, displays, printers, scanners, digital cameras, iPod, AirPort Base Stations, Newtons, and Mac OS versions.

gDisk: http://gdisk.sourceforge.net
gDisk is a software that turns your gMail account into a portable hard drive so you can always have your important files accessible across the Internet. New items in this program include support to Drag-n'-Drop files from / to the finder, double clicking on a completed download or an upload in the transfer queue table will reveal the file in the finder. gDisk can automatically check for software updates at launch.

Detour: http://www.rogueamoeba.com
Detour lets you control where audio from all your programs is going by allowing you to send audio to different output devices on an application-specific basis. This means you can send music from iTunes to your external speakers and keep the annoying beeps and blips of iChat going through your computer's built-in speaker, mute any application's sounds all together, change the volume of some applications relative to others, make your email client's alerts quieter, and you'll never again be jarred from work just to receive spam.
Detour is a program from one of our favorite developers, Paul Kafasis at Rogue Amoeba Software. They gave us Audio Hijack Pro and Nicecast to name a few. Detour was shareware until just now, it's been retired from active development. It is now freely available and will automatically register itself, enabling unlimited use.

Yoink Widget: http://www.softchaos.com/products/yoink
Yoink shows a nice thumbnail of a web page, updated however often you like. Yoink checks the web page's text for change periodically, and only captures it if there is a significant change. The last three captures are available for you to view, and you can see the amount of text change between them as red bars. Whilst looking at a captured web page's thumbnail, just click it to open it as a Web Archive in Safari.

Photo-Based Software

Mosaics for Mac: http://homepage.mac.com/knarf/MacOSaiX
This photo software takes an image and creates a mosaic of it. You decide on the number of squares and the size. It's something that you've seen and said to yourself, "I wonder how they did that", now you know! It's a lot of fun and you'll be a big hit with your family.

Galerie: http://www.myriad-online.com/en/products/galerie.htm
Galerie generates media gallery web pages from iPhoto, GraphicConverter, iView MediaPro, Extensis Portfolio 7 or from any set of pictures and/or QuickTime media files. Collections of editable templates and many options are available to let you create a variety of different galleries. You do not need to know HTML language to use Galerie.

Jet Photo 2.1: http://www.jetphotosoft.com/web/
For those without a .Mac account, Jet Photo is a great alternative to publishing you photos online with a single click. JetPhoto is full-featured freeware to store, organize, view and share digital photos, as well as publish photo albums onto Web. JetPhoto contains JetPhoto Studio, and a PHP-based Web service software - JetPhoto Server. It's easy to use JetPhoto Studio to create, organize and review photo albums on user's personal computer. Once the photo album is prepared, only One-Click is needed to synchronize local album with online photo album based on JetPhoto Server. JetPhoto Server enables users to quickly build and customize a searchable full-featured photo website. JetPhoto also integrates GPS technology to locate and track photos on a map.

iPhoto Batch Enhancer: http://www.feroxsoft.de/ibe/index_en.html
Simply drag pictures from iPhoto onto iPhoto Batch Enhancer and immediately all of them are treated to a previously selected built in iPhoto effect: Enhance, Black & White or Sepia. iPhoto retains a backup copy of any modified picture. The advantage is that you can revert to the original picture using the menu option *File/Photos > Revert to original*. The disadvantage is that the backup copies do increase the storage space for the iPhoto library. If you are satisfied with the results and have no need to revert to the original photo, you can remove the original versions by hand, or by using the program "iPhoto Diet" which can be found on http://www.versiontracker.com.

iPhoto Diet: http://pages.cpsc.ucalgary.ca/~fuhrer/personal/freestuff/iphotodiet
iPhoto Diet is a utility that helps to slim down your iPhoto library by manipulating your photos in the following ways:
   * eliminate duplicate photos created internally by iPhoto or imported by yourself
   * remove iPhoto's backups of rotated or modified photos
   * strip the thumbnail icons of your photos
   * remove thumbnail photos that have become mixed up with your high resolution photos
   * identify photos which have not been added to albums
   * weed out unnecessary folders and files from the library
iPhoto Diet supports multiple iPhoto libraries, and provides basic library management features such as switching and launching libraries. In addition, iPhoto Diet can be run manually or configured to start scanning your libraries automatically at desired times.

iTunes-Based Software

TuneConnect: http://sourceforge.net/projects/tuneup
TuneConnect is an AppleScript Studio application for Mac OS X that allows you to control iTunes on a remote Mac, using just your local network. TuneConnect's power lies in a technology built-in to Mac OS called ìRemote Apple Events.î Remote Apple Events allow different programs to communicate over a local network (and even the Internet, when properly configured). All that needs to be done in preparation for TuneConnect is to enable Remote Apple Events on the remote computer, and you're ready to go! It's really that simple! TuneConnect connects to the remote computer, you enter the name, artist, album, or genre (or any combination of the four) of the song that you want to play, and iTunes plays it.

Entertainment

Battle for Wesnoth: http://www.wesnoth.org
The Battle for Wesnoth is a free, turn-based strategy game with a fantasy theme. Fight to regain the throne of Wesnoth, of which you are the legitimate heir, or use your dread power over the Undead to dominate the land of mortals, or lead your glorious Orcish tribe to victory against the humans who dared despoil your lands Ö Wesnoth has many different sagas waiting to be played out. You can create your own custom units, and write your own scenarios ñ or even full-blown campaigns. You can also challenge your friends (or strangers) and fight multi-player epic fantasy battles.

Splendid City: http://www.splendidcity.net
Splendid City (formally known as 'Advanced Team Scheduler') is available as a free, easy-to-use, full-featured league and tournament sports scheduling software system, dedicated to the volunteers who spend countless hours towards the noble cause of organized sports. Splendid City can schedule sports with any user specified combination of dates and times. Create professional double or single elimination tournaments brackets, round-robin league schedules, Swiss round tournaments, cross divisional or practice schedules for any sport that requires pairings. Users can freely exchange all data associated with projects with other users who have a free copy of Splendid City Lite installed regardless of platform. The application comes with an integrated e-mail client that can aid with the exchange of object files among organization members. There is also a simple FTP client for direct uploading to web domains from within the schedule view frame.

Oolite: http://oolite.aegidian.org

Oolite is a space sim game, written for Mac OS X in Objective C using Cocoa and OpenGL. Oolite is designed as a small game that is easy for users to pick up and expand upon. Almost every aspect of the game can be modified using simple, free graphics packages and text-editors. The game has nice looking graphics and a fun flight engine. If you like the space games like Elite, you'll love this one.

Jack-O-Lantern Screensaver: http://www.killerrobots.com/screensavers

Jack-O-Lantern is a screen saver that displays a carved 3D pumpkin. The pumpkin is recreated in loving detail right down to the flickering candle inside. Several carving designs are included, and you can even create your own to be displayed. No getting your hands dirty carving the real thing. Artificial pumpkin smell not included. This is really a beautiful looking screensaver.

*doc_*Babad's Macintosh Tips **- A Macintosh Tip or Three…**

Hints & Tips Harvested by Harry {doc} Babad

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

This month I continue sharing my occasional tip related finds with you.

This month most of my column is gleaned from Paul Taylor's fine monthly Hints and Tips [H&T] Newsletter. They are used with his permission. These tips have been culled, by Paul, from user group newsletters, Macintosh-related books, magazines, and other sources. I want double Paul's thanks to all who have contributed and provided such valuable information to the Macintosh community. Note, for each tip, I've noted the original contributor of the item.

This months hint include:

- It Never Hurts to Save As
- CD Stuck?
- Stay Out of Computer Trouble
- Cracking Installer Packages
- Ways to Force Startup from a CD
- A Shortcut for Accurately Selecting Text on a Web Page

Oh, I almost forgot! Unless otherwise noted, *all* the tips and tidbits I share, where appropriate, work on my software. If I don't own the software, I'll so note. The software related tips were tested on a 1 GHz dual processor PowerPC G4 Macintosh with 2 GB DDR SDRAM running under OS X 10.4.2.

#################################

It Never Hurts to Save As
    As you work on a file over time, the file slowly gets bigger than it should. You can guard against file bloat and possible file corruption by occasionally using the "Save As" command. You can save with the same name (replacing the original) or a different one.
David Blatner's Tips & Tricks by ALAP, Inc.
H&T September 2005

#################################

CD Stuck?
    Did you ever have a CD or DVD get stuck in your SuperDrive? And it would not come out? *Open System > Library > Core Services > Menu Extras* and double-click on "Eject.menu." This produces an Eject Menulet in the menubar. Use it to open the SuperDrive.
Mouse Droppings, Corvallis OR
H&T September 2005

#################################

Having in this macC issue reviewed two books on Mac OS X Tiger, I was pleased to find a series of tips from Small Dog Electronics that reflects some of the "safemacing' the books stressed about staying out of computer trouble. However, a few of the items below were not explicitly mentioned in either Scott Kelby's *Mac OS X Tiger Killer Tips* or Bob LeVitus' *Mac OS X Tiger For Dummies.*

Stay Out of Computer Trouble

Here is a compilation of our technicians' best recommendations to keep a small glitch with your computer from turning into a major nightmare.

1. Back up and back up often. We all know that we should do this but how many of us really back up on a regular and systematic basis? Just about everyone who comes into the Small Dog showroom, with a look of terror on their face are the folks who haven't backed up. Backing up can be as simple as burning your most important documents, libraries and folders to a CD or you can use a number of different software titles to back up such as the Backup from Apple (included in a .Mac account).

2. Save often. (Automatically if possible.) The most common shrieks that are heard around the office are when people haven't saved their data, especially when they haven't saved in over an hour. The simple question, "when did you save last?" can bring grown people to tears. (This document was just saved to keep good karma!) Don't forget you are backing up and saving not only to protect yourself from a mechanical failure but also to protect you from your own mistakes. How often have you closed a file quickly without saving when you really wanted to save?

3. Stay out of where you don't belong. Willy-nilly throwing out of files and moving them around can cause problems that are unexpected, especially if you are in the System Folder or Library. Technicians often hear stories like, "I didn't recognize the file name so I trashed it" and now I can't ..." (fill in the blank). It's always good to remember what you did most recently before the problem occurred.

4. Don't rush into installing updates. It often can work to your advantage to wait a few days before installing updates to see if anyone else has problems with the updates before you have crossed the point of no return. It doesn't happen too often but there are instances where updates were immediately updated to fix problems that the early adopters found the hard way. That said, you should install updates as these often correct problems, you may just want to wait a few days before clicking the Update button.

5. Don't download too many updates at once. It's easy with automatic checking for updates to try to update too many different things at once. Instead, update in smaller steps, checking after each upgrade or two that all continues to work well. This is especially true if it has been sometime since you updated your software. Don't be tempted to download too much.

6. Be careful when using your email address on line. Always be careful when submitting your email address on web sites, especially to web sites that you may not know much about. This is a good time to use email aliases that .Mac provides (or create your own).

7. Always beware of email scams. If you didn't ask for the email to be sent to you, do not reply or ask more questions or follow links. Obviously there's some level of self-awareness that you have to have. I receive plenty of email from customers that I didn't ask for but these are pretty easy to tell which is legitimate.

8. Read dialog boxes before responding. How many times have you clicked a response on a dialog box without really thinking about what you were doing? Though most often this won't cause problems, if you forge ahead without reading you may be directing your computer to proceed in a direction that you don't want to go. Once you click "erase" or "don't save," you can't go back!

9. Don't pirate software. It's tempting but it isn't legal, and if you have problems with documents that you created using software that you didn't pay for, you really don't have any way to solve the problems. If you are using pirated software, don't call tech support asking for help.

10. Stay organized. Keep receipts, original software, and manuals in a place where you can find them if you need them. If you need to boot from the Install CD and can't find your Install CD, you aren't going to be able to get much help over the phone.

Small Dog Electronics *www.smalldog.com*
H&T September 2005

From doc_Babad

11.   Buy and use virus protection software. I know there isn't much Macintosh malware out there but I found many virus loaded email attachments. Norton Anti Virus also killed a few other do-bad applications when I've downloaded shareware from non-standard sites [e.g., Sites other than MacUpdate, Version Tracker, TuCows, ZDNet or Apple's own Mac OS X download site.] From my perspective, as more PC users switch of the Macintosh, at least for their home machine, the bad guys will have more incentive to attach our computers so stay safe—keep your virus definitions up to date.

11.   Watch out for <mark>phisher's</mark>. These folks are the E-mail spammers, telemarketers, and even some clerks and salespeople who use a false pretense to lure you into revealing personal information. Don't ever use e-mail to send your Social Security number or other personal data. If you must, make sure that you use a secure Internet connection by checking your browser window for a secure-connection icon. Consumer Reports recommends against giving personal information to someone who has called or e-mailed you unsolicited.

#################################

Cracking Installer Packages
An application that unexpectedly quits as soon as it is launched usually has a corrupt preference file (or files). So, the first thing you should do is find the suspect files. Move any matching *preference* files [*Check your user folder > Library > Preferences*] to the trash, and then try to launch the application again. Hopefully, it will start up normally and you'll be back in business.

On the other hand, the application itself could be corrupt. Charles Soft's Pacifist ($20; http://www.charlessoft.com) is a shareware utility that allows you to crack open installer packages and extract applications and other files. Download the utility and launch it. Now insert the Mac OS X Install CD and click "Open Mac OS X Install Packages." You'll soon see a list of available packages. Click the caret to expand Contents of Essentials.pkg, and then click the caret to expand Applications. Once you've spotted your application, highlight it and click "Expand To." Choose a location for the application and enter your administrator password.

Apple Pickers MUG, Indianapolis, IN
H&T October 2005

################################

Ways to Force Startup from a CD

Holding down the "C" key during startup is supposed to force your Mac to start up from the CD or DVD in its optical drive. Often, that doesn't work, so here are some other ways to do it:

- During startup, hold down the Option key instead. At the resulting window, choose your CD or DVD as the startup volume.
- During startup, hold down the Shift, Option, Command, and www.mac-hints-tips.com
- Page Delete keys. This should force your Mac to bypass its hard drive and look for any other volume with Mac OS on it.
- Insert the CD or DVD while Mac OS is running, choose Apple Menu > System Preferences > Start-up Disk and then select your CD or DVD and restart your Mac.

Be sure to wait for the startup chime before using any of these key combinations, and to use a CD containing a version of Mac OS X that is at least as new as the version your Mac shipped with-earlier versions won't work.

MacFixIt.com via Design Tools Monthly
H&T September 2005

################################

A Shortcut for Accurately Selecting Text on a Web Page

If you've tried to highlight text on a Web page by dragging your mouse across the text with the button depressed, you know how www.mac-hints-tips.com awkward it can be. Often either some of the text you meant to select is left out, or else headings, figures, and other elements are mistakenly included in your selection.

Fortunately, there's a much cleaner and easier way. Simply click just to the left of the beginning of the text you want to select, release the mouse button, position your insertion point immediately following the last part of the desired text, hold down the Shift key and click again. When you do, all the text between the two click points is highlighted and selected.

TMUG Insider, Pleasanton CA
H&T October 2005

Views From the Ivory Tower

Have it Your Way! by Ted Bade

I read about an interesting comment the other day. It appears that a well-known technology author (John C. Dvorak - - http://www.pcmag.com/article2/0,1895,1872175,00.asp) made the comment that many writers are biased toward Apple and the Mac OS X, because they use that platform. Because of this bias, Microsoft and their products get less good press then they would otherwise.

I have been reading Mr. Dvorak's technology based writing for a long time. Sometimes I agree with him and other times I don't. He has sometimes been in agreement with what Apple is doing and other times definitely against them, but he has always had his own opinion, and I admire that. However, I think in this case, he is really missing the real cause of what he is observing.

He says:

" The reason for this is that today's newspaper and magazine tech writers know little about computers and are all Mac users. It's a fact."

While I might like to dream that the majority of writers use Macs, I sincerely doubt that **all** of them do. (But that would be a nice thing!) The important point that Mr. Dvorak misses, (or more likely, fails to point out) is that the majority of these writers aren't techno-geeks. They have probably all had their fill of malicious software programs that don't function like they (the user) wants, but as the programmer wants and marketing techniques that promise the moon, but often deliver only a can of dust. Neither they, nor their companies, want to deal with constantly crashing computers, and daily cleanup of various malicious software pieces. So they and their companies have gravitated toward a computer platform that supports their needs and lets them work the way they like, without a lot of computer expertise.

Techno-geeks have no problem with this, if they are married to the Windows platform. They are willing to spend hours tweaking their computers and software, cleaning out the malicious programs, and learning to deal with software that doesn't know the term, "have it your way". Although, even some of them are wandering away from non-Mac systems because of these problems.

If these writers use and are satisfied with Apple computers, they are going to speak kindly about them, especially if they had used Windows-based machines and had problems. They use Apple's technology and not only does it work, it works well. It doesn't get in their way and it allows them to do things their own way. Because the computer and the operating system don't become a thing of fear, the user learns more about the computer and how to do more things with it. Some might even become power users after a while, even though they are not technologically educated in any way. When you find a company that makes products that work, you tend to rave about it. This is because so many products these days don't perform as expected.

Long time Mac fans will recall that many of these same writers now being accused of pro-Mac bias, have been around a while. Some of them even used to associate the word "beleaguered" with every mention of "Apple Corporation". Many of them were forced by various employers to submit to the Wintel platform. This leads me to believe that their praise isn't blind, but that of a person who has seen how bad it can be!

Another point I think Mr. Dvorak isn't talking about is the fact that these writers are representative of the majority of late adopters to computers in general. What I mean is that the majority of new computer users and recent computer users aren't techno-geeks, heck, they are hardly techno at all. But these are the people buying computers today. They don't have the skills and more importantly, the interest to deal with the day to day hassles of dealing with a troublesome computer like those of the Windows platform.

Surely, some of their praise is misplaced and their attention over done, but that is the way of the media. Really bad stuff makes good news as does really good stuff. Apple isn't a perfect company; they are indeed driven by the desire to make a profit. But in my humble opinion, what makes Apple different from many other companies, is that they do it in a way that serves the customer and they consistently make products that perform as expected.

Ultimately, I believe Mr. Dvorak's article is a real tribute to what Apple is doing. Not only do they make products people like, but they capture the hearts of the people who write about their equipment. Praise like this is good for any business. Now, if Microsoft made products that consistently worked in a way people liked, perhaps they would get the praise...

New products from Apple - It seems that Steve Jobs just loves to annoy Apple fans! First he releases the iPod Nano, than only weeks later the video iPod! He announces the next generation Macs will have Intel chips, than releases a whole batch of G4 PowerBooks and G5 Power Macs, adding features that will entice most power users and consumers alike. But this is a fact of life when buying technology products. Companies don't sell things until they can and technology is constantly changing.

Apple's new video iPods (http://www.apple.com/ipod/ipod.html) can now play a variety of video formats in addition to music and still photos. Apple also began selling video through the iTunes Music Store. In case you haven't looked, there are a few popular TV shows you can buy episodes of at $1.99 USD.

Will this be popular? I don't know, but I can say that I have spoken to a number of people who would love to have a particular episode of a show in their collection, without spending hundreds on a DVD set that includes an entire season of shows they don't want. It is a lot like the music market. You can buy a single song if that is what you really want, you don't need to buy the whole album. Apparently this appeals to the buyer.

Another company called Show Footage, has also began offering video clips for the video iPod (http://showfootage.com/catalog/). What they offer are interesting but short video clips, mostly short animations that can be used as a video iPods eye-candy. I expect as time goes on, more and more places will offer such things.

The new iMac G5 (http://www.apple.com/imac/) is slowly changing from a desktop computer to a computer based entertainment center. The addition of a remote control will appeal to any couch potato ;-).

Seriously, I think that giving the user the ability to easily use the iMac for various forms of entertainment will go a long way toward making the iMac have more universal appeal. Yeah, if you want it to be a computer, it can do that, but it can also play your DVDs, music, and share your photos. Sure I can do all these things on my PowerMac, but the iMac is a really cool device and the remote control makes the process easier and so much more Techno!

New Powerbooks (http://www.apple.com/powerbook/), although still containing the old G4 chip (1.5 and 1.67 GHz) now also include ATI Mobility Radeon 9700 graphics with 128MB DDR dedicated video memory, which provide higher than previous resolution,. All now include a SuperDrive DVD burner, and are supposed to have longer battery life. They also include all the standard features of the previous PowerBooks. Prices range from $1499 for 12", $1,999 for the 15" and $2,499 for the 17" models.

The new G5 PowerMacs (http://www.apple.com/powermac/) now offer dual-core G5 processors, that is two G5 cores on one chip. So you now get your choice of either two or four G5 cores all working in concert and at speeds of up to 2.5 GHz. They also include the faster PCI Express expansion slots (although PCI-X expansion is still available). While these aren't anything terribly earth shattering, if a person really wanted to stay with the PowerPC platform, these machine would make a great choice. There is enough power here to keep one working for a couple of years, at least until the second generation MacTel computers hit the streets!

It was a good quarter financially - Once again Apple Corporation had a very good quarter, financially. If you are interested, you can read all the details for yourself (http://www.apple.com/pr/library/2005/oct/11results.html). Some of the hi-lights are as follows.

They posted a $430 million quarterly profit with revenues of $3.68 billion, this is more than 50 percent increase from the year-ago revenues ($2.35 billion) and 400 percent increase over the year-ago quarterly profits. Apple shipped more then 1.2 million Macs and almost 6.5 million iPods during the quarter, representing 48 percent growth in Macs and 220 percent growth in iPods over the year-ago quarter.

Even though so many people have been saying that this or that MP3 player is going to be an iPod killer, once again iPod sales continue to rise. Also, one can only imagine that the increase in Mac sales must be in part created by the iPod halo effect, as well as a growing trust in Apple products overall.

Stealing music still in the news - It is no surprise that the recording industry is still up in arms about trading music over the Internet. Steve Jobs has stated that he feels making music available for a low price is an important factor in fighting music piracy. This came up recently as the recording industry is pressuring Apple to raise the cost of music. At the Apple Expo in Paris, Mr. Jobs pointed suggested that the industry is greedy! (http://biz.yahoo.com/ap/050920/france_apple_itunes.html?.v=1) As if we didn't already know that!!

I have heard from several sources that Apple's largest competitor in music sales isn't another company selling music, but music piracy. Apple still claims to have 80% of the digital music sales. Perhaps the recording industry should work *with* Apple, rather then trying to take a bite of the hand that might keep them alive.

In the past year, sales of CDs have decreased, but this loss has been partly offset by the rapid growth of digital music sales, which has increased by 175%. (http://www.npd.com/dynamic/releases/press_051004.html).

We all know and deal with the business model daily. Those that buy legally shouldn't have to pay extra to help offset the losses of those that don't pay. This is why the commercial drug and medical industries still make a lot of profit even though some people cannot pay the high prices. Personally, I don't want to have this happen with the recording industry.

Book Reviews

Ambient Findability: What We Find Changes Who We Become reviewed by Robert Pritchett

Author: Peter Morville
http://www.oreillynet.com/cs/catalog/view/au/561
http://findability.org/
http://www.alistapart.com/articles/ambientfindability
http://semanticstudios.com/publications/semantics/000057.php
Booksite: http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/ambient/index.html
$30 USD, $42 CND, £25 GBP, €32 EU
Published: September 2005
Pages: 204
ISBN: 05960076553

Strengths: Full of through-provoking prose about how we use technology to find and discover things.

Weaknesses: None found. Okay, no glossary of terms.

Ambient Findability: What We Find Changes Who We Become by Peter Morville is a fun read, a thought-provoking tour of memes (self-propagating unit of cultural evolution) and more.

A later quote from the *Semantic Studio* link above says;

> Google is worth nearly $90 billion because Google helps us find what we seek. And Google has delivered superior findability via a multi-algorithmic approach that recognizes the value of:

> 1. **Full Text.** Matching keywords in the query and content.

> 2. **Information Architecture.** Analyzing the internal link structure and hand-crafted metadata of each web site.

> 3. **Free Tagging.** Leveraging the links between web sites.

This book is full of great color as well as word-plays with unusual vocabulary. And there is no glossary, but the words do end up in the Index.

For example; "…woof and warp of social software that folksonomies arrived…". Folksonomy is really an attempt at categorizing free tagging, mob indexing, collaborative categorization, and ethnoclasssification and are used to surf the World Live Web for trendspotting and revealing "desire lines". Doesn't that just dribble off the lips? How about the "..dystopic vision of a computer-generated parallel universe " known as - cyberspace as we "step through the looking glass of our computer monitor into worlds of adventure and beauty". Or discussing Mooers law that Calvin Mooers established back in 1959 on information retrieval where reading information requires using our wetware to understand it, such that not having it may be less painful than having it, leading to a "poverty of attention" as we move forward into information overload as we follow the "Principle of Least Effort" (we will not seek out information that makes our job harder) even as we race through the fast food foraging approaches to information consumption.
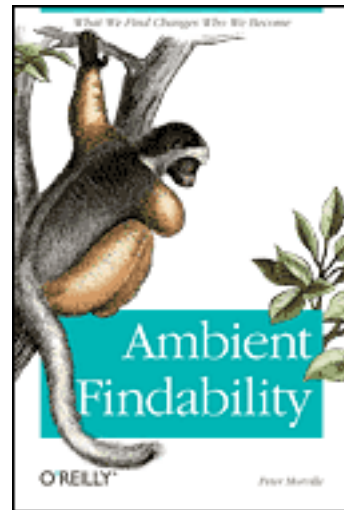
There is a whole chapter dedicated to Intertwingling and intertwingularity and is what we experience when we click on hypertext links everyware and wandering in the wilderness of ubicomp (pervasive computing). That brings us to the next term: Wayfinding – grasping the Global Position and GIS System technologies so we can either find our way to the doctor's office or navigate an underground railway system in new environments or as we get borged through using subdermal chips with RFID technologies.

Look at Amazon.com for a click-streamed book and get a saturated blend of semantic and social metadata sprinkled with bibliographic notations and co-citation analysis, collaborative filtering and customer reviews.

Or a term coined by Bruce Sterling - spimes – location-aware history-enriched, auto-Googling objects. Look at Google's Newsmap, Epinions, eBay's auction system, Slashdots metamoderation and karma-metric, or Flikr's hot tags. Or the new pheno of Googlebombing – an attempt to influence search result rankings. Have you looked at recent listings at Wikipedia.org?

I love this sentence: "To manage complexity, we must embrace faceted classification, polyhierarchy, pluralistic aboutness and pace gathering". Or this one on Grafitti theory; "…. all information flows through our senses continuously and unconsciously shapes our memories, beliefs, predictions, decisions and behaviours. We are born with instinct, but in matters of intuition, we are lifetime learners."

One more quote? "Memory and vision are linked in a dance of senses to an ambient rhythm, and in a very real sense, we all groove to the beat of ambient music".

Are you ready to trip through the sociosymantic web? Peter Morville guides us through 7 chapters of the stuff.
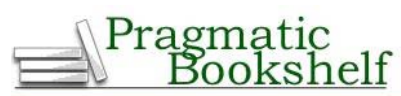
Authors: Johanna Rothman and Esther Derby

Pragmatic Programmers, LLC
P.O. Box 293325
Lewisville
TX 75029-3325
Or
9650 Strickland Road, Suite 103-255
Raleigh
NC 27615
1-800-699-PROG (800-699-7764)
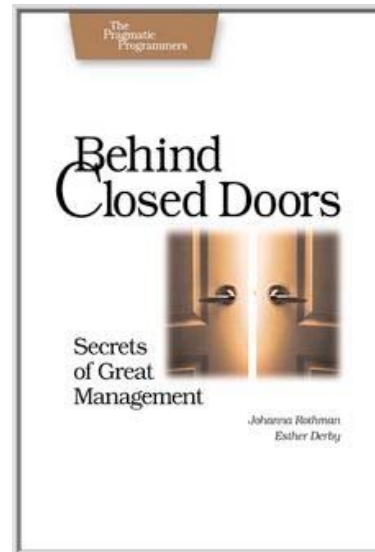sales@pragmaticprogrammer.com
pragprog@pragmaticprogrammer.com
http://www.pragmaticprogrammer.com/titles/rdbcd/index.html
Distributed by O'Reilly Books
http://www.oreilly.com
Released: September 2005.
$30 USD, $45 CND, £21 GBP, €25,77 EU
Pages: 192
ISBN: 0976694026

Strengths: Easy to read and understand. Great weblinks.

Weaknesses: A few typos.
http://books.pragprog.com/titles/rdbcd/errata

Behind Closed Doors: Secrets of Great Management by Johanna Rothman and Esther Derby helps us understand how to manage software teams based on "lessons learned" from software development projects.

A new manager is brought on board and we watch as he learns the ropes and offers sage advice and words of wisdom over a 7-week period.

All the great stuff is here; Delegation of authority, feedback and goal-setting, developing influence, handling one-on-ones, coaching, mentoring, prioritizing, choosing what makes money for the company and deciding not to work on stuff that doesn't and why.

After the 7 weeks, there are also 13 techniques for practicing great management. Each chapter ends with and a chapter bibliography. There are also a handful of sidebars that have been thoughtfully listed in the table of contents, right behind a list of figures.

Both Johanna Rothman and Esther Derby show through this narrative a few aspects of management vs. mismanagement that apparently they have experienced themselves over time. Sometimes, learning about this stuff before being put into a baptism-by-fire opportunity helps us better understand our current managers and what they go through as well.

I would recommend this book to both current managers and those who may aspire to management in the future.

Digital Identity: Unmasking Identity Management Architecture (IMA) reviewed by Robert Pritchett

O'REILLY®
computer books • conferences • online publishing

Author: Philip J. Windley
http://www.oreillynet.com/cs/catalog/view/au/2239
Booksite: http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/digidentity/index.html
$35 USD, $49 CND, £25 GBP, €32 EU
Published: August 2005
Pages: 254
ISBN: 0596008783
Requirements: Knowledge of existing Information technology systems.

Strengths: Doesn't get bogged down in platform or software-specifics.

Weaknesses: None found.

Digital Identity: Unmasking Identity Management Architecture (IMA) by Phillip J. Windley is all about Information Technology system Identity Management Architectures (thus the IMA acronym). There is no "code" here nor is there much about personal identity issues. Rather, this book drinks deeply at the Information System governance frameworks trough based apparently on his experiences at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah and as Chief Information Officer for the State if Utah.

The book is in three parts on what Digital Identity is all about, including privacy issues and trust scenarios, what technology is involved and a "how-to" in building and managing and Identity Management Architecture in any organization.

My personal experience in IT has been that if you are opinionated and take a stance, you will gain enemies. Phillip J. Windley was able to write this book on his experiences because apparently, he was ousted as Utah State CIO and took time to put this book together.

I loved the information regarding his efforts in trying to heard cats as far as standardizing on an Email address conversion form every way to do Email addresses to bringing them all under one domain and process (first initial, last name) and central location (bringing in all the various government and support organizations into one command center) and his observation about siege mentalities and security.

And of course, IMA opens up all kinds of opportunities for being able to get work done online regarding E-Commerce activities without compromising personal identity too much. He uses the ATM machines as an example of financial transaction migration where banks essentially move from "banking hours" to 24x7 service.

Chapter 12 talks about BYU's "Route Y" web-based initiative and the mirage of Centralized Efficiency vs. Federated Identity Patterns. Chapter 13 stands out in providing a list of what factors make IMA successful and what roadblocks are likely to be encountered, while Chapter 14 shows some principles that Utah uses for E-government that includes individuals, businesses and employees as well as government entities. Chapter 16 lists a number of questions regarding baseline identity inventories and audits.

Each of the 20 Chapters ends with a Conclusion that summarizes what was covered.

I also loved his definition of *Cryptography* in Chapter 6 on Integrity, Non-Repudiation and Confidentiality; "the science of making the cost of discovery of hidden information greater than the value of the information itself".

Whether larger or small, following existing standards that rise above platform-specific "solutions" seems to be the modus operandi here. If you are working on trying to consolidate systems for nearly one-button access, you might want to mosey on over to this book and dig into Digital Identity yourself first before proceeding any further. It just might help you keep your IT job.

Digital Photography *Pocket Guide* Third Edition reviewed by Michele Patterson

Author: Derrick Story;
http://www.oreillynet.com/cs/catalog/view/au/54
Booksite: http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/digphotopg3/index.html
$15 USD, $21 CND, £10 GBP, €14 EU
Published: August 2005
Pages: 172
ISBN: 0596100159

Strengths: Easy to read and understand, touches on a variety of subjects and gives the reader the tools to make the right purchase for them.

Weaknesses: No camera recommendations, could tabs or colored sections to make it easier to find topics, extra pages at the end to take notes would be make this even more useful.
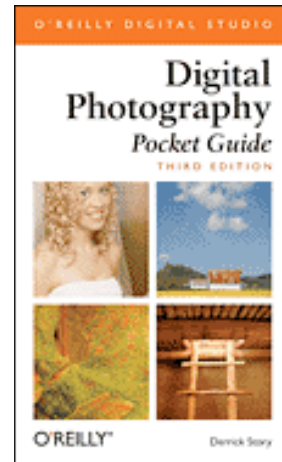
Whether you're an experienced photographer making the switch to digital or new to photography all together, the Pocket Guide is defiantly worth a read. I own a Nikon D70 and have been using it constantly for over a year now. But all the different settings were a mystery to me. I like the auto shot and most of the time it works wonderful, but there are times when I knew there was a better way, I just didn't know what it was. I was able to begin taking shots using the manual mode within 30 minutes of opening this book, photos that defiantly looked better then the ones on auto.

Derrick gives you the tools you'll need to make a more informed decision on your next digital camera. Before I bought my camera I did a lot of research on the internet, reading reviews on both cameras I was considering. But something that wasn't as easy to find was in-depth coverage regarding features that my camera has available to me. Sure the Nikon D70 book that came with it was nice, but long and boring, written like a classic user manual, not fun to read. This book is easy to follow, enjoyable to read and didn't assume I knew what white balance, shutter priority or other befuddling terms meant. He does an excellent job explaining advanced and not so advanced terms. Thus propelling you to dig further and learn more.

Just that because you own an advanced amateur camera doesn't mean you know everything about it. The author takes you through all the basics and into some of the more advanced features that will help you to take better pictures. He also touches on different types of SLR lens and detachable flashes, both of which can improve your shots. The main points of the book are to give you enough information to buy the right camera for you and to begin taking the pictures you always wanted to take.

How to Do Everything with Mac OS X Tiger reviewed by Steve Stanger

Author: Kirk McElhearn
http://www.mcelhearn.com/
Booksite: http://books.mcgraw-hill.com/getbook.php?isbn=0072261587&template=osborne
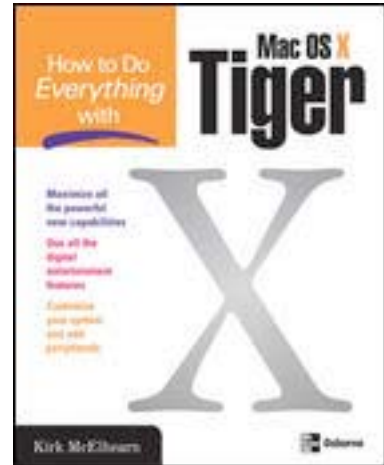$25 USD, $34 CND, £15 GBP, €22 EU
Published: September 2005
Pages: 504
ISBN: 0072261587
Requirements: Mac OS X Tiger

Strengths: Good introduction to Tiger for users new to OS X.

Weaknesses: None Found.

This book is an update to Kirk McElhearns's previous "How to Do Everything with Mac OS X Panther" book. The book does a great job introducing the new features of Tiger while walking the novice user through the use of OS X.

This book covers everything that a beginner user would need to know to get the most from their OS X experience. Some of the topics covered are customizing your desktop, faxing, using iCal, account settings, managing your music with iTunes and an iPod, share files on a home network, adding on peripherals, protecting data using security tools. The book also focuses on the new additions to Tiger: Spotlight, Dashboard, Safari RSS, Automator, and other application enhancements. The first chapter introduces the changes in Tiger, which are then discussed in more detail throughout the book.

The book is written in easy to understand language (no techno-babble here) and includes illustrations on almost every page to help demonstrate the topics being discussed. Another feature of this book is the inclusion of labeled and italicized shortcuts, tips, "How-to"s, and cautions.   You will find yourself skimming the book for these notes then going back to read the chapters.

This is one of those "beginners" books that will even teach "experienced" Mac users a thing or two.

Mac OS X Tiger For Dummies – A Reference for the Rest of Us reviewed by Harry {doc} Babad

Author: Bob LeVitus
John Wiley's Dummies Series
http://www.wiley.com/WileyCDA/Section/id-2925.html
Published: May 2005
$22 USD, $29 CND, £14 GBP, €19 EU
Pages: 432
ISBN: 0764576755
Audience: Macintosh Tiger OS X Newbies and them folks that want an easy way to learn more about Apple's latest and greatest operating system.

Strengths: Clearly written and well organized.

Weakness: Even with a magnifying glass, many images were too small to illustrate Bob LeVitus' point.
_____
Product and company names and logos in this review may be registered trademarks of their respective companies.

Where appropriate the instructions in the book was tested on a 1 GHz dual processor PowerPC G4 Macintosh with 2 GB DDR SDRAM running under OS X 10.4.2

Publisher's Overview
Mac OS X just keeps getting better! The newest cat in the pack, 10.4 Tiger, has new bells and whistles and terrific updates that make it even easier and more fun to use, which is why you won't want to miss out on the helpful guidance this book has to offer.

Written by "Dr. Mac" himself, veteran Macintosh expert Bob LeVitus, *Mac OS X Tiger For Dummies* is perfect whether you're brand-new to the Mac or you're a longtime Mac-thusiast. You'll find sections on

* Basic Mac usage, including keyboard and mouse, menus, windows, the Dock, saving-backing up files, and getting around OS X
* Internet ins and outs, how to print from your Mac, and the how and why of System Preferences
* How to set up a network, share files, and troubleshoot problems
* Step-by-step installation instructions for OS X, and a lot more

Bob LeVitus reaches over a million readers weekly with his "Dr. Mac" column in the *Houston Chronicle,* and his books have sold more than a million copies worldwide. In this one, he helps you
* Find your way around the new Finder, go Web surfing with the cool new Safari browser, and search smarter with Spotlight
* Use Preferences to personalize your system for the way you work
* Handle removable media, including CDs, DVDs, and even classic devices like zip drives
* Manage files, use file sharing, and protect your precious data —painlessly
* Take advantage of Dashboard widgets, navigate nested folders, and make the most of Tiger
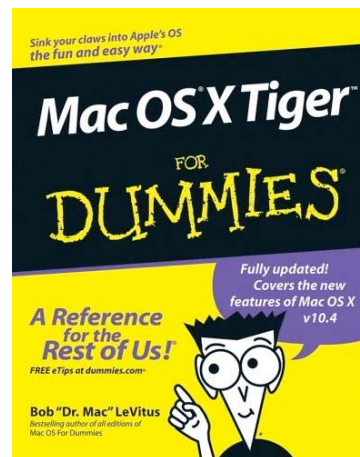
Review Introduction

As you might well know, I'm not a newbie to Macintosh OS X (Tiger) but having never read a 'Dummies" book and having greatly enjoyed articles by Bob LeVitus (aka Dr. Mac) I thought I'd take the plunge. Bob's books and articles are easy to read, or even skim and are always either helpful or informative. And like other authors whose books I've reviewed favorably in macC, he doesn't assume you know more than you the books target audience are likely to know. Although the book contained many familiar things, and a few not so familiar sections, I tried no read it as if I were new to OS X, and in particular new to Tiger.

As the book's back cover notes: 'Hold that Tiger! Whether this is your first meeting with a Mac or you're a longtime Mac-thusiast, here is how to get up to speed quickly with Mac OS X v10.4 Tiger. From finding the "on" button (it CAN be challenging!) to networking your Mac and backing up your files, it's just what the doctor ordered."

The Book Itself

Part I: Introducing Mac OS X Tiger, shares the simply joys of turning your computer on and safely off when done; an introduction to the desktop (just a

A few things you should definitely NOT do with your Mac

In this section, I deal with the bad stuff that can happen to your computer if you do the wrong things with it. If something bad has already happened to you — I know . . . I'm beginning to sound like a broken record — see Chapter 15.

- ✔ **Don't unplug your Mac when it's turned on.** Very bad things can happen, such as having your operating system break. See the preceding section, where I discuss shutting your system down properly.

- ✔ **Don't use your Mac when lightning is near.** Here's a simple life equation for you: Mac + lightning = dead Mac. 'Nuff said. Oh, and don't place much faith in inexpensive surge protectors. A good jolt of lightning will fry the surge protector right along with your computer — as well as possibly frying your modem, printer, and anything else plugged into it. Some surge protectors can withstand most lightning strikes, but these warriors aren't the cheapies that you buy at your local computer emporium. Unplugging your Mac from the wall during electrical storms is safer and less expensive. (Don't forget to unplug your external modem, network hubs, printers, or other hardware that plugs into the wall as well — lightning can fry them, too.)

- ✔ **Don't jostle, bump, shake, kick, throw, dribble, or punt your Mac, especially while it's running.** Your Mac contains a hard drive that spins at 4,200+ revolutions per minute (rpm) or more. A jolt to a hard drive while it's reading or writing a file can cause the head to crash into the disk, which can render many (or all) files on it unrecoverable. Ouch!

- ✔ **Don't forget to back up your data!** I beg you: Please read Chapter 8 now before something horrible happens to your valuable data! If the stuff on your hard drive means anything to you, you must back it up. Not maybe. You must. Even if your most important file is your last saved game of Tony Hawk Pro Skater 2, you still need to realize how important it is to back up your files.

  In Chapter 8, I discuss how to back up your files, and I *strongly* recommend that you read Chapter 8 sooner rather than later — preferably before you do any significant work on your Mac. Dr. Macintosh sez: "There are only two kinds of Mac users: Those who have never lost data and those who will." Which kind will you be?

- ✔ **Don't kiss your monitor while wearing stuff on your lips.** For obvious reasons! Use a soft cloth and/or the Klear Screen polish and wipes that Apple recommends if you need to clean your display.

simple tour). I wish I had something like this the first time a client pointed me to his PC on which MS Office was installed, and said turn it on and write me a draft of your recommendations. After that you lean about the dock, and it's icons (chapter 2) as well as the other icons for items you will find as part of the operating system as well as the joys of using an alias. It is, as illustrated below, also full of critical pieces of information that no Macintosh user should forget. In chapter 3, the reader *Learns all About Windows (Not the Microsoft Kind) and Menus.* After all, except for your desktop and dock, they frame and contain everything you have on your computer.

Part II: Rounding Out Your Basic Training. Dr. Mac tells us all about the Finder (Chapter 4); its features in the Tiger, and for the most part of other Macintosh OS X systems. You leap boldly into an understanding of the save and open dialog boxes (Chapter 5) and most critical to many Macintosh users, old and new, learning how to manage—organize— you ever growing files. Yep, Chapter 6 is all about *File Management Without Tearing Your Hair Out.* Dealing with removable media, you know it's about Zip disks, CDs DVDs and even floppies. Perhaps the most import part of this book, is Chapter 8, *Back Up Now or Regret it Later.*

Part III: Doing Stuff with Your Mac. Just the titles of the chapters make you want to get tuned in. Starting with *Internet-Working* [working the Internet (Chapter 9)] and *Publish or Perish: The Fail-Safe Guide to Printing* (Chapter 10) and ending with a discussion of *What Your Mac Prefers*, which is all about systems, and setting preferences — Customization 101. After all, you bought your computer to do work, relax in play, and to make reaching out to touch somebody easier to do. So a little bit of book larning wouldn't hurt.

Part IV: Networking & Troubleshooting. Mine! Miiiiine! Sharing Your Mac and Liking It (Chapter 14:) is all bout, well sharing, something that I'm too selfish to do. It is one of the easiest to understand chapters on networking I've read and I am certain, should I need to, I can do it. Chapter 15: Troubleshooting Mac OS X, was despite my long-term experience with my Macintosh, well worth reading and understanding. This was the best chapter on troubleshooting I've read, and is well worth having close at hand when trouble strikes. This is a little like having snake bite venom when you hike, you wouldn't need it often but it could save your *computing* life.

Part V: The Part of Tens. The final section of the book deals with:
Chapter 16: Ten (Or So) Ways to Speed Up Your Mac Experience.
Chapter 17: Ten (Or So) Ways to Make Your Mac Better by Throwing Money at It.
Chapter 18: Ten (Or So) Great Web Sites for Mac Freaks.
Chapter 19: Ten (Or So) Mac OS X Apps That You Might Need Someday.

An Appendix on *Installing or Reinstalling Mac OS X 10.4 Tiger (Only If You Have To)*, and a detailed index conclude this book.

Although the book covers both the Mac OS X essentials and more, I would have welcomed a few words that in order to achieve the full benefits of the operating system almost all users will need to either tune into either Apple's or third party applications. After all, how can you play with a full deck of tools, if some of the best tools for enhancing your creativity are not part of your software collection.

The iApplications will certainly kick-start your creative juices [e.g., iWorks (Keynote 2 and Pages), and iLife (a suite of tightly integrated applications to enhance your abilities in participating in the digital media revolution (iPhoto, iMovie, iDVD, and GarageBand)]. And for those of who for communications with Wintel peers, or in really creating the very best in your favorite genre, you can chose among Microsoft Office Suite, Adobe and Macromedia's fine products or from the great shareware and commercial applications you can find by checking the usual shareware sites.

Kudos and more Kudos
Backup or Die, Sooner Rather Than Later — Thank for the prescription Dr. Mac. I recent had a major not easily fixable case of 'lost privileges' occur on my G4. After I'd given up on fixing things, a college who does this sort of stuff professional, got my Tiger hard disk straitened out in only a mere six hours. I would have been in a full panic mode were it not that I have an external dual partitioned LaCie 160 GB external hard drive and at least weekly backup changed files of fully clone my hard drive using *SuperDuper*, a great backup solution. Bob, with all due respect to your love for *Retrospect*, I had files backed up just incase. Now I(didn't need the backups this time, but only would have lost a few days work if I had to use them.

The Computer vs. Home Folder — I'm impressed! One of the major identity crises foisted on us by Mac OS X, ignoring the multiplicity of font folder, is the difference between the use and structure of my *computer* as opposed to my *home* folders (Pages 146-153). Bottom line, avoid messing with the former and learn to work within the later, after all it belongs to you.

Bob LeVitus Rants — Dr. Mac, since I publish an occasional Rants, Raves and Revelations column for macCompanion, I welcome those from folks like you who dwell on high on Mount Olympus or is that Mount MacRageous.

All That Teckie Stuff — I was delighted by the items labeled Technical Stuff. Almost all of it can be leaned by a newbie, although perhaps only in a second read of *Mac OS X Tiger For Dummies.*

Unsanity Haxies — Kudos for you sagacious recognition of Fruit Menu, but Unsanity has other great haxies that I also use, and they are rock stable. It's a shame that Apple didn't license them and add them to Tiger's system preferences. http://www.unsanity.com/news/

The Lozenge Word — I've read that the ovoid in the upper right hand window called a capsule, jellybean.

Discomforts

<u>Deactivate The Caps Lock Key</u> — As a 50 wpm two-finger typist, accidentally hitting the caps lock key is an ongoing acknowledgement that there is an even spirit living in my keyboard or operating system. Therefore, I kill it in Apples Keyboards and Mouse preference. [Key Boards and Mouse Preference > click the Keyboard Tab > At the bottom of the keyboard tab click the Modifier Keys button > The first popup menu item is Caps Lock > Choose no action from that pop up menu > click okay and the caps lock key ain't.]

<u>Overcoming the Clipboard's Limitations</u> — It's all and good, to recognize and warn readers about the limitations of the Apple Clipboard (Page 83) but it would have been even nicer to share the names of multiple clipboard shareware options. My favorite is www.stupidFish23.com shadowClipboard 2.

<u>Type Size</u> — I know that 'Dr Mac' keeps telling us that his editors and the approved Dummies books format controlled the design of this book. That still doesn't make the tape large enough for the comfort of my seventy-year-old eyes.

<u>Size of Screen Shot Images</u> — Bob, you gotta believe me, I'm not picking on you. However, I just finished a review of Robin Williams book, *The Non-Designers Type Book* (in this Mac C Issue) and your graphic designers, by eliminating excess white space above and below your carefully selected illustrations, could have enhanced their readability. What particularly got to me was the size of the icons in 'captured' finder windows whether in icon or list view where too small to read their text titles.

<u>Cutsie Terms</u> — Come on Bob, *dialog dealie boppers* (Pages 59-61). There must be a better way to describe the *elements* of a windows dialog box (e.g., check boxes, popup menus, radio buttons, text or number fields.

<u>Errata or Glitches</u> —
- Tiger Uses Disk Tools, not Disk Copy and Disk Utility (Page 88.)
- What is a Kernel you might rightly ask? The term is neither listed in the index not defined (Page 158)
- What is Target Disk Mode? (Chapter 13, Page 302.)
- Too few illustrations in Chapter 13.
- Tiger, preferentially ships on DVD (Chapter 15, Page 358.)

In Closing

I'm glad I decided to read this *Dummies* book despite having illusion of grandeur about my Tiger Skills. Although lots of this stuff was familiar, after all I do work on my Macintosh for hour on most days, there enough 'easier ways' to make me humble; finding productive things I missed in other Tiger or even Panther Books. I stayed awed and humble for a few at least minutes. I thoroughly enjoyed this excellent book both by reading and working with it.

I agree with comments made by Ronald Schoedel, Alaska Apple Users Group member, http://akappleug.org/blog/?p=196 that "the true test of a "Dummies" book, however, is how much it helps someone unfamiliar with the Mac become a more efficient and better informed user. The book is broken down into a number of tasks, and then walks the reader through a task step by step. Playful icons guide the reader through the task, warn of potential pitfalls, clarify matters, and direct the reader to additional software or resources that may be helpful."

With the newbie friendly and expert advice in this book, you'll tame the Tiger in no time. For you know it alls, this book makes a great refresher. *Tiger for Dummies* is a great book and will easily and (almost) painlessly helps even windows switchers get tuned our superior operating system. As Bob often reiterates, a window in the finder is not MS Windows. Buy one for anyone on your holiday shopping list that is either new to OS X (Tiger) or better yet a found soul escaping from the *Windows* monster. [Rated 4.5 macC's]

My Job Went To India (And All I Got Was This Lousy Book): 52 Ways To Save Your Job reviewed by Robert Pritchett

Author: Chad Fowler
Pragmatic Programmers, LLC
P.O. Box 293325
Lewisville, TX 75029-3325
Or 9650 Strickland Road,
Suite 103-255
Raleigh, NC 27615
1-800-699-PROG (800-699-7764)
sales@pragmaticprogrammer.com
pragprog@pragmaticprogrammer.com
http://www.pragmaticprogrammer.com
Booksite: http://www.pragmaticprogrammer.com/titles/mjwti/index.html
Released: September 2005
$20 USD, $28 CND, £12 GBP €17 Euro
Pages: 208
ISBN: 0976694018
Requirements: Being a software programmer or working with one and thinking of "outsourcing" off shore.

Strengths: Excellent food for thought regarding working with off-shore software development teams.

Weaknesses: Some cussing.

My Job Went To India (And All I Got Was This Lousy Book): 52 Ways To Save Your Job by Chad Fowler is a "Lessons Learned" kind of book for software programmers and contrasts the India IT industry compared to the software industry in the US based on his personal experiences as both a Jazz musician and as a self-trained programmer.

Chad Fowler manages to pull this off in 52 "chapters" or precious gems with each ending with an "Act On It!" To-Do list.

If you have been reading the ebb and flow of outsourcing, read this book about someone who has literally "been there, done that" as a person who spent time living in India trying to find folks who could program and were flexible enough to be cross-trained and could communicate effectively in American English. I really enjoyed his thoughts on translating Kentuckian colloquialisms by translating English to English sitting with the Indian Team as the Stateside folks spoke and he repeated what they said because the Indians couldn't get past the Kentucky accent (Southern Drawl). What a hoot!

Instead of bad-mouthing outsource decisions by IT management and company accounting practices that sway sending development off-shore, learn from Chad about what you can do to improve your marketability stateside.

Career success doesn't just happen, it has to be planned and technical knowledge does not necessarily equate to success or upward mobility – especially when management has the option to go elsewhere for less cost to get the job done. Learn where to invest time and resources to keep from becoming obsoleted by technological progress. After all, there are a few skill-sets yet that just can't be done off-site or offshore.
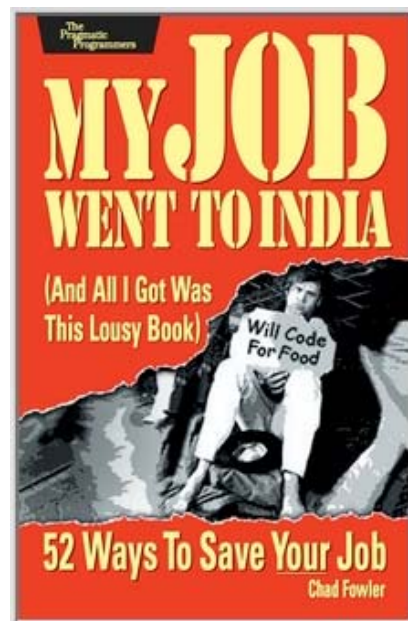
Find out how you can become someone on the high-demand path and maybe learn a thing or two about how to market yourself and find out what can be left behind and what to pursue.

Don't join the monkey's who reach for food in a trap and would rather die than let go of the food by opening their hands and dropping the food that has caught them in the trap. Chad calls it *Value Rigidity* – holding onto a favorite technology for so long that you have become unable to question the technology objectively. And he uses Linux instead of Mac as the object-lesson.

How was Chad able to find the people he needed to do the job in India? He asked questions that pulled the really good ones out of "specialist-mode" and could transfer their programming expertise because they knew more than one programming language and could transcend their abilities because of their ongoing desire and energy to learn and apply that learning to new technologies. Oh, and he also emerged himself in their culture so he could understand where they were coming from.

You can safely bet that folks in India are reading this book, and so should you, if you do programming for a living. Why are they so into Information Technology? Because it is a way they can feed and house not just themselves, but their parents, brothers, sisters, families and other relatives. They are hungry to learn and earn. Are you as hungry to work as they are?

The Non-Designer's Type Book 2nd Edition reviewed by Harry (doc) Babad

Peachpit
Essential books for the creative community

Author: Robin Williams
http://www.eyewire.com/magazine/columns/robin/index.htm
Peachpit Press
http://www.peachpit.com/
Booksite: http://www.peachpit.com/title/0321303369
Published: September 22, 2005
$25 USD, 35 CND, £19 GBP, €22 Euro
ISBN: 0321303369

Strengths: Everyone should own this book. Despite the fact that it is aimed at users of page layout programs such as Adobe Illustrator, Adobe InDesign CS or QuarkXPress, There is enough information to better your designs even though you are only using Microsoft Word [MSW]. The *Non-Designer's Type Book* is simple, easy to follow and a very effective teaching tool. It is clearly and concisely written and well and effectively illustrated. The book is non-platform, and non-software specific, but that fact does not interfere with a macC reader's understanding. As always with Ms. William's books, it was a joy to read, study, and review.

Weaknesses: I would have preferred it if Robin had highlighted those hints that work in MSW, albeit in a more limited fashion.
_____

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

Where appropriate the instructions in the book was tested on a 1 GHz dual processor PowerPC G4 Macintosh with 2 GB DDR SDRAM running under OS X 10.4.2

Publisher's Book Description
"So you have a great concept and all the fancy digital tools you could possibly require—what's stopping you from creating beautiful pages? Namely the training to pull all of these elements together into a cohesive design that effectively communicates your message. Not to worry: This book is the one place you can turn to find quick, non-intimidating, excellent design help.

"This latest addition to Robin Williams' Non-Designer's series, this book not only defines the principles governing type but explains the logic behind them so readers can understand and see what looks best and why. Armed with this knowledge, and putting into practice the secrets Robin reveals for making type readable and artistic, readers can then go on to create beautiful, sophisticated, professional looking pages on their computers for output as hard copy or for use on Web pages. Each short chapter explores a different type secret including use of evocative typography, tailoring typeface to project, working with spacing, punctuation marks, special characters, fonts, justification, and much more. It is written in the lively, engaging style that has made Williams one of the most popular computer authors today. And it uses numerous examples to illustrate the subtle details that make the difference between good and sophisticated use of type. The non-platform specific, non-software specific approach to the book makes this a must have for any designer's bookshelf-from type novices to more experienced graphic designers and typesetters."
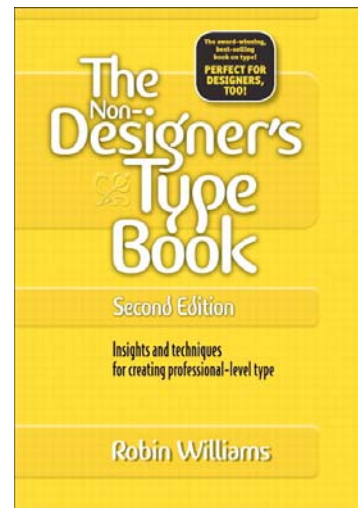
Review Introduction — Nowadays, on your Macintosh you can easily create documents that are far more graphic then on a typed page. Many of us have created brochures, posters, stationary and even web pages using the word processing and graphics tools that either come with our operating system or software tools we've purchased to enhance our abilities to create just the right document. But even the best the computer and the software you own can't apply good design principles. That's up to the user, who, like me, often has no design training.

As I've previously noted in other macC reviews of books by Robin Williams, she has a remarkable ability to teach the total novice about page layout, focusing on the most important (visually obvious) issues, and empowering you, should you own the page layout tools, to create better pages immediately.

In *The Non-Designer's Type Book, 2nd Edition*, best-selling author Robin Williams turns her attention to the basic principles of good design and typography *of printed pages*. All you have to do is follow her clearly explained concepts, and you'll begin producing more sophisticated, professional, and interesting pages immediately. …Humor-infused, jargon-free prose interspersed with design exercises, quizzes, illustrations, and dozens of examples make learning a snap—which is just what audiences have come to expect from Robin. This little book teaches basic design and typographic skills. In four simple steps, she explains how to use the elements of design: proximity, alignment, repetition and contrast [PARC].

Note, as Robin clearly notes and emphasizes, *Graphic design is not something you can teach yourself in a matter of hours*. But with this book, Robin William's *The Non-Designer's Design Book* you can start of educate your eyes to spot to the design elements that make professional designer work so attractive. Then albeit slowly, it's a leaning curve thing, you can apply many of those teachings (e.g., those what's and whys) in the software tools you already own.

Read this book and you will never look at marketing materials in newspapers, magazines, brochures or even the Internet with blinders over your eyes. After reading [and reviewing] her first edition, and, I hope, relearning somewhat forgotten skills, I can create better and more interesting layout, even in MS Word.

The Book Itself
I especially found the *Non-Designer's Design Book* organization easy to use to 'educate' myself further in design elements. The book, for the most part, is set up so that one page shows what you shouldn't do and why, and opposite page shows what you should do—A very effective way of presenting design material. And should you forget the meaning of type related terms, Robin's glossary of type terms should easily help to set them straight in your mind.

Williams explains four basic principles of design that are simple and straightforward and can be applied to every graphic design project. The author then shows how to apply these principles to specific kinds of projects. Finally, she discusses typefaces, or fonts, and the way they should be used, in a way that's so clear that I wonder why it ever took me so long to learn the differences.

The typography section of the book explains the principles of Concord, Conflict and Contrast, based on Ms. Williams' classification of typefaces by type style (Oldstyle, Modern, Slab Serif, Sans Serif, Script and Decorative), weight (Light, Bold), Shape (Narrow, Wide), and spacing.

Each short chapter explores a different type secret including use of evocative typography, tailoring typeface to project, working with spacing, punctuation marks, special characters, fonts, justification, and much more. It is written in the lively, engaging style that has made Williams one of the most popular computer authors today. And it uses numerous examples to illustrate the subtle details that make the difference between good and sophisticated use of type. The non-platform specific, non-software specific approach to the book makes this a must-have for any designer's bookshelf - from type novices to more experienced graphic designers and typesetters.

All of the design and typographic principles are clearly explained, and discussed focusing on their use for creating tasteful eye catching documents the get your message across. The book illustrates both good and bad examples of any given design element. Despite a certain amount of repetitiveness, this book is well worth the investment for design beginners.

The typography section of the book explains the principles of Concord, Conflict and Contrast, based on Ms. Williams' classification of typefaces by style), and spacing. I was pleased with Ms. William's treatment of type. She separates type into 6 categories (Oldstyle, Modern, Slab Serif, Sans Serif, Script and Decorative), weight (Light, Bold), Shape (Narrow, Wide) and explains that, due to the huge variety of type, there are hundreds of typefaces that won't fit neatly into any one of these 6 categories. This is a useful way for the newbie designer to learn how to identify the similarities and differences in type, including how to combine different typefaces in your documents to achieve more interesting and legible results and to start grouping your type.

Robin provides reference material at the end of the book discussing the basics of typography and layout, as well as helpful appendices. These serve to round out your introduction to practical design.

An individual untrained in design can read the whole book in several hours, but I don't recommend that approach to Robin's books. Even with a quick read you can gain a glancing familiarity with the elements of page design, one that is sufficient to attain an improvement in documents appearance.

Things I Liked

Examples and Quizzes — The clear examples Robin provides served me well both in eye training and in educating me how to make my designs look better. The books underlying theme on how a novice designer can apply the principles to their documents when designing advertisements, logos, newsletters, business cards, letterhead, forms, posters, web sites, and more. Often, there are also examples of designs where one or more of the principles were not used so you can compare and see the affect of applying the PARC principles.

Organizational Features — After introducing the principles of design including the differences between readability and legibility, the book delves into teaching the reader how to work with punctuation, the use of expert types, spacing, and dealing with the details (e.g., headers, pull quotes, captions).

Minor Troublesome Things

Web Site Design — Although I have never needed to design a web site, but I found that what little the book discusses was more limited than most of our reader would want. In addition the index to the book does not list the topic of web site design so readers would have difficulty in finding information on this topic.

What Works With Microsoft Word? — Fully recognizing that the book is focused on users page layout software, I remain peeved that Robin has mention how I can achieve some of the design elements with that software. Since reviewing her original edition of this book and upgrading to Word 2004, I've been able to figure out, the hard way by trial and error, how to achieve some of the results Robin teaches. Since I've never used 'open fonts' I would have especially like to learn whether they would work with MS Word; Buying a few font's is less expensive than buying a seldom used page layout program

The Use of Color in Design — Having long owned a color printer, I would have appreciated a bit more information on the use of color in design, beyond the few terse items listed in the index.

Special Fonts — I would have like to have more information about both type to use for documents to be used for PDFs and those for creating websites or web postings.

Conclusions
This is an excellent introduction to design principles. The principles are clearly explained, discussed in terms of practical applications, and illustrated with both good and bad examples. Despite a certain amount of repetitiveness, this book is well worth the investment for design beginners. I have on occasion heard that the best thing about *desk top publishing* is that it puts it in the hands of everybody. The worst thing about *desk top publishing* is that it puts it in the hands of everybody. This book is a wonderful leaning tool for those who are design blind as well as those of us who just don't know what to look for and how to make our designs appear more professional. This may not be the last book you buy on design and layout, but it should certainly be the first.

I am pleased to give it 4.5 macCs.

PS
Now all we need, Robin, is a small book, no larger that *The Mac (PC) is not a Typewriter* on designing in MS Word. After all more folks use MSW than do all the page layout programs you've lovingly taught us about.

Mac OS X Tiger Killer Tips: The Ultimate Collection of Mac OS X Sidebar Tips
reviewed by Harry {doc} Babad

Author: Scott Kelby
New Riders Press
Book Link: http://www.peachpit.com/bookstore/product.asp?isbn=0321290542&rl=1
Released: August 8, 2005
$30 USD, $42 CND, £22 GBP, €26 Euro
Pages: 400
ISBN: 0321290542
Audience: Enlightened Newbies and all but the most eclectically knowledgeable Tiger
users.

Strengths: Oodles and boodles of tips and you the reader not only get to decide which
are *killers* and which are not. Beauty and usefulness are all I the eyes of the
beholder.

Weaknesses: I only bothered to memorize and start to use about 30 of Scott Kelby's ca.
320 hints. More seriously, despite all of his efforts a definition, the only definition
of a killer tip is one that reaches out to me to *make* me use it.
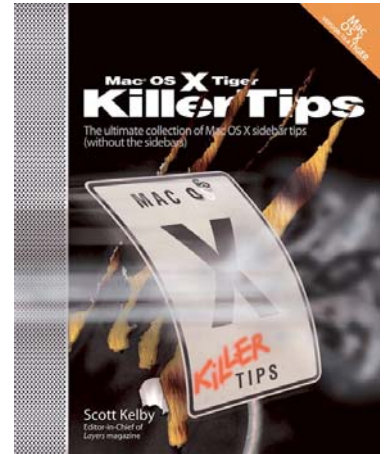
Where appropriate, the instructions in the book were tested on a 1 GHz dual processor
PowerPC G4 Macintosh with 2 GB DDR SDRAM running under OS X 10.4.2.

Publisher's Partial Description
"Tips Rule — Have you ever noticed that in just about every Mac book, the author will include a couple of tips in
each chapter (you'll usually find them in the sidebar, or at the bottom of the page in a tinted box). Sometimes it's a
shortcut, a faster way to do something, or a clever workaround that just makes your life easier. People really love
those tips, but there's only one problem--there's never enough of them.

"That's why Scott Kelby, bestselling author and Editor-in-Chief of *Mac Design* magazine came up with the idea to
create a book that's nothing but "sidebar" tips. That's right--this entire book, cover-to-cover is packed with nothing
but those cool inside secrets, slick workarounds, undocumented shortcuts, and sneaky little tricks that will make you
faster, better, and have more fun using Mac OS 10.4 (Tiger).

 "To be in this book, every tip has got to be a "Killer Tip" (the kind of tip that makes you nod and smile, then call all
your Mac buddies to tune them up with your new-found power). Scott's a total "hip hound" (in fact, it was Scott
who created the entire smash-bestselling "Killer Tips" book series), and he doesn't hold anything back--it's all here
from the man who literally "wrote the book" on cool productivity tips. If you like doing things the easy way, if you
like getting twice the work done in half the time, and if you get a kick out of knowing all the "inside secrets and
undocumented shortcuts" that will wow your friends and coworkers, you're absolutely going to love this book."

Review Introduction
I've been both a Scott Kelby fan and a Tips fan even before I started writing for macCompanion. I've read but not reviewed a number of Scott's Killer Tips books and found them both 'funny' and incredibly useful. I've been told that I have a warped sense of humor but I found Kelby's humorous iconoclastic style still tickles senses of the absurd.

Enter David Weeks http://www.mymac.com/showarticle.php?id=2068%5D. Although Mr. Weeks only gave the book 2.5/5.0 rating, found that there are some fine tips to be found in Kelby's book. "Many OS X'ers don't know you can send text messages via iChat, or that the included BlueTooth File Exchange will send photos to your BlueTooth cell phone. A fair number of the Spotlight tips are not well documented elsewhere, yet are useful and easy-to-use."

But ignoring the pro and cons of Scott's sense of humor, I've memorized and now use 30 of these tips at first reading and have several dozen more tabbed for future adoption. That's not bad for a book that I only tuned into the first nine chapters that contained a mere 94 tips. Reading the book from start to finish is not mandatory to get the most out of it. The book is well indexed and the table of contents is easy to skim. Keeping Mac OS X Tiger Killer Tips in the bookcase behind my computer so I can look up tips either for the joy of it or as I need them will work just fine.

The Book Itself
Kelby's latest in the OS X series books, **Mac OS X Tiger Killer Tips**, presents the need-to-know nuggets that other guides offer in sidebars to which he has added crisp notes and instructions so even veteran Mac users can work faster and smarter with better results. The book is all the better in that even novice users now also can have access to a broad range of tips and advice. I've listed and commented, sort of, on the books chapters. The rest, my readers, is up to you.

And for you complete newbies to OS X — Scott notes (Introduction, Page xxiv) l have to tell you, the tips in this book are designed for people who are already using Mac OS X, so there's not much beginner stuff in here. However, if you are a Mac beginner I have a special bonus for you-a secret special downloadable chapter of beginner tips that I put together just for you. So technically the tips in this downloadable beginners' chapter are not "Killer Tips" they're Mac OS X beginners' tips written in a Killer Tips style but hey-they're free, I made them especially for you, and all you have to do is download the PDF chapter from http://www.scottkelbybooks.com/begtips.html.

Chapter 1.   *Window Wonderland Cool Window Tips* [Toolbars, Windows, keyboard shortcuts, Killing and customizing finder annoyances, and other goodies]
Chapter 2.   *Show Me the Way Navigating Essentials* [A cornucopia of not easily cataloged or organized tips for doing neat things with your Macintosh. No Scott, I have no better way to sequence these than you did.]
Chapter 3.   *For Those About to Dock! Docking Miracles Made Easy* [The lowdown on getting the best from Apple's Application and document launcher-you can even add project related folders for easy access to their contents.]
Chapter 4.   *Spotlight on Sam & Dave Spotlight Search Tips* [Finally, a way add some light to this powerful document search tool. For those tips I didn't learn on my first reading, I've got the pages tabbed so I can get back to them real easy; Aren't PostIt notes wunerful? By the way, who are Sam and Dave?
Chapter 5.   *Fly Like an Eagle Mac OS X Speed Tips* [Another cornucopia of tidbits and an occasional tibats, most of which did not turn me on. But one man's poison….].]
Chapter 6.   *Cool & the Gang Way Cool Tips* [Dashboard widgets, and other good things collect with unfathomable logic by the author. Don't despair, you take these goodies in one killer tip at a time; and the index is grrreat!]

Chapter 7.   *Cheap Trick Mac OS X Pranks* [Naughty, naughty, naughty. These pranks are even more exuberant and overwhelming to their victims than the crop that MacAddict published in its April Fool Day Issue. Remember though, that implementing these tips could get you fired or ruin an otherwise perfect relationship. Your not the only one of your friends to buy this book, so stay cool!]

Chapter 8.   She Drives Me Crazy How to Stop Annoying Things [Having recently reviewed *Mac Annoyances: How to Fix the Most ANNOYING Things About Your Mac* by John Rizzo [macC August 2005, Volume 3, Issue 8] I expected this chapter to be more of the same. Refreshing the two books seldom overlap, perhaps because all of Scott's tip are of Killer variety.

Chapter 9.   *Surfin' Safari Tips for Using the Safari Web Browser* [IE for the Macintosh is dead, stopped in its tracks by Microsoft to protest Apple's development of the Safari web browser. I'm sure every Mac OX X user had adopted this great tool. Working through the tips in the Safari section can only enhance you skills with this fine software.]

Chapter 10.   *You've Got Mail Tips for Using Mail* [Is only quickly skimmed this chapter because, despite Mail's strengths, I'm mot ready to give up on using Eudora. [I know there are tools to export my critical Eudora files to Mail, but I'm just a stubborn coot; and after all, most of my clients use the Microsoft product. For those of you have neither succumbed to Eudora or MS Entourage, this chapter will be well worth your time.

Chapter 11.   *Takin' Care of Business, Business Apps That Come with Mac OS X.* [If you use Apple's Address Book, iCal, Text Edit, Preview, DVDS Player, Sherlock, Stickies or Font Panel; read this chapter and play with the tips. Me, I prefer, GraphicConverter for Graphics, FileMaker Pro for address and contact information, PandoCalendar, MS Word; and Google, Beholder (for graphic searches) and DEVONagent for web searches. I've reviewed these last two recently for macC.]

Chapter 12.   It's My Life Tips for Using iLife Applications [I don't use iMovie, iPhoto (Photoshop Elements is my game), GarageBand, or iDVD but if I did, Kelby's tips would be of great value.

Chapter 13.   Talking Heads iChat AV Tips [Despite my editor's pleading I don't iChat so you're on your own with its tips.

In this book, "you're not going to find complicated descriptions on how to configure a network, how to partition a hard drive, or lines and lines of scary-looking UNIX code--instead this book is nothing but cool tips--and it's all written in Scott's casual, plain English style so you can start using these tips today. Plus, this book does the standard "sidebar tip" one better by including a clear screen capture with nearly every tip, so you can see exactly how it's all done." [Publisher's description.]

Kudos and a Few Tips that helped

Spotlite — I've reached enlightenment, or at least can see the light at the end of the spotlight. I found, hat despite being a constant user of Spotlight, I really didn't know much about its full capabilities. Many thanks for the section of Chapter 4, Search Tips. Now all I need is a better way to search of documents by their extension, some thing I can't seem to routinely master either in spotlight of Apple New Find feature.

Down with the Caps Lock — I've been using third party software disable the Caps Lock key. In this book, Scott shows how to kill the Caps Lock key within OS X. [Chapter 6, Page 148.]

Fixing the World's Worst Keyboard Shortcut — "Prior to Mac OS X (and for all prior Macintosh history), to create a new folder you'd press Command-N. It was simple. It made sense. It was perfect. Obviously, it was too perfect, so when Mac as x came along, Apple changed the shortcut to Command-Shift-N. I've never gotten over that. But in Tiger, I (you, we) can bring back peace and Command-N harmony." Check out Chapter 1, Page 13. Thanks Scott.

Beating the Alphabetic Trap— As Scott notes "Want a particular file to appear at the top of your list when sorting in List view by Name? Just type a blank space in front of its name, and it will jump to the top of the list." [Chapter 1, Page 23.] What Scott didn't share was that if you put the letter "z" in from of a file or folder name, type a space or two, you can create another layer in your 'alphabetization' hierarchy.

…And last but not least.

Do You Miss the Old Trash Can — Check on how to get it back. [Page 162 of Chapter 6.]

One Discomfort
<u>Cheap Trick Mac OS X Pranks</u> — I would have preferred this chapter at the end of the book. There are too many compulsives around who will find this material their main joy.

In Closing
Best-selling author Scott Kelby provides what dedicated Mac users want most: the need-to-know tips that will get them working faster and smarter.

The book is full of short, snappy explanations, full-color screen shots, and loads of interesting tidbits make this a fun, fast read, but don't do that!. Although it's not a fine wine to be savored one sip (paragraph) at a time, neither should it be chugged down in fast gulps. Once I started reading the Kelby's Killer Tips, I couldn't stop. Even worse, found myself turning back to my Mac to try something out. This was a great way to burn off some extra calories since I read books in a comfortable chair in my family room and my Mac lives upstairs.

Other reviewers have panned Scott's new book because they claim that advanced readers will probably find "Killer Tips" too basic. In addition, such serious pundits may claim that many readers may find the writing style too corny. Hey guys and gals, if you're the folks who get to lecture on high-priced Mac cruises, and are otherwise know it alls, this book wasn't written for you. Since my sense of humor was developed in a working class (bluer collar) ghetto, it works for me.

In addition, to add to your enjoyment of the book, have fun sharing the special tips with your friends. If you have only a few Macintosh friends don't despair, there is a support group waiting for you. Read all about them in Scott Kelby's Macintosh… The Naked Truth [macC December 2003 Volume 1, Issue 6] a review by yours truly.

I would if I could, rate the book higher but my publisher insists that 5.0 macC's is the highest score available.

PS
Scott, how about writing a new book all about my favorite Macintosh software? Yup, write about shareware haxies, unheralded applications and just great tools, a few of which I review for *macCompanion*. Although the *Macintosh Bible* lists some of these jewels, as does *MacWorld* magazine, the rest of us have trouble dealing with the wealth of mom-and-pop software out there. The book would likely be a shareware junkie's bestseller. Sites such as MacUpdate.com and VersionTracker.com can even advertise the book for you. In addition, you can do an update at least once a year since so much of value gets added to our favorite shareware sites, a veritable cash cow for your publisher. With you greater knowledge of things Macintosh, you can surely help us separate the wheat from the chaff, and keep us laughing at the same time.

PhotoShop® CS2 Killer Tips reviewed by Steve Stanger

Authors: Scott Kelby & Felix Nelson
Booksite: http://www.peachpit.com/title/0321330633
$20 USD, $30 CND, £16 GBP, €32 EU
Published: September 2005
Pages: 288
ISBN: 0321330633
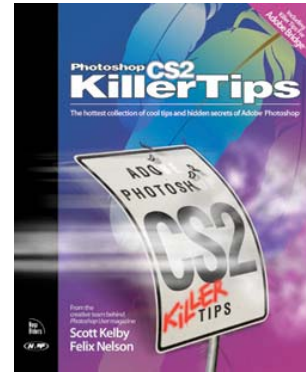
Requirements: PhotoShop® CS2

Strengths: Easy to follow tips for PS users of all skill levels.

Weaknesses: None found.

The back cover description of the book states: "*Wouldn't it be cool if there was an Adobe® Photoshop® CS2 book that was nothing but tips, cover-to-cover? Imagine how fast you would be in Photoshop if you learned all of those little 'insider tips', those time saving shortcuts, workarounds, and undocumented tricks.*" Well this is that book! The book is chock full of cool PS CS2 tips. Every tip is designed to make you work faster, smarter, and have more fun using Photoshop CS2. All of the tips are concise and are accompanied by full-color graphics.

Some of topics covered are Adobe Bridge, "got to know" and "way cool" tips, production and layer tips, smokin' type, and troubleshooting tips. It is hard to believe the number of tips packed in to this book.

This book is designed to teach you those hidden productivity tips and little-known shortcuts that the pros use. If you use Photoshop CS2 you should not only own this book, but also keep it within easy reach.

Real Digital Forensics: Computer Security and Incident Response reviewed by Robert Pritchett

Authors: Keith J. Jones, Richard Bejtlich, Curtis W. Rose
Addison-Wesley
Booksite: http://www.awprofessional.com/title/0321240693
Released: September 23, 2005
Pages: 688
$50 USD, $70 CND, £36 GBP, €44 Euro with CD
ISBN: 0321240693
Requirements: DVD Player on non-Mac platform. A working knowledge of computer Forensics.

Strengths: Heavy on Microsoft and Linux Forensics.

Weaknesses: Next to nothing on Mac Forensics.
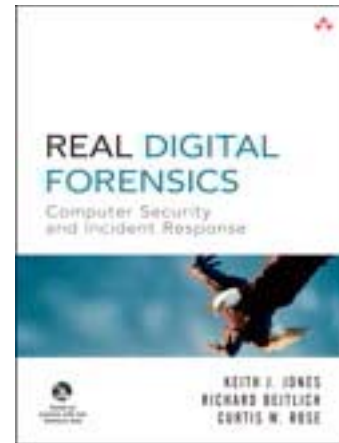
Real Digital Forensics: Computer Security and Incident Response by the authors noted above looks at computer forensics from the standpoint of learning by doing. They do this by including a DVD with "real" data.

There are 7 parts to the book spread across 22 chapters and an Appendix on Perl. The book is split between Windows, Unix (where there may be a hint of Macness, but not much), network-based forensics and intrusions duplications methods without compromising the data and analysis techniques and web browsing reconstruction using Pasco and Galleta both Open Source tools), Email reconstruction, MS Windows reconstruction, Linux analysis, creating a complete forensics tool kit for Windows and using Knoppix, mobile device forensics covering the Palm, and HP iPAQ, duplicating USB and Flash Memory devices, and ending with tracing Email (the chapter is way to short), and domain name ownership.

I was expecting something, anything on the Mac besides knowing where Apple Mail is located, so I guess Mac Forensics is "un-real". I want a Digital Forensics book that includes the Mac. Maybe the next edition will have something I can use…

Maybe the authors don't have hands-on experience with the Mac?

What is in abundance are memory dumps, log file analysis and experiences with Open Source tools.

The authors want us to "get real" with the data on the DVD, but I want to see more on Macs besides - "Oh, it's Unix".

(SCTS) Symantec Certified Technical Specialist: Small Business Security Study Guide reviewed by Robert Pritchett
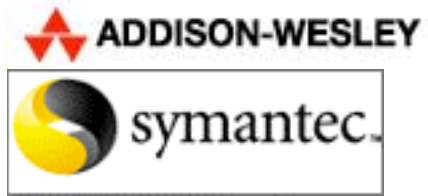
Authors: Nik Alston, Mike Chapple and Kirk Hausman
Symantec Press
http://www.awprofessional.com/symantecpress
Addison-Wesley Professional
http://www.awprofessional.com
Booksite:
Released: September 30, 2005
Pages: 384
$50 USD, $70 CND, £ GBP, € Euro with CD.
ISBN: 0321349946
Requirements: JavaScript, MSIE 6.0 and Firefox, Windows XP with SP2. Symantec Anti-Virus, Client Security and Norton Anti-Spam.

Strengths: Well-written.

Weaknesses: Nothing here for Macs, really.

(SCTS) Symantec Certified Technical Specialist: Small Business Security Study Guide by Nik Alston, Mike Chapple and Kirk Hausman is a certification-training book designed to help master the skills necessary to pass the SCTS exam.

The CD contains the HTML and even though the ReadMe file says it needs MSIE or other Browser on a PC, I found it worked just fine under Safari as an Exam function with banks of questions for all three areas; Symantec AntiVirus, Symantec Client Security and Norton AntiSpam. If you read the book, or know this stuff already as Symantec expects the correct answers, you are going to do well on the exam.

If you work exclusively with Macs, than this book really has no meaning for you. If you support Symantec products, than this is important. Okay, we can stretch it a bit and say that the Norton AntiSpam might be of interest to Mac folks – maybe.
The CD actually walks through simulated installations and explains as it goes what it is doing. The Demos are self-contained so this even works on a Mac.

The software being certified for only works on non-Mac systems. Symantec gave up on the Mac side of things. Too bad. We could have used the anti-Spam software. Except there are other alternatives and there is not much of a market for anti-malware for the Mac. That is a good thing.

Security and Usability: Designing Secure Systems that People Can Use reviewed by Robert Pritchett

O'REILLY®
computer books • conferences • online publishing

Authors: Lorrie Faith Cranor and Simson Garfinkel and 62 Contributors./
Booksite: http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/securityusability/index.html
$45 USD, $63 CND, £32 GBP, €41 EU
Published: August 2005
Pages: 738
ISBN: 0596008279
Requirements: A desire to know something about computer security from the human factors standpoint.

Strengths: Humane approach to system security.

Weaknesses: Sure could use some real knowledge about Macintosh systems. Maybe Mac karma?
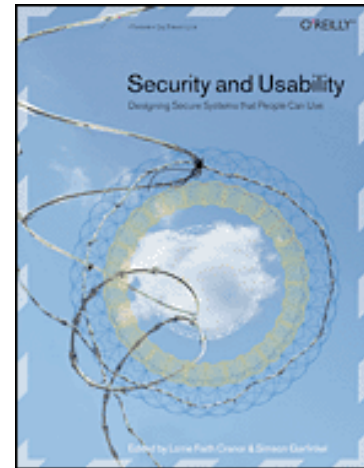
Security and Usability: Designing Secure Systems that People Can Use by Lorrie Faith Cranor, Simson Garfinkel and 62 others is a conglomeration of a number of studies of the human side of computer system security and co-existence with hardware and software that needs to be protected from other humans.

The safest computer is one that is turned off. But humans need to be able to use those machines. Information technology folks are tasked with protecting their networks and computer systems. Other employees have to use those same systems. Somewhere in the middle a balance has to be made between usability and cyber-security and they need to co-exist.

The researchers even have their own acronym – HCI – for Human-Computer Interaction.

This book addresses the issue of Human Factors vs. The Machine. It does so over 34 Chapters in 6 Parts by at least 64 authors. It is true that everyone has an opinion on the topic, but somehow, magically, the principle authors have managed to combine the thoughts, experiences and knowledge of a number of experts all under the same cover. Part 1 brings out the synergy between usability and security. Part 2 looks at techniques for authentication and identification, Part 3 discusses how software either augments or destroys user security. Part 4 whispers about anonymity and privacy. Part 5 approaches security from the perspective of the vendor. Par 6 is a collection of three papers on security; "Users Are Not the enemy", "Usability and Privacy: A Study of KaZaA P2P File Sharing" and "Why Johnny Can't Encrypt".

Oh, I managed to dog-ear a number of pages while going through this book. It addresses cross-platform and attempts to be all-encompassing, but when I got to one part where it was discussing Apple's graphic file manager "which Apple calls the Finger". I just about blew milk out my nose laughing! I'm sure they meant "the Finder". But can you imagine this one getting past the editors? I really did a double-take and so made me feel a little bit suspicious about the rest of the book. Maybe somebody got into the book and defaced it when nobody was looking? Hey, it could happen. After all, isn't it fitting that something as obvious as this faux paux could have been done on purpose because of the Human Factor?

There are other "lessons learned" and examples of what can go wrong such as the chapters on what "formatting" hard drives really does and what needs to be done to insure that data is really erased and not just made unavailable using one particular operating system to access the hard drives. Or the information about which biometrics and safeguards work and where the weaknesses are in whichever technology is used to provide safeguards and securities. And for those areas, this book is worth getting. What works, what doesn't and myth-dispelling about what is known so far based on studies, evaluations and common sense.

The book obviously focuses most of its attention where the hurt is – in non-Mac environments, but occasionally there is a mention of the Mac, so it isn't entirely out of mind even though it may be out of sight. Macs get lumped in with non-Mac systems when discussions about malware is presented and since there are no publicly distributed malware apps for the Mac for Mac OS X Tiger, I may be a bit biased when the lump Macs in with the other systems in blanket statements about "lack of fine grained access controls" or "An additional 60 such creatures were looking for Macs" quoting *Consumer Reports* from December 2004, and we all know how wrong that was.

Otherwise, much of the book is spot-on. There can be a balance made between usability and security. No system is safe, but some can be inherently safer than others. They missed the Mac by a long shot.

Spring Into HTML and CSS reviewed by Eddie Hargreaves

Author: Molly E. Holzschlag
http://www.molly.com
Addison-Wesley
http://www.awprofessional.com
Spring Into Series
Booksite: http://www.awprofessional.com/title/0131855867
Published: April 2005
$30 USD, $42 CND, £22 GBP, €26 Euro
Pages: 316
ISBN: 0131855867
Requirements: Basic computer knowledge

Strengths: Focuses on standards-based design, fundamentals; Organized into quick-to-read chunks.

Weaknesses: No color; little focus on creative design.

There are seemingly two types of computer books available: the giant, thick tomes for geniuses and the thinner books for 'dummies' and 'idiots.' The Spring Into Series from Addison-Wesley is designed to fall into the middle of those extremes. Their books are for busy professionals (not dummies) who have no knowledge of a topic they need to learn quickly.

Spring Into HTML and CSS provides novices with an understanding of the two languages used to create Web pages. The first being for structure and the second to design and apply formatting and anything decorative.

Author Molly Holzschlag is a Steering Committee member for the Web Standards Project. As such, she teaches standards-based HTML, and ignores or downplays old-school workarounds. She also warns against using HTML's deprecated features. If everyone that learns how to build Web pages follows this path, it'll be a better Internet for us all.

Holzschlag is also is an experienced writer of tutorial books, though, so it's not a manifesto, and she has an easy-to-read style. The book is organized well and is divided into little chunks so it's easy to take it in a little bit at a time (since busy professionals only have little bits of time available).

But while she's an expert on CSS and proper structuring, she's not a skilled designer. So there are not a lot of examples of creative design in the book. This is slightly exacerbated by the fact that the book is completely in black and white, so any example graphics related to color are boring and sometimes difficult to discern (the gray versions of red, green and blue are not to different from one another).

This is not a program training manual. You will not find instructions on how to use Dreamweaver, GoLive, or (god forbid) FrontPage. Instead you will learn how to code Web pages. If your job requires you to create Web pages using a specific program, you would do well to find a book that deals with that program and its specific version. However, learning the fundamentals always helps in the long run, since no WYSIWYG application is perfect. In that sense, Spring Into HTML and CSS should make a great prologue to whatever application training book you buy.

Mac OS X Tiger Edition - The Missing Manual reviewed by Ted Bade

Author: David Pogue
O'Reilly/Pogue Press
orders@oreilly.com
http://oreilly.com/
Booksite: http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/macxtigermm/
Released: July 2005
$30 USD $42 CND £22 GBP €26 Euro
ISBN: 0596009410
Requirements: Mac OS X Tiger.

Strengths: Tons of information, easy to read, entertaining.

Weaknesses: Requires an internet connection to download programs referred to in the text.

The Mac OS X Tiger edition of the Missing Manual series is the latest edition of this very informative book. In this book you will find information, hints, and tricks covering every aspect of using Mac OS X and everything that comes with a typical installation. This is the most complete reference to Mac OS X you will find. It is well written and even entertaining. This is one book every Mac user needs in their library.

Tiger: The Missing Manual includes chapters on every aspect of using Mac OS X. It starts with the basics of using various aspects of the Mac OS X desktop, then moves to information on the "free" applications that come with Mac OS X, then to discussions of all the technologies that are part of Tiger (such as networking, graphics, audio, and so forth), and ends up with information on using the Mac online.

Tiger: The Missing Manual is missing a CD, but it is available online. This allows them to cut production costs as well as ensuring the latest version of the applications are available to the reader. Of course, this means that the reader needs a connection to the Internet to access the programs.

Throughout the book, references are made to changes and features specific to Tiger. This is useful if you upgraded to Tiger and are interested in what is different. It also serves to alert one who is using an earlier version. The book is laced with pictures that illustrate what is being described, often making a more difficult topic easier to comprehend. The first two parts of the book are essentially the basics of using Mac OS X, discussing the use of the Desktop and various features of the Finder. Although some of this stuff is very basic, intermediate users should scan through it. There are some interesting trick and tidbits about Tiger mixed into these pages. I found a number of things that I was unaware of!

In addition to basic things there is a lots of information about using spotlight and Automator. There is enough information on both of these items new to Tiger that even a beginner will be able to use them effectively.
In part three of this book your will find in-depth information on using System Preferences, Address book, AppleScript, iCal, iPhoto, and every other application included with Mac OS X. Some of these sections go one for several pages. For instance, there are 11 pages on iMovie and 13 pages on iPhoto, making these sections quite comprehensive. This part of the book is very valuable for both beginner and intermediate users, since it includes enough detail to get a person deep into using all of the applications. While I would recommend a specific book on a program like iMovie or iPhoto for a person who is doing some serious work with them, you will get most of what the average user needs right in *Tiger: The Missing Manual*.

Part four of the book begins a discussion of more advanced topics. This area is where the intermediate user may wish to start and the beginner will eventually grow into. Besides information on users accounts, security, networking, graphics features, and audio features, there is an extensive discussion on using Terminal (the program that allows a user to access the UNIX kernel that is the basis of Mac OS X. There is even a chapter on doing a number of useful things with Terminal. This area might be daunting to a beginner, but the material is presented in a basic enough manner that a person conformable with a command line interface will quickly learn how to use Terminal.

A final chapter, on Hacking Mac OS X is worth a read. It discusses the use of some basic applications that can add features to Mac OS X and gives some information on a number of fun customizations as well.

Using the Internet is a must, to truly enjoy all the features of the Macintosh. Here again, this Missing Manual series book proves to be very useful. Part five discusses many things related to the Internet including setting up for the Internet, using a .Mac account, using Internet based programs (such as Mail.app, Safari, iChat) that come with Mac OS X, then moves onto more complex features such as FTP, VPN, and Web sharing. Again, there is enough information for the beginner and serious intermediate user.

The end of the book includes a number of useful appendices. First and foremost is the appendix on updating or installing Mac OS X. This section discusses aspects of doing the installation and explains various installation options. If you ever wondered what those customization options were all about, the information is here.
An appendix on troubleshooting is a good one to visit when things go wrong. This chapter gives the basics on how to deal with some of the more common things that go wrong with Mac OS, as well as a number of things you can do to recover and even prevent some of them.

This is followed by two different appendices that people who switched from an either an earlier version of Mac OS or Windows will find useful. Given the title, "Where did it go?", these pages point out a number of features commonly used in these other operating systems and explains the related feature or why it isn't necessary in Mac OS X. A switcher will find a lot of questions answered here.

As with all the David Pogue books I have read, this book is well written and entertaining. I often found myself chuckling after reading a particular quip or funny comment. Reading a large book like *Tiger: The Missing Manual* can be very daunting, especially to a beginner. David Pogue's writing makes the process a lot more enjoyable.
I highly recommend this book for people of all levels of Macintosh experience. I learned a number of useful things while reading it and some of the suggestions within opened my eyes on how to use features. Excellently written, full of valuable information, easy to read, and often entertaining. What more could anyone ask of a computer related book? Definitely go out and buy this book!

The Unofficial LEGO® Builder's Guide reviewed by Julie M. Willingham

NO STARCH PRESS
"the finest in geek entertainment"™

Author: Allan Bedford
www.nostarch.com
Updates, errata, etc: http://www.nostarch.com/legobuilder.htm
Book support website: www.apotome.com
Released: September 2005.
Pages: 319 with "lay flat" binding.
$25 USD, $34 CDN, £18 GBP, €22 Euro
ISBN: 1593270542
Audience: Beginner to intermediate builders, whether children or adults.

Strengths: Simple, thorough, well organized. Has a "Brickopedia". Discusses actual masonry techniques.

Weaknesses: None, really, but I just didn't like the book. See my specific gripes at the end of this review.
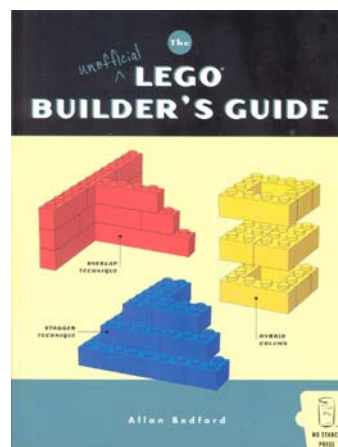
Who among us is so unlucky that he or she has never played with LEGO, whether at home, at school, or at a friend's house? These colorful pieces of plastic, introduced to the world in 1958, are recognized by almost everyone in Europe and North America, and, apparently, show no sign of decreasing popularity.

After almost 50 years of existence, a lot of information about LEGO has built up. The press release describes this book as "(b)ridging the gap between instructions included with LEGO sets and the unlimited world of freestyle LEGO building". In his introduction to **The Unofficial LEGO® Builder's Guide**, author Allan Bedford explains that in this book he covers building techniques such as "architecture, design, engineering, color theory, and so on." And this is a good book for people who want to reproduce exact scale models of real objects using techniques that builders use with real objects: staggering layers, overlapping joints, quoins, etc.

The author begins very simply, discussing shapes, colors, and building techniques for walls, columns, arches, etc. He then advances through the use of scale, making a scale model, and writing instructions for others. See the annotated table of contents below:

Ch 1: The System: Endless Possibilities—The author defines his terms describing LEGO pieces: bricks, plates, slopes, Technics parts, tiles and panels, cylinders and cones, baseplates, decorative items like windows and trees, and specialized pieces.
Ch 2: Back to Basics: Tips and Techniques—Primarily about walls and bracing.
Ch 3: Minifig Scale: Oh, What a Wonderful Minifig World It Is! How to scale buildings to fit the 1:48 scale miniature human figure introduced in 1978. Complete plans for a train station.
Ch 4: Miniland Scale: The Whole World in Miniature LEGOLAND's 1:20 scale—how to make your own figures and models.
Ch 5: Jumbo Elements: Building Bigger Bricks How to scale up LEGO: Make giant-sized pieces that look like those they're made from. How to choose a scale. Make a big model out of the jumbo pieces.
Ch 6: Microscale Building: More Than Meets the Eye How to design a scale model of something big (the author uses a cargo ship) and decide what elements are needed for accuracy.
Ch 7: Sculptures: The Shape of Things to Build How to build a sphere and the Great Sphinx of Giza.
Ch 8: Mosaics: Patterns and Pictures in Bricks

Should you choose studs out or studs up?
Ch 9: Technic: Not as Technical as It May Seem—   Describes the gears, axles, bricks with holes that lock with pins, and other elements that were introduced in 1977 and are compatible with original elements.
Ch 10: Putting It All Together: Where Ideas Meet Bricks—Shows how to build a model of the space shuttle. References to links for software to design LEGO models.
Ch 11: Beyond Just Bricks: Other Things to Do Besides Building   Many different ideas here.
Ch 12: Sorting, Storage, and Sitting Down to Build Something   How to sort and store small, medium, and large collections; creating a building area.
Ch 13: Making and Using Tools for LEGO Projects—   Shows and discusses a presser, pin stand, ruler, brick separator, and household tools.
Appendix A: Brickopedia—Each entry has a drawing, description, part number, information, and year introduced for many but not all types of pieces.
Appendix B: Design Grids: Building Better by Planning Ahead—The grid scale matches LEGO® scale, and can be downloaded as a PDF from the book's website.

So you can see that the early chapters in the book introduce you to the lingo, parts, and sizes of the LEGO® system. The middle chapters go into specifics, and the later chapters focus on building scale models with great accuracy.

The Unofficial LEGO® Builder's Guide is logically organized and easy to read. It has a seven-page index and two appendices that, if not useful to everyone, are interesting. A middle-school student could understand most of it, and it stays on topic. The grayscale illustrations are easy to see, though the captions might be a bit small for grandparents.

The book's first page contains positive review comments, and I agree with most of them. But I was disappointed with the book, and I can't say why exactly. Maybe it's because there is a lot of talk about "limited only by your imagination", but all the models shown and discussed in the book are based on real objects, without much of a nod to creativity and imagination. The author points out the importance of color and theme accuracy, but what if I want to make the Space Needle out of red and white pieces? And if I run out of those at the top, so what if I switch to yellow or blue or clear ones? Also, many of the building techniques discussed are those I arrived at as a kid through trial and error, and I think that others have done or will do so as well. Who needs advice on how to store LEGO pieces or where to build with them?

I can't quarrel with the book's technical accuracy, but I don't see how this book has much to offer the experienced LEGO user. And I can't give a perfect score to a book that I didn't really like, no matter how well written, so I give it 4.5 macC's.

Windows XP Cookbook: Solutions & Examples for Power Users & Administrators reviewed by Robert Pritchett

Author: Robbie Allen; http://www.oreillynet.com/cs/catalog/view/au/1046
Preston Gralla; http://www.oreillynet.com/cs/catalog/view/au/1202
Booksite: http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/windowsxpckbk/index.html
$45 USD, $63 CND, £32 GBP, €41 EU
Published: August 2005
Pages: 678
ISBN: 0596007256

Strengths: Digs down just far enough to get your interest and not bury you in gumbo.

Weaknesses: Not really for Sys Admins, more for newbees "power users".
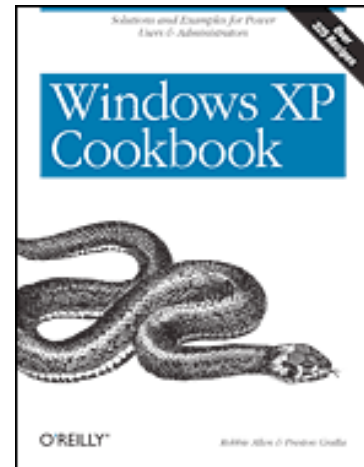
Windows XP Cookbook: Solutions & Examples for Power Users & Administrators by Robbie Allen and Preston Gralla is very readable. If you are using VPC 7 on your Mac, you will find this book helpful for help in handling those goofy things that bother folks who use Windows XP. The book does not follow the now familiar O'Reilly Cookbook format.

Because I deal with a cantankerous machine that runs XP Pro, there were a few things I was searching for to see if this book would help my system without having to reinstall everything. Chapter 4 got me closer with "Removing Stubborn Uninstalls from Already Uninstalled Programs". And Chapter 9 helped me get rid of some others with The Registry. Way back in Chapter 18 is Performance Tuning, with one area dedicated to making better use of RAM.

The cookbook is filled with 325 recipes designed to keep us from boiling over when we get steamed with Windows XP. The garter snake on the cover is appropriate, I think.

There are 20 chapters designed to help us tweak and season to taste. It digests easily and leaves no aftertaste.

What's the best part? It gives multiple ways to get to the solutions, using either the GUI, command-line or VBScript. Chef's choice!

Games

The Journey to Wild Divine: Wisdom Quest reviewed by Ted Bade

The Wild Divine Project / Healing Rhythms
P.O. Box 381; Eldorado Springs, CO 80025
1-866-594-WILD (9453) or 303-499-3680
FAX: 303-499-3688
takeoff@wilddivine.com
http://www.wilddivine.com/
Game URL: http://www.wilddivine.com/20J3K4K44/
Trailer URL: http://www.wilddivine.com/Demo/

$60 USD

Requirements: G4/800, Mac OS X 10.2.6, 1.5 GB disk space, DVD drive, and available **Powered** USB port.

Experience needed: You need to need to have own and have played the first edition of Wild Divine. Installation is basic. You need to know how to use a powered USB port.

Strengths: Excellent game, interesting world, great sound track. Many features added that make this game more useful then the first one.

Weaknesses: Has a few bugs like the initial start up crash and a couple navigation bugs. You must own the first game to play this game. Relaxation might be difficult for many people.
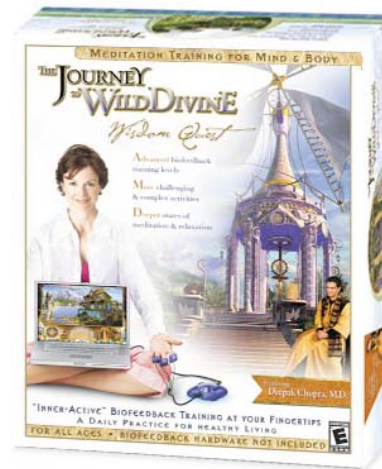
Wisdom Quest is both an entertaining game and a tool designed to help one relax. It is the next part of the *Journey to Wild Divine*. I reviewed part 1 called The Passage, several months ago. This version requires that you have purchased The Passage, which includes the biofeedback device. Wisdom Quest offers many new features. Graphics and audio are more advanced and several new breathing and relaxation techniques are introduced. If you played and enjoyed the first game, you will definitely enjoy this new addition.

The Wild Divine games utilize biofeedback technology, provided through the USB input device called the Lifestone. It connects to three of your fingers and monitors biofeedback parameters like skin conductance and heart rate variability as your play the game. If you are interested in more information on biofeedback, visit this area of the Wild Divine site: http://www.wilddivine.com/Biofeedback/.

As you play these games, the challenges you are faced with are that of manipulating your energy levels, either by relaxing, getting excited, or performing a particular breathing technique you are taught. The Lifestone monitors the effects on your body and provides feedback to the game as you accomplish the task. Obviously, you must master a particular technique for this to happen. Some of the techniques are difficult, but all can be achieved with a little patience. (As an older guy who likes games, some of my younger friends often run circles around me. I am looking forward to seeing how one young friend does with this game.
☺)

Wisdom Quest doesn't include a LifeStone. When I asked if a version with one would be released, I was told that Wisdom Quest was designed to be used by a person who has completed The Passage. The game expects that you have gained some skills working with the breathing and biofeedback techniques taught in the first game. So they do not plan to offer a version of Wisdom Quest with the Lifestone.

Wisdom Quest continues the journey begun in *The Passage*. As before, you explore the world of the Wild Divine, search for clues and information, and complete a series of biofeedback challenges and attempt to save the day. The ambience of this world is brought into being through wonderfully rendered graphics, blue-screened actors and actresses that provide help and information, and an audio track including both environmental sounds as well as appropriate music. I found this environment very captivating.

Wisdom Quest offers several advances in technology compared to the first game. Most importantly, the technology of relaxation and meditation used in the game has been enhanced. Deepak Chopra, a well known New Age Author has joined the Wild Divine project and has added his expertise to this game. Not only will you find him within the game, teaching and providing information, but he has made suggestions that helped improve the effectiveness of the challenges you are expected to complete.

One particular addition by Dr. Chopra is that of first raising then lowing ones energy level, thus learning to balance one's energy. In one challenge the puzzle requires the player to do this as they move a ball through a maze. Raising one's energy level allows the ball to rise up a passage, relaxing and lowering one's energy level allows the ball to lower down a passage, and maintaining a constant level allows the ball to travel along a straight passage. Although the player can chose the path, they must alternately raise, lower, and steady their energy levels to pass through the maze. A really neat challenge!

The audio track is very nice and much more advanced then that of the first version. The environmental sounds blend well with the musical audio track. One of my complaints about The Passage was the voice tracks could be lost to the other sounds. Not so with Wisdom Quest.

One neat feature added to the graphical side of the game is the use of Apple's QuickTimeVR features. Now as you journey through the rooms and gardens of this world, you can stop and shift your gaze up, down and a full 360 degrees around your point of view. A lot of work went into creating this beautiful environment, it is well worth the time to take a moment and enjoy the sights. I found some of the views quite breathtaking!

As with the first game, navigation through the game is through clicking your wand in a particular direction, if an exit exists, you are moved in that direction. A compass on the interface window marks where exits and points of interest surround your position, making navigation relatively easy.

There are two types of exercises found in *Wisdom Quest*. First are those that re required as part of the game. A purple smoke appears over these areas when the wand is moved near them. The other type are those placed in the game for fun and relaxation, but are not required to continue the game. Orange smoke appears when you wave the wand over these.

A map feature is part of *Wisdom Quest*, a nice addition to the interface. Pressing the "m" key brings up a map of the world you are on. Once you have visited an area, you can simple click on an area to immediately jump to it. A handy, "You are Here" logo tells you where you are. Of course, you need to accomplish some biofeedback challenge to get to these new areas
first.

For the impatient, *Wisdom Quest* includes a feature called *Guided Activity Mode* that lets you simply sample a number of biofeedback challenges without going through the game. In the previous game, I had learned to make a save game at every interesting activity area, so I could return to them when I wanted. This game takes care of that for you. By entering the *Guided Activity Mode*, you can simply jump to any of the 20 included activities. A booklet describing each of these activities, how to accomplish them, and a little about why they are a benefit is part of the game package. This section would be very useful for a person not really interested in the game but interested in taking part in the biofeedback activities.

Another feature that some might find of value is the ability to change the difficulty level. There are several steps from extra easy to extra hard. So if the challenges are a bit tough, you can tone them down, than tone them up when you are ready.

I found the game played very well, although I did find a few bumps. First of all, there is the registration process, you need to get a game key from the Wild Divine people in order to get the game to play. I don't know what I did wrong, but the key I acquired from the Wild Divine web-site wouldn't work, so I had to call tech support to get a key. A friend who bought the game while I was working on this review didn't have this problem.

Although I don't know if the problem is only with iMacs, I discovered the original version of Wisdom Quest crashed on startup when I ran the game on our iMac. Luckily the Wild Divine people have a patch that resolves the issue, which can be requested if it happens on your Mac.

I also ran into a situation where I "backed" into a space from which I couldn't back out. When you "walk" into an interaction scene, and are expected to perform some biofeedback technique, sometimes you find you just can't do it. The game includes a "go back" wedge on the interface screen that lets you back out for the moment. This is great if that cup of joe you just had just won't let you relax.

In two instances while experimenting with Wisdom Quest, using this button got me stuck. I couldn't move from

where I was, although the music continued and I could move the wand around. I couldn't figure out a way to move from where I was, but I was able to hit the esc key (which brings one to the game controls), and reload an earlier saved game. Their tech support person also suggested using the "m" key to bring up the map function, and select the area you would like to continue in. They also indicated that patch for the game was in the works, which would address both these two issues.

Hardware-wise this program performed well on both my G5/1.8 and my iMac G4/800. It is interesting to note that the Mac OS X version comes on a DVD. Although the box requirements say you need a DVD or CD-ROM drive, if you want to install the game, you need a DVD-ROM drive on your Mac. (not a problem, since all Macs that meet the hardware requirements include the DVD-ROM drive) The box includes a Windows version that comes on 4 CDs. Also needed are QuickTime 6.5 or better, and Microsoft Direct-X or OpenGL. A utility called 3ivx is included on the CD that gives you Mac the ability to play certain types of movies/animations that QuickTime doesn't support.
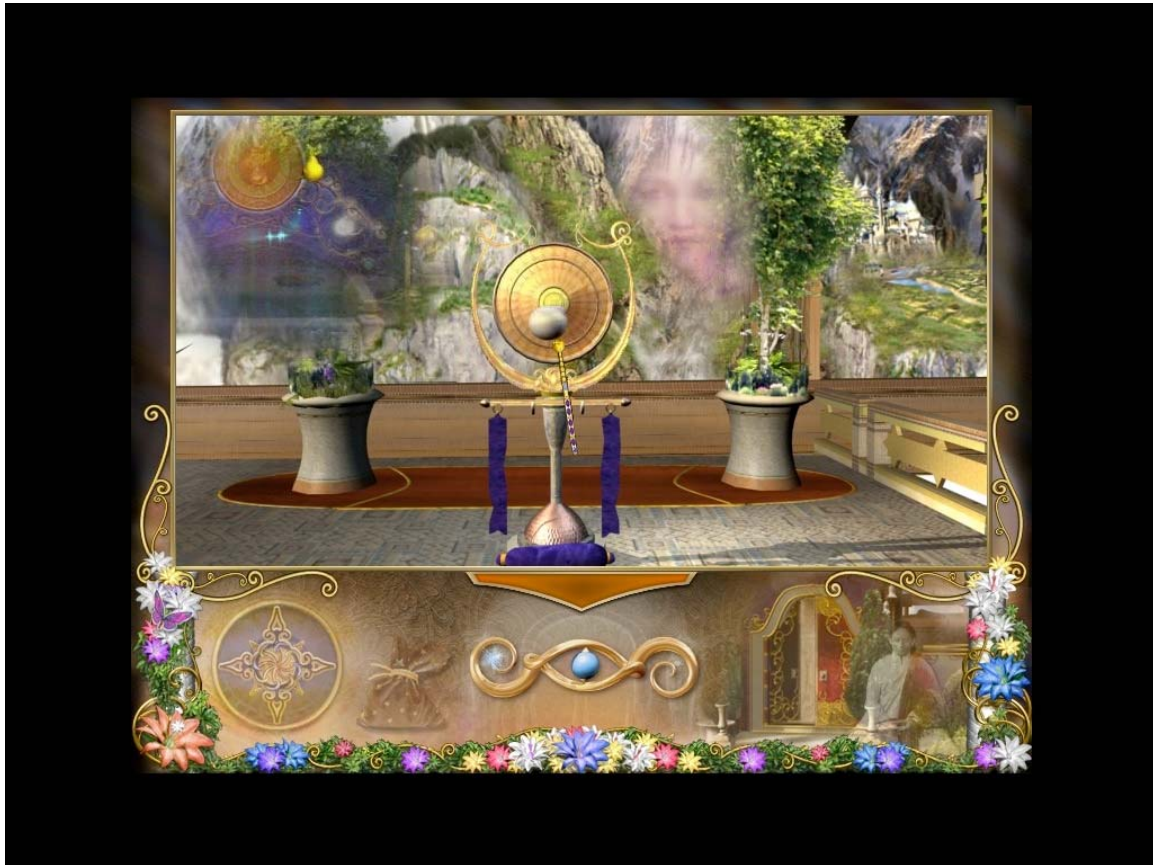
Over all, I think this game and the concept of a game like this, are really terrific. There are tons of computer games out that that involve violence and that add stress to our daily lives. With the Wild Divine project, you get a game designed to help you learn to relax, calm yourself, and to even out your energy levels. Wouldn't it be nice if something like this would help us reduce stress levels, which in turn could help us reduce our risks of a variety of physical and mental maladies? I believe this is true and I commend the people of the Wild Divine project for taking the risk to bring such a device to the market.

A game designed to relax and calm a person is something our civilization could really use. While I am completely blown away by the concept, others might not be. It ain't easy to relax, especially if your idea of calming is spending a few hours blasting at aliens. But give it a try, you might like it!

Wisdom Quest does a great job of melding a good computer game with a tool for improving one's life. I highly recommend this game and its predecessor to anyone who realizes that their life could use some balance and relaxation. Get this game!

Hardware

ADS Simple Touch HDKit reviewed by Derek Meier

ADS Technologies
12627 Hidden Creek Way
Cerritos, CA 90703
800.888.5244
Product link:
http://www.adstech.com/products/USB_2_Drivekit/intro/USB804intro.asp?pid
=USBX-804
https://www.adstech.com/cart/shoppingbag.asp?pid=USBX-834-
EF&id=USBX-834-EF&item_type=product
$59 USD
Requirements: USB 1.0/1.1 or USB 2.0 enabled computer; Windows 98,
Win 98SE, Win 2000, Win ME, or Win XP / OS 9.0 or later and an external
hard drive.

Strengths: Low priced, easy to setup, well designed.

Weaknesses: Loud.

I found a great deal on a cheap external hard drive enclosure 9$ plus shipping. Needless to say I got what I paid for. Oh sure it works okay, but the enclosure doesn't close if I have a hard drive inside. That's what I get for being cheap. I was given the ADS USB Drive kit to review and was excited to see how a product from a reputable company fares.

The Drive enclosure itself is made of hard plastic shell and is black and grey. It cozily fits a 3.5 inch drive. A nice colored blue LED on the front flashes when there is hard-drive activity. On the back you have the USB 2.0 connector, AC power connector, exhaust fan, a power switch and SimpleTouch Backup button, which I will go into later. The kit itself comes with a USB cable, power adapter, Quickstart guide and software CD.

Setup of the HDKit is simple. Starting with the unscrewing of four screws in the back then sliding in your drive. But make sure you set the drive to master before sliding it in. When you have the drive in the enclosure you can screw the drive in. Drives fit snugly enough inside where you might not require screwing it in, but if your paranoid like me or going to move the drive around a lot, you may want to screw it in. You do have to use your own screws for securing your drive though, because the kit does not include them. While being a sturdy device, it's not designed to be truly portable. It's just meant as an external hard drive, not a "portable" hard drive, at least according to the manual. This unit is used with my Mac mini and the fan on the unit is very loud. The mini is virtually silent compared to the roar of the SimpleTouch.

Software-wise the unit comes with both Mac and Windows software. The Mac software Touchback is a bit dated and I could not find an update for it. The software is really easy to use. Basically you select the folders you want to backup in the software and then select the source files. When you push the SimpleTouch Backup button, it starts the backup to the unit.

For the low price and upgradeability the ADS SimpleTouch HD Kit is a great value.
It is very well made and very easy to setup especially for the beginner. The software is a bit dated but works well. As far as being USB 2.0 only, I don't consider it a downfall to me. It's just as good as having FireWire, albeit just a little bit slower. Backups are very important and the SimpleTouch makes it so easy, you don't have an excuse for not backing up. All in all it's a great piece of hardware for those who have a spare drive around or want an external drive that is expandable.

FireWire 6-Port Hub reviewed by Robert Pritchett

rear view

Belkin Components
PO BOX 5649
Compton, CA 90224-5649
1-800-223-5546
Fax: 310-898-1111
sales@belkin.com
http://www.belkin.com/
Released: June 11, 2003.
Requirements: FireWire port, Mac or Windows PC, 32MB RAM.
Contains: 6-port hub, 6-pin-to-6-pin FireWire cable, Power Supply and User Manual, Optional stand.
$80 USD
Part # F5U526-WHT for "white" or # F5U526-SLV for "silver".

Strengths: 6 ports, powered or bus-powered.

Weaknesses: None found.

What happens when you begin to run out of FireWire ports? You get a hub. One that stylizes cable management is the Belkin 6-port hub. If you need lots of FireWire ports, these things can be stacked on their side and interlocked with he rubberized male-female. I almost could use the rubberized cup to hold it suction-like to my mirrored wall. Almost, but not quite.

This hub comes apart so the cables can be inserted easier. Five in and one more to go to the computer or other hub for stacking, if necessary. One pot is right below the indicator light and the other five ports are back behind next to the power port. Pop things back together and it looks like the picture above.

The unit is 4" x 4" x 1.25" in size. The case is polycarb white plastic. The solo LED is bipolar amber and green. Amber when powered and attached to non-powered FireWire devices and turns green when any are self-powered.

Speeds supported are 100, 200 and 400 Mbps.

With the unit in stand-mode, the cables gracefully flow out the back. The port in front is intended as a temporary port for such things as FireWire cameras or other portable FireWire devices.

The terse, concise User Manual comes in western-continent languages such as Canadian French, American English, Latin-Spanish and Brazilian Portuguese. And it comes with a life-time warranty.

Since these units were released 2 years ago, the price has dropped $20 USD. Want style? Get this FireWire hub from Belkin.

iKitty iPod Toy reviewed by Ted Bade

Speck Products
 227 Forest Ave.
Palo Alto, CA 94301
650-463-8914
info@speckproducts.com
http://www.speckproducts.com/
http://www.speckproducts.com/ikitty.htm
$35 USD for either size.
Requirements: Must own a 4G iPod or iPod mini.

Strengths: Cute, a fun toy for your iPod to stay in.

Weaknesses: although improved over the previous toy, getting the iPod in and out is still a task.

The iKitty is another in the line of interesting iPod cases made by Speck Products. If you are a cat lover or just want a case that makes your iPod the center of attention, this may be the case for you.

The iKitty is a white soft plastic case in the shape of a cat, with a long tail and ears. You can fit any 4G iPod into it or if you have an iPod mini, there is a smaller version for it. The tail is easy to bed and will hold its position once bent, allowing you to pose tour iKitty in many different ways. The lower section of the iKitty opens to allow you to perch your iPod onto its dock while still wearing its cat suit.

One thing I like about the Speck Products iPod toys is that they can add a dimension of personality to an iPod. Even while you are using your iPod, this cat might be roaming your desk and getting into things. (If it gets too out of hand, put it on the dock.) It is also a lot of fin when you are surrounded by a group of people at parties or just with friends. Let your imagination soar.

As a case and protector, this one does okay. The soft plastic absorbs shocks and, since it is easy to grip, makes it easier to keep hold of your iPod. The soft grippy rubber can be a bit tough to get an iPod into, especially a larger one, since the plastic tends to stick to the case. However, this means that the iPod isn't going to ever fall out!

There is a hard plastic insert that is used with thinner iPods to fill the gap. A good improvement over that found in Speck Products iGuy, this piece of plastic has tabs that slip into slots inside the iKitty. If you can manage to get the tabs into the slots, the plastic piece will be firmly held in place. I found that doing this was a task. If you plan to use it, remove the clear plastic screen cover and bend the Kitty so the tabs pop in.

Use of the plastic insert is optional in my opinion. Our 30GB iPod sat firmly in the cavity designed for it. The grippy plastic holds it firmly, to a point that removing the iPod becomes a task in itself!

Once the iPod is in, the fun can begin! There are as many ways to pose this toy as there are people who use it. The feet are large enough that it easily supports the weight of the iPod and the case, so that it actually stands on a table.

My only concern about the iKitty is that it vaguely resembles a certain

cat in a famous office related comic, one that a worker might not want to have to deal with. But that's a problem you will have to face, should you buy one ;-)

The iKitty is a fun and protective cover for your iPod. If you are a cat lover and an iPod user, you really should consider one of these. It will cover your iPod and provide you with lots of fun!

Instant Music for Mac reviewed by Eddie Hargreaves

ADS Tech
12627 Hidden Creek Way
Cerritos, CA 90703
Phone: 800.888.5244
Fax: 562.926.0518
http://www.adstech.com/
http://www.adstech.com/products/RDX-152/intro/RDX-152_intro.asp?pid=RDX-152
$59 USD

Requirements: G3 processor or higher (G4 recommended); OS X 10.2 or Tiger; QuickTime 6 or later; USB port; iTunes 4.6 or later (I used it with iTunes 4.5 without incident); Audio Pre-Amplifier may be required for older turntable devices.

Strengths: Small, lightweight box with RCA Stereo inputs; bundled with cables and easy-to-use software.

Weaknesses: Software prone to crashing during editing; Mac version $9 more expensive than PC version.

Since the beginning of the digital music revolution, it has been simple to rip CDs into MP3s or other digital music formats. The more difficult task has been converting LPs, 45s and cassette tapes. That task became even more difficult when Apple removed audio-in ports from most Macs. The ADS Tech Instant Music product makes it easy -- almost fun -- to import cassette tapes and other non-digital audio into your Macintosh.

Setup of the Instant Music couldn't be much simpler. Connect your analog audio device via the included RCA Audio Input cable, then connect your Mac via the USB cable. It does not need to be plugged into a power outlet and no drivers need to be installed. Just choose the appropriate input in the Sound pane of System Preferences.
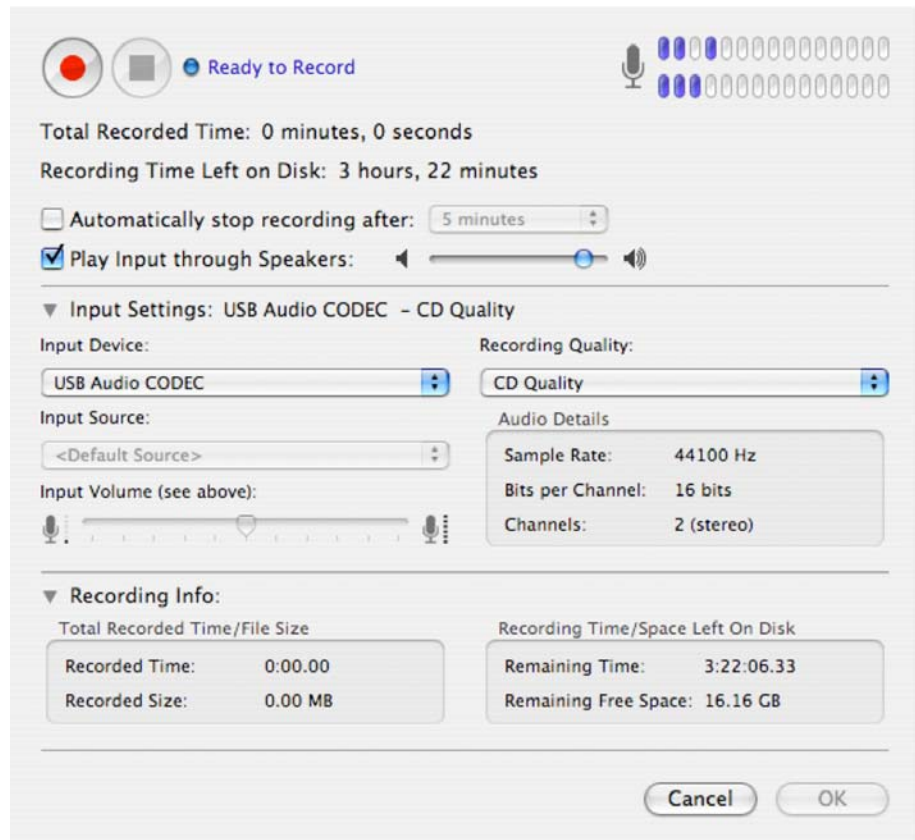
The Instant Music also has S/PDIF Optical Input and Output and an RCA to 3.5mm stereo adapter cable is included if your analog source only has a headphone jack as an output source.

The software provided to record audio is Sonic's CD Spin Doctor, which offers three recording quality presets: DVD Quality, CD Quality and Voice Quality. The more discerning can choose from among 18 custom settings. A large record button and visual level indicators make it very simple to use the recording pane. It also gives you the ability to play the audio input through the internal speakers, an option that used to be pre-built into Macs prior to OS X. Unfortunately, the quality of the audio that plays through ranges from mildly annoying to wildly unbearable. Thankfully, it has no bearing on the actual recording.

The quality of the recordings is very good, and Spin Doctor's available Noise Reducer and Sound Enhancer filters help get rid of tape hiss and other artifacts. I recorded a number of cassettes and the quality of the resulting files was dramatically better than recordings of those same songs I had made via the audio-in port of an old Mac with the built-in capabilities of the Mac OS. Uninformed family members who listened to the digital files had no idea they were encoded from a 10-year-old cassette tape.

It's easy to record an entire album to Spin Doctor and then define and name the tracks. You can let the program try and Auto-Define the tracks, but there will inevitably be some manual work necessary. Each track is represented by a different color, which makes it visually simple to differentiate the tracks and determine where they correspond to the track listing.
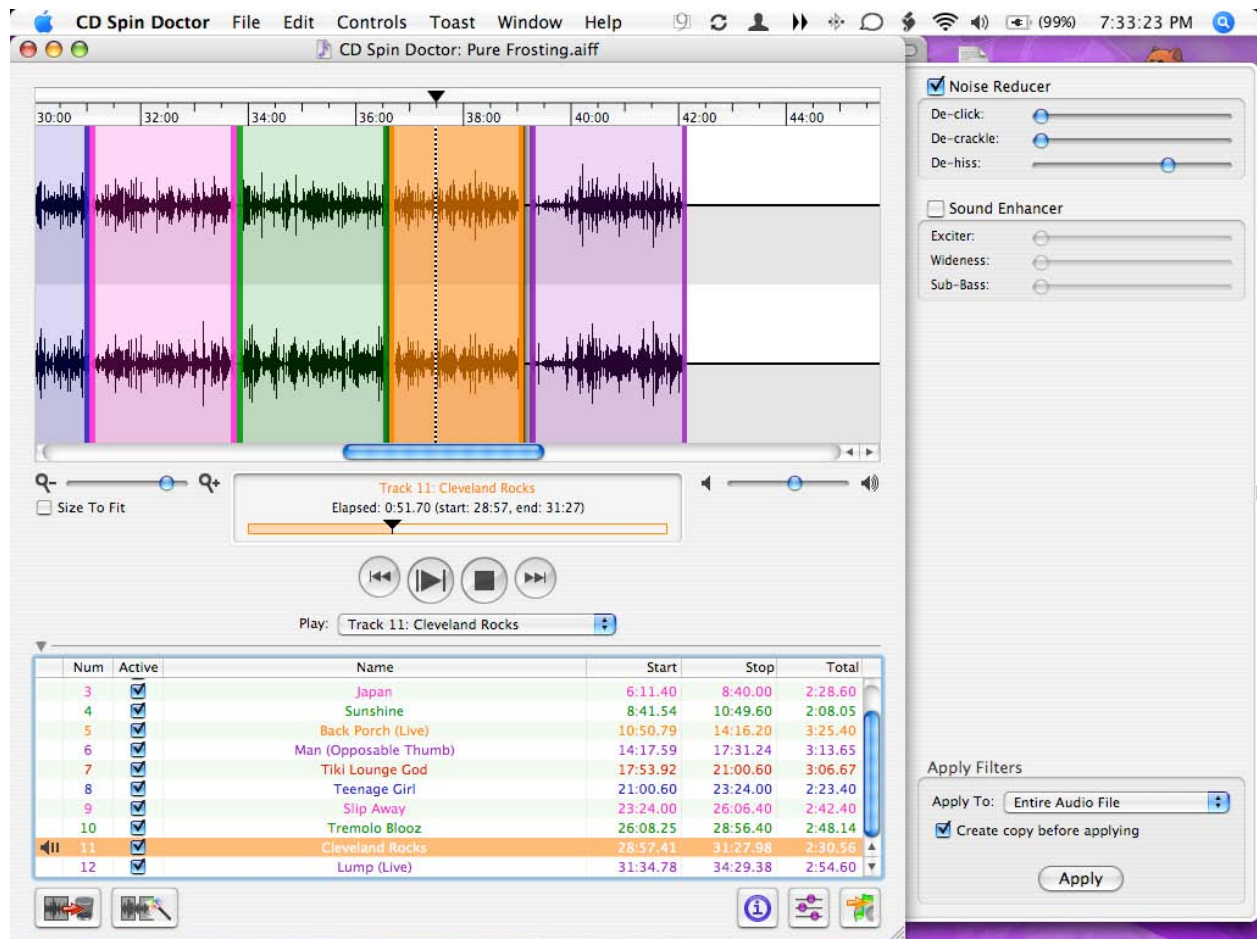
You can send the active tracks to iTunes, and Spin Doctor will prompt you for the Artist Name, Album Title and the format you would like to encode to: MP3, AAC or Apple Lossless. [`spin_doctor3.png`] It puts them in a custom playlist titled CD Spin Doctor, so they are easy to find, and you don't have to worry about deleting extraneous AIFF files from your iTunes Library. It does not add track numbers to the file metadata, though, which is strange because Spin Doctor has a 'Num' column in its interface. The published system requirements say you need iTunes 6. This is not true, as I used iTunes 5, and it also seems odd because the product was introduced in January 2005, when iTunes 4 was the most current version. Of course it also had a price below $50 back then...

Spin Doctor is a very courteous OS X application: it doesn't have an installation process, you just copy it from the CD to your Applications folder. It has an animated Dock icon and its interface is pleasing and intuitive. Unfortunately, it crashed regularly while I was defining tracks. Thankfully, even if you did not save the original recorded file, the program will prompt you to reopen when relaunched, what it was last working on. The recording Spin Doctor makes and saves is an AIFF file, but it will remember your defined track areas if you save the file throughout your work. This has the benefit of not requiring a proprietary Spin Doctor file in addition to the large AIFF file. It also means you can use the base AIFF recording if you don't want compressed files.

U2 recently performed 3-and-1/2 songs on "Late Night with Conan O'Brien," so the Instant Music was a great way to get those songs into my iTunes Library and onto my U2 iPod. There are doubtless many other uses for the product since it isn't tied exclusively to the Spin Doctor software and will work with GarageBand, SoundStudio, AudioX or Audacity.

This product's direct competitor would be Griffin Technology's iMic, the original USB audio adapter. The main difference between the two is that the Instant Music has RCA Stereo Left and Right input and output in addition to an S/PDIF Optical input and output. It also comes bundled with more connection and adapter cables. The iMic is better suited to laptop users who want to carry the device with them in their bag.

The Instant Music isn't the first analog-to-digital USB audio recording product, nor is it the cheapest. But it's simple to set up, fun to use and produces high quality results. Kind of like a Mac.
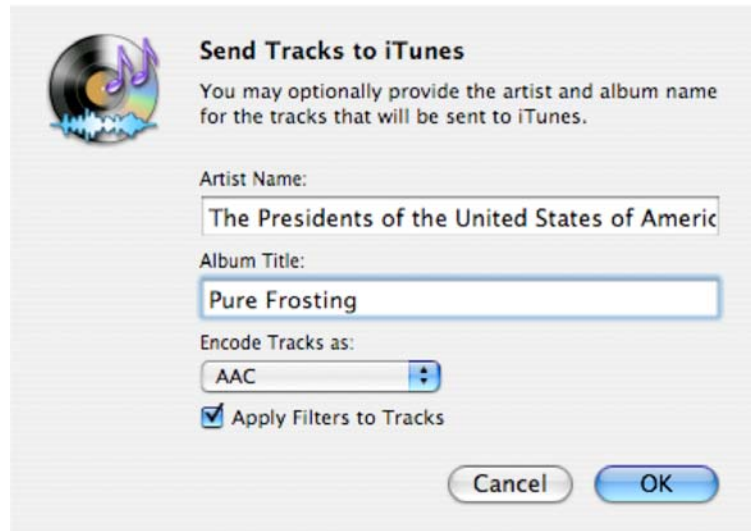
Plextor ConvertX PVR PX-TV402U-NA/Mac reviewed by Robert Pritchett

The Ultimate Personal Video Recorder
CONVERT X PVR ™

Plextor
48383 Fremont Blvd., Suite 120
Fremont, CA 94538
1.510.440.2000
FAX: 1.510.651.9755
http://www.plextor.com
http://www.plextor.com/english/about/contact.html
Product site: http://www.plextor.com/english/products/TV402UMac.htm
Released for the Mac: November 2004.
With DivX capture: June 2005.
$200 USD
Requirements: Macintosh computer with minimum PowerPC® G4 500Mhz or G5 processor; Mac OS X 10.2.8 or later: 256MB of RAM (512MB recommended); 20 MB free space for software installation and USB 2.0 connection. Roxio Toast 6 Titanium is recommended for CD or DVD creation. A cable connection would be nice.
Comes with: Elgato EyeTV 1.8.1 on CD, USB cable, composite audio and video cables, S-video cable, AC adapter and power cord.
Comparison sheet:
http://www.plextor.com/english/products/ConvertXComp.htm
Other Reviews: http://www.bonafidereviews.com/article.php?id=50
http://www.byopvr.com/Sections%2Bindex-req-viewarticle-artid-14-page-1.html
Mac FAQs:
http://www.plextor.com/english/support/faqs/faq_TV402Mac.htm

Strengths: Does DiVX now with eyeTV software as well as MPEG 1, 2 and 4. Uses TitanTV for click&play.

Weaknesses: Only can watch one live program at a time. Requires the eyeTV software that is bundled with the PVR. No MP3 capture.

Reviewed with an iMac G5 with Mac OS X Tiger and cable connection.

Okay, you have the best computer on the market and you want to connect it up so you can watch programs on Television. What? Apple didn't include a TV-tuner with their iMac G5? Really? Now what. Look to other options. Plextor's solution has been around a while, but it isn't that old for Mac OS X and now it works with DiVX via the eyeTV software update. Hey, if you don't want the convenience of the ConvertX PVR, you can always go back to using HackTV from Apple hooked to other options:

http://www.maccompanion.com/archives/may2005/Shareware/HackTV.htm.

Front Panel — Audio In, Video In, S-Video In

Rear Panel — RF/Coaxial Connector, USB 2.0 Connector, Power

TitanTV for viewing online programming with aerial, cable or satellite and eyeTV 1.8.1 for controlling as the tuner on the Mac to pause, watch or record. What is *NOT* needed is a VCR but you can hook up one of those to the front, or a camcorder or a DVD player to do recording too.

Oh, you want to record? That's the R of PVR. You can do it with DVDs. And watching it on an iMac G5 is sweet. Postage-sized up to full screen. Video and audio-in are composite video, S-video, 75 Ohm coax and RCA right and left. NTSC/PAL/SECAM broadcast standards are all supported.
Remote scheduling is also supported.

It doesn't really show on the front view, but the left LED showing the device is ready to record is orange and the Power LED is a bright blue.

Yes, with the TitanTV website and the ConvertPVR, it is possible to watch, record, schedule remotely, burn to DVD. And a remote control device? It's on the screen from eyeTV. And this version also does closed captions on the Mac. Here is a link to Jim Heid's earlier Digital Hub eyeTV review: http://www.macintoshdigitalhub.com/reviews/eyetv/. And here is a more recent review at *accelerate your mac*; http://www.xlr8yourmac.com/feedback/eye_tv_review.html

A list of PVRs that work with TitanTV is located at http://partners.titantv.com/ttv/grid/aboutpvrwatchfull.aspx.

Personally, I'm very impressed with the video quality on this iMac G5. Go ahead, check out one of these PVRs for your Mac. For more information about PVRs and Macs, go to http://the.taoofmac.com/space/PVR.

I'm more impressed that even when the network side goes down, because of the poor cable modem I am currently using, the video feed continues to work just fine with the cable feed (I'm using a "Y" connector). Amazing!

While speaking with Tim Verpoorten on the *Mac ReviewCast* about this product, he asked about the recording side of things the remote scheduling functions and I have to admit, I'm more into the online TV Guide replacement program by TitanTV instead.

Recording is easy enough with eyeTV and so is editing and deleting recorded sessions. With the ConverterX PVR, only one channel can be dealt with at a time for viewing, so some of the functions don't work as advertised in the 56-page eyeTV help manual located in the Help dropdown menu in the Mac OS X tool bar area at the top of the screen. That is a limit of the PVR, because it only has one receiver. (Want more channels? Get more units.) Recorded sessions can run at the same time as "live" channels but audio is tied to whichever screen is "up front".
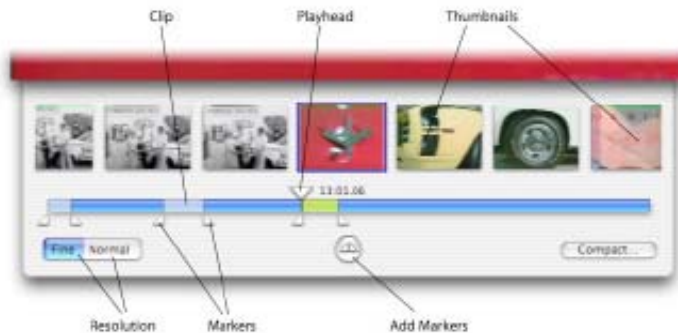
Tim also asked about formatting. This is a "live" feed and the response to his question. I accepted all defaults and did nothing special to the configuration.

Apparently, Plextor doesn't do software programming in-house, so the combination triad of ConverterX PVR, eyeTV and TitanTV seems to be a pretty potent combination for the price for use with the Mac or non-Mac computer systems. Hey, I'm impressed!

Plextor PX-740UF USB/FireWire DVD Burner reviewed by Robert Pritchett

Plextor
48383 Fremont Blvd., Suite 120
Fremont, CA 94538
1.510.440.2000
FAX: 1.510.651.9755
http://www.plextor.com
http://www.plextor.com/english/about/contact.html
Product site: http://www.plextor.com/english/products/740UF.htm
Released for the Mac: September 2005.
$180 USD
Requirements: A system without a DVD Burner but with either a USB 2.0 or FireWire port.
Comes with: CD for PCs (Nero 6), USB cable, Power cable and AC adapter, eject pin.
Comparison chart:
http://www.plextor.com/english/products/716vs740Comparison.htm
Compatibility chart:
http://www.plextor.com/english/support/support_compatability.html

Strengths: Uses either USB2.0 or FireWire, for both single and dual-layer DVDs and also does CDs.

Weaknesses: Loud fan. No Mac-based software.

Listed on Plextor as part of the Value series, the PX-740UF DVD-burner doesn't have all the features that the PX-716UF (Premium Series) does, but than again, it costs $60 USD less and doesn't sport the rounded edges the higher-priced unit does. So what do we get with this unit? Both USB 2.0 (480 Mbps) and FireWire (400Mbps) capability, 16X single-layer or 8X dual-layer recording speeds. And apparently, it can read and write CDs up to 48X.

The price difference between the two units could be because the Premium unit has 6MB more memory buffer. Buffers on both units are designed to handle buffer underrun errors. And perform multi-tasking and editing operations. It also is designed to run in the background.

For the PC-side, the Nero 6 suite software is included to handle all the things that normally can be done using Mac OS X or using Roxio's Toast Titanium 7.

Software

iDive 1.5 with Mosaic reviewed by Robert Pritchett

Aquafadas
interested@aquafadas.com
http://www.aquafadas.com/
Released: End of October 2005
$70 USD, €42 Euro
Try it: http://www.aquafadas.com/download.html 9.7 MB download.
Requirements: iDive uses Mac OS X 10.3.9 or later and QuickTime 7.
Mosaic (animation module) uses Mac OS X 10.4 Tiger's Core Image and
Quartz Composer.

Strengths: Great video file organizer and indexer and animator.

Weaknesses: None found.

http://www.idivepro.com/globe.html

Other Reviews: http://www.macupdate.com/info.php/id/15547

Tested the beta version on an iMac G5 with Mac OS X 10.4 Tiger.

iDive 1.5 with Mosaic is an organizer for videophiles. It works directly with Spotlight and interoperates with Final Cut Pro and the folks at Aquafadas call it a digital video shoebox. Do you still use tape or have video captured on tape? Is it cataloged yet?

iDive handles AVI, DV, MOV and MPEG formats for importing now and it exports to iMovie, Final Cut Express or Pro along with any annotations done within iDive.

If QuickTime can open the file, iDive can catalog it. Ditto with CDs and DVDs. With this app installed, we now have a Digital Video database to work from.

The interface is "Mac-like". You can record single frames of tapes and set seconds between them to add a progressive look-see that is almost iPhoto-like. And there is a time/date search function that nobody else has used that "just works" along with a text search capability. And ratings can also be applied to the files as a way to assist in cataloging and sorting.

If you are a onesy-twosy video per year cataloging type of person, this may be too powerful for you to use. If you are professionally involved in video and want to be better organized, than get this product.

library elements (libraries, tapes, sequences)

timeline

current clip

iDive modes Tag/search

People/Places/Events drawer

Movie Player

Clips in the currently selected library element

Samples of the current clip

Annotations of the current clip
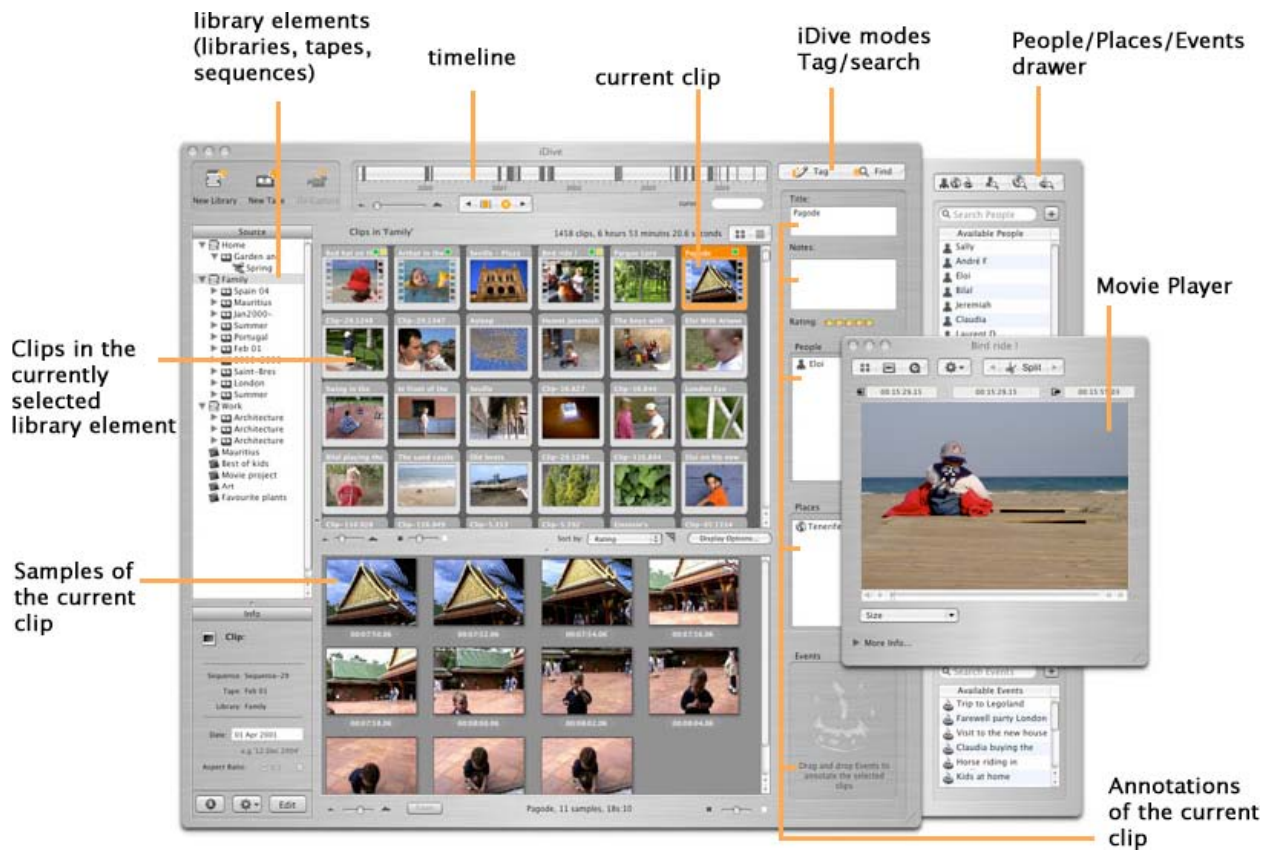
By the way, there is also a Spotlight plug-in for iDive to help with search functions, assuming you are using Mac OS X Tiger.

Mosaic is a presentation tool for creating animations and motion graphics using the iDive catalog and comes with iDive 1.5 and requires Mac OS X Tiger because it uses the Core Image and Quartz Composer technologies for animations such as the Globe animation linked above and shown next.
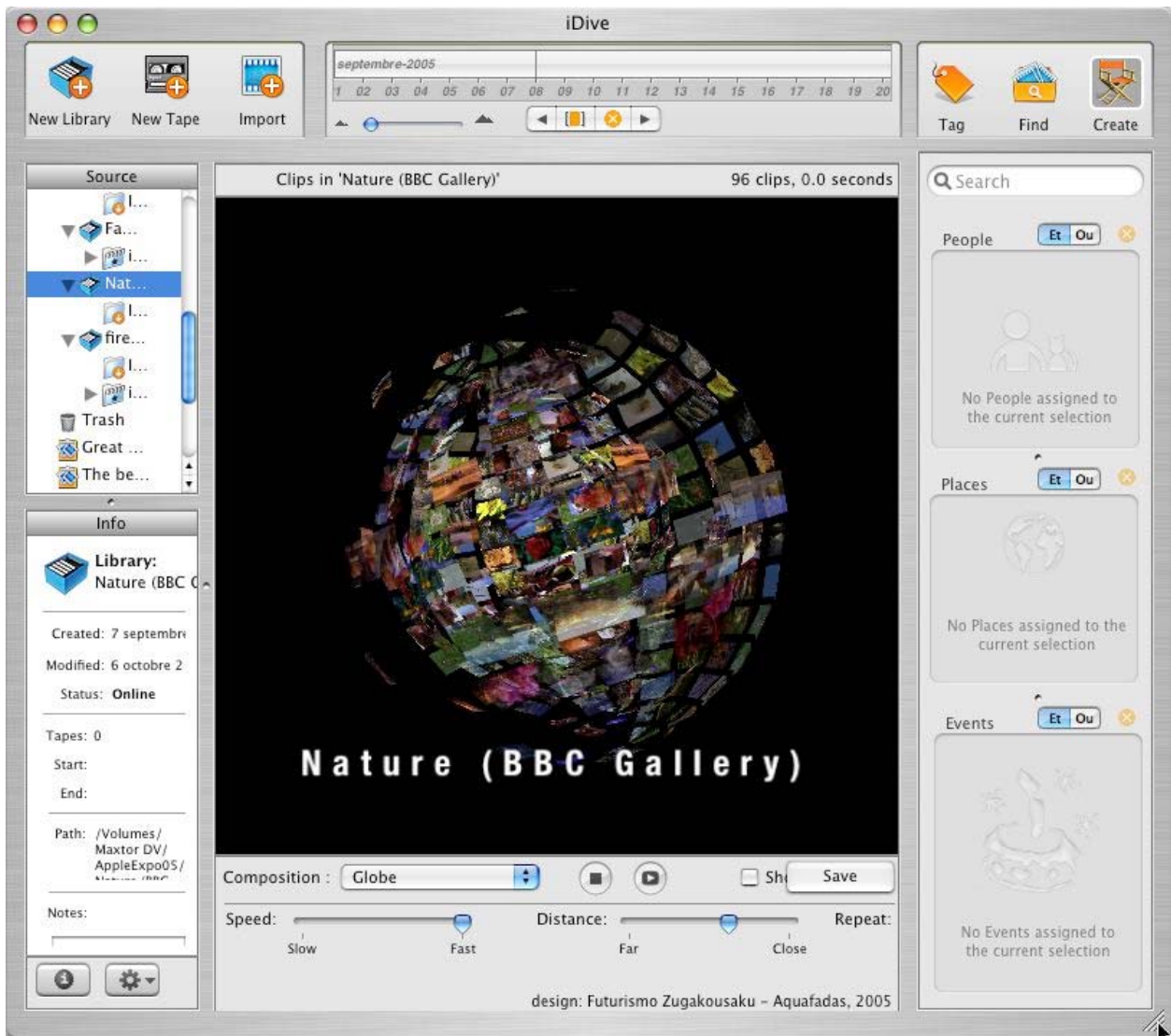
The preview showed a file for download named Flights to demonstrate how Mosaic works by attaching through the *File* tab and *Attach File At Path* to import a folder that has all the data. A new library named *fire balloon flights* appeared in the *Source* section in the left column. Once that was accomplished, the next step was to *Create* the animation and choose a Composition. I choice Mosaic, but I had three other choices as well such as Desktop Photos, Globe and Slideshow with future composition options coming from Aquafadas. The output can be saved either as a QuickTime video or sent out as a Digital Video Stream to a FireWire port. The "killer app" for me was the Globe composition. It takes the photos and sphericizes them into a rotating globe-like 3-Dimensional mosaic that, in this case, also tumbles while rotating. Catch the vision by clicking on the Globe link above to visualize this.
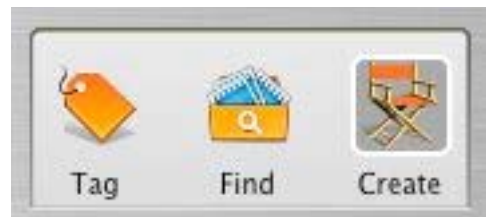
Mosaic here.
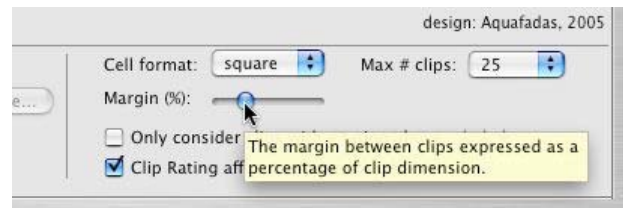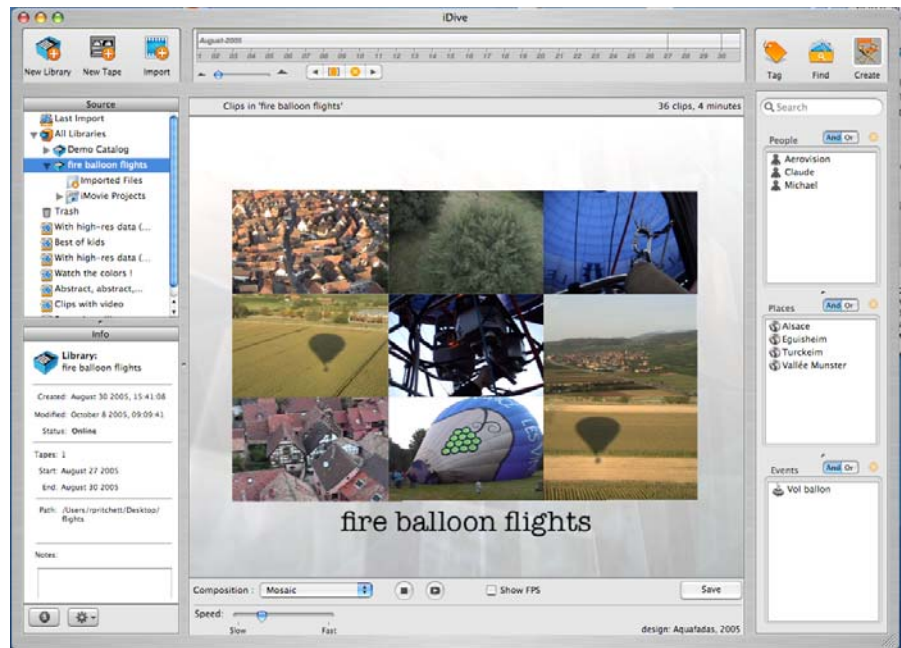
Animated Globe here.

And you can play the final compositions in full screen. I want to animate the world and use that on our website similar to what Geoloc did with their Flash movie animation at http://www.geo-loc.com/. We'll see.
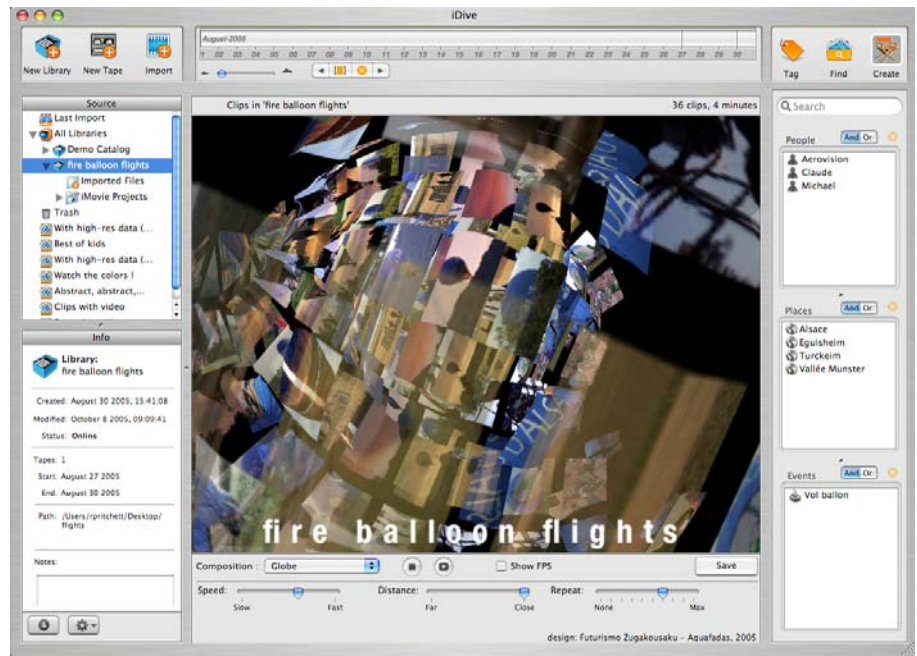
InCopy CS2 4.0.1 reviewed by Robert Pritchett

Adobe
http://www.adobe.com/products/incopy/main.html
$250 USD
Released: September 22, 2005
Requirements: Macintosh - PowerPC® G3, G4, or G5 processor; Mac OS X v.10.2.8 through 10.4.1; 256MB of RAM (320MB recommended); 575MB of available hard-disk space; 1,024x768 monitor resolution with 16-bit video card (24-bit screen display recommended); CD-ROM drive; QuickTime 6 required for multimedia features (included in Mac OS X); For Adobe PostScript printers: PostScript Level 2 or PostScript 3; Internet or phone connection required for product activation; Broadband Internet connection required for Adobe Stock Photos.
Windows -Intel® Pentium® III or 4 processor; Microsoft® Windows® 2000 with Service Pack 3 or Windows XP; 256MB of RAM (320MB recommended); 410MB of available hard-disk space; 1,024x768 monitor resolution with 16-bit video card (24-bit screen display recommended); CD-ROM drive; QuickTime 6 required for multimedia features; For Adobe PostScript® printers: PostScript Level 2 or PostScript 3™; Internet or phone connection required for product activation.
Features: http://store.adobe.com/products/incopy/newfeatures.html
Tutorial:
http://studio.adobe.com/us/tips/tip.jsp?p=1&id=594&xml=idsn3ttcopyfit#

Strengths: Integrates seamlessly with Adobe CS2.

Weaknesses: None found.

Galen Gruman found some though…
http://www.macworld.com/2005/10/reviews/incopycs2/index.php?lsrc=mwrss

Well, now you have InDesign CS 2 Professional, and you want to do a hard-copy magazine. Now what? Get InCopy 2 to help you do the job.

Galley | Story | Layout

feature2 [Available]
writer [Available]
assoc [Available]
SubstrateMag_editorial_1217 [Editing]

1 Can we more space for this blurb? For mor
   decade now, Techton Flu has been
2 proving herself in a major way—starting spinni
3 on the London club scene and making a name for
4 herself in a traditionally male-dominated indust

                                                    Copyfit

5
6 Currently ranked at #41 on The DJ List. Techton
   is synonymous
7 with progressive, epic trance that brings down t
   invincible
8 beats.
9
10 Born to a Dutch mother and an Irish father, she
   spent her early childhood
11 traveling the world gypsy-style. Her father's

I'm all for productivity tools and this is one that would help anyone who is publishing either on a daily, weekly or monthly basis, books, newspapers or magazines. And like the rest of the Adobe CS products, this one is also available in various spoken languages, such as Central European, Danish, Dutch, English, Finnish, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Middle Eastern version, Norwegian, Spanish and
Swedish.

Something I'm constantly battling is MS Office Style format conflicts – and it shows in past issue of *macCompanion*. There is a special 12-page document provided that discusses filters from MS Office apps to InCopy CS2. And there are far more things that work, than don't. And a number of issues that appeared to be problems in 4.0 have been resolved in the 4.0.1 release.

One of the best features is the tight integration in Version Cue CS2 and InDesign and workflow collaboration between writers, editors and designers.

You have to get used to the various file types used by Adobe to get work done such as:

Assignment files (.inca) used in InDesign to display content and styles, as well as page geometry and levels of visual fidelity (wireframe, assigned spreads, or all spreads).

InCopy CS2 content files (.incx) for exporting stories or graphics from InDesign, and when saving or creating new documents using InCopy that display content and styles, but no page geometry (layout information from an InDesign document).]

Template files (.inct) that can be preset with page size dimensions, text area dimensions, styles (paragraph and character), XML tags, swatches, pretagged sample content, and so on.

InDesign files (.indd) include content, styles, and layout of all page items in InDesign and viewed in InCopy and

InCopy CS files (.incd).

We quote with permission from Adi Ravid, who wrote;

> As I listened to your last podcast [**Editor:** Episode #24 of the Mac ReviewCast at http://www.macreviewcast.com/?p=62], it seems like you and Robert, got the InDesign/InCopy relationship wrong.
>
> InDesign CS2 is the layout application, designed to carry out the task of generating perfect layouts for books, magazines, booklets, etc. InCopy CS2 is a word-processor. It can be used as a standalone application, but It's most powerful when used in combination with InDesign.
>
> Both InDesign and InCopy use the same import filters that enable them to import and convert text from multiple sources and formats, and the same text engine to format and display the text.
>
> In addition, there's a 2way connection between InDesign and InCopy, by which InCopy documents can be placed into InDesign documents, and InDesign stories exported to InCopy. Because both application use the same text engine, opening exported InDesign stories in InCopy, will preserve all the text and layout formatting done in InDesign, including colors, paragraph and character styles, etc.
>
> ...and, the basic file format of InCopy document is XML.
>
> Please note that InCopy only relates to InDesign, and have no relation to any other of the CS2 applications.
>
> When working in a standard layout and design environment, InDesign will give you all you need in order to design artistic and complex layouts, format text that was imported from various sources, add images and art, and get it all printed or exported to PDF output.
>
> When working in an editorial environments, such as newspapers and magazines, you need to divide the work between several workstations, with different tasks to perform. This is what refer to as the editorial workflow, and this is where the InDesign/InCopy collaboration comes as useful..
>
> For example:
> The journalist will use MS Word to type his article, then send it to the editor, which will open it in InCopy to review it, make necessary changes, and save it into the editorial environment as InCopy document.
>
> Next, the InCopy file will be placed into the InDesign layout, the text will be formatted and images added.
>
> From InDesign, the article (story) will then be exported as InCopy file and sent to the editor to copyfit.
>
> When the editor opens the exported file in InCopy, he will get all the formatting features of the exported article, plus the entire layout structure of the page items around it (this is the new CS2 Assignments feature), so it will be easier for him to do his task properly. When finished, the editor will simply save and close the InCopy document. Next, the designer in the layout workstation will just update the link to the InCopy document (the edited article) and the InDesign layout will automatically update to reflect the editor's changes.
>
> This is a typical InDesign/InCopy editorial workflow, and you can see where InCopy becomes useful. Instead of having the editor working in a design environment loaded with tones of extra features he doesn't need, InCopy will provide him with all the text processing features h needs (and more) in a fraction of the cost, while keeping a seem-less workflow.
>
> This is, by the way, the reason that InCopy is not part of the CS2 package. It is only needed to those who need to work within a editorial environment. For the basic InDesign layout tasks, InCopy is useless.

The basic InDesign/InCopy workflow, using the CS2 Assignments feature, is suitable for small organizations with up to 5 layout seats and 2-5 editors. Above that, the editorial tasks will need to be managed by an editorial workflow manger applications such as the WoodWing Smart Connection Pro plug-in (up to 30 users), or the WoodWing Smart Connection Enterprise (a database driven environment for large organizations over 20 users) and others.

As a DTP specialist, I've set-up several editorial environments based on the Adobe InDesign/InCopy workflow, most of them using the WoodWing Smart Connection solutions.

You can find more information on the Smart Connection solutions at:
http://www.woodwing.com.

When you do that, if you're using InDesign, take the time to check out some of the great InDesign plug-ins they have there, such as: Smart Styles, Smart Catalog, and more.

I hope you and Robert will find this information helpful.

Adi Ravid
The Final Touch
972-3-6163491
972-57-7349595
adiravid@netvision.net.il

Training

Learning Macromedia Contribute 3: Essential Training reviewed by Robert Pritchett

Instructor: Tom Negrino
Lynda.com, Inc.
PO Box 789
Ojai, CA 93024
888-335-9632
mailto: info@lynda.com
http://www.lynda.com
Released: September 2005
$100 USD with 1 CD, 4.5 hours training or online $25 month for all training from Lynda.com or $375 per year unrestricted access for the complete library with all exercise files.

Product site: http://movielibrary.lynda.com/html/modPage.asp?ID=167

ISBN: 1596711256

Requirements: Mac G3 or later; OS 8.6 or later; 16X CD-ROM drive; 32 MB RAM; 800 x 600-bit video; QuickTime™ 6; Broadband connection or Win98 or later; Pentium II; 32 MB RAM; 800 x 600 24-bit video; PC Soundcard/speakers; Internet connection if using the online option and broadband connection.
Beginner to Intermediate Level.

Strengths: Great cross-platform QuickTime™-based instructions on Macromedia's Contribute 3 application. Excellent navigation features.

Weaknesses: None found.

Learning Macromedia Contribute 3 by Tom Negrino offers 9 sections discussing all the drawing functions that Macromedia Contribute 3 touches Building Web Pages, Editing Page Content, Working with Images and Movies, and Links, Creating Tables, Working with External Documents and Designing and Administering Your Site.

Click on the link above to learn the details or register with Lynda.com to learn online for all of the training programs offered by them for either $25 per month or $375 per year for complete unrestricted access to their complete library. Best results are with a broadband connection. The exercise files are on the CDs, or if you get the Premium Membership, they are also available online.

Go Lynda.com!

Learning Macromedia Dreamweaver 8 – Essential Training reviewed by Robert Pritchett

Instructor: Garrick Chow
Lynda.com, Inc.
PO Box 789
Ojai, CA 93024
888-335-9632
mailto: info@lynda.com
http://www.lynda.com
Released: September 2005
$150 USD with 2 CDs, 11 hours training or online $25 month for all training from Lynda.com or $375 per year unrestricted access for the complete library with all exercise files.

Product site: http://movielibrary.lynda.com/html/modPage.asp?ID=172

ISBN: 1596711221

Requirements: Mac G3 or later; OS 8.6 or later; 16X CD-ROM drive; 32 MB RAM; 800 x 600-bit video; QuickTime™ 6; Broadband connection or Win98 or later; Pentium II; 32 MB RAM; 800 x 600 24-bit video; PC Soundcard/speakers; Internet connection if using the online option and broadband connection.
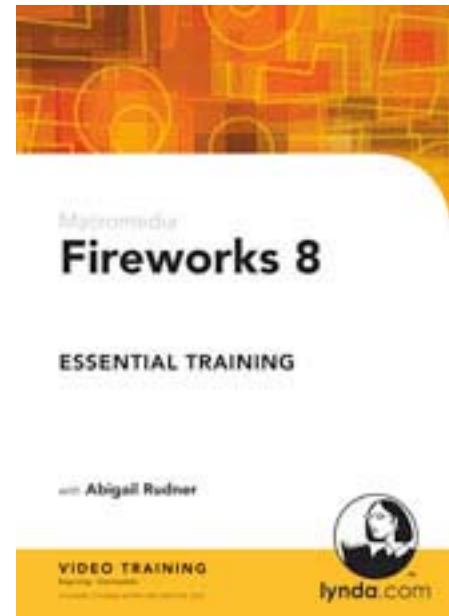Beginner to Intermediate Level.

Strengths: Great cross-platform QuickTime™-based instructions on Macromedia's Dreamweaver 8 application. Excellent navigation features.

Weaknesses: None found.

Learning Macromedia Dreamweaver 8 – Essential Training by Garrick Chow offers 19 sections discussing all the web-based acronyms that Macromedia Dreamweaver 8 touches. If you are just starting out with Dreamweaver 8, believe me, you will not be disappointed with this excellent approach to learning that is so well done and cross-platform-aware.

Click on the link above to learn the details or register with Lynda.com to learn online for all of the training programs offered by them for either $25 per month or $375 per year for complete unrestricted access to their complete library. Best results are with a broadband connection. The exercise files are on the CDs, or if you get the Premium Membership, they are also available online.

Go Lynda.com!

Learning Macromedia Fireworks 8 – Essential Training reviewed by Robert Pritchett

Instructor: Abigail Rudner
Lynda.com, Inc.
PO Box 789
Ojai, CA 93024
888-335-9632
mailto: info@lynda.com
http://www.lynda.com
Released: September 2005
$150 USD with 2 CDs, 10 hours training or online $25 month for all training from Lynda.com or $375 per year unrestricted access for the complete library with all exercise files.

Product site: http://movielibrary.lynda.com/html/modPage.asp?ID=164

ISBN: 1596711248

Requirements: Mac G3 or later; OS 8.6 or later; 16X CD-ROM drive; 32 MB RAM; 800 x 600-bit video; QuickTime™ 6; Broadband connection or Win98 or later; Pentium II; 32 MB RAM; 800 x 600 24-bit video; PC Soundcard/speakers; Internet connection if using the online option and broadband connection.
Beginner to Intermediate Level.

Strengths: Great cross-platform QuickTime™-based instructions on Macromedia's Fireworks 8 application. Excellent navigation features.

Weaknesses: None found.

Learning Macromedia Dreamweaver 8 – Essential Training by Abigail Rudner offers 20 sections discussing all the drawing functions that Macromedia Fireworks 8 touches Vector Drawing, working with Wacom Tablets, Image Editing, Layer and Symbol Essentials, Masking, Live Filters and Styles, Optimizing, Exporting, Slicing, Image Mapping, Animation and Dreamweaver and Flash Integration.

Click on the link above to learn the details or register with Lynda.com to learn online for all of the training programs offered by them for either $25 per month or $375 per year for complete unrestricted access to their complete library. Best results are with a broadband connection. The exercise files are on the CDs, or if you get the Premium Membership, they are also available online.

Go Lynda.com!

Learning Macromedia Flash Professional 8 – Essential Training reviewed by Robert Pritchett

Instructor: Shane Rebenschied
Lynda.com, Inc.
PO Box 789
Ojai, CA 93024
888-335-9632
mailto: info@lynda.com
http://www.lynda.com
Released: September 2005
$150 USD with 2 CDs, 11.5 hours training or online $25 month for all training from Lynda.com or $375 per year unrestricted access for the complete library with all exercise files.

Product site: http://movielibrary.lynda.com/html/modPage.asp?ID=169

ISBN: 159671123X

Requirements: Mac G3 or later; OS 8.6 or later; 16X CD-ROM drive; 32 MB RAM; 800 x 600-bit video; QuickTime™ 6; Broadband connection or Win98 or later; Pentium II; 32 MB RAM; 800 x 600 24-bit video; PC Soundcard/speakers; Internet connection if using the online option and broadband connection.
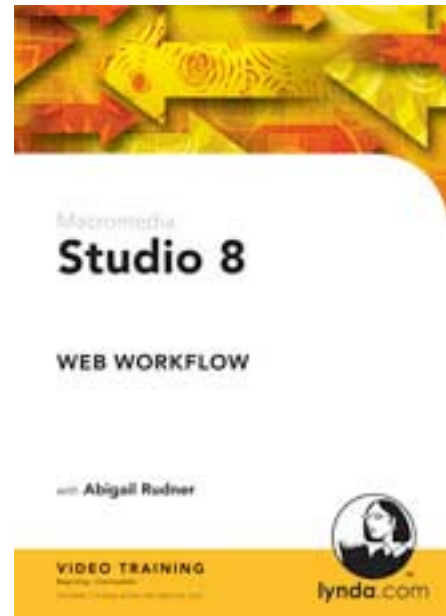Beginner to Intermediate Level.

Strengths: Great cross-platform QuickTime™-based instructions on Macromedia's Flash Professional 8 application. Excellent navigation features.

Weaknesses: None found.

Learning Macromedia Flash Professional 8 – Essential Training by Shane Rebensheid offers 21 sections discussing all the video functions that Macromedia Flash Professional 8 touches such things as animation, tweening, Type and text, Bitmapping, filtering, blending, buttons, movie clips, ActionScripting, Sound Video, Publishing, Accessibility and Templates.

Click on the link above to learn the details or register with Lynda.com to learn online for all of the training programs offered by them for either $25 per month or $375 per year for complete unrestricted access to their complete library. Best results are with a broadband connection. The exercise files are on the CDs, or if you get the Premium Membership, they are also available online.
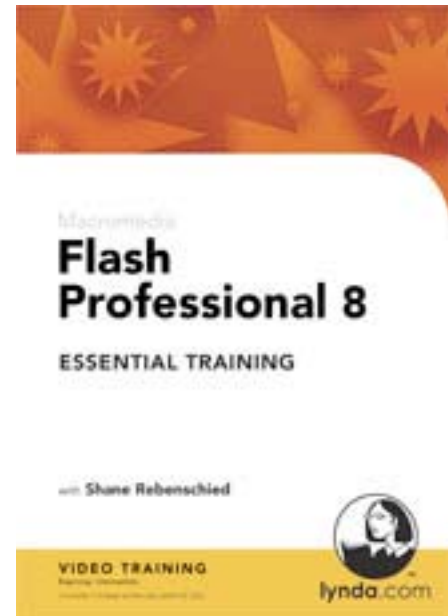
Go Lynda.com!

Learning Macromedia Studio 8 – Web Workflow reviewed by Robert Pritchett

Instructor: Abigail Rudner
Lynda.com, Inc.
PO Box 789
Ojai, CA 93024
888-335-9632
mailto: info@lynda.com
http://www.lynda.com
Released: September 2005
$150 USD with 1 CD, 6 hours training or online $25 month for all training from Lynda.com or $375 per year unrestricted access for the complete library with all exercise files.

Product site: http://movielibrary.lynda.com/html/modPage.asp?ID=171

ISBN: 1596711264

Requirements: Mac G3 or later; OS 8.6 or later; 16X CD-ROM drive; 32 MB RAM; 800 x 600-bit video; QuickTime™ 6; Broadband connection or Win98 or later; Pentium II; 32 MB RAM; 800 x 600 24-bit video; PC Soundcard/speakers; Internet connection if using the online option and broadband connection.
Beginner to Intermediate Level.

Strengths: Great cross-platform QuickTime™-based instructions on Macromedia's Studio 8 application. Excellent navigation features.

Weaknesses: None found.

Learning Macromedia Studio 8: Web Workflow by Abigail Rudner offers 10 sections discussing all the drawing functions that Macromedia Fireworks 8 touches Designing and Drawing with Fireworks and Flash, CSS Pop-up Menu Navigation and Roundtrip editing with Dreamweaver, Using Multiple Swap Image Effects, Exporting CSS from Fireworks to Dreamweaver, Creating a Web Photo Album, Creating a Complex Button, Creating Complex Animation for an Ad Banner, Creating an Animated Navigation Bar and Mocking up a Mobile Interface.

Click on the link above to learn the details or register with Lynda.com to learn online for all of the training programs offered by them for either $25 per month or $375 per year for complete unrestricted access to their complete library. Best results are with a broadband connection. The exercise files are on the CDs, or if you get the Premium Membership, they are also available online.

Go Lynda.com!

Advertisements

DigitaMediaTraining

http://www.digitaltraining.com/special/maccom

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 was almost 2 million hits in October 2005. Beginning June 2004, our readership continued to increase rapidly through our "whisper campaign". October 2004 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. In September 2005, we transferred to a later Xserve that could handle throughput better. We tended to tax their network pretty hard.

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 2,000 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.

In October 2005, bandwidth usage went over 35 GB, with over 1.7 million page views and over 50,000 new viewers. Trend analysis indicates that will continue to increase.

It pays to advertise with us!

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.)

PDF Ad Rates

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.)

Rate Table

Page Size: 8 1/2" x 11"				
No bleed				
Style	**Rate**	**Size Fractional**	**Size Decimal**	**Size Centimeter**
1/16th Page	$40 USD	1 5/8 x 2 1/4 in	1.625 x 2.25 in	4.1 x 5.7 cm
1/8th Page Horizontal	$50 USD	3 1/2 x 2 1/4 in	3.5 x 2.25 in	8.9 x 5.7 cm
1/8th Page Vertical	$50 USD	2 1/4 x 3 1/2 in	2.25 x 3.5 in	5.7 x 8.9 cm
1/4th Page Vertical	$60 USD	3 1/2 x 4 3/4 in	3.5 x 4.75 in	8.9 x 12.1 cm
1/2 Page Horizontal	$100 USD	7 1/4 x 4 3/4 in	7.25 x 4.75 in	18.4 x 12.1 cm
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
Full Page	$250 USD	7 1/4 x 9 7/8 in	7.25 x 9.875 in	18.4 x 25.1 cm

Affiliations

We do affiliations, and work with those who have made arrangements with online affiliate systems, or we deal directly with you if you have created code, and have a contract we can sign.

Sponsorships

We also accept sponsorships. Please let us know if you would like to sponsor *macCompanion*!

And we also accept donations by those who feel our services are value-added.

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.

Robert Pritchett
Owner of MPN, LLC
Publisher of *macCompanion*
1952 Thayer Drive
Richland, WA 99354
1-509-210-0217
mailto:rpritchett@maccompanion.com
http://www.maccompanion.com/
Email works best.

Well that's it for this issue. Please come back again next month!