

August 2006

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Application Service Provider for the *macCompanion* website:

<http://www.stephousehosting.com>

Thanks to Daniel Counsell of Realmac Software Development (<http://www.realmacsoftware.com>), who graced these pages and our website with newer rating stars.

Our special thanks to all those who have allowed us to review their products!
In addition, thanks to you, our readers, who make this effort all possible.

Please support this effort by going to the back of the magazine and to our website and clicking and purchasing from our affiliates and advertisers. **THEY WILL APPRECIATE IT EVEN MORE THAN WE DO!**

Letter from the CEO

Plans for the Future – Riding the Apple Tsunami!

by Robert Pritchett

August, the month this year for WWDC, the eventual unveiling of the next Mac OS X system, probably the finalization of the Apple computer line with desktop and server configuration updates and other neat ‘gotta-have’ stuff from Apple that drive non-Mac folks crazy with anticipation and pushes them over the brink into Maclandia.

The increase in the consumer-base for Mac products we wrote about nearly a year ago is “on-track” and we here at MPN, LLC are riding the tsunami Apple has created with their underground-swelling of ever-improving products. The, for now, unnamed one-trick-pony competition can’t keep up! And that indeed is good for competition. Apple needs some to keep it on the innovative edge.

Meanwhile, what are we doing here to improve *macCompanion*? We’re recuperating from the incredible participation from the *macCompanion 4th Anniversary Celebration* we had last month. Around 148 prizes were given away with well over \$7,366 USD. And we did that on the *Mac ReviewCast*, not once, but twice, as we repurposed some gifts due to duplication. So in a way, even though there is no “paid subscription” to *macCompanion*, **it pays to participate with us!** For some, more than others, obviously.

Our deepest gratitude to those manufacturers, software developers and book publishers who pretty much spontaneously joined us to do the “gift-away”. They, along with names of those who received gifts, are prominently listed on the **Gift List** at <http://www.macompanion.com/GiftList.html>

This was just a way-cool way of offering our gratitude to you, our readers and listeners in the middle of this pre-WWDC blazing-hot summer.

What else is going on?

We added more writers to this “Reader’s Digest of Macdom”, *macCompanion*. We think you will like what they have done and will be doing with the Mac-azine. The magazine will continue to grow and expand readership.

We are changing the *macCompanion* logo.

We will be adding more advertisers, to help pay the bills.

We added the Ultralingua word-translation function to all pages of the website, including the Blog.

We moved the Forum to Mac-Headz.

We will be massaging the website, so you can add comments and feedback online (real-time interaction) and we will also be working up an online questionnaire and feedback form, so we can do a better job meeting your needs, while still working on better ways to monetize the magazine. We’d like to keep it free to you, our readers, but we do have bills to pay too.

Please keep “spreading the word” about us, so we can get to our goal of 3 million page views per month by year-end. If you think our efforts are worth the bother, than others will too.

Meanwhile, please visit our affiliates, online stores, advertisers, etc., and purchase something. Every little bit helps and we do get one or two percentage points or so per purchase. It adds up after a while!

Come join the Apple Tsunami and “Hang 10”!

According to Hoyle...

<http://www.jonhoyle.com> Copyright ©2006 Jonathan Hoyle

Macintosh Software Development 2005-2006: A Year in Review

by Jonathan Hoyle

jhoyle at maccompanion.com
macCompanion
August 2006

Last year we began a series of articles each devoted to a cross-platform strategy from a Macintosh programmer's perspective. Thus far, we have covered the following 11 subjects:

Intro: http://www.maccompanion.com/archives/september2005/Columns/According_to_Hoyle_1.htm
Qt: <http://www.maccompanion.com/archives/october2005/Columns/AccordingtoHoyle.htm>
wxWidgets: <http://www.maccompanion.com/archives/november2005/Columns/AccordingtoHoyle.htm>
CPLAT: <http://www.maccompanion.com/archives/december2005/Columns/AccordingtoHoyle.htm>
REALbasic: <http://www.maccompanion.com/archives/january2006/Columns/AccordingtoHoyle.htm>
Runtime Revolution: <http://www.maccompanion.com/archives/february2006/Columns/AccordingtoHoyle.htm>
AMPC: <http://www.maccompanion.com/archives/march2006/Columns/AccordingtoHoyle.htm>
Java compilers: <http://www.maccompanion.com/archives/april2006/Columns/AccordingtoHoyle.htm>
Basic compilers (Part I): <http://www.maccompanion.com/archives/may2006/Columns/AccordingtoHoyle.htm>
Basic compilers (Part II): <http://www.maccompanion.com/archives/june2006/Columns/AccordingtoHoyle.htm>
Converting Legacy Frameworks:
<http://www.maccompanion.com/archives/July2006/Columns/AccordingtoHoyle.htm>

This being my 12th article for *macCompanion*, I have decided to do a year in review to cover the topics affecting Macintosh software developers these past 12 months. I know that most year-in-reviews tend to be written in December to follow the calendar year; however, I think the academic year is a more realistic unit of measure, as Apple tends to make its new development announcements in the summer during its Worldwide Developer Conference (WWDC). Apple will be previewing Mac OS X 10.5 Leopard at the conference this month, so what better time than now to summarize the events that have transpired since the last WWDC?

WWDC 2005

Last year, Apple dropped a bombshell with its announcement that the Macintosh will be transitioning away from the PowerPC processor series onto <gasp> the Intel processors! Many could not believe their ears. Intel. The enemy. How could Steve do it? After all, it's wasn't too long ago when an Apple commercial displayed the Intel processor strapped onto the back of a snail!

Despite all the big talk about the "Megahertz Myth", the fact still remained that Intel processors continued to improve in speed while the Motorola PowerPC chip stagnated. Steve was not happy that the Motorola G3 and G4 processors, that were the brains of the Mac, were being beaten by Intel's higher performing Pentium III and IV chips. So he made the big move away from Motorola and went to IBM for (what was supposed to be) the next generation chip, the G5 processor. In return, IBM promised to keep the G5 up to date by continual performance increases, and decrease its footprint so that G5 that could run inside of a portable. Unfortunately, IBM was never very good at keeping its word.

The G5 was introduced with all of its glory at the 2003 WWDC. At the keynote, Steve Jobs promised the audience a 3.0 GHz version of the G5 in time for the following year's conference. When IBM failed to meet that target by WWDC 2004, he had to apologize in the keynote for not having delivered on his word. However, he expected to be able to reach the 3 GHz mark for the 2005 conference. But in reality, no such speed could be attained, and looked nowhere to be in sight. Furthermore, the G5 was never able to be reduced in power consumption and size to be usable for the Powerbook.

IBM cost Steve some pride and, worst of all, his public word: the very thing that he prides himself on. IBM caused Steve some public embarrassment. He was damned if was to let IBM do it again. So, Steve threatened IBM that if they didn't deliver on the promised performance, he would move the entire Macintosh platform to using the Intel processor. I can only imagine the IBM execs laughing in his face at this "obvious bluff".

Lesson to IBM: Don't ever, *ever*, assume Steve is bluffing. Especially after you've already pissed him off.

The rest, as they say, is history. IBM didn't deliver, so Steve walk away and into the arms of the Intel.

The Intel Transition

Amazingly, the transition went much faster than originally expected. In Steve Jobs' original announcement, the first Intel-based Mac's were not expected until about now (mid-2006) and PowerPC-based Mac would continue to be sold until the end of 2007. Steve said "This is not going to be a transition that happens overnight., it's going to happen over a period of a few years."

As it turned out, "overnight" was a much more accurate description. The first Intel-based Macs shipped in early January 2006, and as I write this, every new Mac at the online Apple store is available for Intel only, with the sole exception of the desktop tower (which itself is likely to be replaced after this month's WWDC). The Intel-based Macintoshes represents one of the fastest and most successful transitions Apple has ever undertaken.

Universal Binaries

The absolute #1 task for all Macintosh software developers this year was to convert their applications into Universal Binaries, the dual native format that runs native PowerPC or Intel, depending on the architecture. Mac OS X 10.3.9 or higher is required for the operating system to understand the U.B. file type.

Universal Binaries are very much analogous to the old "Fat Binary" format that included both 68K and PowerPC binaries from 10 years ago. Those building Dashboard widgets or Java applications did not have to do anything, as that code runs fine regardless of architecture. Those creating Mach-O applications in Xcode (either Cocoa or Carbon) had only small work to do. CFM-based applications built with Metrowerks CodeWarrior, on the other hand, were very much in trouble, thanks in large part to the incompetence and mismanagement of Freescale, the company that owned Metrowerks (more on this below).

The new version of Xcode, 2.1, added a checkbox selection for target hardware: one checkbox for PowerPC and one for Intel. Checking both gives you a Universal Binary. As I write this, Xcode has been updated to version 2.3. Macintosh software developers defected from CodeWarrior in droves to go to Xcode, the only environment that allows the user to create U.B.'s. Converting CodeWarrior projects to Xcode was the lion's share of the work, as Xcode's compiler (gcc 4.0) was ANSI compliant and fairly strict. Once this was done, Intel compilation became much easier.

Metrowerks CodeWarrior

Two to three years ago, Metrowerks CodeWarrior was the overwhelming marketshare leader in Macintosh C/C++ development. Over 90% of all shipping Mac applications at the time were built using it. Considered both easier and more powerful than the freeware Xcode from Apple, CodeWarrior was the IDE of choice for the Mac community. In addition to the PowerPC compiler inside CodeWarrior (which could build Classic/PEF, Carbon/PEF, Carbon/Mach-O and Cocoa/Mach-O applications), Metrowerks also had an x86 compiler to build Windows applications. Its x86 compiler had been tested and grown for over 10 years, just as its Mac compiler had. One might think that of all the Macintosh development environments available, CodeWarrior would be the one in the best position for the Intel switch. Alas, such was not the case.

Motorola, the parent company of Metrowerks at the time, spun the latter off to Freescale. Under Freescale's reign, CodeWarrior began to languish. In former years, Metrowerks released annual updates of its IDE (timed usually to coincide WWDC). From version 4 in 1998 to version 8 in 2002, both Macintosh and Windows versions of the IDE were updated. However, something went awry in 2003, as version 9 was released for Macintosh only, with no updates to the Windows or Java compilers. In 2004, CodeWarrior 9 for Windows was finally made available, but its Macintosh cousin stagnated. And to the shock and bewilderment of the Mac user base, Metrowerks failed to even appear at the 2004 WWDC. In yet another bizarre move in the spring of 2005, Freescale sells all of CodeWarrior's x86 compiler technology to Nokia and announced it was getting out of the x86 compilation business altogether. How ironic that Metrowerks would have its salvation in hand for 10 years, but sells it away mere weeks before Steve Jobs announces the Intel switch.

By effectively shooting itself in the head, Freescale drove an overwhelming popular development environment, a near monopoly in fact, into insolvency in just two years. Metrowerks was left with no choice but to abandon the Macintosh market, which is what it announced at the 2005 MacHack conference. A final version 10 of CodeWarrior for the Macintosh was released in late autumn as a download only and at a slashed price of \$99. In the spring of 2006, all support and sales of CodeWarrior for the Macintosh was officially terminated.

For a review of this final version of CodeWarrior, go to:

<http://www.maccompanion.com/archives/december2005/Software/Metrowerks.htm>

REALbasic & Other Development Environments / Frameworks

As the leading Basic compiler for the Macintosh, REAL Software announced that REALbasic would support compilation for Universal Binaries sometime in 2006. Unfortunately, as of this writing, that no such support has been released. Apple has been selling Intel-based Mac's for over six months now; not being able to create an Intel native application with REALbasic has most certainly hurt its sales. However, REAL Software President and CEO Geoff Perlman has promised to make Universal Binaries its single most important feature, and still expects to release it before the end of the year.

FutureBASIC, a Macintosh-only Basic compiler, is also not yet available as a universal binary, but the authors have promised an update soon. The majority of modern C++ frameworks, even the cross-platform ones, now support building as Universal Binaries. Qt, wxWidgets and CPLAT have all been updated to allow for Intel compilation. Metrowerks PowerPlant has been released into the open source market to SourceForge, but as of this writing, there is still some work left to do with it.

Conclusion

This year there was a singular emphatic message: support Intel compilation. Many application projects have already made the transition, and those, which haven't, are actively working on such an update. With the rate at which Intel Macs are selling, this should remain all developers' top priorities. With that, I leave you for a month and make preparations for this year's conference.

Next Month: WWDC 2006 Round up! See you in 30!

The European Perspective

<http://www.myapplestuff.com> Copyright ©2006 Chris Marshall

My Stuff

by Chris Marshall

Welcome to what I hope will be a regular column. Why hope? Well if no one wants to read it or I run out of things to say, than it won't continue.

I want this article to cover a number of areas on a regular basis, so please be patient with this first article – by necessity I need to establish some foundations and take time to provide some one-off explanations.

I bought my first Mac in January 2006. I bought a PowerBook G4 with a 100GB 7200rpm Hard Drive, 1.5GB RAM and two days later Apple announced the new MacBookPro! In addition I have a 60GB 5G iPod with Video, a 20GB 3G iPod, a 1GB iPod Shuffle, whilst my wife has a 4GB Silver iPod Mini and a 1GB iPod Shuffle.

I could list my “Ten Reasons to Switch” for you, but you know what they are. At the end of the day it was simply a case of I had pretty much always wanted a Mac, work and personal budget never coincided to allow me to do it until now, so I got one. End of story! For those that are interested, my reasons to switch can be found on my blog.

Before I bought my PowerBook, I listened to a huge number of Podcasts, and subscribed to a number of forums. With very few exceptions, I found them extremely useful and very friendly – the Mac Culture, right?

The purchase of the PowerBook coincided with me having the opportunity for the first time in my life to really focus on the consumer side of computing, rather than the corporate side. In fact, it was because I was going to have this opportunity, that I bought the PowerBook. I have been fascinated ever since in the wide variety of options that exist, and that is the reason to some extent for these articles. I wanted to share my experiences and learn about yours. I already had all my music on iTunes, but there has been an explosion in my level of photography, video clips, digital media etc. and that is what I really want to cover in this column.

BUT I am not a switcher! As Adam at MacCast would say I am a *slider*! I have a couple of Windows machines that I spend time on pretty much every day. In one way I am frustrated that I still have to use Windows, not because I hate Windows, but because the Mac simply is a more rewarding experience. I have a number of clients here that I support and train on their Windows PC's. My wife has a Windows Notebook that she doesn't use enough to warrant a swap to a MacBook (I am working on her though, I promise), and my Windows Desktop is part of my Digital Media Solution.

My 'Casts

Books ¹	Fun	General	Mac	News	Review	Sport	Technical
Fiddle & Burn	French Maid TV	The Daily Mayo	BRITISH MAC	BBC NewsPod	In Business	The Football Phone-In 606	AV Forums
Lessons from a Geek Fu Master	Jack Black's Nacho Libre Confessional	Daily Breakfast	EuroMac	Telegraph	iTunes New Music Tuesday	Nike Football	commandN
How to Disappear Completely	The Daily Nut		Mac Roundtable	Today	Mark Kermode's Film		Diggnation
Earthcore	Ricky Gervais		MacCast		NYT Book		Engadget
Nina Kimberly The Merciless	Tiki Bar TV		MacBreak Video		NYT Movie		Geek Brief TV
Route 66 to Vietnam			macTV		NYT Music		Inside The Net
Podiobooker			Mac ReviewCast		24 Cast		The Tech Night Owl LIVE
Spherical Tomi			Typical Mac User				This week in TECH
							TWIT Video

These are all available via the [iTunes Music Store](#).

Under Consideration – Geek Brief TV². I have watched this pretty much from the very beginning and I have certainly watched every episode, so it is with a mixture of sorrow and surprise that I find that I am actually considering unsubscribing. Two reasons contribute to this:

- not really enough interesting content, and
- far too much time spent on outtakes and trying to be funny.

In the earlier episodes, the presentation style was sort of naively cute and the occasional outtake made for an interesting variation. Of late I am getting the impression that the 'cast is more about the presenters that the content. This has certainly coincided with them "going full time", so I wonder is there is something behind this, or if they are trying a new format, or (and potentially fatal) they have got sidetracked by their success and believe they are bigger than the content. At the moment, I figure that about 40% of each 'cast is outtakes and at least daily iTunes says it is having a problem downloading from their site.

I am certainly in the minority here though, if you look at their position in *iTunes* and the number of downloads they get a month.

¹ <http://www.podiobooks.com/index.php>

² <http://geekbrieftv.podshow.com/>

Just Added – BRITISH MAC³. I like this ‘cast for a number of reasons:

- Will (Green) just sounds like he is doing it for fun.
- It has an interesting structure with some nice innovative touches (Ye Old Mac & Mouse).
- It has a great “British” feel that is somewhat unique in the ‘Cast world.

With more and more of the ‘casts coming out of the States being at or close to professional standard this ‘cast reminds me of the earlier ‘casts that I listened to. I love that – it is a true reflection of the “Happy Amateur” level of ‘casting, no disrespect Will I love the work you do, although I don’t actually learn that much from you 😊

Favourite ‘Casts – Surfbits Mac ReviewCast⁴. Not just because I do some writing for Tim (although that helps of course), but because I think it has a lot going for it that ‘casters would do well to take note of:

- He has a regular format and schedule that he sticks to.
- He has found one thing that works and hasn’t deviated.
- He has a regular team that support him well.

As a result he has a weekly “must listen” ‘cast that consistently provides content that I find useful. His regular contributors provide a nice balance, and the ‘cast is extremely informative, with no focus on the individuals other than a bit of introductory chat between Tim and Robert.

My Forums

From time to time you may see me around on the following forums:

Apple - <http://discussions.apple.com/index.jspa>

AV Forums - <http://www.avforums.com/forums/index.php>

GAP - <http://gap.us.playstation.com/>

MacCast - <http://www.maccast.com>

ScreenCasts Online - <http://screencastsonline.com/forums/>

Mac Headz - <http://forum.mac-headz.com/>

I tend to find that I visit forums when I have a very specific reason (usually a problem) or when I realize that I haven’t made a visit for a long time – in many ways I treat them as my friends! I am always pleased that I have spent time in them, and nearly always get the answer or advice that I want. My ongoing gripe with forums though is that not enough people close down a thread with a confirmation that advice they received worked. As a result, it can get frustrating trying out fixes that you don’t know if they will work or not.

³ <http://web.mac.com/britishmac/iWeb/British%20Mac/Home.html>

⁴ <http://macreviewcast.com/>

European News

Robert wanted me to cover the “Apple News” here in Spain. I explained to him that would take up about as much space as the iPod on the SNL skit.⁵

Apple of course has a web site in Spain <http://www.apple.com/es> but no stores (to the best of my knowledge, none planned either). From a size perspective, this is a little strange, as both Madrid and Barcelona are top European cities with large businesses, high earning individuals, and a large tourist population. To buy any Apple products other than online, you have to rely on the understocked “store in store” areas in the local PC City’s etc. Having visited Apple Stores in London, New York, Chicago, and Tampa, I am certainly getting withdrawal symptoms!

As a result, I don’t know one individual or company that uses Macs. This has certainly enhanced my use of the various ‘casts and forums to keep in touch with fellow Mac users.

In subsequent columns, I will explore and explain in more detail the reasons behind this absence here in Spain. I attribute it to a totally different culture and attitude towards work and leisure. For now though, I suggest you read this article from Dennis Sellers⁶ back in June 2004, as it will set the scene nicely for you.

For now though, I will leave you with a tip. If you have an iSight camera or Airport Express that you no longer want, you may want to consider selling it on eBay and shipping to Europe, as it is no longer possible to purchase them in Europe⁷. “The decision to stop selling the products, is to bring the company in line with the new European Union Restriction of the Use of Certain Hazardous Substances in Electrical and Electronic Equipment Regulations 2005 (RoHS).”

Digital Media Solution

This is my current project/obsession/drain on my funds.

Over the years I have accumulated a pretty wide range of gadgets, TV’s, Computers, etc. and like many people, have gone through phases of buying DVD’s and Music (CD’s and ITMS).

Currently my numbers are:

DVD’s – 230

Music – 60GB on iTunes

Hard Drive Capacity – PowerBook (100GB), Windows Notebook (80GB), Sky + (Like TiVo 80GB with 16 movies stored on it), Windows Desktop (180GB), and an External Hard Drive (230GB) a TOTAL of 670GB.

My Desktop is a Sony Vaio Media Centre PC, which is currently hooked up to a satellite receiver and a Sony TV, so that I can record stuff off the Satellite onto the PC, and then view back either on the PC or on the TV.

I have three B&O TV’s linked with their BeoLink hooked up to a second satellite system (Sky +) that is a TiVo type service so I can record a couple of stations at any one time, and the B&O throws this around the various TV’s as I wish.

I use an Airport Extreme Base Station and two Airport Express units, which gives me two ‘Music Networks’ that I can wirelessly connect to from my iTunes.

⁵ <http://jemca.watchmactv.com/downloads/ipod/stevejobssnl.php>

⁶ http://www.macsimumnews.com/index.php/archive/spanish_perspective_the_mac_scene_in_spain

⁷ <http://www.macworld.co.uk/news/index.cfm?NewsID=15031>

My vision/task is to try and remove or reduce the physical media that I own, get as much as I can onto hard drives, and to be able to access this data from any TV or Computer that I am at in the Apartment. I intend to document this process over the coming months and would really appreciate you sharing your experiences in this area.

And Finally My Sites

It seems like hardly a week goes by without a new “social networking” site been launched, and I guess like a lot of you I try a lot of them out, but to date not for long! Anyway to “support” these columns I am going to make an effort to really understand and use the following:

Frappr: <http://www.frappr.com/myapplestuff>

MySpace: <http://www.myspace.com/myapplestuff>

Podshow: <http://myapplestuff.podshow.com>

Blog: <http://www.myapplestuff.com>

Digg: <http://www.digg.com/> (MyAppleStuff)

Flickr: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/chrismpics/>

Personal: <http://web.mac.com/chris.marshall>

A word of warning though – I haven’t really got beyond setting these up, but thought that I would cover my progress as part of these columns. I will try and cover at least one each column, but in the meantime, please visit them and help me discover their value! Add me as a friend, stick me on your map, digg me, or whatever it is that we are all meant to be doing to each other these days ☺

About Chris Marshall

Educated in the UK and USA, I have lived and worked in the UK, USA, and Spain. I currently live in Spain in a state of semi-retirement where I spend most of my time developing my skills on the Mac and understanding the significance and opportunities of the “Web 2.0” explosion.

I have recently started writing reviews and articles for *macCompanion*⁸ and for *The Mac ReviewCast*⁹.

From a “day job” perspective I don’t really have one at the moment. I am doing some PC training and support locally and have been advising a couple of small start-up businesses. When I do work, it is a business consultant¹⁰ with an emphasis on small and start-up businesses and mentoring individuals. I am particular keen to help US organizations establish themselves in Europe. I am also keen to develop my writing skills.

⁸ <http://www.maccompanion.com/>

⁹ <http://www.surfbits.com/>

¹⁰ <http://www.m2associates.wordpress.com>



Speak: Random Mac Stuff You Need to Know

<http://www.macfanatic.net/blog/>

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Introduction, WWDC Anticipations and Fake Leopard Screenshots

by Matt Brewer

About This Column

I'd like to welcome everyone to my area of *macCompanion*! Being a first article, hang in with me while I cover some stuff that we need to get established.

First off, I'm going to provide a monthly column that covers many areas. I dabble in many different areas with my Mac, and while I don't pretend to be an expert in much, I do like to share stuff that I believe every Mac user should know. So, this will be an area where I share interesting tidbits of info that I've run across over the month.

I'm also fairly intimate with coding, mostly web-based. So, while I won't bore everyone with random code, I do plan on sharing info that I've run across through trial-and-error and think that it would help out other people.

About Me

While you can read all about me, in a more lengthy version, from the *macCompanion* site itself, I'll throw in a little background info to get us acquainted. I come from a Windows background a few years back, mainly using Windows ME and then XP for a while. After finally experiencing Mac OS X (10.0 initial release) on a first generation iMac at a local store, I was hooked on Macs. I became an avid Mac rumor junkie over the next few years and moved to Linux for most of my computing until I purchased my first Mac in the summer of 2005. Since then I've sold that iBook and made the transition to Intel with a black MacBook.

I ran across [Rapidweaver from RealMac Software](#) in the winter of 2005 and my website, [Mac Fanatic](#), was born. I started the site without even the most basic knowledge of HTML, CSS, or any of its related workings. Even FTP was pretty unfamiliar to me. So, Rapidweaver allowed a complete novice to create a site and I grew from there, soon reaching the limitations of the application. I find features that I want to implement on my site all the time and keep a long list, with an accompanying folder of source code, and steadily work through it in my free time. I'm studying towards a Computer Science major at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville and just completed my first year. I'm a passionate Mac user and hope to develop for the platform one day soon. With all that out of the way, let's get started!

Leopard at WWDC 2006

So, for anyone who doesn't know, I'll be attending the WWDC in less than two weeks. With that said, I'm very excited about attending my first conference, my first flight, and my first trip out west, all at the same time. So, this is a big experience for me on several levels.

The conference always brings rumors and speculation about upcoming products, announcements, and enhancements to an all-time high. I won't bother recapping all the rumors, as there isn't enough room for all of that.

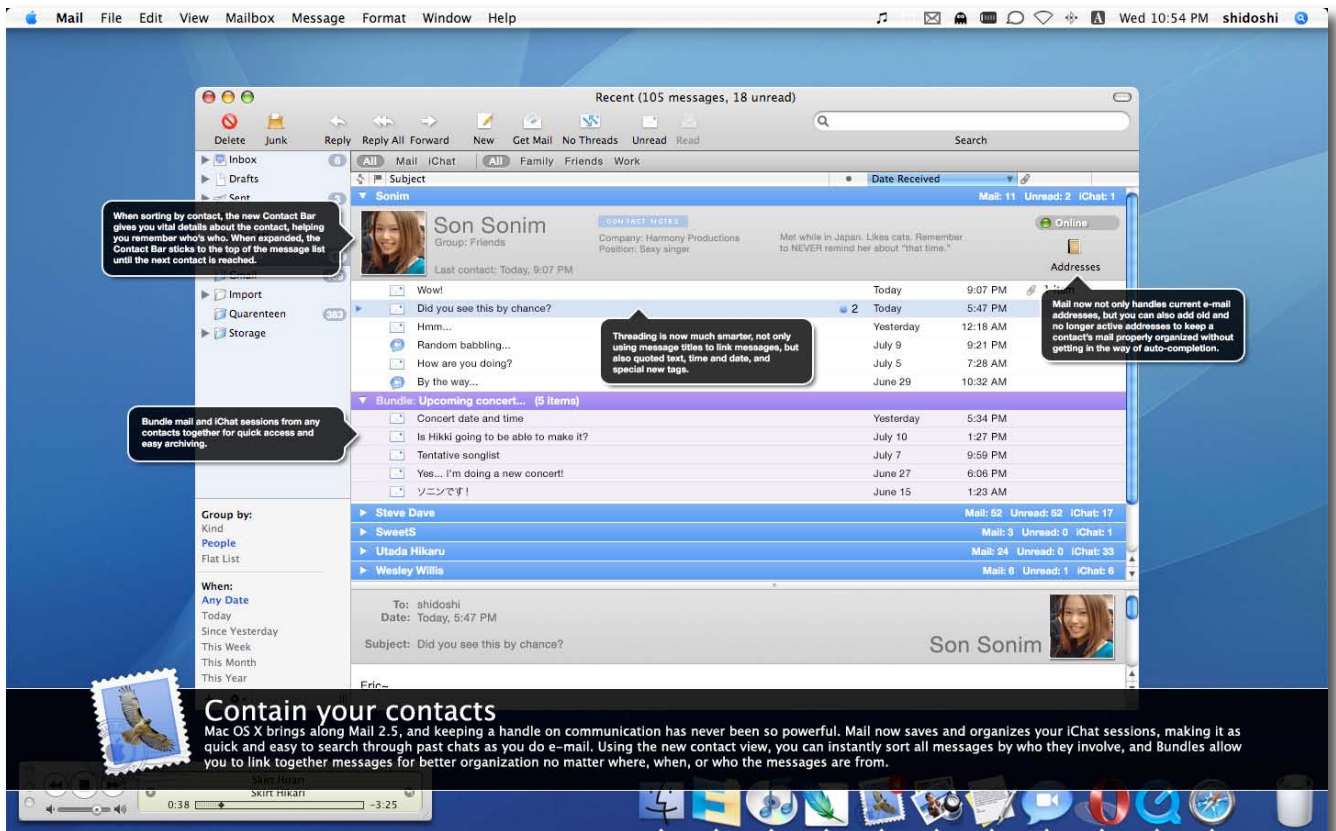
I wanted to point everyone to the "official" Bingo game card for the conference. This just serves as a silly way to waste some time, but the card has squares on it with rumors in each block, and you can read more about each rumor from the author's page, so it's a nice place to start looking for ideas and making your own predictions about what may or may not appear in Leopard. [Read more about the Bingo game card here.](#)

Fake Leopard Screenshots

Probably one of the cooler sites that I have run across in the last month would have to be a blog setup by Phil Ryu. [Check his site out here.](#) He has some great content and just finished up a contest where contestants sent in their best fake Leopard screenshots to be judged. Some of the entries were exceptional and I would buy a working copy of Mac OS like that in a heartbeat. So, I'll elaborate on those features that I hadn't ever thought of, but would quickly add to my [Top 10 Things I'd Like in Leopard.](#)

[Phil has announced the winners of the contest and you can read the judges comments as well as see the entries, here.](#)

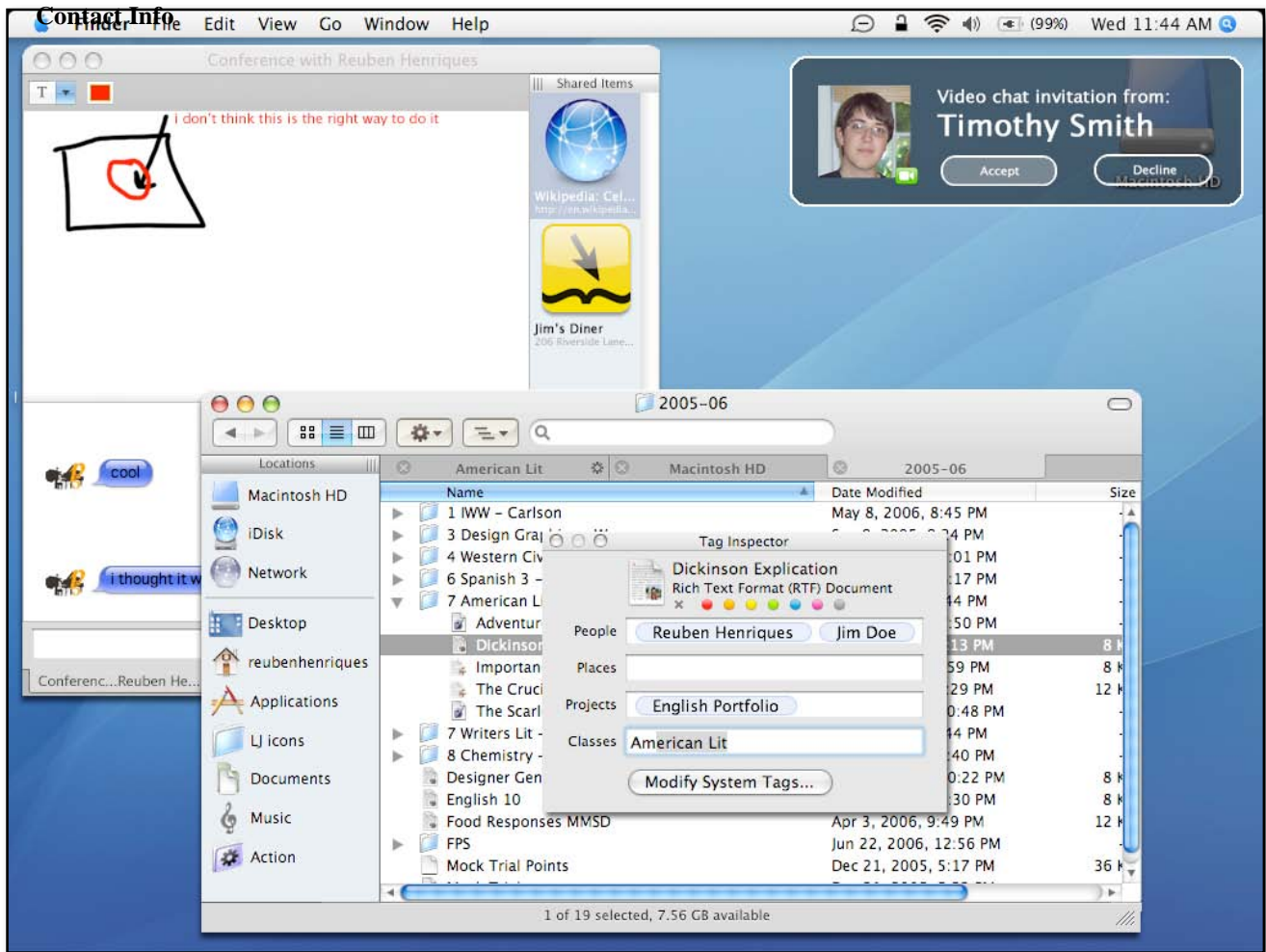
I already talked about creating a killer solution for Mail and Address Book, possibly combining iCal in that mix as well, in my wish-list for Leopard. However, I wasn't really sure what I'd like the interface to look like, and the first place winner, Eric Patterson, has captured my heart with his fake screenshot. Eric incorporated the best features of Mail, Address Book, and iChat into one wonderful application, at least in theory. There is a contact information bar that seems like a wonderful idea.



You now have “bundles” in Mail to group your iChat chats (all are now recorded and included in Mail instead of a weird folder on your Mac) as well as an updated and fitting toolbar itself. The only thing that I’d like to see added to this would be broader support for sending SMS text messages via Bluetooth enabled phones. You can do this with a select number of phones via Address Book at the moment, but if you’re going to combine all of these features from iChat and Mail into one killer application, the addition of archiving your SMS messages from your Phone on your Mac would be wonderful.

Another small feature that I ran across and really liked was a redesigned invitation window for iChat. The current one is still way cooler than anything else on the market, but I like the new QuickTime full screen controls, it has inspired a whole number of skins for various apps. There is also whiteboard integration, tabbed Finder windows and more in this screenshot.

The only other quick features that I would like to see in Leopard dealt with an easy-to-use meta-tag info editor built right into the Finder, sort of like when adding tags to photos in iPhoto. I like the idea of having some sort of notification of Finder tasks, like when you’re emptying the trash, or copying several different sets of files, moved to another area. As it is now you would have several different windows open with their own progress bars. Consolidating all of that into one window, or maybe a small part of the topmost Finder window letting you know that it’s indeed working, would save so much screen space.



You can always send me an email at mbrewer@maccompanion.com or visit my website at <http://www.macfanatic.net/blog/> for more information about me and my ramblings. I also produce a weekly audio podcast, taking an in-depth review of cool and new Mac applications, along with tips and the occasional tutorial.

Ivory Tower - August 2006

Dumb Hum Drum DRM and some Apple goodness

By Ted Bade

I would like to revisit the Digital Rights Management (DRM) debate. I recently read an article which tried to explain why a particular vendor that makes MP3's available to public libraries couldn't use Apples DRM, but could use Microsoft's. Apparently one thing that Microsoft's DRM does that Apple's doesn't is that the license expires. Which means that the company can say the borrowing period is three weeks. After three weeks, whether you are done or not, the downloaded file no longer works.

For a librarian, having a set period to borrow an item is a familiar thing. However, most libraries will let you borrow a book (and most other items), multiple times. Additionally, you can renew most materials without returning it. So why is a borrowing time period so important?

What happens if the period is over and you haven't finished the audio book you borrowed from this service? That's easy, use Windows Media Player to make a copy of the material! Want to know how? Visit the web site of the vendor claiming they need the Windows DRM to protect the material:

<http://www.overdrive.com/MediaConsole/QuickStartGuide.asp#transfer>. It doesn't sound like this company really wants to protect the material, if they give you an easy means of mass distribution!

Apple's DRM doesn't expire, at the moment, but it does give you license to only use it on computers you own. This method protects the material as well as an expiration would. Only, it doesn't serve to annoy the patron who doesn't have time to finish the material in the allotted time. Egads, people, it is an audio book! How terrible would it be if I listened to it six or seven times? You know, I have borrowed a couple of the Harry Potter audio books from our local libraries several times. You know what else? I sometimes think about the material in the book. I remember scenes I enjoyed or situations I found interesting, and most important of all, I dream about what the next book will hold. Is this misuse of copyrighted materials?

So what if I can listen to a book I download more than once! What am I going to do, memorize it?? If they used Apple's DRM I could listen to it on my computers or on my iPod. And yes, if I really wanted to, I could burn a copy to CD and give it to all my friends. But that doesn't change anything, they already tell you how to do that with the Microsoft DRM.

I almost forgot to point out that the Microsoft DRM doesn't support iPods at all, even if they are connected to Windows based computers. The company's solution for PC iPod owners? Burn a copy to CD and rip the CD so you can put it on the iPod. (What are you going to do with that CD? I don't know, perhaps give it to a friend ;-)

Like so many other companies these days, they give *say* the "right" things about protecting media, but really don't care. In my opinion, the real reason they don't want to support Apple's DRM (and therefore the iPod), is that Microsoft gave them a better deal on the DRM license. Who knows, Microsoft might even have provided it for free!

I really think this company has hood-winked the library community by using a keyword they resonate with, "loan period". You mean a patron can borrow some material for a certain period of time and we don't have to worry about getting it back from them?

I have a lot of respect for librarians and the services they provide. But I disagree with offering a service that excludes 80% of the portable player market just so you can have an enforced loan period. Leaders amaze me. When questioned why they don't support Macs in a particular industry, it is because they are such a small fraction of the computer market. Go ahead, ask the company Overdrive why they don't support the market's majority player! I dare you!

It is because Microsoft doesn't provide a version of Windows Media Player that works on iPods. How else can they worm into a market dominated by Apple? Only by playing nasty tricks to exclude iPods from using their DRM, then providing the DRM at extremely low, low prices to anyone who will use it. It is a dirty business practice. I for one am happy to pay a company like Audible.com who supports the Macintosh and the iPod, rather than get "free" stuff from a company who doesn't.

By the way, there are rumors that Apple might provide a service that loans movies for a period of time. Obviously, if the movie has a loan period, the license will expire. There is nothing firm on this yet.

If Safari is any indication - A recent study of which browsers are used the most, put Safari in third place after Internet Explorer (or should we call it an “open ticket to my PC”?), and Firefox. Safari has 3.17% of the share in June of 2006, which is about a 49% increase over last July’s number of 2.13%.

<http://marketshare.hitslink.com/report.aspx?qprid=0&qpmr=15&qpdt=1&qpct=3&qptimeframe=Y>

In a related article on the Mac News Network site <http://www.macnn.com>, they point out that some sources consider that Safari usage can be correlated to the Macintosh user base, because it only works on Macs (most other browsers support multiple platforms. <http://www.macnn.com/articles/06/07/05/safari.market.share/>

I hope it is true. It would be very nice to see Macintosh users on the rise again!

The virus issue, again - I recently discovered a very fair article on the Symantec site concerning Mac OS X and malicious software. If you are like me, PC friends read these terrible headlines about how there are now many viruses for the Macintosh. Yes, there are lots of articles out there saying this, but frankly, they are pretty much wrong. Thirty-odd articles from fifty different web sites make it seem like there are hundreds of pieces of malicious code written for Mac OS X! But it just ain’t so.

If you are being bugged by PC friends, pass this link along to them. It doesn’t say there are not pieces of malicious code for Mac OS X and it doesn’t say there won’t be. It does say there was one piece of malicious code and it was a worm (code that spreads itself, but doesn’t necessarily do any harm).

A related article on a Mac-centric site (but a thorough article never the less), can be found on the Mac News site <http://www.macnewsworld.com/story/BF9bCtn38raYDu/Macs-More-Secure-Than-PCs-Says-Sophos.shtml#> In this article, they discuss a mid-year security report provided by the security company Sophos <http://www.sophos.com> Essentially, they say that Mac OS X is more secure than Windows. Note that the important thing is that they are saying this publicly. Read their article for all the details, it is pretty good.

iPod killed the radio star - This is a side effect of iPods that I never expected to see. A radio station in Chicago feels that the iPod has lead to the demise of its Jazz shows. According to the following article:

http://news.yahoo.com/s/nm/20060707/tc_nm/radio_dc;_ylt=AuI77wUR1X71R06bsxKEMNYjtBAF;_ylu=X3oDMTA0cDJlYmhvBHNlYWwM-

“WBEZ, Chicago’s National Public Radio (NPR) member station and among the oldest public radio outlets in the United States, has decided to scrap scheduled music programming -- the bulk of which was nightly jazz.”

While this is bad news for the radio station, it points to a major change in our culture. Instead of depending upon the tastes of the local DJ and station management, with an iPod (or any digital music player for that matter), a person can create a playlist of their favorite music pieces, which they can enjoy any time they like.

One reason I personally stopped listening to radio shows is that the shows that play stuff I really like (like Jazz, electronics, and some New Age), tend to schedule the shows at hours that are not convenient to my life schedule. I don’t listen, because I am doing something that prevents me (like sleeping). When I have time to sit back and listen to tunes, they have shows on that I don’t care for.

My two solutions have been to listen to playlists of my favorites in that genre when I care to and to record a couple of these shows I really like, so I can listen to them when I have the time. From the above article, I get the idea that this isn’t all that uncommon across the US. I seriously doubt it affects mainstream pop music much, but for those genres that appeal to smaller percentages of the population, I expect there is a large impact.

I also expect to find more and more Internet only “radio” shows. Ones I can download or listen to when I want to, rather than when they are being presented.

Polsters take note - People in the USA love polls. We poll our leaders, our coworkers, and even ourselves. One of the more well known and prestigious polling groups is called the Harris poll. They annually take a poll called “Best Brands”, in which people say which brands they think are best. This isn’t industry specific like I like Apple better than say HP for computers, but a general which brand name is the best type poll.

In any case, Apple has made it into the top ten for the first time (they took the number 10 position, but hey they are there!) You might want to note that two companies were pushed out of the top ten this year, GE and our friends Microsoft. (The report on the Harris Poll site didn’t indicate where these two companies went to, if they currently have any position. Take a look at the results page yourself by visiting;
http://www.harrisinteractive.com/harris_poll/index.asp?PID=682

Apple has been doing a lot to make itself known as a leader in electronic innovation. I guess a poll like this shows that people are taking notice.

Apple 3rd Quarter financial information - The Mac faithful always love to hear when Apple has a good financial quarter. Apparently Wall Street does as well, since the stock rose over 12% the day after the results were released. If you want all the details as published by Apple visit: [<http://www.apple.com/pr/library/2006/jul/19results.html>].

Here are some of the figures. Apple posted a revenue of \$4.37 billion and a net quarterly profit of \$472 million. Apple shipped 1,327,000 Macs and 8,111,000 iPods during the quarter, representing 12 percent growth in Macs and 32 percent growth in iPods over the year-ago quarter.

I heard a rumor that iPod sales are down based on the previous quarter even though the number surpassed the year ago quarter. Frankly, I feel that the portable music player market might be getting a bit saturated. Apple will have to start selling them to cats and dogs to continue the growth rate it has seen in the past! My home has three iPods and I am waiting for Apple to bring something totally new to market to tempt me later this year!



The Mac Night Owl

<http://www.macnightowl.com> Copyright © 2006 Making The Impossible, Inc

The Leopard Report: Forget the New Features!

by Gene Steinberg

Sometimes I put up a headline mostly for the entertainment value, but I'm fairly serious about this one. Mac OS X needs a fair amount of fixing, and a few hundred of those ahead of a few hundred bits of eye candy might be just the ticket.

Now, I can imagine that many of you are drawing up your list of hopes and expectations ahead of the introduction of Mac OS 10.5 Leopard at Apple's WWDC on August 7. I know I plan to be in the press box at the appointed time, and if we can get a good wireless Internet connection, I have hopes we'll be able to post updates here as the keynote progresses. But don't depend on that; we'll know how the connection rates at the appointed hour and not before.

In the meantime, I've already weighed in on various elements that must be addressed even before we are inundated with all that sizzle. It's quite fascinating, as I've examined the online chatter, that gee-whiz doesn't seem to dominate the discussion this year. Instead, there's the attitude that Apple needs to fix what's wrong first, then worry about the stuff sell lots of copies and provide extra traction against Windows Vista; that is, when that's released (as I'm sure it will, eventually).

As I've mentioned before, numero uno is the Finder, which has been lambasted over and over again for its poor multithreading performance and inability to stay put when it comes to view settings. I've railed against the inability to handle multiple copying operations, which can bring even the most powerful Mac to a halt. But there's more. Just try this: Mount another Mac as a network share on your computer, and then put that other computer to sleep. That's a simple, innocent mistake that we all make, especially with a Mac notebook.

So what happens next? Well, the Finder doesn't get the message that the other computer is asleep right away. In fact, it might hang up for several minutes or more. You could, I suppose, Force Quit the Finder, which isn't hard to do, but why?

On the latest episode of [The Tech Night Owl LIVE](#), author and ace troubleshooter Ted Landau wondered about those occasionally pesky Login items. You know, the stuff that launches when you boot your Mac.

Now a login item may be nothing more than an application that you want to launch at startup, such as Apple Mail or Firefox. But that's not all. There are some strange things that lurk there as well, background operations that might serve special functions for, say, iTunes, Microsoft Office, and a third party input device.

If you have a startup problem, one common troubleshooting step is to disable your Login items, which can be done via holding down the Shift key as soon as the blue background appears during the startup process. Or just remove some or all of the suspects from the Accounts preference panel.

The latter is, however, dangerous, because you can't easily restore some of these items, because they are parts of peripheral driver installers, or hidden within an application "package". It doesn't just put things in a "disabled" folder, so they can be easily restored and you have to wonder why.

Such subtleties may not make so much of a difference to you, until you consider what might happen if you remove the wrong Login item, such as the custom keys of your fancy mouse or multimedia keyboard failing to work. You suddenly have to rerun installers, maybe even endure multiple startups, to set things right.

You can no doubt list lots and lots of interface and setup oddities that can get you into a lot of trouble if you happen to make a simple mistake. Another that comes to mind is the way Trash has been handled in the Mac OS from Day One. What if you delete the wrong file by mistake? Forget having backups, forget a third party file recovery utility. Even if you do backups, it's not too practical to do them constantly, and the latter doesn't always succeed.

But what if Apple offered a trash undelete function, part of the operating system, that gave you the chance to restore recently deleted items? Not a flashy feature, but, when added to a bunch of important fixes to the system, would make Leopard absolutely irresistible to me.



Mac ReviewCast

<http://www.surfbits.com> and <http://www.macreviewcast.com> Copyright © 2006 Tim Verpoorten

Mac Freeware of the Month - August

By Tim Verpoorten

This month we're going to start a new layout of sorts for the freeware of the month. I decided that I was overwhelming a lot of readers with every piece of freeware I discussed on the podcast over the last 30 days. Instead, we're going to give you the best 10 freeware programs that I tried during the month of July and see how you feel about sticking with quality over quantity. The list will be numbered, but will be in no specific order, just the top 10. Period.

1. TigerLaunch

<http://ranchero.com/tigerlaunch>

TigerLaunch is an easy-to-use and easy-to-configure application launcher for OS X. It displays an Apps menu at the top of your screen listing all your applications in alphabetical order no matter what folder they appear in. You can easily configure it to exclude applications you rarely or never launch. This allows you to be more selective about what apps are dock-worthy, so your dock doesn't get so cluttered. It also makes it easier to launch apps that are buried in sub-folders, such as in the Utilities folder of your Applications folder. I used this app for a long time as my launcher and it's simple, functional and stays out of the way. A great little utility.

Easter egg feature for developers: If you have a Projects folder in your home folder, a Projects menu will appear next to the Apps menu. It will list Xcode project files, making them easy to find and launch.

2. ClipEdit

<http://www.everydaysoftware.net/clipedit/index.html>

ClipEdit is a small application that allows you to create and edit text and picture clippings. Yes, you read correctly, edit clippings! ClipEdit also exports any internet address to an internet clipping. Picture clippings can be zoomed and cropped and text clippings can be edited like a normal text file. If you use clippings frequently you'll wonder how you lived without ClipEdit for so long.

ClipEdit allows you to style & edit text with all the features you'd expect in a complete text editor. ClipEdit also allows you to import and export text and image files. ClipEdit is able to print text and picture clippings. It also features graphic import and export features, for easy conversion of any picture clipping you may have. Drag and drop friendly, ClipEdit makes adding text to clippings a snap. ClipEdit also supports: contextual menus, help tips, sheets, and other Mac OS specific technologies

3. CustomHTMLExport

http://mountainmandan.net/code_distributions/CustomHTMLExport

This quick little plug-in goes straight into iPhoto, and allows you to make custom templates that iPhoto will export to. Just like the "HTML Export" tab, except that you can specify your own templates. Allows for the use of CSS or Tables for formatting, and you can fully customize almost every aspect of the webpage. You can even change the script that creates the HTML for even more customizability.

Now comes with some cool new templates based on SimpleViewer. If you use iPhoto to export into a website, this is a great little plug-in you'll love.

4. ToyViewer

<http://www.info.kochi-tech.ac.jp/ogihara/software/OSX/toyv-help/English.lproj/index.html>

ToyViewer is an image viewer, which also provides various editing functions and image converting filter services to other applications. If ToyViewer is installed in your Mac, you can see image files in PCX, PPM, Sun Raster, etc. on other Cocoa applications.

ToyViewer can read and display image files in following formats: tiff, gif, bmp, png, jpg, pcx, pcd, pict, pnm, xbm, mag, SUN Rasterfile, JPEG2000 and many other formats supported by Mac OS X. Displayed images can be saved in following formats: tiff, pdf, gif, bmp, png, jpg, JPEG2000, pnm, or xbm. ToyViewer can scan (auto-display) image files in a folder. You can also display images in full-screen size. Displayed images can be scaled (enlarge/shrink). You can rotate, flip, or clip images. ToyViewer has ability to fix automatically the balance of colors. You can also adjust brightness, contrast, and colortone of images.

ToyViewer has some typical operations to images, such as enhancement, mosaic, embossing, and so on. You can replace specified color with other color or transparent color. Full color images can be reduced into 256, 64, or 8 colors. Also, each color value of images can be cut down to 4, 2, or 1 bit. ToyViewer can make images monochrome (8bit gray, 2bit gray, or bi-level). Images can be printed. An image is automatically shrunk to be printed on a sheet, or divided into some pages.

You can add comments to images (comments are written into only gif, png, jpg, or pnm formats). You can make Aqua-button-like images. ToyViewer provides the function of Drop-Shadow. If you like a displayed image, you can make it the Desktop picture (wallpaper) of your Mac.

This is a big program in function, if you need an image viewer and editor, give ToyViewer a look/see.

5. i use this

<http://osx.iusetthis.com>

It's a fun new website that has lists of Mac Freeware, shareware and commercial software and you choose which ones of them you use and it will show you how many others use them, and allow you to download the app right from their website. It will recommend applications from the ones you already have and it allows you to see other users applications and compare. If you want to see what I have on my hard drive, just go to <http://osx.iusetthis.com/users/surfbits>. Add yourself as a friend and let me see what you're using for applications on your Mac. You know how much I love Mac software, and this website will be a great resource for finding those hidden apps that others are using.

6. DiskDriver

<http://www.visualsteel.net/diskdriver.shtml>

This is a webware product that allows you to share High-Quality MP3 file with anyone through your website. You just upload the software to your website and then upload your MP3 files, music or podcasts or spoken words, and DiskDriver will create a beautiful website interface for visitors to choose the MP3 they want to hear and play it in High Quality sound. It's like an online jukebox that you get to load and control. Here are some of the features:

- Stream high quality sound files.
- Automatic buffering sensing.
- Live audio scrubbing.
- View stream and song duration status.
- Ability to create custom mixes on the fly.
- Display ID3 soundtrack titles tags or filenames.
- Scroll long soundtrack titles.
- Design album covers for every album.
- Any name for your files and folders.
- Ability to instantly scan through all soundtracks and albums.
- Jump to any soundtrack in any album.
- Multiple master directories from different web pages.
- Specify a particular start soundtrack on each page.

As you can see, the possibilities for this application are endless. Take a look for yourself, they have demos and online jukeboxes set up for you to try. Just use your imagination, this app can be a lot of fun.

7. Gizmo

<http://www.gizmoproject.com>

The Gizmo Project is VOIP (voice over IP) software that competes directly with Skype. I have a username of surfbits on my Gizmo account and you can call me anytime and leave a voicemail message.

This week Gizmo updated and announced a huge new promotion to try to get some of the business away from Skype. If you download the new Gizmo and enter in your cell phone and landline numbers, anyone that does the same will be able to call you on your cell phone or landline for free from Gizmo, and Vice-versa. So get all your friends and relatives to download and install Gizmo, enter their phone numbers and you can call them from Gizmo for no charge. This is good in 60 countries around the world. Check out the website for a list of countries included in the free calls.

Gizmo has many of the same features as Skype, and a few different ones too. Check it out for yourself, the program is free, the calls now can be free, what do you have to lose.

8. Diabetes Logbook X

<http://www.nesfield.co.uk/diabeteslogbookx>

When you have the type of diabetes that needs insulin shots, you need to track the time of shots, your carbohydrate intake, the amount and type of insulin you're using, and most importantly, your blood sugar readings. This program will take all this information and help you to understand what changes in insulin doses, times and food intake will make to those all important glucose blood readings. You can create charts and graphs, export data to take to the doctor, set up reminders and list contacts data. If you deal with diabetes in your family, this program can help you make sense of those important numbers that control your day-to-day life.

9. Xfolders

http://www.kai-heitkamp.de/cms_en/main.php?content=9&module=0

If you moved over to Mac OSX Tiger from Linux or if you just find that the built in Finder in Tiger leaves a lot to be desired, you should try this freeware file manager called Xfolders. Xfolders supplements the Finder and it is, thanks to its compatibility with Norton Commander, an effective assistant for administering your files. Xfolders fully integrates with the finder, so it can support drag and drop into and out of the finder, along with all the file operations you'll need. You can bookmark and manage folders and navigate through them with keyboard commands just like Norton Commander. It allows you to have integrated and detailed spotlight searches, zip archive support and the ability to easily change file and folder attributes. It can have a flat or 3D appearance, is a universal binary, compatible with Intel Macs, and is absolutely free.

I use Pathfinder on my Mac and I would have a hard time going back to the Apple Finder again, I think that once you start using Xfolder, you'll have a hard time every surviving with Finder alone.

10. Himmelbar

<http://softbend.free.fr/himmelbar/faq.html>

I've mentioned this app before, but it's so good that I wanted to talk about it again since it was just updated. HimmelBar provides an icon in the menu bar to quickly access your installed applications by scanning standard locations such as local, user, network and developer applications. You can also add a custom location such as the Classic Applications folder, or any other folder of your hard disk that contains applications. HimmelBar doesn't just add all applications to a menu, it displays separated menus for each location and allows you to customize menu contents and scanning behavior to best fit your needs. In other words, you set up the menubar to display your apps in any form you need or want them displayed in. It's a great alternative for mouse users that want another option for launching their programs.

See you next month with another list of the top ten freeware applications for your Mac.



Musings from Mars

<http://www.musingsfrommars.org>

Getting Ready for Screencasting: A Review of Video Screen Capture Software for Mac OS X

by Leland Scott

This time, we are going to have you click on the link above and let you go directly to Leland Scott's website, so you can read his work there. And you can provide comments on his site at the end of his article.

He discusses the following apps:

- **DisplayEater**
- **iShowU**
- **ScreenAction Studio**
- **ScreenMimic**
- **Screenography**
- **ScreenTool**
- **SnapzPro**

A Martian can do more than dream...



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Market Share Myth: Nailed!

by Daniel Eran Dilger
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In *The Apple Market Share Myth*, I demonstrated how overall market share numbers can be used to suggest ideas that have no basis in reality. Here, I'll look at the slippery aspect of numbers, prove that a quality share of the market can be better than a larger market share, and then compare how the definition of a market is critically important in determining how useful market share numbers are. In particular, I'll look at the iPod's market share.

Myth in the Share: Slippery Numbers

Unfortunately, there are no widely published numbers for historical market share within specific segments. It's obvious, however, that Apple maintains a significant presence in certain markets:

- Adobe reports that about half their profits come from Mac users.
- Apple holds a 23% second place share of the US education market
- Apple has a 15.2% leading share of the European education market
- Apple's share of the US retail PC market is around 6.6%
- Apple's share of the entire US PC market is at 4.6%

Myth in the Share: Half the story

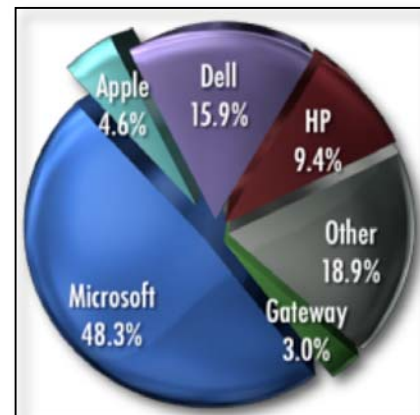
A common error in comparing market share numbers is forgetting that Apple sells both the hardware and software. Comparing Apple's PC market share with the two market leaders, Dell and the merged HP/Compaq, ignores the fact that while Dell and HP each sold ten times as many PCs as Apple, they had to pay Microsoft for an operating system on every sale.

FUD flingers often wallow in market share numbers to highlight the suggestion that Apple's 2.2% compares to a 97.8% share by Microsoft in operating system market share. That conveys the opposite false impression, because Microsoft makes no money at all from PC hardware profits. Looking at the PC market as a combination of two different products, software and hardware, only gives Apple half the credit for their sales.

Apple is the only market player able to make money from both sides of the coin. Apart from Apple, everyone else in the industry only makes half of what is sold as a whole PC. Users who buy a non-Apple PC get a CPU and a Windows license; they realize they've made two purchases, so why doesn't the Gartner Group, IDC, and others publishing PC market share?

By counting PC sales as a hybrid of two products, hardware and software, Apple's share of the overall market would stay unchanged, while Dell, HP, and Microsoft's reported shares would all be cut in half!

Apple's fourth place, 4.6% share of the US PC market, as reported by Gartner in their Q2 2006 report, compares favorably with other PC makers.



Once you stop double counting PC hardware and software sales however, it reflects Apple's significant position in the industry even better.

Those numbers echo the reality one can observe everyday: why [CompUSA](#) assigns significant space to Apple's products, why [CDW](#) and other mail order catalogs and online retailers have a dedicated Mac sections, why Apple's retail stores work, and why Apple has its own topic category on sites like [Slashdot](#) and [Digg](#).

The revenues Apple earns in hardware sales is reinvested in the development of [Mac OS X](#), which has outpaced the development of Windows XP and its eventual successor. Apple can consistently improve upon the tight integration between their hardware and software, creating a higher quality, differentiated product that neither Microsoft nor their hardware partners can deliver on their own.

Myth in the Share: Quality vs. Quantity

Also missing in the reports of market share percentages is the value of a given share of the overall PC market. This impacts profits; higher end systems have higher profits, while the cheapest systems are often loss leaders.

Apple doesn't have a low end product filling out their share of the market through low profit, high volume sales. They can't, because a super low end Mac would erode their overall profitability by [cannibalizing higher end Mac sales](#). In the Windows arena, market leaders like Dell and HP can't afford not to sell a huge number of low end loss leaders; if they didn't have \$300 PCs for sale, they'd lose volume sales to other bargain bin retailers.

Dell is working to [avoid selling low end PCs](#) because there is little profit in that segment of the market. There is little Dell can do to differentiate themselves from other PC makers however. Their large share of the market is at risk, and actually [falling due to pricing pressure](#), particularly from HP.

More importantly, market share quality impacts the significance of a vendor's users. Macs are over-represented by creative users and by tech enthusiasts and influencers in emerging markets. This was true in the emergence of the commercial Internet, and today applies in areas such as podcasting, open source, and UNIX compatible development.

This serves to keep the Mac platform well represented in the market for software availability, far more so than a 3% market share would suggest. The only area where Macs are not significantly over represented is in [PC gaming](#), a market, which Microsoft has worked hard to tie to their proprietary technologies.

Myth in the Share: PC Compatibility

Clearly, the Mac's low worldwide market share is not directly proportional to worldwide users' mind share, consumer interest, or in development activity. Consumers buying a Mac historically had to go out of their way to do so. Until recently, they had to pay a premium for Apple hardware, deal with retailers trying to talk them into a more profitable PC sale, and forgo the ability to run PC applications at comparable performance. Those three issues have since evaporated.

Now that Apple is effectively building PCs, their overall market share compared to Dell, HP and others is actually a more significant figure than ever before. Contrasting sales of Macs and other PCs is no longer an apple to oranges comparison. For the first time, Apple will be competing directly against other PC makers.

Apple's new Intel Macs erode the previous barrier to competition. Users will be able to factor Apple's hardware against units from other PC makers without worrying about Windows compatibility. The only remaining compatibility factor will be: which PCs can run legally [Mac OS X](#)?

Apple is finally in a position to compete as a PC maker, rather than just against PC makers. How well Apple does going forward has a lot to do with how innovative they continue to be in developing their hardware and software. The company lost their lead in the early 90's by contentedly raking in profits when they should have been finding ways to remain innovative and relevant.

Additionally, without any compatibility constraint in place, Microsoft will finally face real competition from Apple, rather than being insulated from competition simply by being the default installation and included in the price of PC hardware. Microsoft has never been able to compete against an installed operating system, so it should be interesting to see how this works out.

As a side note, Microsoft's Unix distribution, XENIX, was the last stab Microsoft took at competing in the free market. After focusing on NT, they spun XENIX off to SCO for a 25% ownership in the company. SCO has since been famously used to attack Linux in a massive FUD campaign to discredit Linux development and question its legal legitimacy.

Myth in the Share: Market Definitions

While Apple's share of the PC market is looking to swing upward, there have been a flurry of giddy blog entries excited about Apple loss in market share in the music player segment. Reportedly, Apple's overall share of the market for devices able to play music fell to 75%. This highlights another problem in throwing around market share numbers without any context.

These numbers don't compare devices able to play music against devices people actually use to listen to music. The significant downturn in iPod market share doesn't reflect competition from new music players, but simply figures in large numbers of devices, mainly mobile phones, which can now play MP3s. Some people actually do use mobile phones to listen to music, but it's pretty clear those numbers are being used to draw conclusions that aren't true.

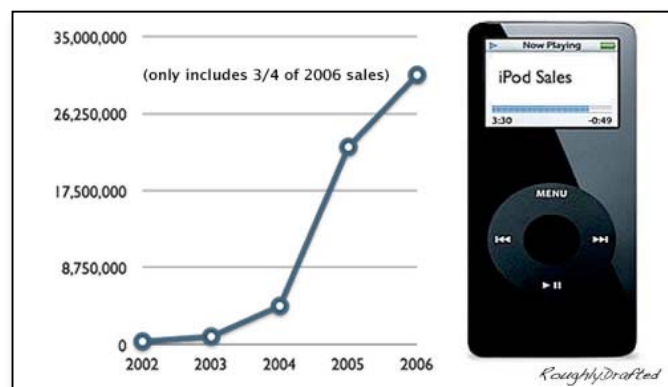
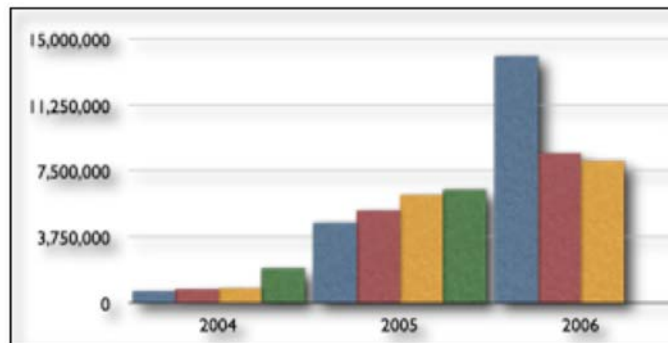
In market share comparisons pitting PCs against Macs, there is limited overlap among users; consumers and businesses tend to exclusively choose to use Macs or PCs. Few people can afford to have both sitting on their desk unless they have special circumstances that require it.

However, many people commonly carry a mobile phone and an separate music player. I considered the limited overlap between the two in *Why Mobile Phones Make Bad iPods*. Further, nearly everyone with an iPod also has a mobile phone; clearly, all those iPod users choose not to use to use their phone to listen to music!

More Nails in the Coffin

Pitting mobile phones against the iPod in a market share percentage war is therefore rather pointless, unless it can be proven that sales of iPods are dropping dramatically. The sales figures in the above chart show that isn't the case.

[Sales of the iPod](#) surged to over 14 million units, more than 200%, in the first quarter of 2006, reflecting its huge popularity in the holiday gift giving season. In the two quarters since, the iPod's popularity has still increased by 32% over last year's sales. Those numbers reflect a satiated demand for the current iPods following the huge surge, not a sudden trend toward using mobile phones and PDAs to listen to music.



If Apple's sixth generation iPod, likely to be released sometime this quarter, does not spur new demand, then we can start to assume people have suddenly figured out how to get their Treo and PDAs to sync music, or have decided it is far cooler to belt a Motorola Q to their arm than an iPod nano. Until then, this can safely be regarded as yet another attempt to create headlines or spew FUD. I have yet to see anyone listening to music on a mobile phone outside of a Verizon commercial. In fact, the 30 million iPods sold so far this year and the 22 million sold last year are the best proof that users are choosing not to use their mobile phones to listen to music, but rather paying a significant premium to get a dedicated music player!

The next time you hear market share numbers being thrown around, consider the context. Numbers don't speak for themselves, they require critical interpretation.

[Editor: Learn more about Daniel Eran Dilger and his research by going to <http://www.roughlydrafted.com>]



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To Rule the Desktop

By Rick Sutcliffe

The book of the hour is "To Rule the Waves--How the British Navy Shaped the Modern World", by Arthur Herman, a fascinating and sobering reminder of how the largest empire the world has ever known was assembled over centuries, but lost in mere decades.

"What's the British Navy got to do with Macintosh computers?" Nellie demanded from behind me--as usual reading over my shoulder, and as often, unannounced.

"Hi Nellie. Nice of you to knock."

She ignored my lesson in etiquette. Nellie wasn't much changed since the old days of the early eighties when I relied on her to type my columns and books. We've both grown older, but no mellower. "Well?" she insisted.

"It's very relevant, Nellie. The British Navy stayed on top as long as it had superior technology, better leadership, a sense of destiny, and the backing of the people. It enforced the elimination of piracy and the slave trade, and maintained free trade, which benefited Britain as the world's premiere trader. Eventually most of the world's trade goods flowed through London.

"Mmmm," she replied, helping herself to the can of peanuts I keep on my desk. "Once they lost their edge, their nerve, and their backing, it was all kaput. I suppose you're telling us that the same thing can happen in today's technological trade and commerce."

"Right-o, kid."

She snorted at the cognomen, and I grinned. She might not be my student or employee any more, but you gotta maintain some distinctions.

"You see, Nellie, "I went into professorial mode, "The stock-in-trade today may not be so much agricultural and industrial goods as it is ideas and the tools for manipulating them, but the principles are similar".

"I'm a programmer. I'll buy that to some extent. But how come Pa Jobs, the world's greatest innovator, isn't king of the roost instead of BillG?" she demanded.

"Apple had the technological edge, the leadership, and the marketplace mindshare back in the late seventies and early eighties, lost all three between then and the mid-nineties, and took the first two back as the millennium ticked over."

"And mindshare?"

"It's coming, Nellie. It's coming. The iPod, the consistent innovation, even the Intel switch, have all won friends. Market share is approaching five percent again, profits are at record levels, the press sharks are eating other people's shorts, and the former monopoly is losing confidence--its own and everyone else's. And don't forget the Spy's Fourth Law."

"That 'marketshare lags mindshare by two to five years.' Is there a prediction coming on, oh one who is never wrong? Her sarcasm could cut down walls."

"Well, let's not mention my forecast that IBM would go into the business of making G5 personal systems with Apple, and just recall all the times I got the specs of new machines pretty well right, shall we?"

"No hard trick with an outfit as predictable as Cupertino, but what say, Professor?"

"All other things staying equal (which they won't), a one to two percent growth in marketshare per year for the next two years, and three or more thereafter, to about the sixteen percent level in five. Not a revolution, but certainly a big dent in the monopoly. After that, anything could happen, and something probably will."

"Even that much requires a breakthrough into business. My boss only bought me a Mac when I promised to maintain it myself. Little does she know. If she bought all Macs, she could let most of her support staff go and not notice."

"The breakthrough will come as the current crop of university students gets into the workplace. Business can't afford to go on buying technology whose productivity is inferior and whose total cost of ownership is so much higher. Sooner or later cold hard logic will prevail."

"So Apple isn't really going to rule the desktop in five years," she grouched.

"No, but neither will anyone else."

She changed the subject. "I notice you're not going down to WWDC next week."

"Not a good time of the year. I preferred it in the spring. Besides, the agenda is pretty well set this time. New desktop, faster portables, and attendees get to play with Leopard. Only a slight chance of a really big product announcement, more likely save those for back-to-school and/or Christmas shopping."

"Still wanting the all-in-one doodad you wrote about twenty years ago? What'd you call it, the Personal Intelligence Energizing Apple? "

"PIEA is right, but that's 'Enhancement Appliance', Nellie. Cell phone, wireless modem, book reader, music player, camera, personal computer, and everything else you can think of, with perhaps a few things you can't."

"Anybody going to do it?"

"Not yet. Apple maybe someday. Meanwhile, they haven't perfected the eBook reader or the telephone yet, or they'd have released them by now."

"What about this new eBook reader Sony just announced?"

"Got possibilities, Nellie, but it introduces yet another proprietary file format. That could be the kiss of death, even if it were a good one. It has for lots of others. Apple might get away with it in an iTunes environment, and only if the device also allowed owners to put their own files on it in any format they wanted. In the long run, electronic ink on a sheet of plastic as thin as paper is the right hardware, but that won't take off without the right approach to digital rights."

"But isn't Microsoft going to kill iTunes and the iPod with this Zune thingummy they announced end of June?"

"How many companies have announced an iPod killer? How many have gotten anything to market? How many are still around? Other than W*nd*ws keyboards, has MS ever produced a successful hardware device? Have they built one we've even used since the Z-80 SoftCard? How many announced MS products are intended for anything but FUD generators? Case closed. If the Zune ever arrives, it will zune be gone."

"Har-dee-har. Are we going to say anything nice about anybody other than Apple this month?"

"We? You haven't worked for me in over fifteen years."

"So? I still have a proprietary interest, even if not a paycheck. And I have an e-mail account on your system. And I keep an eye on the web site."

"True. How be I tell the upgrade story? It has at least one hero."

"How be."

In one of his alternate personas, the Spy runs Arjay Web Services, a sister in Arjay Enterprises to The Northern Spy, Arjay Books, Sheaves Christian Resources, and opundo (word garage)."

The hosting server AWS runs was getting long in tooth and kinda slow, so he upgraded it to dual Opteron iron running CentOS 4. Ah, now before you complain that's not a Mac, I already suspected that was so. Most hosting, you see, is done with commercial control panels, the most common being CPanel, which runs under Unix and various flavours of Linux, but not Mac OS X. Too bad, but that's life. It's none too practical to do consumer level hosting on Mac OS as yet, and frankly, doing on W*nd*ws is a really bad idea.

Anyhow, the new box can't hold a candle to the Spy's office machine--a quad (two dual) 2.5G G5s, but with CentOS, CPanel, and a variety of other software, it's optimized for web sites and their associated FTP and mail traffic. Once the Atjeu data centre people set the box up, it took a few days to harden the security (sublet task to the good folk at ConfigServer) and install all the software (including MailScanner anti-spam filters), and a few more to move accounts from the old box to the new. An interesting exercise, both in the doing and in the learning.

Interestingly, although the new box benchmarks only 73% faster than the old single processor Pentium machine, throughput is ten to thirty times as great because of better software and more memory. Indeed, the latter is a good reminder, to Apple and its customers that 512M is not enough memory. No computer should have less than 1G, and no serious workbox less than 2G. Buying more memory for a standard box has a greater effect on performance than any other single upgrade, and this is particularly so for Macs, which come notoriously under-memoried from the factory.

The Spy believes that anyone who messes up should fix up, so there were a few trouble tickets submitted to software vendors to get things working, including to the Netenberg people (makers of excellent CPanel skins and script installer Fantastico) whose Universina skin was reporting files as .php when they were really .html (it'll be interesting to find out how). He had to answer a few tickets of his own customers' to cover off minor glitches in moving up ten or eleven OS versions, but that's par for the course.

He notes by the way, that Red Hat Linux seven and nine (like eight), along with Fedora Core one and two are all being end-of-lifed for legacy support. So all servers running one of these will have to be upgraded by 2006 12 31, for after that bugs will not be fixed and security upgrades won't happen, making all these useless for servers. Hey, it happens with Apple, too.

He also notes that it is an interesting exercise in planning and execution to move a hundred accounts under various IP numbers, and their associated nameservers, from one box to another, while keeping all the IP numbers, and not interrupting mail service.

Anyway, all went pretty well, excepting some of the technical answers were a bit thin. During the process however, he noticed that SFTP wasn't working to one of his own accounts on the new box though FTP was. Deleting and reinstalling the account didn't help and neither did editing the Mac's own known_hosts file (necessary to accommodate the new certificate being presented by the new box). So he put in a service request to Stairways, maker of Interarchy, the FTP client he's used since long before it was called that.

Stairways' guru Peter Lewis ran a few tests and discovered shell access wasn't enabled on the server for that account. Duh! Easy to fix this rookie mistake, though having Interarchy return a "length error" perhaps wasn't the most informative thing possible. (The all time grand champion error message is still a tie between: 1. "This is an error", and 2. "This error cannot happen, but if it does, please call the following number...."). Anyway, Lewis, Stairways, and Interarchy earn a hero award for the most helpful response to any technical question coming out of the move.

Four lessons to learn from this: First, that there are times when being a generalist is not quite good enough. You need a real guru. Second, that technical people need to give real answers as Peter did. Too many were of the type "I fixed a configuration error". So, what error? Don't hand me a fish. Teach me how to fish. Third, the Spy should have known better. He's getting old and forgetful.

Oh, and while we're at it, most useful utility award of the move goes to ConfigServer for their File Manager/Console, which allows the root owner to sign in to CPanel's Web Hosting Manager and edit/rename/move/view/change permissions and owners on any file without a separate SSH logon. Dangerous, but very nice.

The pitter-patter of little feats

Don't you just hate it when someone comes along out of the blue and tries to patent a technology/algorithm everybody has been freely using for years? Shades of SCO's attempt to kill Linux, some outfit called Forgent Networks tried to assert a patent against the JPEG compression standard used for graphics in cameras and computers. In a show of common sense, the U.S. Patent Office ruled there was prior art and threw out the attempt. Nice. A few more of these and perhaps companies that live by the lawsuit will all die by the lawsuit. Couldn't happen too soon. Are you listening, Steve?

Interesting Mac Product Noted

(but this is not a review) is Graph Paper Maker, which allows the user to create custom graph papers with linear or log scales, on a variety of paper sizes, line weights, colours, etc. According to the company bumf, a graph paper can be saved as a pdf for later repeat printing. Don't know how good this is (haven't tried it yet), but when the Spy was a high school teacher it could have come in very handy. Hey, he assigned himself to teach first year calculus for a change this fall, so perhaps....

I remember taking calculus from you," Nellie grumbled, pushing back her chair and making ready to wander off. "That's where you showed us really practical things like the container with finite volume but infinite area, so that it couldn't hold enough paint to cover its own surface, and where we calculated how fast the surface area of the water in a toilet bowl is changing 1.345 seconds after you flush it. Real practical."

"That'll do, Nellie. There are people in the world other than computing science types, you know. Besides, if I'm not mistaken, you needed Calculus to write gaming software. A little matter of differential equations and numerical analysis?"

"She flinched but tried to ignore the hit. "See you around sometime."

--The Northern Spy

Rick Sutcliffe, (a.k.a. The Northern Spy) is professor of Computing Science and Mathematics at Trinity Western University. He's written two textbooks and several novels, one of which was named best in the science fiction genre for 2003. His columns have appeared in numerous magazines and newspapers, and he's a regular speaker at churches, schools, academic meetings, and conferences. He and his wife Joyce have lived in the Aldergrove/Bradner area of BC since 1972.

Want to discuss this and other Northern Spy columns? Surf on over to ArjayBB.com. Participate and you could win free web hosting from the WebNameHost.net subsidiary of Arjay Web Services. Rick Sutcliffe's fiction can be purchased in various eBook formats from Fictionwise, and in dead tree form from Bowker's Booksurge.

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Booksurge: <http://www.booksurge.com>

Fictionwise: <http://www.fictionwise.com>

The Spy's Laws collected: <http://www.thenorthernspy.com/spyslaws.htm>

MailScanner : <http://www.mailscanner.info>

ConfigServer (CPanel security) : <http://www.configserver.com/>

Netenberg (Fantastico, Universina and XController) : <https://netenberg.com/>

Stairways Interarchy : <http://www.stairways.com/main/>

Black Cat Systems' Graph Maker : <http://www.blackcatsystems.com/software/graphmaker.html>

CPanel : <http://www.cpanel.com>

Atjeu : <http://www.atjeu.com>



Mac Security 101

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Secure Email: Encryption Basics

by Kale Feelhaver aka: Applemacpunk

Secure email is a phrase that is often used, but rarely understood. In reality, secure email is a combination of digital signing and encryption. A digital signature is used to verify the integrity of the message and encryption is used to protect the contents. Neither of these are lightweight concepts, and putting them together makes them even harder to understand. This article is meant to provide a high level view of encryption and show how it relates to secure email.

Before exploring encryption, let's look at the basic email process and spot some flaws. You want to send an email to Jim and another one to Cindy. These emails are sent using the normal unencrypted method. If Jim intercepts Cindy's email, he can read it and change it. Jim can then deliver the modified message to Cindy, and she has no way to verify that Jim changed it. As far as Cindy knows, she is receiving the letter you sent her. Even if Jim doesn't want to change it, he can still read the message, which was intended only for Cindy. There are two major flaws here. First, Jim is able to read Cindy's email, and second, Jim is able to modify Cindy's email without her knowing. Secure email is designed to fix these flaws. In order to understand secure email, you must first know a little bit about encryption, and how it works.

There are many types of encryption, but for the sake of this article, I will concentrate on three basic types: asymmetric encryption, symmetric encryption, and hash encryption. Think of encryption as a lock box, and an email as a letter. You can physically put a letter inside a lock box and deliver the lock box to the recipient. Using this analogy, think of symmetric encryption as a lock box that has a single key. The same key can be used to lock and unlock the box, and you can make as many copies of that key as you want. So, essentially if you want to send a secured letter to Jim and Cindy, you have to put the letter in the box, lock it, and make sure that both Jim and Cindy have a copy of the key. When they receive the box, they can unlock it and get the letter from inside. The concept is simple, but it has a major flaw. Jim can retrieve Cindy's letter, and Cindy can retrieve Jim's letter. Essentially, anyone who has the key can open the box.

Asymmetric encryption uses two keys. One key is used to lock the box (this key can be copied). The other key is used to unlock the box (this key cannot be copied). Together the keys are called a key pair. The first key is called the public key (because it can be copied) and the second key is called the private key (because there is only one). Using the above example, Jim and Cindy will each create their own key pair. They will each retain their private keys and give you a copy of their public keys. Now if you want to send a letter to Jim, you'll lock the box with his public key. When he receives it, he'll be able to open the box (with his private key) and get the letter. If Cindy intercepts the box (or it is delivered to her by mistake) she will not be able to open the box, because her private key will not open it. Only Jim's private key will open the lock.

Hash encryption is one-way encryption. This means, once it is encrypted it cannot be decrypted. This type of encryption is not used to secure the contents of the letter, but to verify its integrity. In other words, there are no shared keys because the box will never need to be unlocked. Instead of thinking of this type of encryption as a box, let's think of it as a translator. If you write a letter to Cindy (in English) and translate it into Spanish, this works like a hash encryption. Now you can send both copies of the letter (English and Spanish) to Cindy. When Cindy receives

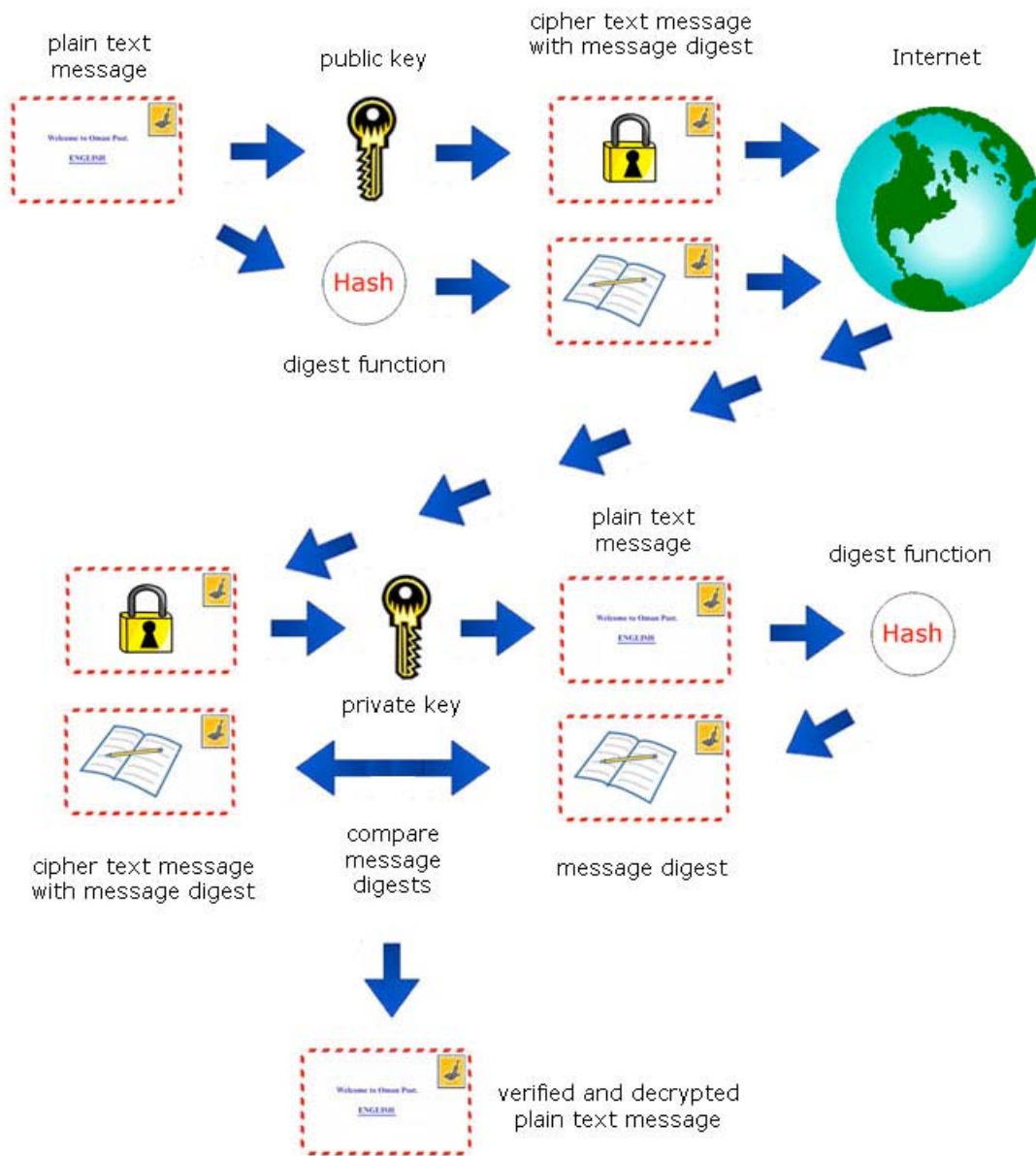
the letters she can use her own translator to translate the English letter into Spanish. Then she can compare your Spanish letter to her Spanish letter to see if they are the same. If the two match, she has verified the integrity of the letter you sent. If the two don't match, she knows someone must've intercepted the letter and changed it while it was in transit. This process is known as digital signing.

Let's apply two of these concepts to get a basic idea how secure email works. Cindy creates a key pair and gives you a copy of her public key. You write her a letter (in English) and translate it into Spanish. You then put the English copy of the letter into a box and lock it using her public key. For argument sake, we'll say the box can only hold one letter, so you tape the Spanish copy to the outside of the box. Now you can send the box to Cindy. When she receives it, she can unlock the box with her private key and get the letter from inside. She notices the Spanish copy of the letter (taped to the outside) and proceeds to translate the English copy into Spanish. She then compares your Spanish copy to her Spanish copy. The two match. She is now satisfied that this letter is secure and she proceeds to read it.

Now... what happens when you bring Jim back into the scenario? Lets say you accidentally deliver the box to Jim by mistake. Jim will not be able to open the box because he does not have Cindy's private key. Therefore, he cannot read the letter inside. However Jim can see the Spanish copy of the letter taped to the outside of the box. Jim proceeds to modify the Spanish copy because he wants to fool Cindy. After he has modified it, he delivers the box to Cindy. She unlocks the box with her private key and gets the letter from inside. She then proceeds to translate this letter into Spanish. She compares her translation to the one taped to the box and notices that they do not match. She then realizes that even though this message is encrypted, she cannot verify it, so she contacts you and asks you to resend it.

I know what you're thinking... if Jim can read Spanish, he can still read the contents of the letter. This is true, but keep in mind this analogy is for illustrative purposes only. In reality, our "Spanish letter" is actually translated into a language that nobody can read. Remember, hash encryption is one-way only, so it can never be translated back into a readable format. Think of it as a special Spanish dialect that can be translated from English, but never back into English.

Take these fundamentals, and apply them to the secure email scenario. You want to send a secure email to Cindy. First Cindy sends you her public key. Next, you compose your message. After that, you take that message and run it against a hash algorithm producing two copies. The original copy (hereafter referred to as the clear text message) and the hashed copy (hereafter referred to as the message digest). You then take the clear text message and encrypt it with Cindy's public key. This encrypted message is called a cipher text message. Now you can send both copies to Cindy. When she receives the messages, she uses her private key to decrypt the cipher text message back into a clear text message. She then takes the clear text copy and runs it against a hash algorithm to produce her own message digest. Cindy can now compare her message digest to your message digest to make sure they match. If they match, she proceeds to read the clear text message. It sounds like a lot of steps, but in reality, it happens very fast.



There are several email encryption programs available on the Mac. One of the oldest and most well known is a product called Pretty Good Privacy (PGP). PGP is an application that runs on your Mac and allows you to easily send and receive secure email. It can be purchased from the [PGP Online Store](#). In the scenario above, let's say you and Cindy are both using PGP. You both have to share your public keys with each other before sending email. This is critical to the functioning of the software. One of the nice things about PGP is that it is 100% cross platform. You can send secure messages to Windows users, and (as long as they have PGP) they can read/verify them. Once you have exchanged public keys (the public key is a small text file which can be imported in the PGP application), you are ready to begin exchanging secure email. You will write your message normally, and then use PGP to encrypt/sign the message. Once encrypted, the message will not be in a readable format. The email will be sent in this format. When Cindy receives the message, she can use PGP to decrypt/verify the message and translate it back into readable text.

If you feel confused, that's okay. Secure email is not a lightweight topic, and this article does not get into the intricacies of the process, it is meant only to provide a high level view. I am planning on writing a future article on Certificate Security that will further build upon the concepts in this article. If you take anything away from this article, know that secure email is a two-part process (encryption and digital signing) and that key pairs utilize two keys (one that is shared and one that is not). Once you have a good grasp on those concepts... everything starts to fall into place. So next time you hear someone talk about encryption, think of Cindy and the lock box scenario. Make sure to watch out for Jim.

[Editor: By the way, Leo LaPorte and Emery Wells over at *MacBreak* also took a stab at explaining how "easy" Email encryption is on the Mac in Episode #6 http://macbreak.com/index_copeland.php]

The MacNurse

<http://www.themacnurse.com> Copyright © 2006 TheMacNurse

The Mac Nurse Reports...

by Mark Howson and Vincent Tavera

Introduction

Well, welcome to the summer, and welcome to the first ever issue of The Mac Nurse Reports... for *macCompanion*. We like to think of The Mac Nurse Reports as a magazine within a magazine, as we're going to have features, reviews, information and a great gift or offer each month.

Without taking up too many column inches, let me introduce myself and The Mac Nurse. So firstly, I'm Mark Howson, and I'm the manager and owner of The Mac Nurse. I enjoy, among other things, beta software and podcasts. You'll find my full biography at <http://www.macompanion.com/info/AboutUs/markhowson.html>, and it's an interesting read if you have the time to check it out.

The Mac Nurse offers free tech and software support for Mac computers. As of 30th July, 2006, we're launching version 2.0, which introduces *The Mac Nurse Pro*, a service giving premium members early access for just \$20 per year. The Mac Nurse volunteers also produce a range of articles, a selection of which will be available here first.

In this, the first episode of The Mac Nurse Reports...

- A Review of PDF Pen and PDF Pen Pro
- A Review of Mouseposé 2
- A Guide to Font Management on Your Mac
- A Guide to Better DNS
- A Second Opinion for MediaCentral 2

The Mac Nurse Reviews

PDF pen (Pro and Standard Editions)

reviewed by Vincent Tavera



SmileOnMyMac
PMB 281
25 NW 23rd Place, Suite 6
Portland, OR 97210-5599
510-289-4000

philip@smileonmymac.com

<http://www.smileonmymac.com>

\$95 USD; free upgrade for existing PDFpen Pro users.
PDFpen 2.1 \$50 USD. Both versions have a 30-day free demo.

Download:

<http://www.smileonmymac.com/PDFpen/download.html>

Requirements: Mac OS X 10.2.5 or later.



Previous macCompanion Review:

<http://www.maccompanion.com/archives/june2005/Software/PDFpen2.htm>

Aesthetics:

10/10 - As I said earlier, the app is aesthetically pleasing, it looks and functions like an apple app, much like Safari. The interface is very straightforward and easy to look at.

Ease of use:

10/10- PDFpen is very easy to use, it looks and functions much like an apple app, making it easier to use. The newest release is also compatible with more recent PDF formats. The only improvement I can think of is the ability to export to other formats if necessary.

Features:

9.5/10- I really enjoy using this app and all of its features. The newest release is compatible with more versions of the PDF format making it easier to manage a workflow using PDFpen across platforms. A feature I would like is the ability to edit the pdf as it is, to remove an image placed in the InDesign file for example. I mention this because there is another app that has that feature and it is extremely useful.

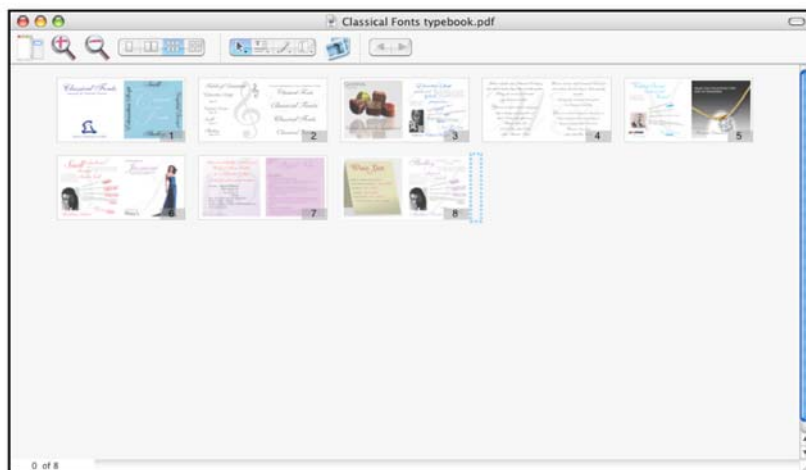
Weaknesses: I think this app is great, but it also has a high price tag at \$95 USD for PDFpen Pro. PDFpen for \$50 USD, which is good for the average user, but does not have form creation facilities.



I have to start out by saying that I am very impressed and pleased with this app. I was expecting an app similar to preview with a few extra tools, not to say that OS X's Preview app isn't good. Working in the printing and graphic industries, I use a lot of PDF's and have the need at times to edit them quickly or add things.

PDFpen is basically an app to edit and work with PDF's. You can slit, combine, edit, reorder and sign PDF's. You can also add text, shapes, images or watermarks to PDF's. PDFpen PRO also creates custom forms.

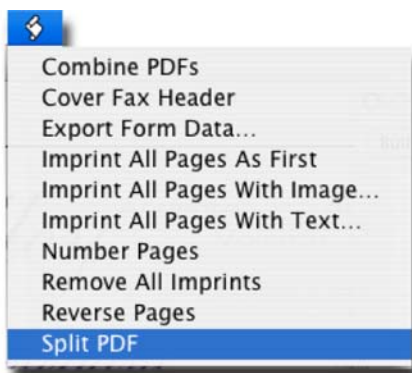
PDFpen makes many things easier. One of my favorite aspects of PDFpen is that it runs very smoothly and requires very little system resources. I am using a 450MHz G4 Cube and it opens and runs extremely smoothly on my Mac, even with large books in PDF for print.



One of my favorite features of PDFpen is the ability to drag and drop pages in a PDF in the order you want them, making pagination and reordering pages Apple/Mac easy. This feature may not be important to many other users, but if you ever work on a document with more than one page, it is a great feature. I also thought that something like this would move slowly on my Mac, maybe lag a little, but instead it drags seamlessly.

PDFpen is very easy to navigate, using many shortcuts I was already used to in other apple applications. It is also built very much like an Apple app, even the buttons and tools in the tool bar are similar and easily customizable with many of the same functions and buttons as apples apps.

PDFpen also comes with a script menu that has many very useful scripts in it for working with PDF's. I find many of these much easier than manually doing things in an app like Adobe Acrobat 7 Professional or manually reordering or making changes in InDesign or Quark. The "imprint all pages with image" script is useful when adding a watermark, the only downside is that it imprints on the whole page, and you cannot move or scale the image. Also, if you have a two or more page spread, it will imprint right in the middle.



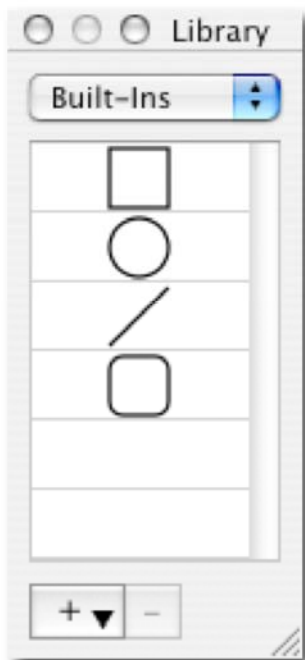
Another useful feature is palettes. PDFpen has two palettes, one for making shapes and another for modifying properties of your shapes. This is useful to me in that many apps hide such functions in menus, having them at your fingertips makes them easier to use.

I have used apps like MS Word and Apples Pages to make forms of various kinds, now, I can make great forms in PDFpen. The forms are very easy to make, you start with a blank document, then use the form tools to add radio buttons or boxes with text fields next to them. You can also add images, and places for a person to sign electronically and small sticky notes and all cross platform as in acrobat.

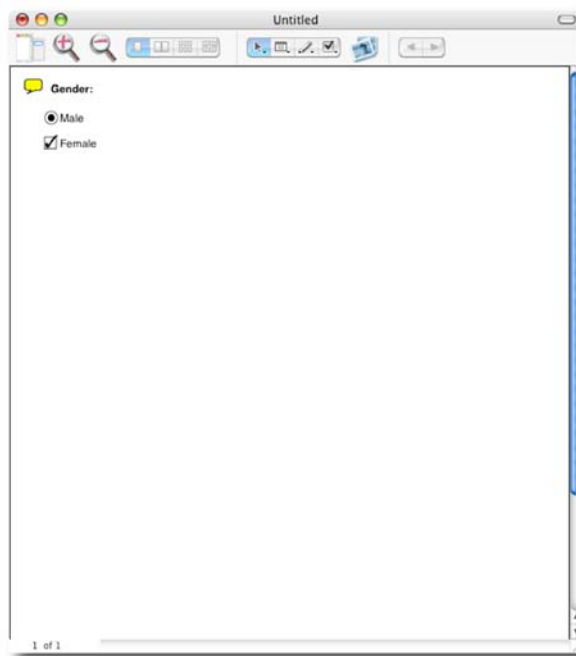
Note: Form creation is only available in PDFpen Pro.

Lastly, I would like to point out that this app has really helped maximize speeds of working with files and work flows in these ways:

Before, I had to use a clunky app like Word to make forms, now it's a few clicks. I used to have to reopen files to edit them or add small areas of text, now I can just use PDFpen instead of reopening InDesign.



Having PDFpen Pro run at the same time as other apps uses less system resources leaving more available for other larger apps.



Mouseposé 2

reviewed by Mark Howson



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82110 Germering
Germany

+49 89 84 005 333

Fax: +49 89 89 43 99 11

Fax US: 1-866-GOBOINX (toll free)

sales@boinx.com

<http://www.iVeZeen.com>

<http://www.boinx.com/mousepose/>

Download: <http://www.boinx.com/download/index.html#Mousepose>

Released: July 18, 2006

\$10 USD

Requirements: Mac OS X 10.4. Tiger or later; Graphics card with Quartz Extreme support.



So much software is going paid, without improvements of any kind over the previous version. I'm happy to say that this app adds extra features, now it comes with a \$10 USD price tag. The previous version of Mouseposé was free, but was also a very basic application, which put a spotlight around your mouse.

Mouseposé 2 introduces many new features to the package, including mouse click visualization, which puts a dot or target around the mouse when it is clicked. The smooth edge adds visual flare, and makes the spotlight look more like a spot, and less like a white circle.

Advanced 'hotkeys' enable you to change the size of the spot while it is in motion, and a small animated effect adds to the visual flair of the program. However, Mouseposé can eat resources, especially when used at the same time as a screen capture tool.

This is one of those products where a picture is 1,000 words, so be sure to check out '5 minutes with Mouseposé' on The Mac Nurse Reports website at <http://www.themacnurse.com>. The app gets 9/10, losing one mark, because of occasional slowdown.

A second opinion for MediaCentral 2

I've recorded my views on MediaCentral 2, which you'll find on The Mac Nurse Reports website at <http://www.themacnurse.com>.

Font Management on your Mac

by Vincent Tavera

Part One

I'd like to start off by saying that most Mac users do not think about font management at all, some because they don't know, and some because they do not need it. If you are a graphic designer or just have lots of fonts, font management is a must. This is especially true for workflow's involving fonts as many graphic designers may deal with. There are various approaches towards font management since system and user fonts are activated in a hierarchical structure that can make it difficult for some to manage fonts and identify font conflicts. Font book is not able to efficiently handle more than the default fonts installed with Mac OS X. Thus, third party apps are necessary for font management if you install more fonts. The first thing is to choose an app you are comfortable with and can trust. The two best options available in my experience (over 10 years in the printing industry and graphic design fields), are; *Suitcase* by Extensis, which is a professional level font management suite that includes *Font Doctor* for organizing and repairing fonts. The other option is *Font Explorer*, a free app by LinoType. A third and less used option is *Font Reserve*, and if you are running OS 9, there is *ATM deluxe* by Adobe. These apps also help you work more efficiently with fonts.

In this article, I will use hierarchical file specification (canonical for short) to show you the path of where your fonts are located. I can't tell you the exact path to fonts in your home account folder, since I do not know your user name, so here are some references to help you navigate to various font locations. Here is the file path to the Lucida Grande Font:

```
System/Library/Fonts/LucidaGrande.dfont
```

The beginning forward slash in the path above is the root folder of your startup drive named "Macintosh HD" by default. The ~/ is always your home account folder.

Organization

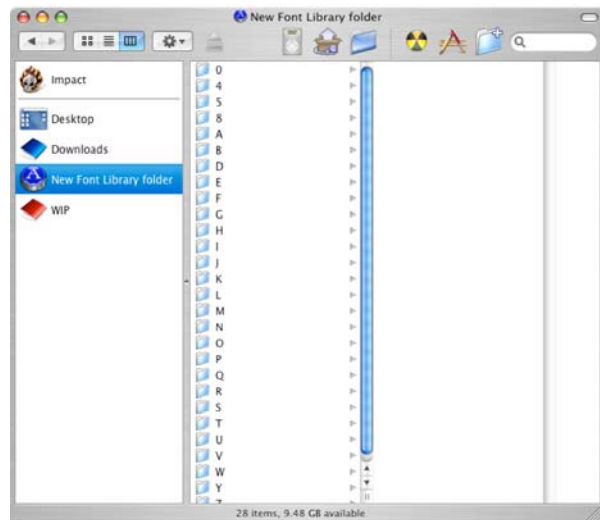
Organizing your fonts is very important in many ways, one way is that it makes it easier to find the ones that you want to activate. Fonts are in three different locations in OS X, the locations are as follows: Macintosh HD/Library/Fonts, Macintosh HD/ System/Library/Fonts, ~(home folder)/Library/Fonts. You can manually organize your fonts or use Font Doctor to organize them. It is important that you deactivate non system fonts in FontBook before moving them. You can organize them alphabetically, by genre/style, by Font Foundry/Creator, or any other way that will make managing your fonts easier. I personally have mine organized alphabetically. Here are fonts that you must have:

- Courier.dfont
- Geneva.dfont
- Helvetica.dfont
- Keyboard.dfont
- LastResort.dfont
- LucidaGrande.dfont
- Monaco.dfont

Starting with Tiger, you must also have AppleGothic.dfont installed.

There are also certain applications that will not launch if Helvetica is not activated or the wrong version is activated. Other apps also require Monaco and Geneva, though for general use of your mac, the minimum eight fonts listed above should always be active. For a list of applications that will not launch without specific fonts, see the knowledge base article here:

<http://docs.info.apple.com/article.html?artnum=25486>



There are also a few fonts installed by Mac OS X and by Microsoft apps that should be active since MS apps need them and many websites also use them and will display better if these fonts are active.

They are:

- Arial
- Arial Black
- Comic Sans MS
- Tahoma
- Trebuchet MS
- Verdana
- Webdings

Here is the prioritized order in which Mac OS X finds and opens fonts:

- ~/Library/Fonts/
- /Library/Fonts/
- /Network/Library/Fonts/ (if you are on a network)
- /System/Library/Fonts/
- /System Folder/Fonts/ (if OS 9 is installed)

All other fonts in your system fonts folder can be removed or relocated, if you plan to remove them from your mac, I strongly recommend you back them up in case you may need them in the future.

Next month, we'll discover font formats and compatibilities, as well as what fonts are necessary to run Mac OS X.

A guide to better DNS

By Mark Howson

Introduction

If you are a Digg user, there is no doubt that you have heard of OpenDNS, a free service giving you access to a safer, faster DNS system. For those that haven't heard of it yet, I'll take a short snippet from the OpenDNS website (<http://www.opendns.com>)

OpenDNS can identify and stop sites trying to phish (steal) your personal information or money. The OpenDNS phishing protection works with all operating systems and browsers, and complements any other security measures already in use, such as a firewall and anti-virus software. Most DNS servers on the Internet are slow. Your computer uses DNS every time you visit a website or send an email, so you want DNS to be blazing fast. Two things make DNS really fast: a big cache and a good network. We have both. We make corrections for common spelling mistakes, on the fly. That means when you are typing fast and type yahoo.cmo instead of yahoo.com you still get there. No annoying pop-ups or evil spyware installed because you made a typo. Things just work. Cool, but what is DNS?

Don't worry, you're not the only person who doesn't know.

The domain name system (DNS) stores and associates many types of information with domain names, but most importantly, it translates domain names (computer hostnames) to IP addresses. It also lists mail exchange servers accepting e-mail for each domain. In providing a worldwide keyword-based redirection service, DNS is an essential component of contemporary Internet use. Useful for several reasons, the DNS pre-eminently makes it possible to attach easy-to-remember domain names (such as "wikipedia.org") to hard-to-remember IP addresses (such as 207.142.131.206). Humans take advantage of this when they recite URLs and e-mail addresses. In a subsidiary function, the domain name system makes it possible for people to assign authoritative names without needing to communicate with a central registrar each time.

Courtesy: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Domain_name_system

So, how do I get OpenDNS?

Simply head over to <http://www.opendns.com/start> and follow the instructions for your router, or go to the Mac.Extra Content on The Mac Nurse Reports website.

The Mac Nurse Video Content

To access this month's video content, visit <http://www.themacnurse.com/maccompanion>, you'll need the code

TMNREPORTSXYZ123

Book Reviews

Computer Security Basics, 2nd Edition

reviewed by Kale Feelhaver



Authors: Rick Lehtinen, Deborah Russell, G. T. Gangemi Sr.

Publisher: O'Reilly Books

<http://www.oreilly.com>

Booksite: <http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/csb2/>

\$39.99 USD, \$51.99 CND, £28.50 GBP, 33,40€ Euro

Published: 2nd Edition, June 2006

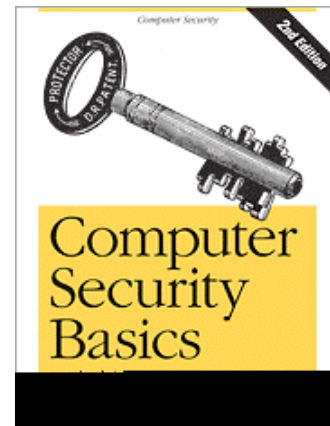
Pages: 300

ISBN: 0596006691

Requirements: A desire to learn a little about computer security and the theory behind it.

Strengths: Many topics, good information, good explanations.

Weaknesses: Hard to read for an average user, not very Mac-centric.



This book does a great job of summing up the basics of computer security into one concise package. I know what you're thinking. It's a 300-page book, and it's called Computer Security **Basics**? That seems like a lot of information for only covering the basics. In reality, this book takes a lot of complex topics, and gives a very brief, but informative, overview of each. Each chapter in this book could probably be made into it's own 300-page book, but for the average user, the book will contain more than enough information.

Be warned, this is not a book targeted at Mac users. Most of the topics in the book are platform agnostic, but the book is not written in the user-friendly style of many Mac books. The chapters include: Access Control, Viruses and Malicious Code, Security Policy, Encryption, Physical Security, Biometrics, and many more. It also includes appendices on the OSI (Open Systems Interconnection) model, FIPS (Federal Information Processing Standards), and TEMPEST (Transient Electromagnetic Pulse Surveillance Technology). None of these are lightweight topics, but this book does a good overview of each one. I can't say that I learned a lot from this book, but I can say that I like the way the authors explain the topics.

If you are looking for an easy way to make your Mac more secure, then this is not the book for you. It does not have any tutorials, and is not Mac-centric. However, if you are looking to learn a little about computer security and the theory behind it, then this is a good read. Being that I work in the Information Security field, this book will become a fixture on my desk. In fact, I will probably quote from it often.

The Da Vinci Barcode: A Parody

reviewed by Robert Pritchett



Author: Judith P. Shoaf

<http://www.clas.ufl.edu/users/jshoaf/>

SCARITH Books

New Academia Publishing

<http://www.newacademia.com/#scar>

<http://www.davincibarcodes.com/>

Released: May 2006

Pages: 296

\$16 USD, \$18 CND, £11 GBP, 13€ Euro

ISBN: 097779086X



R-Rated due to language



Strengths: Offers intelligent discussion of a plausible scenario regarding barcode codes and information exchange, along with French history.

Weaknesses: Not only is there French language, but in two or more places, there are objectionable “French” words, as in 4-letter cuss words, thus the R-rating.

The Da Vinci Barcode: A Parody by Dr. Judith Shoaf is a rather delightful 1st novel that bring bar codes to life and without spoiling the story, discusses at length such esoteric items such as binaries.

Were you confused but entertained by a certain recent best seller? Want to be confused but entertained some more? Welcome to the world of the Da Vinci Barcode! An alternate universe in which cash registers ring up Pi million, the Louvre Pyramide is upside down, and Catholic priests have been kneeling before the bones of Mary Magdalen for over a thousand years!

Robert Longone, Professor of Symbology at Harvard Business School, is drawn into a mystical web with international implications, when he receives an invisible two-dimensional bull's-eye barcode from the recently deceased former Director of the Louvre Shopping Mall. His task is complicated by the fact that the former Director had not one, but two gorgeous granddaughters, Marie and Madeleine Navet, who join him in deciphering the coded messages.

Robert calls upon the expertise of his friend the revered medical symbologist Linden Teabag. At long last, in the very land of the Goddess, he confronts the one-eyed hunchback Fibonacci and everybody learns way too much about themselves and about Mary Magdalen.

Everything in this book was meticulously researched. However, any time I found that the actual facts didn't fit my story, I ignored them." Judith P. Shoaf

Here, we get to look at the Free Masons from a French-perspective with new American eyes as Professor Longone gets to work with the “binaries”, Marie and Mado, twin sisters in many ways representing polar opposites of morality, but equals in intelligence and knowledge of Christianity in France down through the ages. For the most part, thing are “black and white”. Together, they unravel mysteries, and solve issues dealing with hidden messages and we learn some of the art surrounding barcoding. And we learn a little French along the way. The fun part is how they were able to get a barcode software app named “Apple Pi” working on non-Mac systems. Not much detail , but we play along for sake of the story. An perhaps that is why Dr Judith Shoaf wrote that if “the actual facts didn't fit my story, I ignored them”.

Why is this book a “parody”, because it is a variation on a theme and a parody is satire - <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parody>, however, I think the storyline stands on its own.

Now as with most first printings, there are a few misprints and extra extra words words here and there, but not many. What I didn't care much for were the one or two places where certain “French” words were used and not the ones normally spoken in the French language. Otherwise I would have given the book a better rating and is why I wrote that it is R-Rated.

I'm looking forward to any other books that might be in the mind of Dr. Judith Shoaf. Perhaps she could do a parody on RFID technology and Macs?

Recent technology for the Mac deals more with things like Delicious Library <http://www.delicious-monster.com/>.

Digging Deeper: Barcoding

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barcode>

<http://www.intellisw.com/barcodeproducer/>

<http://www.waspbarcode.com/>

<http://www.mac-barcode.com/faqs/answ1.htm>

<http://www.peninsula-group.com/>

<http://www.adams1.com/pub/russadam/mac.html>

<http://www.barcodeformac.com/>

Digital Photography: The Missing Manual

reviewed by Mike Hubbartt



Authors: Chris Grover and Barbara Brundage

<http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/digphototmm/index.html>

Released: June, 2006

Pages: 403

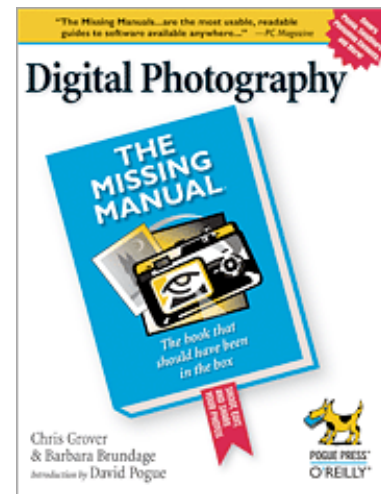
\$30 USD, \$39 CDN, £21 GBP, 17€ Euro

ISBN: 0596008414

Novice/Intermediate

Strengths: Plenty of useful examples of procedures, good subject matter coverage, well structured for novice and intermediate photographers, and loaded with useful tips and helpful pictures throughout the book.

Weaknesses: Covers PC, not Mac, software and platform dependencies.



Interest in digital photography is growing at a remarkable rate. Digital cameras, point-and-shoot and SLR, are becoming more affordable and image quality continues to improve each year, yet many people purchasing this equipment are new to digital photography. The authors of *Digital Photography: The Missing Manual* want to answer questions often missing in camera and image editing software manuals: specific procedures or guidelines to produce decent quality photographs.

This 403-page book is divided into four sections: Digital Camera Basics, Organizing Your Photos, Editing Your Photos and Sharing Your Photos. Each section in turn has three or more chapters. Mac-users will find chapters 1 – 3, 6 and 8 – 17 helpful and worthwhile reading. Chapters 4, 5 and 7 are strictly for PC owners.

Photography novices and digital photographers should start at the Introduction and read through Chapter 3. Chapter 1 introduces basic concepts and chapter 2 covers basic image composition: how to setup portrait and landscape shots. Chapter 3 covers the procedures and suggested settings for: action and sports, portrait, landscape and nature, kids and performances, weddings, sunset and nighttime, underwater and objects. Good information for people new to film or digital photography. Jump to chapter 6 for coverage of websites that provide online photo storing services, with warnings about possible issues with each site. And read chapter 8 to see how to use Adobe's *Photoshop Elements* for organizing and backing up photos.

Intermediate level photographers will want to skip directly to Chapters 9 and read through Chapter 13. Chapter 9 goes into basic photo fixes with *EasyShare* and *Picasa*, but *Picasa* does not have a Mac version of software, so ignore that section. Chapter 10 covers procedures to rotate, resize and crop images with *Photoshop Elements* – good tips for resizing images for e-mail, displaying on the web or printing. Chapter 11 addresses *Photoshop Elements* Quick Fix tools, with good explanations how to fix shadows and highlights problems.

Chapter 12 is Advanced Photo Retouching with Elements and it covers situations Quick Fix default settings can't address adequately. The authors stress the importance of the Level and Unsharp Mask tools and include photos showing the effects of both tools before and after. The area of the chapter devoted to fixing blemishes goes into using tools and filters to improve old or damaged photos - very useful material. One other nice item (if you don't use an LCD monitor) covered in this chapter: how to calibrate the colors on your monitor.

Chapter 13 is Creating Special Effects and it covers *EasyShare* and *Elements*. *EasyShare* has 10 special effects, while *Elements* has 90. *Elements* effects include: cartoon drawing effect, coloring book effect, colorize black and white photos, convert to black and white, film grain effect, fisheye distortion, glow, graduated tint, sepia tone, soft focus, and spotlight. An impressive number and range of effects! In addition to special effects, this chapter lists procedures to create impressive looking panoramas.

Conclusion

The material in this book is organized so novices and intermediate users alike will find it useful and interesting. The procedures are easy to follow, the tips are useful, and the writing flows well. The chapters covering image editing are excellent and an excellent reason to buy this book. The information on *Photoshop Elements* will prompt more than a few readers buy that software, as well as order a copy of Barbara Brundage's *Photoshop Elements 4: The Missing Manual*.

Recommendation

It doesn't matter if you own a Mac or a PC, get this book if you own or plan to buy a digital camera in the future.

FileMaker Pro 8: The Missing Manual

reviewed by Dr. Eric Flescher



Authors: Geoff Coffey and Susan Prosser

<http://www.oreillynet.com/cs/catalog/view/au/1934>

<http://www.oreillynet.com/cs/catalog/view/au/2313>

O'Reilly

<http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/fmakerprotmm/index.html>

Released: September 2005

Pages: 737

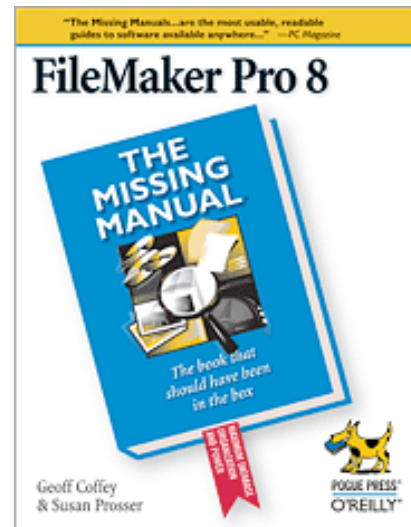
\$35 USD, \$49 CND, £25 GBP, 18€ Euro

ISBN: 0596005792

Novice/Intermediate/Advanced

Strengths: Book covers the breadth and depth with the learning how to start and utilize FileMaker Pro for many of your database needs.

Weaknesses: None found.



Databases are an application that I have been dabbling with and used for many years. Usually with ClarisWorks and AppleWorks, I found that there was something I liked about making, sorting, filing and arranging records for home, school and personal needs. But for few years, I did not do much with databases. FileMaker Pro versions were being used in my (former) school district on Macintoshes, to keep track of all sorts of records for special education students and finding and sorting data. This made me think about working with an application “like the big Boys”. I wanted a database application that was fun, fairly easy to use (at least I found Claris/AppleWorks fairly easy), one that could be used more readily by both PC and Mac would fit the bill. FileMaker Pro was one that I thought could meet the need.

I was urged to try FileMaker Pro, but I thought it looked too complicated. I tried FileMaker Pro 6 but found it cumbersome. But when FileMaker Pro 8 came out and I learned a few of the new tricks and ease of use, I needed to look further at the new version of the software. I also found a new book to help guide me, FileMaker Pro 8. The authors are Geoff (IT director and manager for FileMaker Pro systems) and Susan (a journalist turned FileMaker Pro enthusiast.) They have written the book, which has seven parts divided into nineteen chapters. There is also the Appendix: A and B. Their work spans a good amount of knowledge that gives solid information concerning learning FileMaker Pro 8 and databases in general.

The book starts off with creating a record of a database, adding, more records and learning how to organize and edit the records. There is good advice (page 40) and a good job of explaining about database requests for multiple types of data. Sorting records, especially on multiple fields, which is very useful when you have many records. To a great extent, the authors tell the needs and how to accomplish work with one or more fields, to find the records wanted. Most importantly, details concerning sorting are well done and included.

Other interesting chapters include “advanced calculations”, “scripting”, “ Security”, “Sharing Databases”, and “Developing utilities”. Chapter 17 peaked my interest on concerning “Exporting and Importing”. Since I currently use FileMaker Pro 6, I was glad to know that my current work could be upgraded to take advantage of the extra flexibility and power of FileMaker Pro 8. The Appendixes also were helpful (A- “Getting Help” and B - “FileMaker Error Codes”, would help as one works with various phases of the database program.

The special note instruction box-like instructions peppered throughout the book are well written and insightful. Some of these are categorized as “Power User’s Clinic,” “Up to Speed”, “Diamond in the Rough”, “Gem in the Rough”, “Workaround Workshop” and “Frequently Asked Questions.” Along with the detailed screenshots (only Black and White), pointers to information within screenshots help to focus upon key parts within the shots. With the diagrams and more, one gets a true sense of the inner workings of how to utilize FileMaker Pro. Black insets on the edge of the pages, give the name of each page’s action or task so that finding specific information is at your fingertips. This helps along with the nice index in the back of the book.

The “ Missing Manual” series is a collection of good and useful books. They serve a need by “acting the name of the book” filling in information that is not usually supplied by manuals that come with software. The authors in the series and in this manual, do a great job and go “above and beyond”. The book detail provides needed guidance and instruction to use the application to a higher potential.

FileMaker Pro 8: The Missing Manual is no exception. It offers breadth, depth and worthwhile background and clues for learning and developing your database(s). The price of the book is right, the instruction and detail are well done and there is much that can be learned to assist with using databases for many needs. Take the step towards learning about databases like a pro and with FileMaker Pro 8 and FileMaker Pro 8: The Missing Manual.

The Hidden Power of Photoshop Elements 4

reviewed by Dr. Eric Flescher



Author: Richard Lynch

Sybex

Wiley Publishing

111 River St., MS 4-01

Hoboken, NJ 07030-5774

<http://www.sybex.com/WileyCDA/SybexTitle/productCd-078214456X.html>

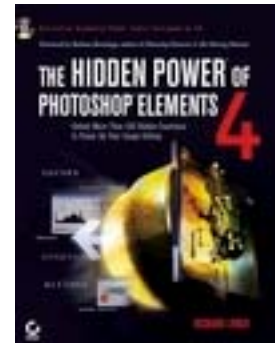
Released: April 10, 2006

Pages: 342

\$30 USD, \$39 CND, £20 GBP, 25€ Euro including CD.

ISBN: 078214456X

Intermediate/Advanced



Strengths: CD has additional information for tutorials and the website has additional information. The CD works for Mac and PC/Windows people. Author provides several ways to contact him for additional information.

Weaknesses: Only Black and white screenshots are used. The tutorials, while extensive and using numbers to segment tasks, are very much text based oriented in a storybook like fashion. Takes awhile to cover the activities in this fashion. The Power tools on the CD can only run by having Photoshop Elements in your computer system.

The Hidden Power of Photoshop Elements 4 by Richard Lynch deals with serious image editing. The black-on-white screen shots, photos and tutorials are made to promote learning of Photoshop Elements 4. The main purpose of the book is to provide practical procedures for making better images.

The author has written several books on digital images, writes columns for *Digital Photography Techniques*, teaches art classes and works on web authoring and information management. Photoshop Elements can be a serious graphics tool and books like this are meant to enable the user to utilize the features of the application to a greater extent, to make the images better.

The book comes with a CD. There are series of tools on the CD for Mac and PC users. To access the tools on the CD, Photoshop Elements is needed in your computer's system and will not operate without the proprietary application. Using instructions, the installation allows the collection to be downloaded. The website can be accessed for additional information to add functionality to Photoshop.

The Hidden Power of Photoshop Elements 4 offers the user to learn about the hidden aspects of graphics, utilities and the program. However, it is written in a way that I did not expect and "hides" some of the "hidden power" suggested in the title.

The book is written in a way that I consider non-user friendly, especially for novice users who do not know much about Photoshop Elements. The key to a book like this, is to "open doors", for unlocking how and what to do, and help see and understand the circumstances for invigorating your photos. All the information in the book needs to be easily read, so that the user can make access.

One of the problems is the "wordiness" of the tutorials. While the book has useful tutorials and information, there is too much to "wade through", to get at to the "meat" of what can be used. The screenshots are lifeless looking, are only in Black and White, and do not have pointers within the screenshots to highlight the focus of the tutorials.

Many other books on the topic, in the chapters, are easier to read and have an overall better visual style. After all, graphics are spatial and the text should reflect the medium through the use of intuitive learning modes. Intermediate and Advanced users may prefer this book. While I consider myself an intermediate power user, I would look to using the CD and the information that comes from that and use the book sparingly to find additional information.

Mind Performance Hacks — Tips & Tools for Overclocking Your Brain

reviewed by Harry {doc} Babad



Author: Ron Hale-Evans

O'Reilly Media

<http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/mindperfhks/#top>

English Language Paperback

Released: First Edition February 1, 2006

Pages: 330

\$25 USD, \$35 CAD, £17.50 GBP, 17€ Euro

ISBN: 0596101538

Audience — The book highlights techniques for improving memory, problem solving, doing mathematics and enhancing your word skills. If you need help with these and other memory related areas, this is the book for you.

Major Strengths — As one recent [reviewer noted](#) by “Just about everyone should be able to take away something positive from this book. Good preparation for exams such as GMAT and SATs. Also, good tips for staying sharp into old age”

Weakness — There’s so much I can accomplish with these mind hack and so few years to do so

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 10.4.7

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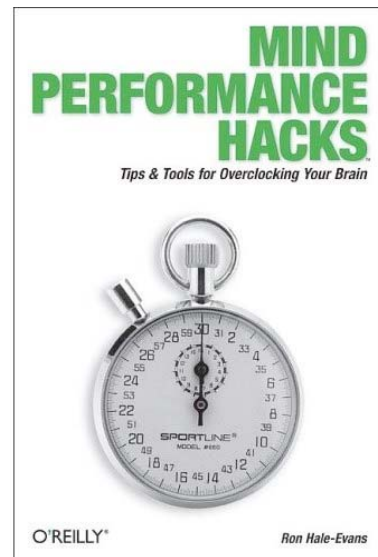
Publisher’s Overview — “*Mind Performance Hacks* provides real-life tips and tools for overclocking your brain and becoming a better thinker. In the increasingly frenetic pace of today's information economy, managing your life requires hacking your brain. With this book, you'll cut through the clutter and tune up your brain intentionally, safely, and productively.”

You can stay up-to-date on mind hacking at the authors website the [Mentat Wiki](#), especially <http://www.ludism.org/mentat/MindPerformanceHacks>.

Review Introduction

Like most of you, I learned the spectrum by memorizing ROYGBIV and what do to change the clock between summer to winter (Spring Forward - Fall Back). I also knew that these little tricks were called mnemonics, but not that they were mind hacks. See Memory, Book Chapter 1).

I managed to pass my doctoral exams at the U of I by studying 2-3 hours on and sort of controlled cat napping for a half hour or so; something my friend thought was nuts. [I did pass the exam there fore earned the {doc} in my



byline. What I did not know was that I had *re-invented* a mind hack, which the author discusses as *Sound Your Brain with Onar* (Hack 28, Pages 107-110).

I now also know why either during a brief stint in amateur theatre or when presenting technical papers at symposia, did I always do a better job when I had a case of butterflies.

On the other hand, impressed by some folks abilities to make contact. They only needed to spend a few minutes in a crowd chatting with people and then they could remember not only their names (and faces) but also individual things they talked about. You bet I knew this was a skill that I needed, needed desperately. [Such memory feats are mind hacks.] After all, I could not remember the names of my students when I was a teaching assistant. This, despite the fact that I easily memorized hundreds of (inventor) name-reactions in my chosen field, organic chemistry, remembering peoples names remained impossible.

I also, were we not wearing badges at most of my jobs, could not remember most of many more casual co-workers names. I won't describe the pain from failing the National Management Association's course *Names and Faces* three times. Suffice it so say, the last time, the instructor told me *Kid you are genetically impaired*. [It now, according to some studies, turns out I and about 5+% of humanity are, at least with respect to tying names and faces together. [So, I've become a believer!]

When I read the publisher description about Ron Hale-Evans' book *Mind Performance Hacks*, I jumped at a chance to review it. After all, perhaps with a little help I could capture some of those proverbial smartness pills I could use to make my aging brain work better. After all having turned seventy is no excuse to stop learning.

The Book Itself

As the publisher notes: You're smart. This book can make you smarter. *Mind Performance Hacks* provides seventy-five hacks, real-life tips and tools, for becoming a better thinker. According to the author, in the increasingly frenetic pace of today's information economy, managing your life requires hacking your brain. Picking out and practicing some of the tools in this book, will allow you to cut through the clutter and tune up your brain — intentionally, safely, and productively.

Underlying many parts of the book is the idea that “Thinking logically is something we all can do. We find ourselves so often taken in by fallacious arguments, though. How can we identify them in others' arguments and our own thought?” (From The Mentat Wiki)

For ease of understanding and some logical theme, *but counter intuitively to me*, the hacks themselves are divided into eight slightly overlapping by well cross referenced chapters:

1. Memory — remembering information, and doing away with post-It notes
2. Information Processing — maximize your ability to process data and minimize inattention.
3. Creativity — Learn to be comfortable no mater what the mental challenge, and conquer that challenge.
4. Mental Math — Learn the basic hacks to do mental math and perhaps win a few bar bets.
5. Decision Making — Making decisions with limited data by in part by separating out the low-priority data (noise, chaff) from what's important.
6. Communication — Duh, did I really say that? Get your ideas across in the manner best suited to both your needs and those of your audience. (At times, it's OK to be abstruse.)
7. Clarity — dealing with the stuff, like your emotions that sometimes get in the way of clear thinking. Learn to recognize your preconceptions and entrapping paradigms and step beyond them.
8. Mental Fitness — Keep your brain strong and flexible no mater what your age.

In addition, there is a good but not exhaustive index. That's because I like my indices to be almost hypertext like in connectivity, something publishers can't yet seem to capture.

Why counter intuitively to me? — Enhancing Creativity, focusing decision-making and communicating effectively and with clarity are stronger drivers than the focus of chapter 1,2 and 4. Read on, my needs may not be yours.

Grounded, for the most part, in current research and theory, *Mind Performance Hacks* is filled with life hacks that can be immediately applied by you. The author offers practical solutions that teach you to:

- Use mnemonic tricks to remember numbers, names, dates, and other flotsam you need to recall
- Put down your calculator and perform complex math in your head, with your fingers, or on the back of a napkin
- Spark your creativity with innovative brainstorming methods
- Use effective systems to capture new ideas before they get away
- Communicate in creative new ways—even using artificial languages
- Make better decisions by foreseeing problems and finding counter intuitive by effective solutions
- Improve your mental fitness with cool tricks and games

I, in just a month or two, worked with the book and measurably succeeded in some of these focal areas, but have a long way to go in the others — again perhaps that genetic defect, a lack of motivation or a senior moment. However, don't let my limitations stop you from succeeding in areas of my weakness.

While the Ron Hale-Evans first book *Mind Hacks* showed you how your brain works, *Mind Performance Hacks* shows you how to make your brain work better – Pick a hack or seven and practice. [I've not yet read [Mind Hacks](#) but it's on my list.

Ron offers 75 memory tricks, mental math shortcuts, aids to creativity and clarity, and tips for improving mental fitness, drawing on cognitive theory and grounded in practical application.

As **S Gardner** (Fair Lawn, NJ) on Amazon.com noted: “This book is unusual, it groups useful techniques and tools for creative thinking into one short guide. Although (some of) the techniques outlined may be simple, they are highly effective.

“The writing style is informative without being patronizing. I read this book cover to cover in four sessions; it was as interesting to read as most fiction.”

Folks, it took me longer to read the book, but then I'd continually get trapped — decide to practice a hack for a while until I at least understood it well enough to be comfortable working with it. Notice, I said working with, not mastering it!

I got completely hooked on the cited references and took many a trip to the read the materials referenced in the books extensive citations. [Robert, good macC editor-in-chief; that's why this review was a month late — I was having too much fun.]

As other readers have noted, Ron Hale-Evans provides in-depth references to his source material (by individual hack) as well as providing references for further and more detailed study of the topics covered. Although referenced information I studied seduced me for a while, you don't need to go beyond the book's details to make a selection of useful (to you) hacks to learn!

Hacks That Turned Me On

Map Your Mind (Hack 16) struck a responsive chord in me. Despite its similarity to the concepts in mind mapping software, a bit of which I played with, this hack was more open and unconstrained. The concept revolves around collecting and connecting related ideas and thus reveals patterns that stimulate new thought as well as contradictions to be resolved. Mind mapping software, at its best, is constrained by not only its programming but also by the need to interact with the computer interface. Paper and pencil have no such inherent limitations.

In SCAMPER For Ideas (Hack 22), you learn how to apply old ideas to extend the min new directions. SCAMPER is an acronym for: Substitute, Combine, Adapt, Modify, Put to another use, Eliminate and Reverse. Not the easiest hack to learn, but one that is capable or wrenching you thought beyond that of the intellectual and paradigm associated blinders we all wear.

The section on creativity making, fascinated me, as did some of the materials in the section on decision-making. After all, I am a graduate of endless hours of brainstorming, a practitioner of decision analysis, and a veteran various exercises in quality management. The role of these tools is to stretch your mental horizons and to get you thinking outside the box. I'll leave reading that material to you, try it you'll be surprised at the rewards.

Hale-Evans encourages the reader to develop their inductive reasoning skills (especially in Hack 48 - *Don't OverthinkIt*), which is something we could all use. He also includes tips on "mental fitness" - how to get your brain warmed up and ready to process information.

Then there was this boss that always put me into panic-mode whenever he called on me to come to his office. Therefore, I especially liked the tools in Hack 58, *Avoid Cognitive Distortions*. Oh, nothing bad ever happened at these meeting but...

Other hacks include ways to improve the effectiveness of your mental perception by changing your lifestyle, such as Hack #69 - Don't Neglect the Obvious: Sleep, Nutrition, and Exercise and Hack #71 - Navigate around the Post-Lunch Dip. Simple ways you can avoid mental pitfalls.

Enough! Perhaps my biggest surprise when reading this book, I was delighted to learn that I had, unknowingly and probably inefficiently, adopted some of the hacks the author so effectively elucidates.

Discomforts

Starting the Book with Memory Tricks — The tricks to improve memory may have helped thousands of people, but for me they seem to be too much trouble. After all, I keep my brain on my hard drive or in a collection of notes. As other have surly noted, such trick (Hacks 1-12) always seemed to be more work than they're worth to me. However, they may be just what you need.

Games — The benefits of playing board games (Hack 67) appear to be understated and my favorite game backgammon was omitted. In the opposite manner, I was not convinced that first person shooters (video games) serve as useful a function as the author describes (Hack 68).

In Closing

With nothing but your brain or perhaps a pen and paper you can learn how to remember where you put your glasses, learn your emotional ABCs and how they help or get in your way, reduce the clutter in your mind, sharpen your decision-making skills, and turn stage fright into a strategy for success [Hack 54]. You can learn tricks to master all this and more from *Mind Performance Hacks*.

I empathized and therefore concentrated on cognitive functions associated with decision-making, communications and parallel associated issues of clarity (Chapters 5-7). Your goals may to enhance your memory, better process complex information or doing mental mathematics. Whatever your focus, you will find this book valuable and useful.

The underlying science behind these Hacks has not been fully explored, according to the books author, but as knowledge about them expands that too will be added to the [Mentat Wiki](#).

I expect that you like I, will return to this book from time-to-time to further enhance your mental abilities or perhaps just to keep the ones you learn and use sharpened and well honed. **Rating 4.5 macCs**

Author BIOS

Ron Hale-Evans, game designer and founder of the [Mentat Wiki](#), picks up where the more theoretical *Mind Hacks* left off, and provides a toolkit for improving cognitive function. His broad interests include: “[magick](#); [Esperanto and other constructed languages](#); dreams and dreamwork; writing; [computing](#) (including programming); science fiction; inherently bogus religions; the I Ching and Tarot; [hypertext and interactive fiction](#); SCUBA; juggling; the Voynich Manuscript; kids; Nomic, the self-modifying metagame; [nanotechnology](#); [becoming transhuman/posthuman, and cryonics](#); mnemotechnics (the study of how to remember better) and "lightning math." He is training to become a Mentat; and involved with “recreational math; memetics (the study of infectious ideas); board games, card games, and role-playing games; and Hermann Hesse's [Glass Bead Game](#)”.



Outdoor Photographer Landscape and Nature Photography with Photoshop CS2

reviewed by Dr. Eric Flescher



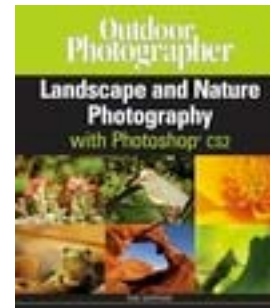
Author: Rob Sheppard

<http://www.outdoorphotographer.com>

Wiley

<http://www.wiley.com>

<http://www.wiley.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd-0471786195.html>



Released: May 2006

Pages: 400

\$ 35 USD, \$45 CDN, £23 GBP, 35€ Euro

ISBN: 0471786195

All- Novice/Intermediate/Advanced

Strengths: Exceptional clarity and knowledge for helping learn about and create better images of outdoor photography, landscape and nature photography. Well-done screenshots, example photography and relevant tutorials. Clear and concise instruction and tutorials. Covers photographic techniques, Photoshop software uses and much more.

Weaknesses: None found.

Graphic-intensive graphic-based books are mostly involved with teaching how to use the software and applications. However, it is rare for an author to go beyond the design of the book that not only provides excellence in learning about graphic artistry and using the applications to make the photos better, but provides in-depth background concerning how to make your photos better first and then enhancing those with the software. Such a book is *Outdoor Photographer Landscape and Nature Photography with Photoshop CS2*.

Rob Sheppard is the editor of *Outdoor Photography* and *PC Photos* magazines. He is also the author of *Adobe Camera Raw for Digital Photographers Only* and has had photos published in *National Geographic*. His depth of experience shows in the remarkable detail within the chapters and tutorials.

Fifteen chapters span the contents of the book, including the main topics; outdoor photography, landscape and nature photography. The author eases into the content by focusing on techniques that lays the groundwork for learning about photography in general. What is really nice about the demeanor of the book, is that the author gradually infuses information concerning how to become a better overall photographer.

The first chapter deals with “An Approach to Photoshop”. The author does a beautiful job by giving brilliant examples and thoughtful ideas to make photos better, before and after the images are taken. The second Chapter deals with exposure, film concerns (for non-digital users), sharpness. Other notations are “Thinking ahead” “visualizing and composition” and “compositions by quoting” and using ideas from the famous photographers such as Ansel Adams and other nature, landscape and other photographers, as well as using his own great examples.

Brilliant images of nature are used to show detailed instructions, examples, tutorials concerning how and what ways to make your photos better. Other details that are most helpful are pointers to specific parts screenshots software, pull-down menus showing application capabilities, pro tips, notes, question and answers.

With these tutorials, techniques involving curves, color adjustment, use of layers, use of dodging and burning, cloning and more are used while demonstrating Photoshop software to produce the final intended results. Later working with RAW files is introduced.

More advanced techniques include “Putting it all together: An Approach that works”, integrates many of the found ideas as well as cleaning up images. “Special techniques for the Nature Photography”, writes about extending tone ranges, using black and white photography and finishing the image. A chapter is also dedicated on how to make better prints.

Finally the last chapter includes information about Photoshop plug-ins, which can speed up or provide more easily techniques. These are described and the ways that the plug-in and can assist with Photoshop techniques more easily. These plug-ins can be purchased through the chapter’s included websites. A nice glossary includes many of the needed terms and words found in digital and film photography.

All levels of photographers will learn from this book. This book is one of the nicest book that I have found. Not only does the author include great techniques, he provides a clear understanding of using Photoshop. At the same time, you will learn much more about outdoor photography, landscape and nature photography and photography in general. It is a resource guide that you will use for a long time to come. I rate this a best buy, especially if you want to learn more about one or all three of the main topics.

Peace Quantum

reviewed by Robert Pritchett

Author: Alicia Ghiragossian

<http://www.poetalicia.com/>

A New Age Publications

PO Box 11243

Glendale, CA 91226-7243

1-800-431-1579

Released: Trilingual Edition, 2005

Pages: 172

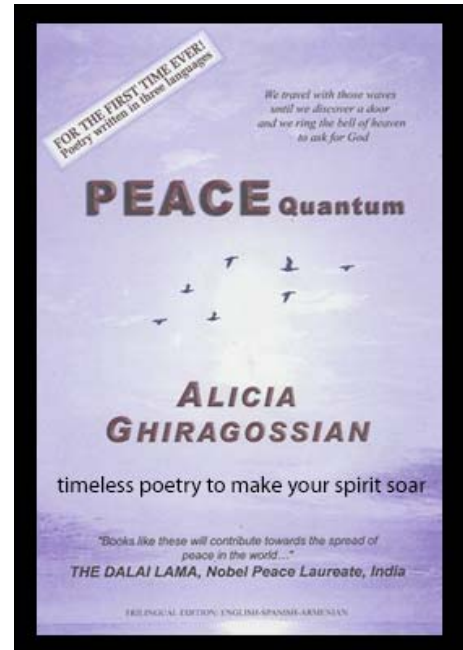
\$18 USD,

Languages: Armenian, English, Spanish

ISBN: 1881415104

Strengths: A trilingual approach to poetry – and peace.

Weaknesses: Some formatting bleedover from page to page.



With a world at war, it is nice once in a while to reflect on more elevated universal things like Peace. Alicia Ghiragossian makes spirits soar through poetry.

Approaching Universal Love and Peace from the direction of Quantum Physics and rich meta-dimensional metaphors the study of light at the bio-molecular level and the theme of “Peace has lost its own peace”. Laments for compassion, justice and love.

The book has English on the left page, Spanish and Armenian on each right page. The back of the book has 2 discs, one DVD with a video collage on peace in all three languages from poetry by Brian J. Kronenberg and the other disc is a CD with three tracks, each about 15 minutes long and in each language, with Chopin music as background and the voice running through about 7 minutes with more music filling the rest.

The book is filled with introspections on war, genocide, forgiveness and hope. The book is a compendium of poetry from others besides Alicia Ghiragossian, such as Martin Luther King Jr., Mahatma Gandhi, Mother Teresa and Nelson Mandela.

And yes, the book delves into mysticism and spiritual awareness and possible pathways to healing with a pretty neat concept of tapping into the frequencies that affect human behaviour and can change the universe. We just have to learn how to harness it.

Alicia attempts to bring us up from darkness into light, even as she describes man's worst inhumanity to man that has to make the gods cry in anguish at the brutality and uncivilized behaviour we do to ourselves on the only planet so far known to have abundant life everywhere.

"Now there is room for miracles."

Steal this Computer Book 4.0 – What They Won't Tell You About the Internet

reviewed by Harry {doc} Babad



Author: Wallace Wang

No Starch Press (O'Reilly Press)

Link: <http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/1593271050/>

Released: May 2006

\$30 USD, \$39 CDN, £22 GBP, 30€ Euro

ISBN: 1593271050

Audience — The book offers non-technical readers an insight into what hackers do, and why. It also addresses other privacy and security issues that even should be of interest to all readers be they computer experts or not.

Strengths — The book is an excellent offbeat examination of hacking, in its most generic sense. Author Wallace Wang explains, hacking can mean questioning the status quo, looking for your own truths, and never accepting at face value anything authorities say or do. It's not just your computer or the Internet. It's the forces in the world around you ranging from companies trying to seduce you into buying stuff you don't need. In addition, governments and agencies around the world trying to control your belief system and ultimately your behavior. Not quite a *Brave New World*, but...

Weakness — The book is written in a rambling fashion, and at times, tongue in cheek fashion that it may not appeal to some readers.

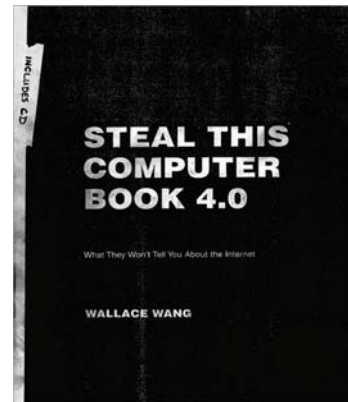
Where appropriate the instructions in the book were tested on a 1 GHz dual processor PowerPC G4 Macintosh with 2 GB DDR SDRAM running under OS X 10.4.7

[Product and company names and logos in this review may be registered trademarks of their respective companies.](#)

Publisher's Overview — This offbeat, non-technical book examines what hackers do, how they do it, and how readers can protect themselves. Informative, irreverent, and entertaining, the completely revised fourth edition of *Steal This Computer Book* contains new chapters discussing the hacker mentality, lock picking, exploiting Peer-to-Peer file sharing networks, and how people manipulate search engines and pop-up ads. Includes a CD with hundreds of megabytes of hacking and security-related programs that tie-in to each chapter in the book.

Review Introduction

I am always delighted when I open a book and despite having read the publishers come-on, am surprised by the depth and breadth of its content. Although *Steal this Computer Book 4.0* (the punctuation is weird) subtitle, its contents covered all sorts of topics I wondered about. What they don't tell you about the Internet, this book's subtitle is a real sleeper. Not only is the book focused on the malevolent aspects of owning and using a computer in the age of connectivity, but its silver lining. Wallace Wang shares the means that you the individual can make your voice be heard in ways that weren't imaginable when I was growing up in the days when paper and phone lines were the primary means of reaching beyond the range of your voice.



This book is kind of a collage or potpourri of lots of different topics and themes related to our networked lives. How we communicate and nowadays interact with those around us—our networks social and physical, and those who we don't notice who at times maliciously make their presence felt. Although these intrusions in our lives are mostly computer or cell phone related, there are other means getting into our privacy against which to protect ourselves. [No not by being paranoid, just by being realistic.] Perhaps the strongest theme is Wallace's paradigm that only you can prevent yourself from becoming a victim, mostly. Alas, the title of the book gives no indication of the richness of ideas contained in this book. For that, you must read the introduction and the full table of contents.

Thomas Duff Duffbert notes:

“The central theme of the book is "hacking", but there are areas where the author strays into areas that I've not traditionally put in that category. Getting free stuff like email accounts and blogs? Censoring information? Hate groups?

But even having said that, there is a guilty pleasure in reading this book. It's similar to reading about the seamy underbelly of your local city... you know it's there, you don't condone it, but you have a hard time averting your eyes when you drive by. And there are some things that I didn't know... like services that will email you requested web pages so as to avoid http logging.”

I agree with Duff, but so what. [Duffbert Review](#) The book needs a better subtitle! Therefore, I tried to write one for this review; I came up with an essay.

From my perspective, the message of the book is in its introduction.

“Truth is nothing but a point of view — This book doesn't pretend to be a comprehensive resource for every possible legal and illegal activity you might run across on the Internet, but the information it contains can help or hurt others. Fundamentally, the information itself is neutral.

Crash your government's computer network and you may be labeled a terrorist. Do the same thing to an enemy's computer network, and your government may proclaim you a hero. (With respect to hacking,) good and evil depend solely on your point of view. So, welcome to the side of computers that the computer industry doesn't want you to know about, a world where slickly printed tutorials and training classes don't exist.

This is the underground of the real computer revolution, where everyone is encouraged to question, explore, and criticize, but most importantly, to learn how to think for himself or herself. And to many governments, corporations, and religions, people who know how to think for themselves can be the most dangerous threats in the world.”

The Book Itself

The book offers non-technical readers an insight into what hackers do, and why. Learn how users, mostly Windows users for the time being, can protect themselves. Embedded in these tips are insights on how to avoid scams, being phished, or sharing information that assists in identity theft and related problems. The lesson(s) on vulnerability, in a Zen manner, are not limited to things networked but also to our trash, cash machine transactions and to whom you respond on the phone or when a *too good offer* reaches you in the mail.

A companion CD comes packed with dual purpose hacking and security-related programs like keyloggers, spyware stoppers and spam filters, alas most for users of Windows. For shame! Few are the tools, although they do exist on the WWW, which are provided to Linux and Macintosh users.

The Books Contents	Babad's Thoughts
Part 1 - The Early Hackers: The Hacker Mentality; The First Hackers - The Phone Phreakers; Hacking People, Places, and Things	Interesting material, the chapter took me back to my High School and early College days, but that's another story – a tail of trials and few errors, but I was not a brave soul in those days.
Part 2 - The PC Pioneers: ASNI Bombs and Viruses; Trojan Horses and Worms; Warez (Software Piracy)	There is nothing surprising in this chapter, but lots of great details with links and references. You do practice safe on your Macintosh, don't you?
Part 3 - The Internet Hackers: Where The Hackers Are; Stalking A Computer; Cracking Passwords; Digging Into A Computer With Rootkits; Censoring Information; The File Sharing Networks	This is a fascinating exploration of the less rosy side of the Internet. It also raises questions about censoring information (which begins at home) as well as the controversy over file sharing and excessive copy-write protection including by our friends at Sony Music.
Part 4 - The Real World Hackers: The Internet Con Artists; Finding People On The Internet; Propaganda As News and Entertainment; Hacktivism - Online Activism; Hate Groups and Terrorists on the Internet	<p>I admit it. As a child of the 60's, this part sucked me in!</p> <p>There are still con artists that pass my filters or find me when I browse – read the chapter. Wallace gives lots of examples of cons worthy of your study.</p> <p>Then there's the 'selective focus' of the evening news. I've always been cynical about what I read or hear, especially after leaning that even my beloved science books could be wrong.</p> <p>I especially enjoyed the section called "Fear, Future, Fun, and Fakes: The weekly news as a model for the news media." Also, read the section of the effects of individuals reporting events, in blogs, on news availability.</p> <p>For no other reason than the contents of Part 4 (and 5), this book is a good buy.</p>
Part 5 - The Future - Hacking For Profit: Identity Theft and Spam; Banner Ads, Pop-Up Ads, and Search Engine Spamming; Adware and Spyware	Yeah, wouldn't I like the <u>power</u> to put the folks that create this stuff into an isolation chamber with four video walls — their computers feeding them this stuff 24/7.
Part 6 - Protecting Your Computer and Yourself: Computing On A Shoestring - Getting Stuff For (Almost) Free; Computer Forensics - The Art Of Deleting and Retrieving Data; Locking Down Your Computer	Great material, Wallace at his most serious. A must read for all of our macC audience. For those of you who don't read consumer reports or the AARP bulletin, this materials provides a timely insight in what you can do to protect you and yours from both malware and 'homo-malevolent, the black hats.
Epilogue; What's On The Steal This Computer Book 4.0 CD	Hello Wallace — We use Macintosh computers; based on Apples last quarterly sales, as do many more of you – It's about the Intel Mac and using windows on our favorite computer making us a bigger target.
The Index	An essential tool when trying to find related topics across the book.

A number of themes come through the various sections of the book:

Hackers — A hacker is some one who enjoys learning about computers and breaks down software to learn about it. This, as Wallace notes, neither good nor bad, it just is! Cracking is attacking another computer which most of us think is a terrible thing, but we don't work for law enforcement agencies.

Computer Safety - The author is teaching us about computer safety, not in enough detail to be comprehensive, but with enough citations that the information is only a click or three away in your browser.

If its Too Good to be True – As Robert Heinlein long ago pointed out – *There's No Free Lunch* – so stop buying treasure maps and giving out your social security number to anyone who asks.

Less obviously, and in a scattered manner, it gave me answers to a number of questions I wanted to have answered but was too lazy to search for:

- Where to find passwords where I wanting to illegally duplicate software?
- How do terrorists or hackers or supporters of 'lost' causes find each other?
- How can I benefit from files haring even though I'm neither into collecting mp3 music audio or downloading movies?
- What will my computing world be like when Apple significantly raises its market share making it a more interesting malware target?
- How effective are biometric controls such as fingerprint, voice prints or retina photo access controls – They're not as often depicted on *Mission Impossible* type tales in TV and in movies.
- How corporations use hacker techniques to infect your computer and invade my privacy

No, I'm not going to provide pages or give you the links, but the book — you learn more about the Internet and computing benefits and risk then you dreamed possible.

A Message to Wallace Wang - Beyond Computers and The Next Edition

Sir, you do not clearly emphasize that our 'personal' security is vulnerable outside the networked world, although sections on stalking, phishing and the like address it. The message is there but gets lost in the words of various parts of the book.

In addition, a new chapter, is needed when the book is next updated, that summaries information that would best serve the various genre of readers. It should be aimed at the various stereotypic groups focusing on what they should stay alert for. For example the folks who only email family but ever shop online have a different security needs than those who lives (and finances) are centered about computer record keeping and outreach. Then there are the lonely hearts... teenage or otherwise. Adding such a chapter would help to pull the otherwise interesting but scattered threads together, a must in *Steal this Computer Book 5*.

In addition, I must be a poor searcher of the internet since I could not find a photo of you on the internet. I would have thought, as an author and stand up comic, there's be lots of pix out there — Alas, I failed.

A Gripe or Three

General — The book is written in a rambling fashion, that it may not appeal to some readers. The author, a free spirit, takes us on a walk of many branching paths, more a spider web of ideas then a pert chart or logic diagram. Nevertheless, that's okay, my editor believes I think that way even when try to write logically.

Things Macintosh — Too little linking to the world that Macintosh user will likely face soon. For the casual Macintosh user, the threats that pervade the windows worlds are just be yond the horizon; but the books tone beliees that that likely reality.

One Example Benign Neglect — As an aside (Page 308), Macintosh tested and screened shareware can be found on both the MacUpdate and Version Tracker sites. There are also a significant number of Macintosh products that allow you to by pass MS Office, some of which have been reviewed in macC.

In Closing

I found the book fascinating, at times almost addicting. I read it late into the night, taking time out only to check a few links or many, to see where they led. I avoided the obvious pornography and hacker sites – folks who deal in spyware and worse, in part lack of interest and in part just plain avoidance. I did check out hate-group sites (mine may not be yours) and sites related political action - just to see how the world had changed.

If you've used a computer, you need to know about common tricks and traps - and *Steal This Computer's* latest edition covers them all. As note by the publisher, If you've ever logged onto a website, conducted an online transaction, sent or received email, used a networked computer, or even watched the evening news, you may have already been tricked, tracked, hacked, and manipulated. As the saying goes, just because you're paranoid doesn't mean they aren't after you. As Wallace Wang so ably reveals, they probably are. **Rating 4.5 macC's.**

And in the Real World — A Postscript

I agree with *Elizabeth Lewis* in her Amazon Editorial Review of this book that:

“If ever a book on cyber culture wore a fedora and trench coat and leaned against a lamppost on a foggy street, this is the one. It is an unabashed look at the dark side of the Net--the stuff many other books gloss over. It's hard-edged, wisecracking, and often quite cynical as it pours over the reality of online scams, illegal activities, and simple annoyances.

Wang's stated goal is to open the reader's eyes about what's really there. He shows what's being done, how it's being done, and how to avoid problems or even strike back. He begins with a chapter about the news media, and his message is that no source is to be trusted completely. He examines issues important to Internet users: the cost of getting computerized (with tips on how to find the real bargains), who is using the Internet as a source of hate information, and how your privacy can be invaded and protected.

He shows you the secrets of malicious hackers and others and how some of them attack computer systems without the ethical mindset typical of the original, idealistic hackers. Wang shows you how you can set up your defenses against such an onslaught, discussing how to protect yourself and your kids from online stalkers and how online con games work.

Wang never claims that the Internet is the electronic den of darkness that the pop media make it out to be. But he makes it clear that something this big has its lowlights--it's own "net noir". His messages are 'know your enemy' and 'be careful who you trust', an ideology verified by the examples he provides.” [Read Elizabeth Lewis' review.](#)

About Wallace Wang

Mr. Wang is a former contributor to *Boardwatch Magazine*, where he wrote a monthly column called "Notes From the Underground". As a Renaissance Man, he is also a successful stand-up comic who has appeared on A&E's "Evening at the Improv" and appears regularly at the Riviera Comedy Club in Las Vegas. Wang is the author of the *Steal This Computer Book series*; *Steal This File Sharing Book* and a book on multimedia tools called *The Book of Nero 6* (No Starch Press). Listen to Mr. Wang talk about his book at:

[http://www.lets-talk-computers.com/guests/nostarch/steal4/.](http://www.lets-talk-computers.com/guests/nostarch/steal4/)

Ubuntu Hacks

reviewed by Kale Feelhaver



Authors: Jonathan Oxer, Kyle Rankin, and Bill Childers

Publisher: O'Reilly Books

<http://www.oreilly.com>

Booksite: <http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/ubuntuhks/>

\$29.99 USD, \$39 CND, £21 GBP, 30€ Euro

Published: June 2006

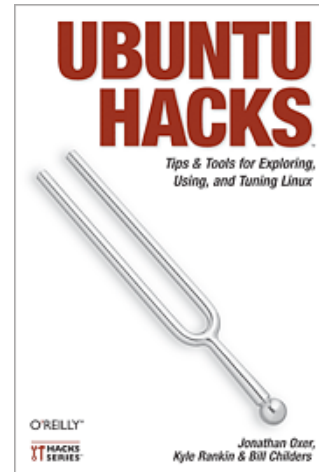
Pages: 428

ISBN: 0596527209

Requirements: An interest in learning more about Linux.

Strengths: Lots of tips and tricks for installing, configuring, and using Ubuntu Linux.

Weaknesses: Not related to Mac OS X.



Ubuntu is an African word that means “humanity to others”. The Ubuntu Linux distribution was created as a free operating system that is freely distributed. The creators of Ubuntu encourage everyone to share it with others. This book discusses several ways to install, configure, and customize Ubuntu Linux to get the most out of it.

As an IT professional in my day job, Linux is nothing new to me. I work with it often. However, I did learn a few things from this book, and (because of it) I am currently in the process of building an Ubuntu file server for my home. Chapter 10, Installing a Small Office/Home Office Server, was especially interesting to me. So interesting in fact... that I decided to do it. This book does not dive deep into the Linux operating system, but does cover a lot of the things that make it unique.

Now, just to be clear... Ubuntu is not Mac OS X. It does not run on Mac OS X, it replaces Mac OS X on your computer. If you are a hard-core Apple addict, you will probably have no interest in reading this book. However, if you are curious about Linux, or want to try something new, this book is a good read. Also, if you have an old PowerPC Mac (or an old PC) sitting around collecting dust, you might want to install Ubuntu on it and put it back to work. Be sure to check out chapter 1 - section 8, Installing Ubuntu on a Mac.

Build Your Own Web Site The Right Way Using HTML & CSS

reviewed by Robert Pritchett



Author: Ian Lloyd

<http://www.sitepoint.com/books/html1/about.php>

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Booksite: <http://www.sitepoint.com/books/html1/>

\$30 USD, \$42 CND, £21 GBP, 32€ Euro

Published: May 2006

Pages: 488

ISBN: 0975240293

For Starters.



Strengths: Easy to understand and follow. Cross-platform.

Weaknesses: None found.

Build Your Own Web Site The Right Way Using HTML & CSS by Ian Lloyd is incredibly readable and nobody should feel being talked down to as they read Ian's words.

The instructions are pretty much platform agnostic and where there are differences, some thought was put into showing what those differences are. Most "additional" software discussed is Open Source, while staying "standards compliant".

A lot of ink is obviously dedicated to CSS, but still leaves open such topics as using tables and form elements.

There is also some ink devoted to blogging, web hosting and using site statistics to better pull in efforts to monetize the effort of creating a web page/site environment.

I learned about some of the shortcoming of our own website efforts and learned a few thing we are currently not doing that we ought to be doing. And isn't that what learning to build a website the right way is all about?

Game Reviews

Call of Duty 2

reviewed by Daniel MacKenzie



ASPYR MEDIA, INC.

Publishers/Developers: Aspyr, Activision, Infinity Ward

Aspyr Media, Inc.

P.O. BOX 5861

Austin, TX 78763

1-512-708-810

Fax: 1-512-708-9595

sales@aspyr.com

<http://www.aspyr.com/>

<http://www.aspyr.com/noframes.php/games.php/mac/cod2/>

Released: July 26, 2006

\$50 USD

Demio:

Requirements: DVD - ROM Drive; Mac OS X 10.3.9 or later; G5 or later; 512 MB RAM or more; 4 GB hard drive space; broadband Internet.

Trailer: <http://www.apple.com/games/trailers/callofduty2/>

Strengths - Great graphics, stunning gameplay and an overall great game.

Weaknesses - Extremely high system requirements.



Intense, heart-pounding action, and realistic come immediately to mind when you look at the introduction to the game. You get hooked almost instantly. Astounding graphics topped with a great story mode meld together to make a home run for Aspyr, Activision, and Infinity Ward.

In Call of Duty 2, you go through the game as part of the three Allied Forces, the Russians, the British and the Americans. You start the game as Vasil Ivanovich Koslov of the 13th Guards Rifle Division, a Russian private in training. As you fight your way through Russia on three missions, pushing the Germans back, you will unlock the British campaign. Don't worry, there are several parts to every mission. This is NOT a short game. The British have four missions, 3 infantry and one tank mission. You are Sergeant John Davis of the 7th Armoured Division and Commander David Welsh of the 7th Armoured Division fighting in North Africa, Egypt and in Normandy. You play 4 missions on the British campaign. Last but not least, the Americans. You rush the beaches on D-Day as Corporal Bill Taylor, D company of the 2nd Rangers Battalion. You will dash over hedgerows and through trenches in this game to become victorious. I had a very good experience with this game. Sometimes I felt like I was there.



Call of Duty 2 is an amazing game. You travel from Russia to Egypt and France throughout the 4 years of World War Two. Visit famous cities such as Moscow, Stalingrad and Normandy. Storm the beaches on D-Day or blow up a German King Tiger. You can do it all in this game. Most of the game is historically correct which adds even more interest to the story line. Buildings look very realistic and if a wall explodes, it looks just like it would in real life. All of the people look the same, which was kind of weird because you shoot a German and you turn a corner to see the same person. But that's understandable, because it would be very time consuming to design thousands of different faces. Also, people don't fall down the same way every time you kill them. This used to be a problem on computers and console games for years. Just a warning to younger children, there is blood and the violence may frighten them. The weapons are the weapons that all of the armies used to fight with in World War Two, such as the MP40 and the Thompson. They also looked like they're suppose to. Just everything about the setting looked and felt real.



The music in Call of Duty 2 sounds very patriotic. Something that you would hear in a movie. A lot of brass instruments. I enjoyed the music, because it really set the mood. If you finished a mission, victory music plays in the background as your commanding officer gives you the victory speech. Everything really worked well together.

Another segment of the game is the online multiplayer mode. You get to choose which side you want to be on. The sides depend on the map that your playing on. There are many modes to play in such as Deathmatch, Team Deathmatch and Capture the Flag. You get to use the weapons that are used in single player and even a few more. It's a lot more difficult, because you're playing against real people instead of the bots. I didn't use it much, but it looked like a lot of fun.

Most of us won't be able to enjoy all of this, because of the overwhelming system requirements. You need one of the new Intel Core computers or a Power Mac G5 to make the game run smoothly without many pauses during game play. 512 MB of RAM is essential. The game becomes discoloured if you don't have the latest video cards. The smoke is blue and the ground is red. This is really bad, because if you're firing a machine gun, blue smoke billows out in front of you and you can't see where to shoot. This really bothered me. Call of Duty 2 eats up a fair amount of space. 4 GB is required. Wow! But there is a reason for this. A game that has all of this intense game play and graphics, needs to take up some space on your Mac.



But don't let this stop you from buying it. If your system meets the system requirements, than these problems won't interfere with you. And if your computer doesn't meet the requirements, go buy a better Mac. I strongly recommend you go out and buy this game. You haven't played an action game until you've played Call of Duty 2.

Hardware Reviews

IPEVO2 Free-1 Phone reviewed by Chris Marshall



IPEVO

www.ipevo.com

www.ipevo.com/v2/prod/p000005.htm

Released: June, 2006

\$34.99 USD, \$39.45 CND, £19.05 GBP, 27,70€ Euro

Audience: Mac Users who use Skype a lot and want a phone with the form factor of a Mac.

Strengths: GREAT design, simple to use, programmable keys, works exceptionally well.

Weaknesses: Ships with Windows-only CD, little complicated setting up audio settings.

What they say: Free-1 is an advanced USB phone specially made for active Skype users. With lightweight and stylish design, it is a lot more fun using Skype! Programmable buttons provides users with higher level of convenience. It allows users to have better control of Skype and make SkypeOut calls via the keypad. Ten different ring tones alert users of incoming calls. Other functions include volume control, mic mute, speed dial, and LED light indication. Free-1 allows you to contact people around the world for free.

- Fully integrated with Skype
- User programmable buttons enhances customization
- Smart and stylish design. Small form factor and lightweight
- 10 selectable ring tones (include silent)
- USB Plug-and-Play technology
- PC sound card not required
- Independent use of phone and sound card allows for Skype call while listening to music on PC
- LED indicates USB connection state plus off-hook condition
- Acoustically isolated speaker and microphone to eliminate echo
- Built-in volume control & mute button

What I say: This product could well warrant 5 stars, it is just that if I give it a perfect score now what will I give it when they enhance it? I am sure they will one day, but I struggle to see how they can improve it.

I have used Skype for years, right from their very first Beta on Windows. At the moment I have a number of accounts with them:



- We have a home user that has a two Skype In numbers and a Skype Out account. It is permanently on line through our Windows Desktop. We use an Olympia Du@L base cordless phone on this account, which also connects to a landline.
- My wife has her own user account with a Skype Out number on her Windows Notebook, with a Cyber Phone K, which is a very early model and made for a really good comparison with the Free-1 phone.
- I have a user loaded on my PowerBook to support my Mac-related stuff and I now use the Free-1 with it. I tried both of the above on my PowerBook and luckily for me they didn't work ☺

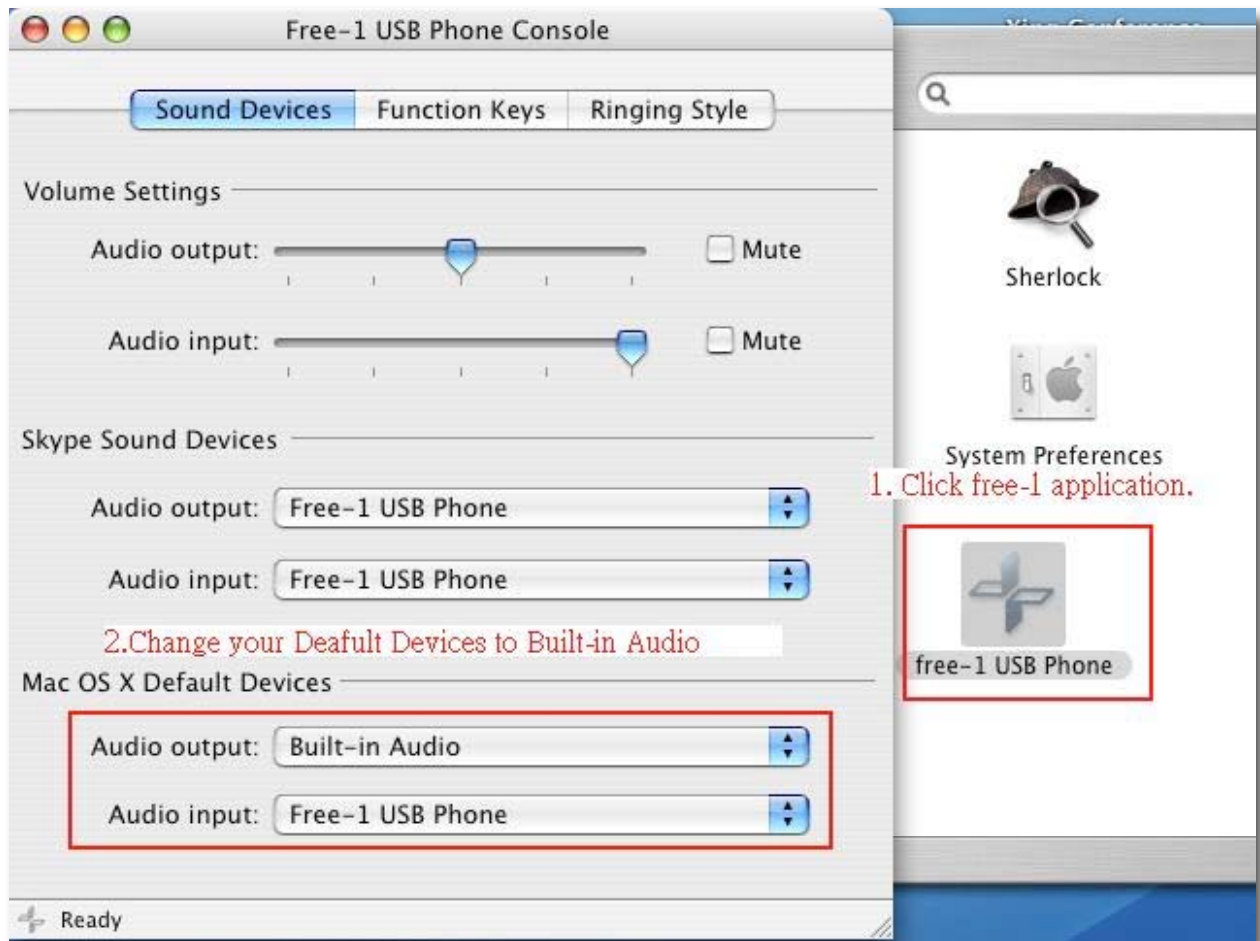
Opening the box was a treat – the size, color and form factor are right “up there” with the Mac stuff. The packaging doesn't come close I must admit, but the pleasure upon opening was as high. I got the white version, which was perfect for me and my PowerBook, but I bet the black one would work great with the black MacBook!

My initial excitement was dampened a little when I realized that it shipped with the Windows-only CD. A quick search through the web site sourced the Mac download¹¹, which was simple to install – but it wouldn't it!!

The Free-1 has a neat little control application that comes with it which is great for fiddling with a few settings. I struggled with the right audio In/Out combination, which was partly my ignorance, partly because I also have a Belkin Bluetooth headset set up for iChat, and partly a lack of documentation. I have to praise the support team though, not only was their response quick, but it was also accurate and easy to follow. Basically you need the following setting:

1. Click the Free-1 application.
2. In the “Free-1 USB Phone Console”, set the “Audio output” of “MAC OS X Default Devices” to “Built-in Audio”
3. After, the Skype sound will output from Free-1, but iTunes music will output through your speaker.

¹¹ <http://www.ipevo.com/downloads.jsp>



Skype isn't the most user-friendly when it comes to the address book, but Free-1 makes light of this with its easy scroll, programmable keys and clear buttons.

Those with stubby fingers may find it a little fiddly, but they are no worse than a regular cell phone keypad.

Initially I wished that the Free-1 had a cradle, and sometimes I still do, but it sits well on your desk or work area and more importantly, the cord is long enough to give you some mobility around the Mac.

One "interesting" aside. I was talking to my friend who was using his new MacBook Pro and the inbuilt speakers and microphone and I got horrendous echo of my own voice in the Free-1, but once my friend used some headphones that problem went away. Apparently this is because the microphone on the MacBook Pro is positioned right next to the speakers. This is obviously nothing to do with the Free-1 but if you do get an echo you may want to check this isn't causing it. Of course my "friend" is now going to buy a Free-1 ☺

In summary: Buy It!

Skype + Mac + Free-1 = perfection.

You can Skype me at myapplestuff

LocationFree Player Pak for Macintosh

reviewed by Eddie Hargreaves



I-O DATA DEVICE USA

2480 North First Street, Suite 100

San Jose, CA 95131

<http://www.iodata.com/usa>

<http://www.iodata.com/usa/products/products.php?cat=HNP&sc=TLF&ts=2&tsc=>

Released: July 15, 2005

\$40USD for Mac SW Package; \$309 USD for Player Pak (includes Mac SW Package)

Requirements: Mac OS X 10.2.8 (or later); QuickTime 6.4 (or later); 867MHz processor, 512MB RAM; 800x600 or larger display resolution; At least 300kpbs of broadband Internet uplink speed for remote use.

Strengths: Stylish hardware; IR blaster included; Onscreen 'Universal Remote' works with wide range of hardware; Uses DynamicDNS to watch home audio/video remotely/

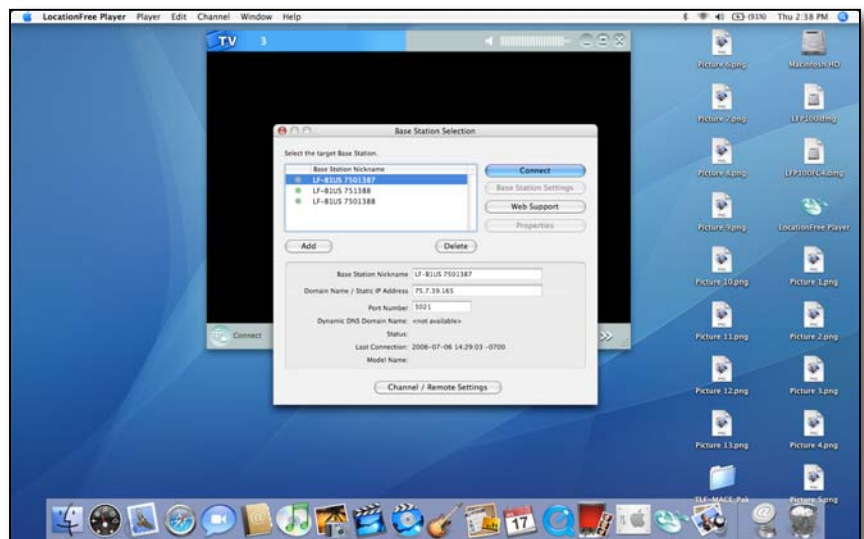
Weaknesses: Complicated setup; Low quality video; Odd interface; Cannot pause or record video.



Sony is not famous for being Macintosh-friendly. Of course, it's not famous for being friendly with hardly anyone, considering it usually tries to force its proprietary formats on everyone (Betamax, MiniDisc, ATRAC, UMD, copy-protected CDs with rootkits) at the expense of consumer ease-of-use. Its latest venture, LocationFree, is no exception.

LocationFree lets you watch the TV, DVDs or DVR in your home entertainment system on your computer or PSP, whether you're at home or away. Of course, by computer Sony means a PC running Windows 2000 or XP. Thankfully, I-O DATA has stepped in to provide a Mac software solution. Their software package sells on its own for \$40 or comes bundled with the LocationFree Player Pak for Macintosh, which costs \$309.

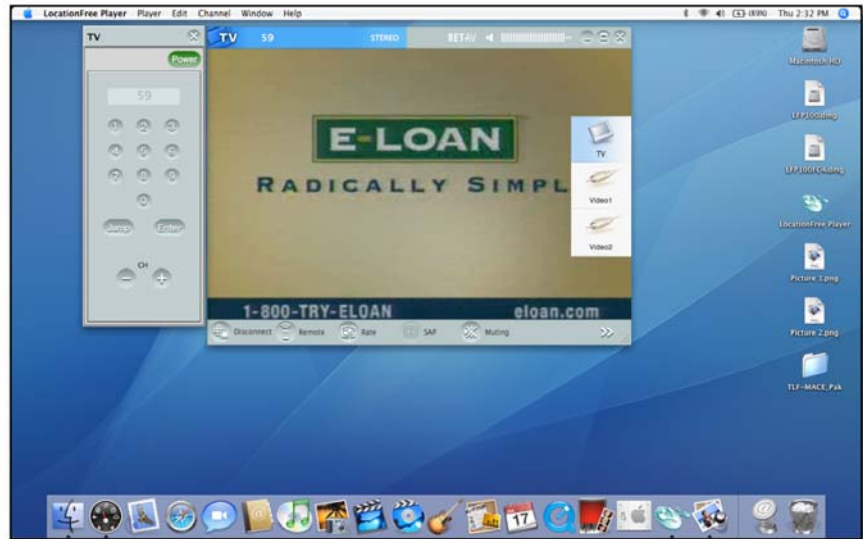
The Player Pak contains the hardware, the main part of which is the LocationFree base station. It's a stylish hardware device that would look at home in your entertainment center, and can be connected to a variety of audio visual devices -- a set-top TV tuner, DVD player, and digital video recorder (DVR). It streams the audio and video from those devices to your computer via its built-in wireless transmitter, your local area network (LAN), or the Internet.



Networking is probably the most complicated part of computing for average computer users and since the LocationFree base station and software both rely on networking, setup was not simple. The amount of time it takes you to set it up will depend largely on what type of LAN you have and whether or not your router is UPnP compatible. I eventually succeeded in setting up the base station and the software for both local and remote viewing.

The base station has three AV inputs: VHF/UHF, S-Video and RCA. I used the VHF input to connect to cable television and was able to stream the audio and video to an iBook G4 via our wireless network. The base station also creates its own password-protected wireless network, so you can connect directly to it and not clog your home network.

I found the default quality of the video quite compressed, especially compared to the EyeTV EZ and EyeTV 250 I reviewed earlier this year. The quality can be improved using manual adjustment, but it is done using the oddly-named "Rate" menu.



The software in general does not compare well to Elgato's EyeTV. It uses Windows interface elements like the *minimize*, *maximize* and *close* buttons on the right-hand side of the window. And for a program that is most likely to be used on laptops, it has a dearth of keyboard shortcuts. You cannot change the channel nor (even more egregiously) change the volume using the keyboard. In fact, there's a volume display on the interface that is frustratingly unclickable. There is also no channel auto-detect, no closed captioning, no way to pause or record what you are watching, and no program guide.



One area where the LocationFree experience exceeds EyeTV is the inclusion of an IR blaster. This device is placed near the infrared port of your home entertainment devices, such as a cable set-top box, DVD player, or DVR, and sends the appropriate signal. I-O DATA's LocationFree Player Software has an on-screen "Universal Remote," which means that you tell the software what piece of hardware you've connected to the base station and it displays a remote that matches that hardware. A massive number of devices are supported and I was able to control a Motorola-brand cable box and a TiVo.

LocationFree's major differentiation is stated right in its name, the ability to watch your home content regardless of location. It uses DynamicDNS to allow your computer to remotely access your home base station via the Internet and you must have at least 300kbps-upload speed on your home broadband connection.

Because your Internet connection speed is much slower than your home network speed, the video quality is lower when watching remotely than when watching from your local network. I can't fault Sony or I-O DATA for that for the same reason you can't fault a car for not making a cross-country trip in one tank of gas. But it does negatively affect the user experience.

When you send a command (change to channel 46) from the software program, it goes through your remote Internet connection to your home, then travels through your home network into the LocationFree base station, which sends it out through the IR blaster into the set-top box. The set-top box changes the channel, sending the new video and audio to the base station, back through your home network, out your home Internet connection and up to your remote computer. So there's definitely a lag involved.

Considering that most computers have DVD-playing capabilities, it's questionable why anyone would ever stream one across the Internet to their remote computer. Between that and the slow, sometimes stuttery experience of watching compressed TV, using the LocationFree Player for remote viewing is not particularly impressive.

I-O DATA should be applauded for bringing Macintosh compatibility to this Sony product. It's an affordable software solution for Mac users who own a LocationFree base station. But the Player Pak is not a particularly compelling product unless you also own a PSP or a LocationFree TV. It works, but it doesn't wow.



PhoneValet™ Message Center Version 4.0.3 –The “Perfect” Telco Hub and Phone Assistant reviewed by Robert Pritchett



Parliant Corporation
6 Tangmere Court
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada
K2E 7H6
866-VoiceDial (866-864-2334)

<http://www.parliant.com/>

<http://www.parliant.com/phonevalet/>

Released: March 17, 2006

\$170 USD, \$30 USD Upgrade

Demo:

http://www.parliant.com/phonevalet/demo/phonevalet_demo_framed.html

Requirements: Powered USB port. Mac OS X 10.3.9 or later; USB 1.1 or later, Standard (analog) phone line with touch-tone service or Vonage® system. Monitor or display supporting 800x600 or higher resolution (1024x768 recommended). 1.7 MB hard drive space. Maybe Caller ID. A phoneset; QuickTime 6.5 or later.

Comes with: Parliant USB Telephone Adapter, 4-wire phone cable, a telephone 3-port Y adapter, USB cable, 51-page PhoneValet User Guide and a PhoneValet Message Center software CD.

Strengths: Provides more PBX capabilities for Small-Office, Home Offices environments using Macs. Works with Vonage systems. Clients are cross-platform.

Weaknesses: No Skype hooks yet.

Other Reviews:

<http://www.macmerc.com/reviews.php?op=showcontent&id=142>

<http://www.macworld.com/2006/05/reviews/phonevalet4/index.php>

<http://www.macupdate.com/info.php/id/15334>

If you are interested in having an auto-answer solution to incoming calls, you couldn't do better than using Parliant's PhoneValet Message Center. Watch the QuickTime video linked above. That page also links to an interview of Kevin Ford on Business TV News.

We reviewed this product twice before over the years and now PhoneValet Message Center 4.0 is pretty much battle-hardened and bullet-proof. We listed other reviews above, but this is such a great product, someone actually generated a Wikipedia entry for it at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/PhoneValet_Message_Center



What I like about this release is that I can have any phone conversations going out or coming in recorded automatically. This is proving invaluable, as I continue to get Scammers online from “anonymous” and now their voices are getting recorded through my Vonage connection. And speaking of Vonage, the Parliant device comes with a 3-way splitter, so that I can plug in the device to the Vonage *Phone 1* jack and reconnect the analog phone unit to the splitter, so the functionality is enhanced rather than hobbled. I attempted to get the “PC” jack to work between the iMac G5 and the Vonage device and I got dead space with no signal at all. The splitter thoughtfully provided by Parliant made all the difference.

Tim Robertson wrote up his review back in November 2005 on the PhoneValet because of his interest in the recording feature as used for podcasting. His review is at <http://www.mymac.com/showarticle.php?id=2148> and discusses version 3. Since then, Parliant has also updated a software app for podcasters.

For more on the Phone Assistant, click here: <http://www.parliant.com/phonevalet/?l=pptxt>

For more on the Podcast function, click here: <http://www.parliant.com/phonevalet/podcast/?l=pptxt>

The podcast bundle of the PhoneValet Message Center includes *SoundSoap 2* from Bias-Inc at <http://www.bias-inc.com/products/soundsoap/> for scrubbing phone interviews and the standalone price is \$99 USD. Jim Perry did a review back in 2003 located at http://www.kenstone.net/fcp_homepage/review_soundsoap.html

Peak Express LE 5 for optimizing audio for Podcast streaming at <http://www.bias-inc.com/special/peakExpress/>
This version of the PhoneValet Message Center runs around \$250 USD because of the two additional licenses for these two apps.

The PhoneValet Podcast bundle saves about \$150 USD if the items were purchased separately. Andrew Kantor wrote a bit about it back in September 2005 over at *All About This Particular Mac* at <http://www.atpm.com/11.09/phonevalet.shtml>

For another \$80 USD, you can also get PhoneValet Anywhere so you can call in from anywhere and pick up messages remotely using the Internet; <http://www.parliant.com/phonevalet/anywhere/index.html>

Any or all apps from Parliant have clients that are cross-platform as well as being Ubinaried, essentially making this a “true” universal app.

If you’ve stayed with us through the years, you know I’ve been a certified Computer Telephony Engineer, worked in a Voice Over IP Lab back in Connecticut and have been patiently waiting for the “perfect” Apple app for telephony. This was going to require some kind of computer dongle and external connectivity solution to the Telco networks or over the Internet. Well, Parliant has the “Cadillac” system right here, right now and it is affordable for anyone who is a small home office environment that needs an “always-on” office assistant. This rev is the best yet, now that conversations can be recorded automatically.

The app comes with “voices” to choose from, but I reviewed some voices from Cepstral and used one of them to read a script I gave the program to “speak” when answering the phone. I just as easily could have created my own voice recording with the program and used that instead.

The only “downside” is that Skype hasn’t been interfaced with the PhoneValet yet. Telephony engineers being what they are, I think because it is a challenge, the gauntlet has been dropped and Parliant may take up that challenge as well.

I highly recommend the PhoneValet Message Center and give it a “5”. It really is that good! We shipped one out as part of our 4th Anniversary Celebration last month to a lucky subscriber and podcast listener.

tekstyl – It's in the bag!

reviewed by Jefferson Eckert



RadTech, LLC
4352 Rider Trail North
Earth City, MO 63045
1-314-209-9993

Fax: 1-314-699-9076

info@radtech.us

<http://www.radtech.us/Products/Tekmod.aspx>

\$75 - \$ 80 USD

Released: January 1st, 2005



Designed to work with most any notebook computer



Strengths: It is very light and compact.

Weaknesses: The only thing I found is I would forget to flip the pocket back so the computer could breathe. The pocket also makes it a little awkward and would be terrific if it could be removed temporarily. The strengths outweigh these weaknesses.

Why would you get one?

This has been one of the best portable computer cases I've ever owned. The best part is that it actually holds all of my cables in the small side pocket. It condensed my previous backpack down to a small carrying case. One of my concerns is that it would overheat – but that has not been a problem as long as I move the pocket out of the way from my PowerBook 17". The elastic straps have stood up to my constant removing and reinstalling. I'm a heavy user - my computer is on more than 14 hours a day, using my computer at home and at work. It only takes seconds to get it out of the bag and put it back in. I've had the *tekstyl* for about a year and the bag still looks very new!

I would definitely buy this bag again for my next laptop.

Tip: I have a lot of cables that would get intertwined – I put them in Ziploc bags and have not had any trouble since.

ToughDrive -ThumbDrive for USB 2.0

reviewed by Robert Pritchett



ATP, Inc.
PO Box 641651
San Jose, CA 95164-1651
1-408-732-5000 or 1-877-ATP-6900
flash@atpinc.com
<http://www.atpinc.com>

http://flash.atpinc.com/products/view.php?product_id=1178

Released: September 29, 2005

\$78 USD for the 1GB Drive. Available from 256MB to 2 GB. 4GB? Haven't found one yet.

Requirements: Powered USB 2.0 port.

Comes with: Lanyard, Quick User Guide in English French and Spanish; and the drive.

FAQs: http://flash.atpinc.com/articles/view.php?article_id=1006

Strengths: Cross-platform, including Linux. 2-year warranty. Solid-state SIP technology. Waterproof. Dust proof. ESD proof. Shock-resistant. 10-year data retention. Hot-pluggable. No driver needed for Linux kernel 2.4.0 or later, Mac OS 8.6 or later or Win2000 or later.

Weaknesses: Needs a powered USB port. Password protection only for Windows systems.

Other Reviews: Don Lee "crash-dummied" his unit and it took the abuse.

<http://peripherals.consumerelectronicsnet.com/articles/viewarticle.jsp?id=36223>

<http://www.phoronix.com/scan.php?page=article&item=344&num=1>

Reviewed a 1 GB unit with iMac G5 and Mac OS X 10.4.7.

The ToughDrive comes with a velvety, ribbed, rubberized shell (DuraSkin) and a little black lanyard. The USB port cover is not velvetized. When the ToughDrive is plugged into a powered USB port, a blue indicator light is on and blinks while it is being accessed or loaded to. With my machine the password-protection software for non-Mac environments is in a folder instead of a separate partition like the *Petito* we looked at last month.

So is it *macho*? It apparently can handle the abuse according to the other reviews listed above. It isn't much larger than the first two joints of a man's middle finger; 75 mm x 21 mm x 11 mm.

The warranty period is two years and the insertion rate is 100,000 cycles. Since it is solid-state, it is shock resistant (physically) as well as ESD (electrostatic discharge), dust and water-proof.

Data transfer is 30 MB per second on a 2.0 port for download (read) and 20 MB per second for upload (write).

The USB cap is smoother than the DuraSkin body for some reason, but it looks like it is the same material. Gee, you know, they really could do a color-scheme for the military market. It looks like it very well could be the exact same internals as the *Petito*, since the specs are the same.



With the ToughDrive in a USB port, it appears as NO NAME. And it does take a little bit of time to port over 1 GB of files, but instead of 12 hours, no, 5 hours, no, 1 hour, no 30 minutes, no, done, it gets the files transferred rather quickly as Mac OS X recalculates how long it takes to do transfers. It may be hot-swappable, but Mac OS X doesn't like having a drive unceremoniously yanked, so *Ejecting* it is better.



I wouldn't suggest, if you are "007", that you drop it out a 60-story window hoping it survives the drop, but it is solid-state, so it might bounce a few stories back up and land fine, since it is made mostly of rubber. Just remember it is abuse "resistant" and not abuse-proof, okay?

Software Reviews

INtex Cassa vX - 1.2

reviewed by Chris Marshall

INtex Publishing
Organize yourself



INtex Publishing

<http://www.intex-publishing.de/intexsoftenglish/index.html>

<http://www.intex-publishing.de/intexsoftenglish/daily/daily.html>

Released: July 10, 2006

\$19.00 USD, \$21.20 CND, £10.30 GBP, 14,90€ Euro



Audience: Mac Users who like to be organized (and have too much time and money on their hands).

Strengths: Easy to Use, very detailed, let's you know exactly where your money has gone (maybe that should be a weakness as well?!)

Weaknesses: Over complicated for the task in hand.

What they say: Casa vX, made by INtex Publishing, is account management software for your giro accounts, cash and book of household account. Learn where you spend your money, where you can save and what your account's balance will be in the future.

These are the features:

- Modern OS X like Tiger interface
- Full integration with Mac OS X features like iCal
- Full multimedia compliance with QuickTime and iPhoto integration (scanning of receipts)
- Import and export in Excel XLS and ASCII format, pictures, videos in QuickTime formats
- Full Filemaker 8 and 7 compatible, most modern and professional database
- MS Office compatibility (import/export)
- Rich text editing with fonts, colors, alignments, text formatting palette and ruler
- Integrated voice recording
- Categorization of entries in as many categories as you want and color labeling
- QuickSearch with saved search values
- Sorting of data, visual rating and priorities
- iCal appointments from notes
- Easy editing due to standard entries
- Automization of recurring entries such as rents, income etc.
- Screen statements and report printing
- Optional record locking prohibits deletion of records
- AppleScript support
- URL and mailto links for Internet & communication integration

What I say: This product very quickly put me to sleep!

Seriously I am not an accounting type of person. My wife is though. She can spend hours making our accounts balance, whereas I am more concerned with if I have enough cash on me for a few drinks every now and again.

To be totally honest, I have a good financial background having been a CEO of a number of companies, and raised funds for many more, so I do understand the process and requirements.

I struggled to find a place for Casa though. I started off looking at it as a product to manage my personal cash flow, and found it overcomplicated, certainly with the integration with OS X – couldn't really work out why I would want to insert a picture into a cash flow account. Maybe a picture of the car you bought in the New Car account? I thought I would like the option to scan in receipts, but found it easier in the end just to enter the data I wanted from the receipt into the accounts. For larger items that you wanted to keep a receipt for e.g. insurance purposes then this is a really useful feature, but on a day-to-day basis, it didn't add anything for me.

Out of interest, I looked at it as a substitute for Quicken, which we use to run our consultancy business, and it wasn't robust enough at all – the reports weren't strong enough. Again to be fair, they don't claim that it is meant for this type of task, but I was trying to find out how I would use it on a day to day basis.

In summary: I can't say that there is anything wrong with the product technically – it does an adequate all-round job. I was left distinctly lukewarm over all though, and it is hard to pinpoint exactly why. Fundamentally I think the structure and layout that they use, whilst working exceptionally well in other products that I have reviewed, is just too much in this case.

INtex Daily vX - 1.3

reviewed by Chris Marshall

INtex Publishing
Organize yourself



INtex Publishing

<http://www.intex-publishing.de/intexsoftenglish/index.html>

<http://www.intex-publishing.de/intexsoftenglish/daily/daily.html>

Released: June 17, 2006

\$19.00 USD, \$21.20 CND, £10.30 GBP, 14,90€ Euro



Audience: Mac Users who like to be organized (notes, diaries etc).

Strengths: Easy to Use, Powerful Integration, Extremely well thought out.

Weaknesses: Limited Help, Confusing Initial Set Up.

What they say: Daily vX, made by INtex Publishing, is professional software for notes and diaries of all kind. The software offers to you:

- Modern OS X like Tiger Interface
- Full integration of Mac OS X features such as Mail, Safari und iCal
- Multimedia-based with QuickTime and iPhoto integration
- Import and export into HTML, RSS/Blog, XML, Excel XLS and ASCII format, pictures and videos in all QuickTime formats
- FileMaker 8 compatibility, modern database machine
- MS Office compatibility (import/E+export)
- Rich text editing with the free choice of fonts, colors, feeders, text ruler and floating palette
- Integration of audio recording for audio notes
- Integrated formula calculator
- Classification with the help of intelligent lists, graphical priorities, valuations and color labels
- QuickSearch with search criteria to be saved
- Sorting of data
- Data output on printer, as PDF document or as telefax
- Making iCal appointments from notes
- Integrated spell check for several languages
- Search and replace function
- Optional data protection against accidental deleting of entries
- AppleScript support
- URL and Mail links for Internet and communication
- Two views: text and spreadsheet

What I say: This product very quickly became one of my favourite applications.

I had some difficulty initially when I first used it, because I hadn't thought of it as a common database, and was trying to have a number of different "documents" e.g. Passwords, Work in Progress, Ideas etc. Once I recovered from that mental blip though, it was all plain sailing.

I was slightly disappointed with the export to iPod option though, as it exports individual entries as text, rather than the whole document. Until such time as the iPod has the capacity and capability to operate as a PDA though, this feature is pretty much redundant for my use anyway. I like the fact that they have included it as an option, but anyone wanting to use their data “on the go” is going to be disappointed.

By far its greatest strength in my opinion, is the integration of documents and media. It is easy to add documents, audio (from iTunes or personally recorded clips), pictures (from iPhoto or saved to desktop – e.g. the product images I use when writing a review), or some video you want to use. I am currently working on a personal project that involves a lot of pictures and movie clips that I have taken and I found it extremely useful in organizing and recording my thoughts.

There are number of useful record fields, web sites, email details, source of information, and some good management fields for keeping track of priorities, project(s), follow up dates etc. The integration with iCal and Mail with their one click icons, make these all the more powerful.

For the more professional “power user” the RSS and XHTML features are particularly useful, especially for sharing your thoughts with other

In summary: I recommend this product without hesitation to anybody with a Mac. It doesn't matter if you just want to store some personal information and thoughts, or develop more detailed projects. It is strong enough and good enough for the whole range of users.

Garritan Personal Orchestra - A Symphony Orchestra for your Computer

reviewed by Daphne Kalfon



Garritan
Box 400
Orcas, WA 98280
info@garritan.com
<http://www.garritan.com>

\$199 USD

Requirements: 2 GB of free hard disk space; DVD drive; Mac OS X or higher; G4 1.5 MHz, but a G5 is recommended; the Kontakt Player needs a soundcard for playing the sounds of Personal Orchestra; a MIDI interface is required if you are using a MIDI keyboard, another MIDI controller or an external sequencer, minimum 1 GB of RAM.

Strengths: Garritan Personal Orchestra can be utilized in various ways i.e. as a plug-in, with a notation program or stand-alone; the key switching feature is unique and useful; the cost makes this program accessible to everyone; samples of unique and priceless instruments are an exciting feature.

Weaknesses: the manual's guide of the program is a little disjointed; the program makes use of many controllers that may not be accessible in some host programs; some features are limited in scope.

The Garritan website provides a Personal Orchestra audition here:

http://www.garritan.com/audition_hr/

Besides that, there is more information on the software, music demos created by users around the world, news, updates, reviews, tutorials, tips, techniques, and order info.

Another thing I thought is well worth mentioning, is that Garritan Personal Orchestra offers a free orchestration course based on the well-known text "Principles of Orchestration" by composer Nikolay Rimsky-Korsakov. It is interactive, in that it allows you to simultaneously hear and see examples from his own works, via Personal Orchestra. The course is very comprehensive, its many chapters covering all aspects of the symphony orchestra, so I highly recommend trying it out if you are new to the world of orchestration:

<http://www.northernsounds.com/forum/showthread.php?t=45270>

Now on to the installation of the program. I followed the steps in the manual for the installation of the software, and there was one snag - the manual's steps weren't clear about the fact that installation has to be complete *before* the registration tool is accessible. Also, it is important to use the *Enter* key, and *not* the *Return* key in the process. If you don't install a lot of software, this may not be readily apparent, and consequently both those items caused some delay in the installation.

As well, contrary to what was indicated in the manual, I received my authorization key right from the Native Instruments registration webpage, and did not have to wait to receive the same in an Email, in order to complete the authorization process.

I would say that in general, the wording in the manual for the installation, registration and authorization process, as well as the basic guide around the features of Personal Orchestra, was not as clear and concise as it could have been, and was somewhat disjointed in its presentation.

There are three ways to use the Garritan Personal Orchestra; as a plug-in within the sequencer of your choice, with a notation program host, or run as the stand-alone Garritan Personal Orchestra Application. For the review, I've chosen to have GarageBand as the host application, as it's the program I most use these days.

The first thing you'll see when you run the program is the Kontakt player. The Player consists of a virtual keyboard, as well as a variety of options, which are at a default setting, but can be changed, and knob controls, which I will explain in a little more detail further below. The manual takes you through on a guided tour, to explain the function and use of each item on the player, and also shows how to go about loading the various instruments into the Kontakt player.

The knob controls available on the player are both standard and specific, the former consisting of **Tune**, **Pan** and **Volume**, and the latter consisting of:

- **portamento**, which allows a slide effect from note to note, especially useful with instruments such as trombone and strings. Can also be drawn in using the host program of choice, if such a feature is available.
- **length**, which allows the user to control the length of the samples. Useful for simulating double/triple tonguing on the brass and woodwind instruments. This can also be drawn in.
- **VARI**, which allows the user to apply random variability to intonation
- **VAR2**, which allows the user to apply random variability in timbre
- **BD Fund**, which controls the strength of the fundamental frequency of the bass drum

There is a more sophisticated form of the Kontakt player, and for those who wish to have the ability to apply more advanced programming and customization, it is recommended to upgrade to the full version.

Personal Orchestra makes use of many MIDI controllers (which create control change messages) to help create as realistic a performance as possible. These controllers enable the user to shape and play many different articulations in real time, during the recording process.

The manual then describes the four basic real-time controls:

- **mod wheel**, a controller whose purpose it is to effect changes in an instrument's dynamics and expression. The mod wheel, found on most standard controller keyboards, can be moved up and down during recording to effect changes in an instrument's volume, dynamics and expression. If desired, this controller can also be drawn in by hand in the host sequencing program, or a similar result can be obtained by making adjustments using the individual instrument's volume track.

Using the mod wheel in real time to effect changes in dynamics and expression takes time and practice, and as such, for the purposes of this review, I obtained such changes by working within the instrument's volume track after recording was done.

- **velocity**, which has to do with attacks and accentuation. This is brought about by how hard or soft the keys on the music keyboard are depressed. I found that in testing out various instruments in Personal Orchestra, that velocity control is not available on all, and when it is present, it is often not as effective as it could be. I definitely found this issue with velocity to be a drawback when trying to obtain certain articulations in my orchestration project.

- **key-switching**, a feature of Personal Orchestra, which allows the user to change articulations in real-time, and which I will explain below. I used this function for example in one of my flute tracks, switching in real-time, while recording, between regular vibrato and flutter tongue, and it worked quite well. It was nice to have access to both articulations on one track.

- **sustain pedal**, which is used to obtain smooth legato playing. When depressed for example, it automatically creates a legato sound in the instrument patch. If desired, sustain can also be drawn in by hand in the host sequencing program.

On the subject of key-switching, further on in the manual, there is a table, which lists each of the instruments in the Personal Orchestra, along with its description, key switches if any, and the various controls that can be applied to it. So for example, the flute I used was called Flute Solo KS, KS meaning that it is a key switch patch. What that means is that within that patch, by depressing certain designated keys outside of its playable range, I can effect articulations such as vibrato, non-vibrato and flutter. Other instruments may come with a much wider array of key switches, such as violins 1, which comes with key switch articulations such as legato, mutes, upbows, downbows, alternating up and downbows, pizzicato, tremolo, and various trills.

On the last one, trills, I found the key switch feature quite handy for something like timpani, but for some other instruments, I didn't feel like it gave a natural sound. I experimented by playing a key switch trill, alternating with a trill I played myself, and the person listening found that the one I played myself sounded more natural than the key switch one. I am not saying this is the case for all of the instruments, but definitely for some.

Another thing about the key switch keys, is that on the Kontakt Player keyboard, they are designated in a pale yellow colour, which I often times found very difficult to see, and found that aspect a little frustrating as a result. Simply using a brighter colour would alleviate this problem.

In addition to those four basic controls, Personal Orchestra has other features such as:

- **Pitch Bend Wheel**, again found on most standard controller keyboards, and which allows the pitch of a note to be bent. This type of controller can also be drawn in by hand in the host application.

- **Portamento**, a controller, which allows a slide effect from note to note, especially useful with, instruments such as trombone and strings.

- **Vibrato Control** - a few of the instruments, such as piccolo trumpet, flute, oboe and piccolo, have readily available vibrato options, but for other instruments of the orchestra, which are capable of vibrato, vibrato speed is a "hidden" controller in Personal Orchestra. This means it can only be activated if the host application supports that controller. If it doesn't, then the user has no way of having vibrato in certain instruments if it is desired.

The manual mentions that there are two vibrato controllers, one of which was just discussed above - vibrato speed, and the other is aftertouch, which controls vibrato intensity. I was able to discern some changes in vibrato intensity during aftertouch, but I didn't feel that the overall effect was a natural sounding one in any of the instruments that I tried it on.

In general, the instrument samples sounded quite realistic, but I did find that some were better than others. In addition, I found the scope of instruments available in the percussion family to be somewhat limited.

Personal Orchestra makes use of controllers, some of which are not available unless you are using certain host programs. Also, there is a bug with the mod wheel for which there is not yet a fix for GarageBand users, but a workaround is available. This issue is discussed here:

<http://garritan.com/GPO-GarageBandPage.html>

and on that page, users are directed to where they can obtain the workaround.

As part of my review, I created an orchestration project using only the instruments from the Garritan Personal Orchestra. While I was playing around with one of the flute sounds, the melody came to me, and from there, developed the rest of the piece - I guess it was an inspiring flute sound!

<http://www.maccompanion.com/archives/August2006/Garritanreverbed.mp3>

In general, I would say that Personal Orchestra is good value for your money - for a reasonable price, it provides the essential tools that any composer would need to create music for ensembles of whatever size. In addition, this sample library is something I think both beginners and professionals alike will find very useful in their orchestration projects and can be utilized as a great add-on for those who already own other orchestral sample libraries.

iMaginator 2.4 – Have an Affect on Others!

reviewed by Robert Pritchett



Stone Design Corporation
PO Box 6799
Albuquerque, NM 87197-6799
1-505-345-4800

<http://www.stone.com/>

<http://www.stone.com/iMaginator/iMaginator.html>

Released: April 29, 2006

\$49 USD and free upgrades for life! Try-before-you-buy for 14 days.

Download: <http://www.stone.com/NewDownload.html>

Requirements: Mac OS X Tiger or later.

Tutorial: <http://www.stone.com/iMaginator/Features.html#MOVIES>

Forum: <http://www.stone.com/stoneforum/>

Strengths: Seriously improves on Apple technology.

Weaknesses: None found.

Other Reviews: Russ Conte at <http://www.trou.org/> > Site Map > Reviews > S. posted October 18, 2005. He also did the tutorials listed above.

Andrew Stone Interview: <http://maclectic.com/B2/index.php>

Are you into special effects in digital processing and imaging? How about adding another 108 special effects? iMaginator does that.

iMaginator is totally AppleScriptable and works seamlessly with Apple's Spotlight and Core Imaging technologies.

Russ Conte has grabbed the bull by the horns and run with it, by creating a number of tutorial videos linked above. Go watch them.

Now go download a copy at **Download:** <http://www.stone.com/NewDownload.html> and play with it for 14 days on your own.

1. Launch iMaginator - the first time you launch, each possible effect is demoed to you - this will last about a minute or so. To pause/resume, just type <SPACEBAR>. To stop it midway, type anything else.

If you want to see Demo again, choose **Tools -> Watch All Effects**.

2. Add a few cool filters from the *Favorites* category in outline view on left.
3. Click on the *Filters* library (the center button) - and drag one onto the image!
4. Try some of the effects on the *Tasks* menu

One again, the folks at Stone Design have done a magnificent job taking what works and making it work even better. More professional software at a Shareware price!



Intego Security Suite – Internet Security Barrier X4 Platinum Edition – A Real Big Security Blanket

reviewed by Robert Pritchett



Intego

500 North Capital of Texas Highway

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1-512- 637-0700

Fax: 1-512-637-0701

sales@intego.com

<http://www.intego.com/home.asp>

<http://www.intego.com/isb/home.asp>

Released: ChatBarrier X4 10.4, ContentBarrier X4, 6-6-06; Personal

Backup X4 10.4.5, 6-15-06; Personal AntiSpam X4 10.4, 04-15-06;

NetBarrier X4 10.4.1, 2-27-06; VirusBarrier X4 10.4.3, 01-17-06.

\$150 USD Single-user. There are also 5 and 10-user licenses. Try-before-you-buy; <http://www.intego.com/demo/> Annual Service Updates, \$30 USD per year each.

Comes with: [NetBarrier X4](#), [VirusBarrier X4](#), [ContentBarrier X4](#), [Personal Backup X4](#), [ChatBarrier X4](#), [Personal Antispam X4](#).

Requirements: ContentBarrier X4 and Personal Backup X4 – Kids; Mac OS X 10.2.8 or later; 40 MB hard drive space each. Internet Security Barrier X4 AntiSpam (with NetBarrier X4, VirusBarrier X4 and Personal AntiSpam X4) – Internet connection; Mac OS X 10.2.8 or later and 70 MB hard drive space. ChatBarrier X4 requires Mac OS X 10.3.9 or later and 10 MB of hard drive space.

Strengths: One-stop shop for all Mac security concerns.

Weaknesses: ContentBarrier X4 “takes over”, even when it is disabled. So does VirusBarrier X4. VersionTracker comments are harder than I am on Intego: <http://www.versiontracker.com> and search on Intego.

License Agreement: <http://www.intego.com/buynow/license.asp>

Discussed in Mac ReviewCast #64: <http://www.surfbits.com/?p=846>

Internet Security Barrier X4 Platinum Edition is a 6-in-one package that contains NetBarrier X4, Personal Antispam X4 and VirusBarrier X4, Personal BackupX4 Edition, ContentBarrier X4 and ChatBarrier X4.



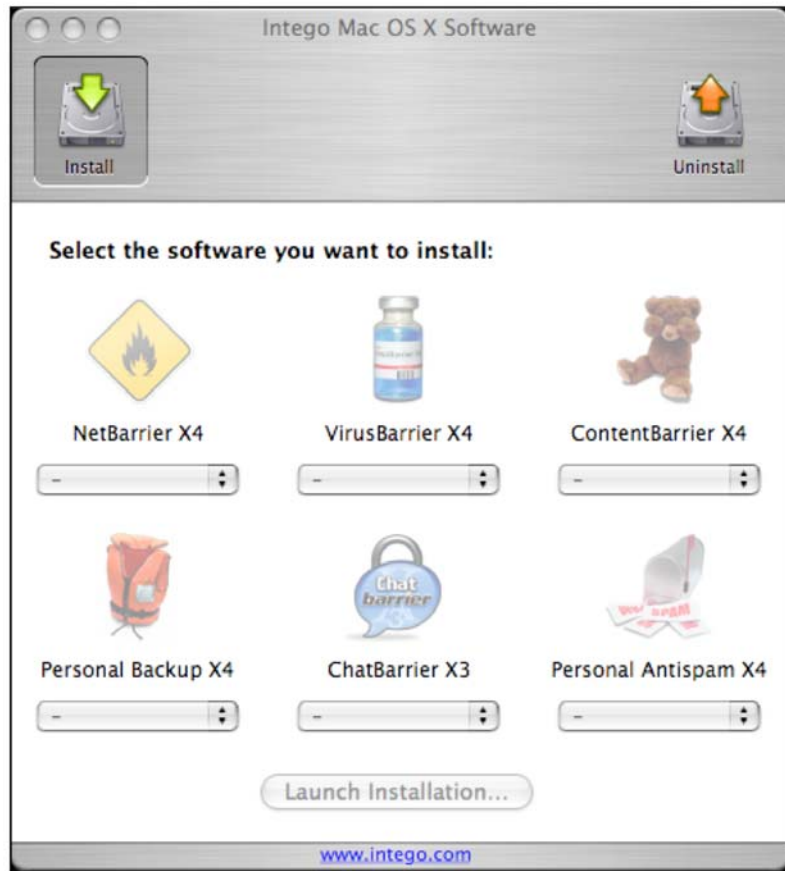
If you are concerned about security issues soup-to-nuts and don't mind the incredible performance hits from letting these apps run in the background, constantly notifying you of possible intrusions or Email as Spam, don't wish to surf the Internet much or do not want to view video streaming online, and are a parent that is completely untrusting of your children's access to any online content or in chat sessions and want to be a *total control freak* regarding computer use (scheduling availability per computer account), than this is the software for you!



I was given Internet Security Barrier X4 and later Personal Backup X4 and downloaded Content Barrier X4 instead of receiving a copy of the Platinum Edition directly.

An earlier installation screen appeared on my system, which I don't show. While reviewing the whole set of Intego apps, this later installation screen appeared. I understand why they set up the Intego apps and I appreciate also that they have an uninstall button, because I had to reinstall some of the apps. They didn't install correctly the first or second time, probably because I had other apps that may have been interfering with proper installation and had to turn them off. Think clamXav, etc.

Also each app required a serial number. One I was given originally for ContentBarrier X4 didn't work where the 5 kept turning into an S until I asked why it would not "take" and we discovered I had an invalid Serial Number, which was finally replaced.



Either way the apps are installed, they each require a reboot of the system and their own Serial Number.

Once everything is successfully loaded, running the NetUpdate X4 will eventually get this screen or one similar to it. Checking for updates can be calendared.

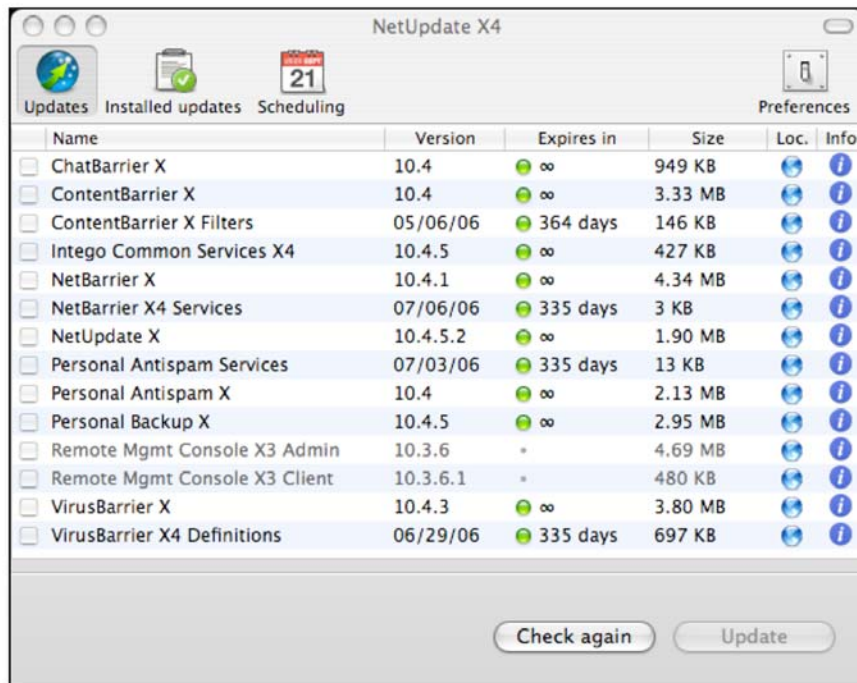
Notice that NetUpdate X4 is in alphabetical order while the Install window is not.

I'll step through the Intego apps according to the Install List.

NetBarrier X4

NetBarrier X4 does the firewall thing, and also adds the antivandal function that includes a stop list that gets updated as intruders are discovered. A privacy protection option filters data blocks banner ads, manage cookies, clean cache and history files and stealthifies the machine online.

A Data filter can be set up to protect sensitive information from getting out of the computer and going online. And a few monitoring tools are thrown in for good measure, including a monitoring screen saver, just to be different.



I was rather amazed at the number of Trojans this can flag in the firewall settings. I'm also amazed they are not all on by default to be blocked.

The way Intego monetizes these apps isn't just the cost of the software up front. They also follow the same formula the other commercial anti-malware vendors in the Windows environment work, by offering annual fee services for updates. A fee-based Services feature does an expiration countdown as shown in the NetUpdate X4 window shown above.

More here: <http://www.intego.com/netbarrier/> It costs \$70 USD, if purchased alone.

VirusBarrier X4

The VirusBarrier X4 is kind of cute to watch run. It follows the green radar-screen concept as it analyzes files. If it detects anything as it runs in the background, choices for alerts are either as a voice or as Email notification. And it works faster than clamXav.

The NetUpdate X4 does an expiration date countdown too. For VirusBarrier X4, they are Definitions and not Services.



More here: <http://www.intego.com/virusbarrier/> It costs \$70 USD, if purchased alone.

ContentBarrier X4

ContentBarrier X4 blocks just about everything. *Restricted access* stops programs like titan.tv (Elgato's online TV program partner), iTunes (Streaming apps), or our Blog backside, or YouTube content or anything with Flash streaming such as the backside of Xooma Worldwide or even the Apple Ads at apple.com!

Okay, it does block everything, but an admin has to step through the configuration and the non-admin accounts need passwords. I mean, come on! You can even do start-stop times with this app for access. It is designed to block streaming media (bummer – as in, forget QuickTime), peer-to-peer software (no more BitTorrent), chat sessions (iChat, iChatAV), Email and application blocking. You really could get carried away here.



As can be seen, there are 4 levels of protection, Okay, three plus custom. I like the anti-predator in iChat sessions mode. And logs can be created per account. There is also automatic Email notification and search engine redirection. Traffic data can also be recorded for Internet use. So we really do have a Big Brother with this app. But I don't like being hobbled, but for many, hobbling is necessary with Sodom and Gomorra on the Internet. And apparently proxy server software can bypass this app, so it keeps honest people honest, however...

More here: <http://www.intego.com/contentbarrier/> It costs \$60 USD, if purchased alone.

Personal Backup X4

This app runs in either manual or automatic mode with backups to any storage medium and even can do the AES 128 encryption mode, if desired. The horizontal scrollbar goes to buttons from backup, Synchronize, Clone, Archive, Move, Restore, Documents, Home, Movies, Music, Pictures or New Script for doing AppleScript customized functions. Or Drag&Drop from Source to Destination. It does one thing at a time.



More here: <http://www.intego.com/personalbackup/> It costs \$70 USD, if purchased alone.

Along with this come two Widgets for Dashboard, one showing current script status and the other showing status of all Intego software running on the machine.



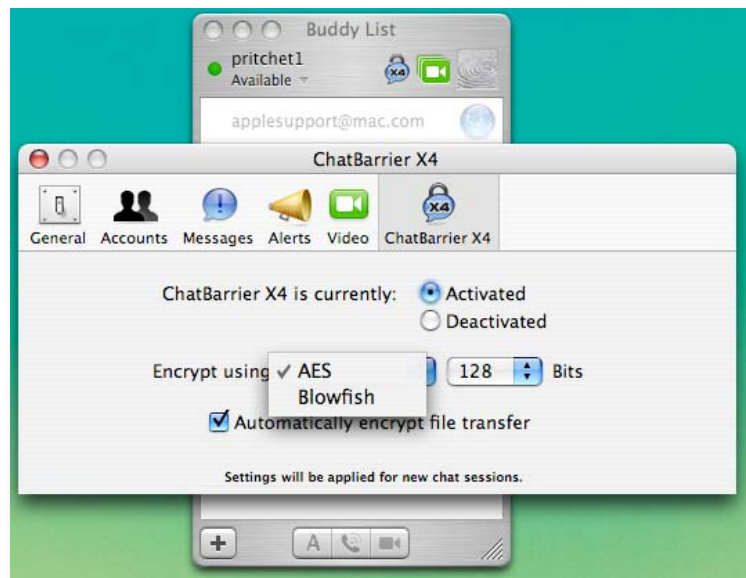
ChatBarrier X4

If you are concerned about iChat intrusions and need to encrypt content, it is possible if the other person(s) is/are using ChatBarrier X4 as well, so the information can be decrypted. It comes with 2 licenses so you won't feel like a person with one hand clapping.

More here:

<http://www.intego.com/chatbarrier/>

It costs \$40 USD, if purchased alone, so it's \$20 USD per license. I wonder how soon Apple will add encryption to iChat with Leopard? I would.

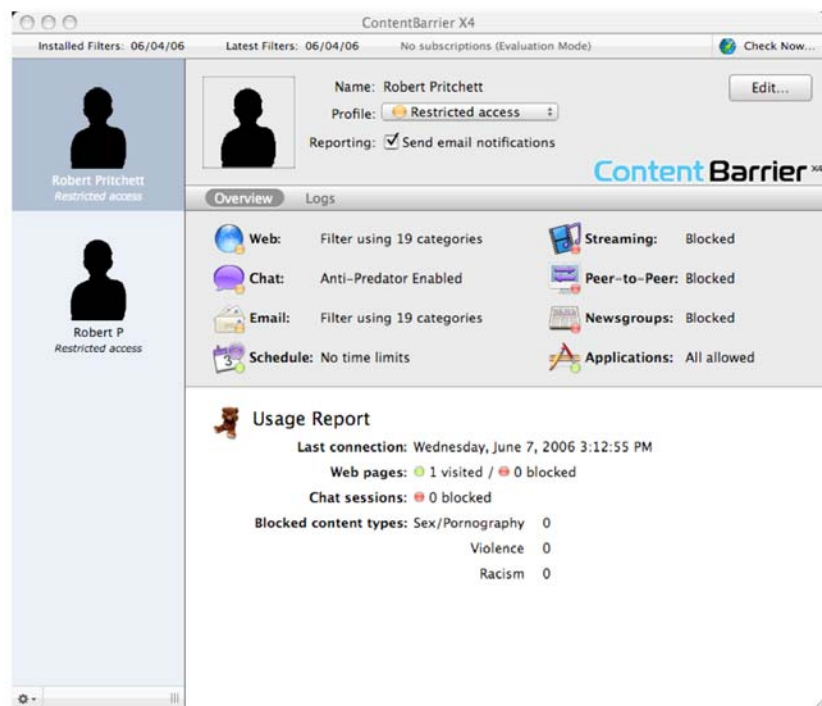


Personal Antispam X4

When Email is running a *Spam Detected* icon pops up onscreen. I noticed that sending Email slows down considerably as a result of activating this app. Okay, I had to open Mail.app and run the configuration for the Antispam function so I could export Email.

The Personal Antispam X4 takes over the Mail.app junk filter (grayed out) and creates its own *Spam* folder where items are sent when identified. Each time there is an item that has been identified in any of these security apps, a loud *bizzzt* sound comes out of the computer and an Intego Widget appears. The noise is the same as a game buzzer heard on the court of a school game of basketball.

It's an app full of intelligent filters that are updated online through NetUpdate X4 Services, which will require an annual fee if you want it kept up-to-date. I actually like it!



Works with either Mail.app or Microsoft Entourage. And a semi-translucent widget-like popup appears every time an errant Email arrives. Then it puts that baddies in a bit-bucket Spam folder instead of unto the Junk folder.

More here: <http://www.intego.com/personalAntispam/> It costs \$50 USD, if purchased alone.

So there you go, six software apps from Intego for the security-minded paranoids, seven, if you include the NetUpdate X4. And you don't mind having performance slow down or you don't mind being a parent Nazi, if more than one person uses the machine.

Is piece of mind worth \$150 USD up front and \$30 USD per service, per year thereafter? For me that means 4x\$30 USD next year.

You decide. Someone I highly respect, who makes software for a living, ran the apps, saw the performance and response on his system drop dramatically, so he removed everything. The pain for him wasn't worth the gain. I have kids. There is lots of stuff on the Internet I don't want or need to see. I hate Spam. I also have other alternatives that don't cost as much. But if you want a one-stop-shop for all your so-called security needs, give Intego a try.



INtex Labels vX

reviewed by Chris Marshall

INtex Publishing
Organize yourself

INtex Publishing

<http://www.intex-publishing.de/intexsoftenglish/index.html>

www.intex-publishing.de/intexsoftenglish/labels/labels.html

Released: June 19, 2006

\$19.00 USD, \$21.20 CDN, £10.30 GBP, 14,90€ Euro



Audience: Mac Users who like to be organized and need to label everything!

Strengths: Creative, flexible, fun.

Weaknesses: A little overcomplicated for labels.

What they say: Labels vX is the professional software for merge and copy printing of labels

- Design and text as many labels as you like
- Group your labels in categories like item tags, price tags, address labels or name stickers
- Print x identical copies of one label design (copy printing)
- Print x different labels in a row (merge printing)
- Define at which label position printing should start
- Choose from a wide variety of label sizes
- Free rich text formatting of the label text
- Import of graphical backgrounds in all QuickTime formats like JPEG, TIFF, PDF, etc.
- Integrated print preview

These are the features:

- Modern OS X like Tiger interface
- Full multimedia compliance with iPhoto integration
- import and export in Excel XLS and ASCII format, pictures and videos in all QuickTime formats
- Full Filemaker 8 and 7 compatible, most modern and professional database
- MS Office compatibility (import/export)
- Rich text editing with fonts, colors, alignments and much more, text formatting palette and ruler
- Categorization of labels in categories and color labeling
- QuickSearch with saved search values
- Sorting of data, visual rating and priorities
- Optional record locking prohibits deletion of records

What I say: Wow! I never knew labels could be so much fun!

The most I had ever done in the past was print some white labels with plain text on them. Now I have color, fonts, images, designs – you name it I can have it. But do I need to?



To be honest, no. I am “old school”. A label is a label – it is meant to do one thing and do it well, but I can see why this application would be extremely useful for many people. I have friends who have teenage kids and I know they would love the individuality that this provides.

The most useful feature in my opinion is the categories. To have a database of labels stored in categories such as Addresses, Christmas, Personal Documents etc. was great.

In summary: This application makes good use of the underlying structure that INtex publishing use for a number of their products. It is well worth trying out if you have any reason (or interest) in creating anything more than bland white labels. I will certainly be using it again in the future.

Living DayLites – Productivity Manager for the Mac – Daylite Productivity Suite

reviewed by Robert Pritchett

 <p>Marketcircle Inc. 431 Alden Road Unit 20 Markham, ON Canada L3R 3L4 905-480-5555 Fax: 905-248-3101</p> <p>Marketcircle Europe P.O. Box 23 Swansea, United Kingdom SA1 7YL phone: + 44 (0) 845 644 6261 fax: +1 905 248 3101 info@marketcircle.com http://www.marketcircle.com/index.html</p> <p>Released: March 30, 2006 \$189 USD, 30-day try-before-you buy.</p> <p>Requirements: Mac OS X 10.3.9 or later; 1 GH G4 or later; 512 MB RAM; 250 MG had drive space.; 1024x768 display.</p> <p>Forum: http://www.marketcircle.com/wp/?p=150</p> <p>Tutorials: http://www.marketcircle.com/help/movies.html#Daylite3</p> <p>Comes with: Daylite 3; Daylite Mail Integration Module.</p> <p>Tour: http://www.marketcircle.com/daylite/tourCalendar.html</p> <p>Strengths: Uses Apple technology to best effect.</p> <p>Weaknesses: None found.</p> <p>Other Reviews: http://www.akappleug.org/reviews/2006/06/15/daylite-302/</p> <p>Used on an iMac G5 and Mac OS X 10.4.7 for this review. Discussed in Mac ReviewCast #65: http://www.surfbits.com/?p=851</p>	   
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Get organized! Work smarter and not harder. Stay in control! Manage Information and relationships instead of collecting it in shoeboxes and neglecting those you work with. Work your information instead of letting it work you.

Run through this quick looksee:

http://www.marketcircle.com/images/splash/home_splash_1_20060619_minitor.mov

Welcome to Business Management Productivity with Mac OS X in mind. We've looked at some project management solutions in the past that were either web-based subscription services or cross-platform with monthly fees for use. Now let's take a peek at "Productivity Management" that takes Project Management up a notch.

Marketcircle has been focusing on a Mac-based business project management productivity tool for a few years now and this is about as good as it gets, because it relies on the strengths associated with Mac OS X with no compromises.

I would strongly suggest that you go through the QuickTime videos in the tutorials linked above to get a real flavor for this app. The Tour isn't too bad either! The Daylite Productivity Suite (DPS) merges Daylite 3 nicely with Apple's own *Mail.app* functionality and really enhances the experience by putting in those "missing pieces" we have all be craving for that Apple has not delivered yet. You know, things like Email merge with template letters and memos. It does this with the Daylite Mail Integration Module (DMI). DMI also handles the contact list functions nicely by participating in the dynamic database that grows to include everybody you work with, both inside and outside the company. Keep track of all activities and correspondence as an electronic papertrail. The only thing is, Daylite has to be running *before* Mail.app, so that the interface will work properly. Daylite's database has to be accessible.

Purchased as standalone, DMI runs around \$49 USD as an add-on to Daylite 3.

<http://www.marketcircle.com/daylite/mail.html>

Daylite 3 is designed for use of a small business from 1 to 50 or so people. It brings together calendaring and scheduling, activity delegation, pipeline views (essentially, project management workflow activities), report writing (memos, letters, etc.) and basically staying organized using a relatively clean interface. It also knows how to use Apple's *Address Book* to best effect. DMI also has the ability to let us work remotely by bringing the power of the Internet to the desktop, wherever it may be. <http://www.marketcircle.com/daylite/index.html>

The Project Management function comes through in the Project Pipeline, using workflow stages, progress tabs, activities and forms. It follows the process that Apple provides for its own sales staff such as initial contact, pain identification, solution gathering and presenting, negotiations, purchase options, implementation activities, etc.

Reports that upper management likes so much, can easily be generated. With a small business, that would be me.

Correspondence that requires paper instead of electronics can also be utilized using labels and envelope addressing apps.

Daylite requires a username/password combination to get going. The database engine used is OpenBase.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Openbase> Remember the Parliant PhoneValet Message Center? The Daylite OpenBase maintenance window recognizes it.

The Preferences windows are well-organized. One is the *Roles & Relationships* window. There are lists of Contact Roles, Organization Roles and Relationships. Once one panel is figured out, the process is simple. Click on the + or – to add or remove an item in each windowpane. Simple! Even simpler is that Marketcircle preloaded most items so it is much easier to remove than to add. Adding requires a little more skill – like knowing your business, so Daylite 3 (okay, DMI) can be customized to fit your way of getting work done and becoming profitable.

With *macCompanion* staff increasing, I need a better way to manage and DPS appears to be one that works for me.

Billings is another module that purchased separately, runs around \$39 USD. And no, it does not come as part of the DPS , but don't you think a "Suite" should?

I gave the Daylite Productivity Suite a 5, because it does a fantastic job of doing what it does best, keeping things organized in a frenetic world.

See Leo LaPorte talk about it: http://movies.marketcircle.com/mov/daylite3/Daylite_on_Call_For_Help.mov

Mireth Technology NetShred X - 3.17

reviewed by Chris Marshall



Mireth Technology

<http://www.mireth.com/>

<http://www.mireth.com/pub/nxme.html>

Released: July 06, 2006

\$19.95 USD, \$22.60 CND, £10.85 GBP, 15,65€ Euro

Audience: Mac Users who, for any reason at all, want to get rid of their download history (amongst other things).

Strengths: Easy to Use, Simple and Effective.

Weaknesses: Have to close down the applications you want to shred first.

What they say: When you need an Internet track eraser, use NetShred X, the Internet privacy software that's easy, fast and cleaner.

- Easy because it runs automatically. No privacy software is going to work if you don't use it, so NetShred X was designed to be easy to use - just quit from your browser or email program and NetShred X will erase your Internet tracks automatically.
- Fast because it runs in the background. Are you tired of waiting for your browser to clear cache? Run NetShred X and you can erase your cache and use the Internet again immediately, without waiting for your browser to do it.
- Cleaner because it will erase (not just delete) browser cache, history, download cache, QuickTime cache, favicons, email cache, email trash, junk and spam so the data can't be recovered.

Key Features:

- Works with most browsers, email programs
- "Confirm before shred" option
- Supports Netscape, Firefox profiles
- Overwrite Options - A configurable overwrite pattern and number of overwrites.
- Compliant with Department of Defense (DoD) and NSA electronic document shredding standards (optional)
- Can be run automatically or manually



What I say: It does exactly what it says it does, and what I wanted it to do. And, it does it very efficiently and effectively.

There are many reasons why you might want to erase your Internet history, and it does no harm to clear out your email trash every now and again. This application is a true friend when it comes to helping you tidy up.

NetShred is already an established part of my regular maintenance and backup activities, and I'm pretty fanatical about that aspect of my computing, and I reckon you will find it useful as well.

In summary: A great product in my opinion. I know there are many ways to clean up your Mac but in my opinion I am all for taking whatever help I can get to make life easy, and this application certainly does that!

Pop Char X – 3.0 – Find the missing characters you need in a single click

reviewed by Harry Babad & Chris Marshall

ergonis ... software that just works.
Software GmbH

ergonis

popchar@ergonis.com

<http://ergonis.com/>

www.macility.com/products/popchar/

Released: June 29, 2006

\$29.99 USD, \$33.33 CND, £16.30 GBP, 23.45€ Euro



Audience: Mac Users who use for example scientific symbols, recipes and foreign languages

Strengths: Incredibly easy to use, focuses on your current font, creates your own *Recent Character* list.



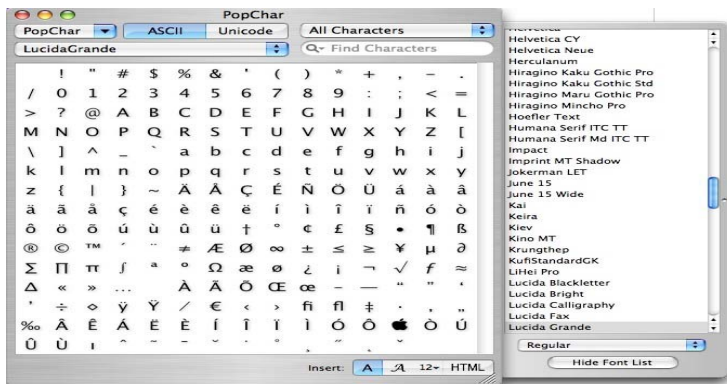
Weaknesses: Limited Help, somewhat confusing initial set up.

Introduction: Neither of use has ever been accused of being at a loss for words, but PopChar is so focused and functional that we've decided to follow the KISS rule in this review.

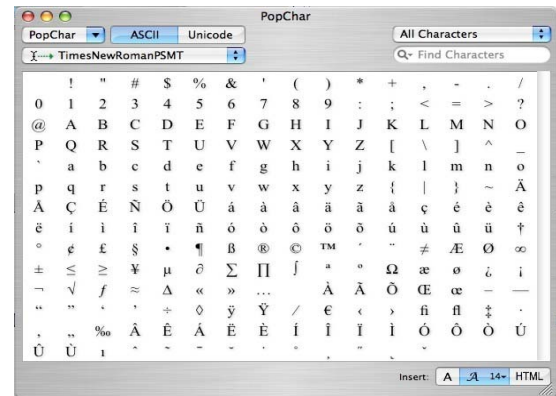
What they say: Tired of searching and remembering keyboard combinations for umlauts and other special characters? Want to get the most out of your fonts? Then PopChar is the right tool for you. It's invisible, almost, until you needed it, then its one click away in your menubar.

PopChar makes "typing" of unusual characters easy without having to remember keyboard combinations. Whenever you need a special character, PopChar is there to help. Click the "P" in the menu bar to display a table of characters. Select the desired character and it instantly appears in your document. A convenient side drawer holds a list of your installed fonts so navigating to the one you want is easy.

PopChar X supports Unicode fonts with thousands of characters available. Just switch from ASCII to Unicode to see all of them, neatly arranged in the standard Unicode categories.



Lucinda Grande Font w Font List Draw Open



TimesNewRoman Font – ASCII View

Web designers will especially enjoy the ability to insert HTML symbols.

Do you write documents in different fonts, Harry's phone list is in comic sans, and just click on *as in the document* in the pull down menu and you'll have access to all the characters in that font.

What I say: Watch the demonstration video (<http://www.ergonis.com/products/popcharx/PopCharXMovie.html>), download the application and then try and work out why you have waited so long for a product like this. I spent the first 30 minutes alternatively smiling like a 4 year old in a candy shop, and kicking myself for not having had this product before.

Now of course if you never use special characters, this will be a total waste of time but between us, I (Chris) communicate via IM and email in English and Spanish, and use the € and £ a lot, as a quick look at my own *Recent Characters* drop down will show you. One extremely useful feature is the way Pop Char intuitively creates your own list of characters based on your usage. Not only that, but it automatically uses the font that you are using at the time.

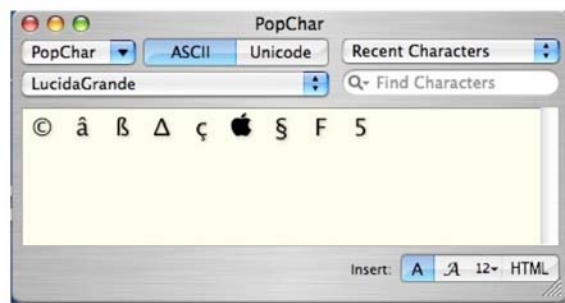
A Gripe or Three

Setup and Initial Use Issue — I (Chris) had an initial problem working out where the application had gone. All that is visible is the “P” icon and you have to right click on that to register and set preferences, and ... the default puts the icon in the top left hand side of the menu bar, which meant that every time I went to use it I tended to overshoot and as I have Expose set to show my Desktop in that active corner everything disappeared. It is easy thought to choose between left, centre or right of your menu bar. A trip to the preferences pane soon fixed my problem

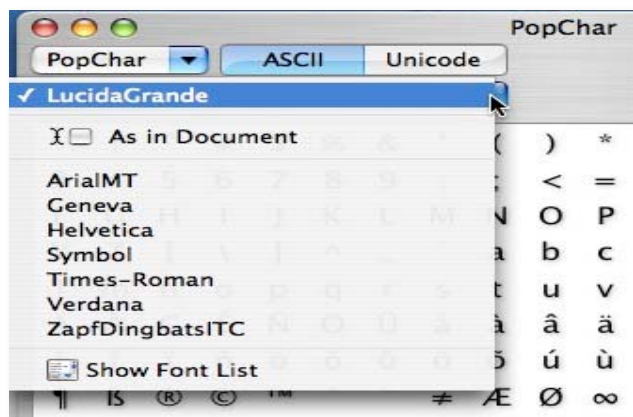


Harry says there are two missing feature that weaken this otherwise excellent product:

Highlighting Selected Characters to Ease Finding Them Again — An earlier version of PopChar highlighted, in yellow, characters I'd selected. That character's highlighting did not go away either when I closed the application, or rebooted. Please, bring that feature back, it save us from a bit of eyestrain. There is a *recent characters* feature, that works, but I prefer the all-in-one ability to see highlights.



Absence of a Way to Designate Favorite Fonts — Most of us use only a handful of the large number of fonts installed on our systems. It would shorten the font list, if in a manner similar to that used by either Apple or Unsanity's FontCard, <http://www.unsanity.com/haxies/fontcard/>, we could search only for most recently used or favorite fonts. The fonts list shown in the pull-down menu bears no resemblance to the fonts I frequently use. However, by selecting *as in document*, this problem can be largely negated changing the gripe to a nit. Thanks Chris!



NOTE: You were aware that all sorts of application install font sets on your computer, weren't you? You haven't checked lately, hmmm.

In Summary

This is an excellent, easy to use product that will save you time when searching for key-board combinations for symbols, accented or non-English characters and the like. Some of you may find the initial price a bit high, but I (Harry) have been using the software almost every day since it was first released in what is now known as a Classic version. Upgrades were and are still free. I have never regretted paying the shareware fee. For those of you who do cost-benefit analyses, at minimum wage, searching the hard way for 2-4 minutes day for elusive font keyboard shortcuts, you are soon in the black.

Try it, then buy it! We gladly give this product 4.5 macCs

Stone Works!

reviewed by Robert Pritchett



Stone Design Corporation
PO Box 6799
Albuquerque, NM 87197-6799
1-505-345-4800
FAX: 1-505-345-3424
info@stone.com
<http://www.stone.com>

Released: July 17, 2006

\$399 USD <http://www.stone.com/store/shop.pl/page=products.htm>

30-day try-before-you-buy:

http://www.stone.com/tutorials/Licensing/Free_License_1.html

Download: <http://www.stone.com/NewDownload.html>

Requirements: Mac OS X 10.1 or later.

Forums: <http://www.stone.com/stoneforum/>

Languages: English, Deutsch, 日本語, Español, Français, Italiano, Svenska, or Dansk!

Philosophy: <http://www.stone.com/Philosophy/Philosophy.html>

Resources: http://www.stone.com/Stone_Design_Resources.html

Successes: http://www.stone.com/Stone_Studio_Successes/

Tutorials: <http://www.stone.com/tutorials/index.html>

Strengths: Just-in-time software for just-enough users.

Weaknesses: Doesn't have thousands of options, just those needed.

Other Reviews: <http://www.stone.com/Reviews/>

Reviewed on an iMac G5 with Mac OS X 10.4.7.

Discussed in Mac ReviewCast #65: <http://www.surfbits.com/?p=851>

What is the difference between Stone Studio and Stone Works? Would you believe \$100 USD? How about seven more apps? While Stone Studio is an amalgam of 7 apps - Create, PhotoToWeb, TimeEqualsMoney, SliceAndDice, PStill, PackUpAndGo and GIFfun, Stone Works also consists of iMaginator, StampInStone, GlobalWarmth, FontSight and PreferenceCommander, Videator and a new Stone Studio Widget.

Way back in 2003, we reviewed Stone Studio. True to his word, Andrew Stone has provided "free updates for life". And even when I've switched machines, lost registration codes and been a nuisance, Andrew Stone has kindly resent that information more than once and has done so gladly, happily and without complaint.

Elsewhere in this edition of *macCompanion*, we already reviewed two of the Stone Works apps – iMaginator for image processing and Videator for creating and adding special effects for movies. While doing these reviews, Videator was updated and so was Stone Studio.



Besides all these sweet apps, Stone Design also gives away software such as DOctor, an MS Word to PostScript and PDF converter and TrueBlue, a TrueType to PostScript Type 1 font converter. And Stone Design Corporation has been constantly upgrading and adding to their software suite since 1984. Check out their history; http://www.stone.com/Stone_Design.html and their philosophy of doing business; <http://www.stone.com/Philosophy/Philosophy.html>



All these apps were designed for Apple's "everyman". Each app can be purchased separately and runs it's own genre between shareware and much higher priced "Commercial" software. If you purchased each app separately, you would be paying that higher "Pro" price so you are way better off just getting the whole package and be done with it. Each one addresses specific issues and you can get soup-to-nuts all-meal deal or just taste the entrées. Sean Ashcroft does a pretty good job hitting some of the Stone Studio apps in the May issue of MacWorld UK, but you need to be a subscriber to view it <http://www.macworld.co.uk/reviews/> or go see the scanned article on Stone.com's website listed above under "Other Reviews".

The real power of these apps is in how they work together in a synergistic manner, and with time, I've seen these each of these apps get just a little better with each rev. To see just how each app works, check out the Tutorials linked above.

To see some of the synergy, go here: <http://www.stone.com/StoneStudio/explained/index.html>

Typinator version 1.3

reviewed by Wayne Lefevre

Developers: Ergonis Software distributed under Macility brand.

typinator@macility.com

<http://www.ergonis.com/products/typinator>

Released: June 15th, 2006

\$20 [USD], 2 pack \$35, 5 pack at \$80 and 10 for \$150. Volume licensing of more than 30 contact customer service for quote. Macility Productivity Bundle List Price for \$45 USD Free updates for 2 years included.

Requirements: Mac OS X 10.3.9 or later. Power PC and Universal Binary

Audience: All user levels It's localized in English only. Help is in English only

Strength — Typinator enables users to rapidly insert text or graphics into any type of application, and does so easily and as advertised.

Weakness — Only one I ran into was no cursor placement on text expansion.

The software was tested on a 1.6 GHz dual processor Intel Mac Mini 2 GB DDR SDRAM running under OS X 10.4.7.

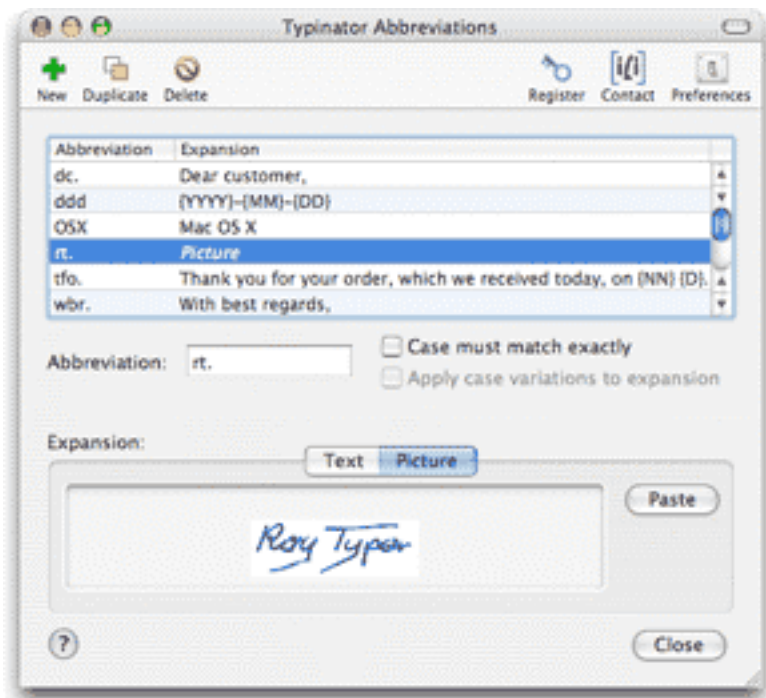
Product and company names and logos in this review may be registered trademarks of their respective companies.

Typinator is one application in a "Macility Productivity Bundle" by **Ergonis Software GmbH**, out of Hagenberg, Austria. The bundle includes **PopChar X**, **KeyCue** and **Typinator**, though you can purchase each separately out of the bundle.

Those familiar with the programs *TextExpander* and *TypeIt4Me* will be familiar with *Typinator*. *Typinator* is an easy-to-use automatic text software that helps you to quickly insert phrases or pictures into any type of document. If you find yourself needing to repeat the same text, formatted text, or pictures, over and over again, *Typinator* will be for you.

After you install *Typinator*, you can define your abbreviations.

The included abbreviations include "typurl." which, when entered into application will automatically replace the phrase into the home-page of ergonis' website, <http://www.ergonis.com/products/typinator/>. Also included is "dt." automatically entering the date, and "typeicon." which places the *Typinator* logo into your document. Like so:



Here you can make your own abbreviations for anything imaginable. Imagine my frustration when typing this review, and trying to type in the abbreviations! This is especially appreciated, though, when typing in HTML codes, or any coding text for that matter. Imagine just typing in "cb", short for say, "Color Black", and having [COLOR="Black"][/COLOR] phrase pop up automatically. Inserting the date and time is very easy, and it offers many ways to set up different templates for doing so.

For personal use, I found it easy to set up expansions for smilies and oft used phrases in e-mail, insert different signatures, pictures, and the like. For business users setting up standard customer e-mail responses would be a breeze, and as mentioned before, would be a boon for coders setting up blocks and templates..

This, perhaps, may be more of a shortcoming I have come across in *Typinator* than other applications of it's like. I have not come across a way to re-position your cursor on text expansion the way *TypeIt4Me* or *TextExpander* will. The trigger options on *TextExpander* let you use the space bar, return, or tab key. *Typinator* will not let you use these as expansions, but I have not seen a problem with that. I can use the "." or period key as the trigger, and it works just as well. It's also case sensitive, expanding the text to how you type the abbreviation. "Btw" will result in "By the way" and "btw" will expand as "by the way".

Typinator is also less expensive than it's alternatives, making this a great buy. It's only offered in English, odd it coming from a Austrian company, but it's a great piece of shareware, well in the affordable range for it's abilities.

Whether your a web coder, student or even an author, it definitely makes short work of the long word.

Videator 1.2.1 – Movie Magic for Mere Mortals

reviewed by Robert Pritchett



Stone Design Corporation
PO Box 6799
Albuquerque, NM 87197-6799
1-505-345-4800

<http://www.stone.com/>

<http://www.stone.com/Videator/Videator.html>

Released: May 23, 2006

\$49 USD and free upgrades for life! Try-before-you-buy for 14 days.

Download: <http://www.stone.com/NewDownload.html>

Requirements: Mac OS X Tiger or later.

Tutorial:

Forum: <http://www.stone.com/stoneforum/>

Strengths: Uses the best of Apple technology and improves upon it.

Weaknesses: None found. Well, okay, but this is an Apple issue -

http://www.stone.com/Videator/Supported_Video_Cards.html

Other Reviews:

Andrew Stone Interviews: <http://maclectic.com/B2/index.php>

<http://www.macvoices.com/archives/2006/656.html>



Think of Imaginator on steroids. Instead of processing images, Videator is a movie-maker that takes iMovie up a notch or two or three. And if you want to mess with existing movies and have some fun, fun, fun, you can do that too. Or you can get all serious-like and make your movies look professional.

Besides grabbing all the Image Units found in Tiger, Videator also has nine of its own plugins to enhance the pictures. And just like Imaginator, it too is fully AppleScriptable. Along with those, there are 108 filters, effects and transitions that can be used to tweak snapshots, slideshows, Podcasts (yes, that's right!) and QuickTime videos.

Are you familiar with LinkBack? <http://www.linkbackproject.org/> Videator is also a LinkBack server.

See how Bob at Maclectic played with the program; <http://maclectic.com/Static/mov/bv2.mov>

You can play with it too, by downloading the app and running the 14-day trial.

1. Launch Videator - you can apply for a trial license - click *OK Trial License*.
2. If you have your iSight attached - you'll see a live action window - try:
 - i. ***File > Live Demo***
3. Watch a demo movie with effects: ***File > Demo Movie***
4. Click on ***Instant Effects*** - and choose one of those
5. Click on ***my fX*** - and drag one onto the movie
6. If you have a video camera connected, click on the *Movie* icon to record a movie
7. Try out the *Snapshot Camera* button

Let your imagination run wild and get crazy or sedate yourself and get professional. Either way, this app is serious software at a shareware price.

Training Reviews

Total Training For: Macromedia Dreamweaver 8

reviewed by Robert Pritchett



Presenter: Janine Warner

<http://www.totaltraining.com/bios/janinewarner.asp?mscsid=>

Interview: <http://www.photoshopsupport.com/dreamweaver/tt/janine-warner.html>

Total Training, Inc.

1819 Aston Ave.

Suite 101

Carlsbad, CA 92008

1-888-368-6825

<mailto:sales@totaltraining.com>

<http://www.totaltraining.com/>

Product site:

<http://www.totaltraining.com/prod/web/dreamweaver8.asp?mscsid=>

Released: October 26, 2005

\$200 USD.

Requirements: Macromedia Dreamweaver 8. DVD drive. Web connection.

Either Mac or Windows platform.

Contains: 2 DVDs and the Total Training run-time interface player program and Project files. 10 hours, 44 minutes run time.

For Beginners through Advanced.

Strengths: Cross-platform. Well-organized.

Weaknesses: None Found.

Other Reviews:

<http://www.photoshopsupport.com/dreamweaver/tt/dreamweaver-8-review.html>

Reviewed under Mac OS X 10.4.7 on an iMac G5 with 1 GB RAM.

“A personal trainer in a box”. Ever sat in a classroom full of bright eager newbies who wanted to rush right out after class to begin using the skills they learned in class? I taught students like that in the electrical installation industry back when structured communication wiring was in vogue. Janine Warner, with her perky, sometimes high-pitched voice carries that same kind of energy in this 2-DVD set for learning Dreamweaver 8.

You know the statistics. In a classroom environment, only 20% of what is taught is retained. With Total Training, that retention rate goes way up, because you can go back and re-review stuff without wasting the other student’s time or by being afraid to ask questions. Okay, it isn’t quite interactive media, but it comes close. And you will have to search for the answers. Think of this as low-impact/your-speed learning.



The DVD set says it is a 10-hour 44-minute course. If this were a classroom activity, then it would easily end up being a 3-day course. Factor in board and room, travel, and time away from work versus plunking down \$200 USD and this training option becomes a real bargain. If you are interested in learning Dreamweaver 8 and being productive right from lesson 1, get Total Training. There are 12 lessons and Janine doesn't leave anything to chance or assumes you know everything already. And that's not a bad thing! The DVDs come with project files and everything works just fine on a Mac.

Predictably, the lessons run through the feature-set of Dreamweaver, but Janine is really into teaching website design using the application. It really is pretty much soup-to-nuts, beginning with adding images and links all the way to building dynamic websites.

Click on the Product Site link above to try-before-you-buy.

Advertising

Amazon.com

<http://www.amazon.com/gp/homepage.html/002-5842389-7443202>

Apple Store for Individuals

<http://store.apple.com/AppleStore/WebObjects/BizCustom.woa/wo/StoreReentry.wo?cid=AOSA1000025758&siteID=%2Foi97eu4uMU-AtGr6EOxXtw%2FizYZGve3Aw&qprm=78313&family=iMac>

Apple Store for Businesses

<http://store.apple.com/AppleStore/WebObjects/BizAgent?qprm=126559>

Lionshead Studios Limited and Feral Interactive - Black & White 2

<http://www.feralinteractive.com/>

Lionshead Studios Limited and Feral Interactive –The Movies

<http://www.feralinteractive.com/>

DigitalMediaTraining

<http://www.digitaltraining.com/ispecial/maccom>

The image shows the cover of the MacCompanion magazine for readers. At the top, it says 'FOR MACCOMPANION READERS'. Below that, there's a banner for 'TAKE 15% OFF ALL SOFTWARE TRAINING!' with the URL 'www.digitalmediatraining.com/special/maccom'. Another banner below that says 'SOFTWARE DISCOUNT'. The cover is filled with various software deals and advertisements, including 'FINAL CUT PRO', 'MOTION', 'ADOBE', 'AMST 5.0.0.1', 'ALL ABOUT', 'PRODUCTS', 'PAGES + KEYNOTE 2', 'MAC OS', 'GET UP AND RUNNING FAST!', 'MACROBONIA', 'MIB', and 'DMTS'. There are also smaller text boxes and graphics throughout the cover.

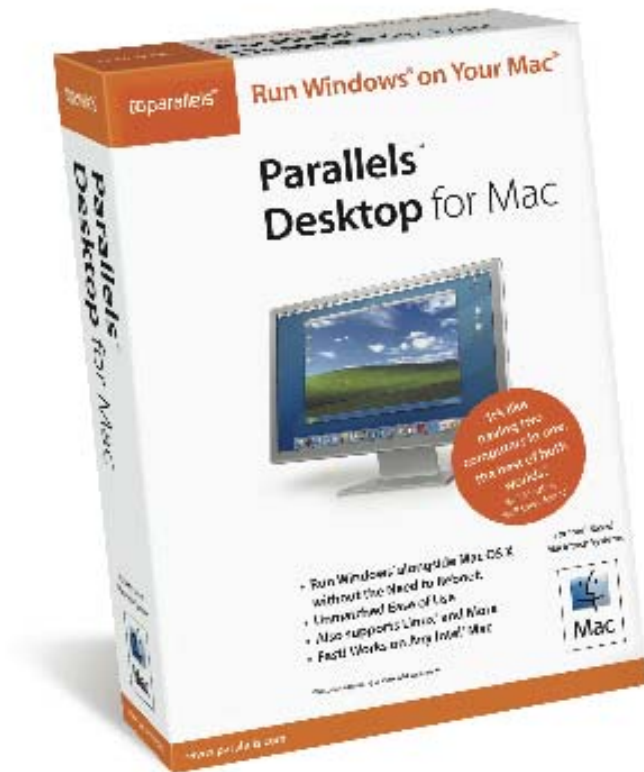
Ominex

<https://www2.lsmsecure.com/ominex/registration/?type=c&domain=betterthanstaples.com&refid>

Xooma Extreme – X20 and X20 Blast

<http://www.xoomaworldwide.com/macCompanion>

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for running Windows on Intel-Macs...
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at the Apple Store!**



Parallels Desktop for Mac is also available
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macCompanion Media Kit

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

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

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

Statistical Analysis

We are very excited about our site statistics! The multilingual-capable [macCompanion](#) website is close to 2 million page views a month and readership continues to increase rapidly through our "whisper campaign".

We continue to get greater visibility every day. Many of the various 35 computer operating systems (with many moving towards the Mac® OS X™ environment), 115 online search engines, 269 countries and domains and 319 online robots have discovered us – and continue to do so. So far, over 201 other websites have also linked to us. Many of our readers have made our site one of their favorites. While nearly 70% of our readership stops by for a quick visit via RSS feeds, over 23% spend between 1/2 to 1 hours at a time going through over 250 different pages on our site (mostly archives). Many of those who quickly drop by, come to get the monthly PDFed issue of *macCompanion*. Over 35GB of bandwidth was used in December 2005 alone for download purposes. Previous months have averaged around 20GB. Trend analysis indicates that will continue to increase as folks decide to "Move to the Mac".

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.

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
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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
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1/3rd Page Horizontal	\$70 USD	7 1/4 x 3 1/4 in	7.25 x 3.25 in	18.4 x 8.3 cm
1/3rd Page Vertical	\$70 USD	2 1/4 x 9 7/8 in	2.25 x 9.875 in	5.7 x 25.1 cm
2/3rd Page Horizontal	\$150 USD	7 1/4 x 6 1/4 in	7.25 x 6.25 in	18.4 x 15.9 cm
2/3rd Page Vertical	\$150 USD	4 3/4 x 9 7/8 in	4.75 x 9.875 in	12.1 x 25.1 cm
Full Page	\$250 USD	7 1/4 x 9 7/8 in	7.25 x 9.875 in	18.4 x 25.1 cm

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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. Check out the Bazaar on our website at <http://www.macompanion.com/bazaar/bazaarindex.html>

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

If you are as excited about our *macCompanion* readership as we are, please download the contractual terms and conditions documentation that are online in PDF format, or we can send them to you as an attachment. We'd enjoy having an ongoing working relationship with you too.

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Email works best.

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