



About This Particular Macintosh: About the **personal** computing experience™

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Thanks for reading ATPM.



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Welcome

by Robert Paul Leitao, rleitao@atpm.com

Welcome to the March issue of ATPM, the latest iteration of the quintessential monthly Macintosh Internet magazine. We come to you this month from atop the digital music distribution market. Despite the efforts of rivals, Apple's iTunes Music Store continues to lead in its ascendant industry. Boasting well over 30 million songs sold, the music store's rivals continue to struggle in building sales and revenue.

How long will the iTunes Music Store hold its commanding market position? The next few months will reveal the answer.

Mini iPod, Maxi Price

In February, Apple released the iPod mini. Priced at \$249, the diminutive digital music player comes to market at a high-margin price. Apple is comparing the price on the munchkin-sized player with the \$199 tag on digital music players with flash memory for storage rather than hard drives. Critics are focusing on the price, while Apple is focusing on meeting demand. More than 100,000 iPod minis were ordered ahead of the product's release.

\$23.92 and Rising?

AAPL finished February at \$23.92 per share, crossing over the \$24.00 per share marker only briefly during the last trading day of the month. AAPL has been trading in a narrow range between \$20 and \$24 per share. Now debt-free and still overflowing with cash, Apple has about \$12 per share in cash and equivalents behind every share.

Despite the overwhelming success of the iPod and the company's market leadership in the nascent legal music download market, Apple's share price remains well below its historical highs. What will move AAPL higher? Analysts are intrigued by the revenue and profits Apple generates from "outside the box" sales of iPods, AppleCare, .Mac, etc. but the slowing pace of G5 sales is causing concern.

Goodbye, Mr. Anderson

Fred Anderson, Apple's Chief Financial Officer, is retiring in June. Credited as the architect of Apple's strong balance sheet, Mr. Anderson's tenure at Apple revealed the genius of a soft-spoken man who quietly restored Apple to financial health while reducing the company's tax expenses.

Under Mr. Anderson's leadership, Apple aggressively expensed R&D investments and acquisition costs to reduce taxes as the company built its cash position and improved its cash flow. In February, Apple paid off the last of its remaining long-term debt.

Fred Anderson came to Apple from payroll services company ADP, where he had overseen the financial operations of that company during a time of explosive growth. Arriving at Apple during the tenure of former CEO Gil Amelio, Fred Anderson quickly arranged new financing to keep the company afloat while it hemorrhaged cash and market share. Perhaps it's a form of justice that Mr. Anderson will witness the elimination of the debt package he once arranged to keep the company viable and alive.

Hello, San Francisco

Apple has opened its latest retail store in the heart of San Francisco. Home to the 60s counter-culture, San Francisco stands as a metropolitan oxymoron. It's a city known to be culturally liberal but socially staid. Once derided by Jerry Brown, former California Governor and current Mayor of nearby Oakland, as "a theme park for yuppies," the city by the bay joins Chicago, Los Angeles, New York, and Tokyo as locations with flagship Apple retail stores.

Apple v. Apple Corps

The epic court battle pitting Apple against Apple Corps has commenced in a British court. In question is Apple's ability to enter the music market in light of an agreement once signed between the two companies that, in exchange for the use of the Apple name, prohibited the computer company from entering the music world.

Apple Corps is the record company owned by the Beatles. One wonders if Apple will use some of the cash acquired during Mr. Anderson's time to purchase what remains of the Beatles' label to further the company's transition into the digital entertainment market, not to mention also end the current litigation.

Have A Pepsi, Win A Song (Maybe)

The \$100 million Pepsi iTunes music promotion is now halfway over. Winning bottle caps and fountain cups will disappear from retail shelves and convenience store outlets on March 31, 2004. In addition to specially marked 20 oz. soda bottles with winning caps, many 7–11 stores are offering 32 oz. fountain cups with winning codes. Consumers have a one in three chance of winning a free song through the iTunes Music Store by purchasing the specially marked products.

No matter the number of winning codes redeemed, Apple is a winner in this promotion as the Apple logo is conspicuously displayed in thousands of retail and convenience store locations. Have you won a song via of this promotion? It's an easy way to add to your digital music collection.

Virginia Tech's High Tech Slim Down

The folks at Virginia Tech are swapping their dual 2 GHz G5 mini-towers for dual 2 GHz Xserves to reduce the size of the now famous Big Mac supercomputer cluster. Constructed by students in record time, the Virginia Tech Mac-based supercomputer ranks third in the world for supercomputer performance. Some of the 1,100 G5 Macintoshes in the original cluster are now available through an Apple authorized catalog reseller.

.Mac Revisited

Apple has been quietly adding new features and products to its subscription-based .Mac service. Products and services now include free tutorials, games, and plug-ins and filters for iLife '04 applications. Once derided as a premium-priced service lacking real benefits other than a mac.com e-mail address, .Mac may be worth a second look by Mac users who passed on the service when it first debuted.

The ATPM Staff

Each issue of ATPM includes product reviews, thoughtful columns and entertaining commentaries about the personal computing experience. Our March issue includes:

The Candy Apple: Clutter, Clutter Everywhere

Ellyn Ritterskamp discusses spam, the No Call Registry, and a new Apple store.

The Desktop Muse: The World's Biggest Jam Session

David Ozab shares his punditry about the inevitable appearance of GarageBand Web communities.

Bloggable: The Headless iMac Rides Again

Whether you're interested in the "headless" iMac, syncing your Palm OS handheld to your Mac, a critique of OS X from a usability writer, OmniWeb's latest and greatest beta, Macworld Boston and a keynote from Jack from [As the Apple Turns](#) or the 20th anniversary of the Mac, well, you can read all about it here.

Hollywood: Did You See the Super Bowl?

The Hollywood Guy is back with thoughts on the Apple/Pepsi promotion, draconian tactics by the MPAA and RIAA, and Eminem's law suit against Apple.

About This Particular Outliner: Legacy Outliners

This month, Ted Goranson takes a look at abandoned "classic" Mac outliners that have unique features, still work, and are worth your while to explore.

Cartoon: Cortland

NeoCort easily fends of the Agents, but...

Cartoon: iTrolls

The iTrolls encounter mentally challenged gamers, losing a CFO, the blue sphere, Wintel know-it-alls, and Michael Eisner.

Desktop Pictures: Bora Bora

This month's desktop pictures, submitted by an ATPM reader, were taken on a vacation to Bora Bora and Moorea, two islands in French Polynesia.

Review: Digital Photography Pocket Guide, 2nd ed. (book)

Is it worth owning? Can it really fit in your pocket? David answers both questions in his review.

Review: NoteRiser

An overpriced piece of metal fails to earn high marks from Chris Lawson.

Review: XRay 1.0.9

Eric Blair gets the lowdown on the on XRay, another entry into the Get Info utility field.

Review: You Control 1.0.1

Is You Control worth its price, especially when its predecessor was free? Lee Bennett says, "maybe."



E-Mail

Why

I've been reading ATPM for about a year, and I really enjoy it. I'm a common sense guy. I do enjoy a personal touch, and some "color" in my computing. Hence, my Mac. ATPM delivers on all these. I'm always impressed with the quality—and lack of hype—in the series. I hope you can keep ATPM going forever (a tall order).

Has there been a series on programming? I'm a naval architect and engineer. Apart from high-end CAD and Mathematica, there's little commercial software in my fields. I'd like to code my analysis and synthesis methods, add a good interface and throw in such exotic things as genetic algorithms, neural networks, and chaos stuff. However, I'd start with the basics.

Thanks again for ATPM. It's one of the best.

—David Morris, Nepean, Ontario

[Roll Your Own](#) teaches introductory programming using AppleScript. —Michael Tsai

The Mac

I am presently using a PC. I had a 603e with 8.6 for the longest time, and I still maintain that the Mac is the better platform, but taking the computer tech class that I'm in is not a possibility on a Mac. There is, by far, a better feeling amongst Mac users than there ever will be on the PC.

I will return to the Mac, so I keep in touch with the Mac community and my old Mac. It's good to get ATPM; keep up.

—David Crichton

About This Particular Outliner

Ah the perfect outliner...the holy grail of writers. I own licenses for ideaSpiral, ZWrite, OmniOutliner, Inspiration, and have tried many more. OmniOutliner is pretty close. I just wish it had a Palm Conduit.

—*Ross Winn*



I've outlined in both Word and AppleWorks. I would argue that any outline *of* a document would be necessarily contained *within* a document.

Considering the amount of effort you've put into "stretching" some of the other (clearly) non-outlining applications (i.e. e-mail clients and Keynote) into outlining service in your previous installments, I'm surprised at how little you've discussed AppleWorks. It's a disservice to your readers (especially when you mention the "W" application in a predominantly Mac article).

Five facts about AppleWorks that should not be overlooked (besides the fact that it can, in fact, outline):

- It is pure Apple/Mac.
- It comes with most Macs (i.e. free).
- It is a single-pane outliner. (In a previous installment, the author only knew of two single-pane outliners: Inspiration and Word).
- It supports named styles. (In a previous installment, the author notes that only Word supports named styles).
- It supports a reasonable number of import/export formats. (Including Word and HTML.)

These facts alone make it worthy, in my opinion, of greater attention than it has received so far in this column.

Great series! I look forward to the NoteTaker/NoteBook Showdown.

—*John Bellis*

I agree that AppleWorks has been shorted in prior columns, and I am sorry for that. For what it is worth, I have a constant flow of e-mails with similar complaints about the attention all the others are getting as well.

But I stand by my characterization. AppleWorks is not an outliner designed to outline a document like the ones I mentioned (and this month surveys FullWrite and WordPerfect). In those, you can use the outline functions as a skeleton to progressively “fill out” an entire document. When finished, you can then remove the outline functions (labels and—importantly—indents) and be left with an “ordinary” document.

AppleWorks’ outline function is designed to create internal outlines as part of a document, just like it and others support lists and tables. You cannot remove the indents in AW. I suppose you could write a long document in it as you could in any of the ones we’ve surveyed—and you would have named styles in a single pane. But in that case, unless I am mistaken, you would never be able to end up with a document rather than an outline even by exporting.

Note that in the styles, document headers are different from outline headers. I think this shows the intent of the designers. It makes outlines in a document, not of one.

That’s why it was overlooked earlier. I noted it in last month’s column because of the curiously and uniquely un-Mac like way it handles labels. —*Ted Goranson*



Ease of use in implementing drag and drop reorganization varies a lot between outliners, but I haven’t noticed a correlation with their way of representing collapsed structure. The drag and drag in Microsoft Word, for example, is relatively hard to use, because of a defect in its outlining logic. Word physically allows dragging to a discontinuous hierarchical position, so that a heading might find itself orphaned at level 4, despite the absence of any level 3 headings. Microsoft corrected this defect when it implemented the outlining in OneNote, which is otherwise identical in outlining feature set.

—*Stephen R. Diamond*

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Clutter, Clutter Everywhere

The National Do Not Call Registry survived a challenge in court, in which telemarketing companies had said it was unconstitutional. The US Circuit Court of Appeals for the 10th Circuit decision said that the 57 million registrants were entitled to privacy and protection from telemarketing abuse. The companies had brought suit, saying it was unfair that political and charitable organizations were exempt from the rules of the Registry. In kid language, they'd said, "If so-and-so gets to do it, I should get to do it." The 10th Circuit Court disagreed.

Yay for them for them. They got it right. Fifty-seven million Americans is a lot of people to say they want something stopped. We get only a small part of that many to vote in general elections—they must feel strongly about this issue!

So what I want to know is, since the National Do Not Call Registry is working (for me it really, really is), when can we get started on a Do Not Spam Registry? I'm sure my experience is typical: my morning e-mail consists of usually 75 e-mails or so, received in the nine hours since I went to bed. Possibly half a dozen are from people I know. Maybe one or two I want to open and read. (I will confess that most ATPM staff mail concerns technical stuff I can't begin to understand.)

I will say that junk e-mail has two advantages over junk paper mail. One is that it does not waste trees. The other is that it can be disposed of very easily.

These advantages do not mean I want to continue receiving junk e-mail for the rest of my life if an alternative is available. I don't want to suggest there is a governmental responsibility to regulate spam. The minute we involve the government is when we begin to give up liberty. I'm willing to sacrifice some convenience for liberty. Besides, the Internet crosses governmental lines, which is cool.

However.

There's nothing that says we can't charge for spam, just like the US Postal Service charges for bulk mail. It costs those marketers actual money to mail me junk, and I want it to cost the e-mailers, too. Say a penny a piece. Say the ISPs charge you a penny for every e-mail you send. I'd pay it, in a second, especially if I knew it would run some of those vermin out of business.

Not all spammers are vermin. Just most of them.

We can fix this, without government intervention. All you bright people, economics people, techies, figure it out and let us know.

Shiny Things

We're getting a new Apple retail store a few miles from my house. I will have to resist the urge to go over there and buy all sorts of toys. Like gadgety things for my first-generation iPod. And a laptop with Mac OS X so I can buy music from the Apple store. And an AirPort card. And a new monitor for my G3, which I am *not* replacing anytime soon because it works just fine for what I need. Perhaps resistance is futile...

Onward.

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The World's Biggest Jam Session

When the folks at Apple created GarageBand, they must have known that they'd have a winner on their hands. I'm sure they even anticipated the effect that the application would have on iLife upgrades. After all, companies bundle software for a reason, and that reason is almost always to sell more software. What they may not have foreseen, however, was how quickly communities of GarageBand musicians would spring up online. But then again, who wouldn't want to share their new GarageBand tunes with others?

First off, several Web sites have sprung up to showcase compositions. A quick search of the Web reveals several: [MacJukebox](#), [iCompositions](#), [MacJams](#), and [MacIdol](#). These sites all have two things in common. One, a name that's a pun of either the Mac or iTunes brand name (and one even parodies, God help us, a reality show—please Lord let there never be a Mac-themed reality show) and two, a desire to share music between GarageBand users.

The music on these sites varies greatly, of course. Some is decidedly amateur, even downright unmusical, though you have to appreciate the fun someone had in creating a song even if you can't share in that fun in the brief few seconds you can bear listening to it. Some is quite good and shows that talent and musicality can thrive even on the limited palate of Apple's preset loops. Most of it is average, and this, of course, is the very definition of average—the majority that's not so great that you have to hear it over and over again, but not so horrible that you can't get through it once.

At this point you're probably asking, "Do we get to hear some examples?" For the most part, I'm leaving you to find them for yourself. But I have to make one exception, and only because these tracks are too demented not to share:

1. [Cletus](#)
2. [Misunderestimated](#)
3. [What Was I Thinking](#)

And thus, an important lesson is learned—a banjo in the wrong hands is a dangerous thing.

One site in particular lives up to the GarageBand moniker: [MacBand](#) (O joy, another witty pun!), which encourages users not only to share tunes, but also to share loops. By requiring that all works posted fall under a [Creative Commons license](#), MacBand attempts to create a sort of ongoing virtual jam session—the band moves out of the garage. And unlike [Magnatune](#) (another Creative Commons site built for a similar purpose), MacBand allows each individual to pick his license terms.

Macband isn't the only place a budding GarageBand musician can find new loops. So far, free loops are available from [Bitshift Audio](#) (drum loops) and [Access Music](#) (synths). The only cost is an e-mail address. I've downloaded both, and both sets are excellent.

In addition, loop collections can be purchased from Apple (Jam Pack: \$99) and [Drums on Demand](#) (Volume 2: \$49).

Next month: Sitting in on the Jam.

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The Headless iMac Rides Again

After last month, February was a thoroughly refreshing stroll through an oasis, at least as far as your loyal blogosphere columnist is concerned. Since ATPM 10.02, quite a lot has happened, meaning that my continued tenure at *About This Particular Macintosh* seems secure for the moment.

You may remember that [last month](#) was fairly bereft of information, and that I even complained about it. I think the universe responded favorably to my kvetching. I stood up and told it that I wasn't going to take it anymore, and "I fought the Law, and the Law won." Err, well, no, but humor me.

Sometimes, as a journalist, bad news is good news; an excellent example of this is Palm dropping support for Macs, which became an instant hit on the frequencies I follow. (Keep reading if this is news to you.)

My job as Mac blogosphere columnist also brings me certain exciting perks. This column is increasingly recognized in its "native habitat," which is a Good Thing™. I received feedback from someone about whom I had written recently, and I discovered just the other day that my first column here at ATPM was the No. 4 referrer to one of John Gruber's [columns](#), with 49 click-throughs. Not bad. Keep a-clicking!

All right, so big news first this month, if only because I already teased you about it. In case you didn't hear, Palm is [dropping support](#) for the Mac in the next version of the Palm OS, which is apparently called Cobalt. *The Mac Observer* suggests that Palm pick up support with iSync since it comes with all Macs, and [Jon Rentzsch](#) seconds that, saying that it doesn't make any sense for Palm to insist on [developing its own application](#) anyway. [Judi Sohn](#) points out that Palm syncing on the Mac isn't such a [great experience anyway](#).

Among others, [Dan Gillmor](#) hits the nail right on the head when he says that, no matter what, it's "[\[d\]isappointing, to say the least](#)." That sound you hear is the sound of Mac users everywhere groaning.

What Else From the Mac Blogosphere in February?

- Has the time come for the iMac to lose its head? Everyone and his brother has an opinion. It all started when [Business Week](#) and Alex Salkever [insisted](#) that “the product that *Time* dubbed Apple’s “new core” has gone rotten,” and Salkever wants Apple to “cut off [its] head.” [Sandy McMurray takes the bait](#) and reminds us that Apple isn’t marketing toward the same users as those sub-\$1000 headless box Wintel manufacturers. [Julio Ojeda-Zapata](#) wonders what it is people have [against Macs with built-in monitors](#) anyway, saying that the loss in clutter from an integrated unit is well worth it. [The Core Dump](#) defends the iMac’s beauty and suggests that the last “headless iMac” [was the Cube](#). We all know what happened with that. Also, somewhere I got linked to another reminder that a headless iMac is not coming anytime soon, [Wired’s](#) coverage of [the IBox](#), which as we have seen is probably not hitting the market anytime soon.
- [Matthew Thomas](#) describes in extensive detail (one critique for each of the first 48 hours of use) what it is he [doesn’t like about OS X](#), having only recently moved to it. I can’t say that I agree, but I know that [John Gruber](#) did, [overwhelmingly](#), and [Michael Tsai](#) (yes, my boss, full disclosure) [almost as much so](#) so I will take their word for it.
- For those of you who are interested in such things, [The Omni Group](#) released a beta version of [OmniWeb 5](#). It’s been getting rave reviews since then: from John Siracusa at [Ars Technica](#), from [Kirk McPike](#) at [Mind The Gap](#), from John Gruber at [Daring Fireball](#), and from [Matthew Hanlon](#) at [_m](#). At least in February I did not see anything bad about it. It looks great. I have to admit, the drawer with graphical thumbnails is pretty slick. If only I had enough RAM...
- Since that’s why he writes a humor series, Jack from [As the Apple Turns](#) has proposed to [take Steve Jobs’ place](#) giving the keynote address at Macworld Boston; he calls it the “AtATNote,” but I like “Jacknote” better. And hey, he lives in Boston, so even better, no expenses for Apple! If you, too, think this is a fantastic idea, you can sign a [petition](#) encouraging Apple to let Jack address the crowd in July.

- In honor of the 20th anniversary of the Macintosh (happy 20th birthday!) some people who were involved with the creation of the original Mac have begun collecting their anecdotes about it. They call it [Folklore](#). The writing is great, and it will make you smile about our Glorious Revolution. It's even set up like a weblog!

To close the day out on a random note, one of the guys I regularly read, [Alex Soojung-Kim Pang](#), wrote, tongue only partly in cheek, about [the deeper meaning](#) of the iPod's shuffle feature: "For a second, I felt that I was at some madly fashionable party at Carl Van Vechten's."

Also, I'm considering starting a companion weblog to this column—this is in the mode of Julio Ojeda-Zapata, who is also a columnist for the *St. Paul Pioneer Press*—so I can give you fun links to things that really aren't column-worthy but are certainly interesting in their own right. Keep tuned for next month to see if it materializes. Or leave feedback about it...or e-mail me about it. Stay tuned for next month's *Bloggable*.

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On a Clear Day You Can See the Hollywood Sign

by Mike Shields, mshields@atpm.com

Did You See the Super Bowl?

Of course you did. And if you didn't see it, you certainly heard about it. Show of hands, how many remember the score? OK, now, how many people have seen Janet Jackson's breast? What are you still talking about at your local water cooler? Well, I'm not going to talk about any of that, as I'm sure those subjects have been talked out.

What was overshadowed by all the posturing by the various sides was a little commercial that Pepsi played, sometime during the first quarter if I remember correctly. Pepsi and Apple had gotten together to promote downloading music at Apple's iTunes site. All fine and good. One hundred million songs for free downloading. Buy a Pepsi, get a download code.

How'd They Do That?

Very well, thank you. Seriously, back in October, Apple got together with Pepsi, and came up with this grandiose scheme. Doing the math quickly: 100 million times 99 cents is, well, a whole lot of money. Of course, this money isn't actually spent. And of course, the launch was timed with the Super Bowl, as all Apple ads should only be premiered during the big game. Here's the problem. Their choice of pitchmen. From Apple and Pepsi, and I quote:

This groundbreaking ad, featuring 16 real-life teenagers who were sued by the recording industry for illegally downloading music from the Internet, shows music fans a new way to freely and legally download music—the Pepsi iTunes 100 Million Song Giveaway. The commercial is set to Green Day's version of "I Fought the Law."

Yes, you read it right. Teenagers were sued. By the recording industry. The RIAA to be exact. For something I don't believe they were doing in the first place. More on them later.

I'm Back Now

Last time I was here was before last year's Showbiz Expo, and usually I report and comment on the various findings that relate to the Mac and the industry, however, there wasn't that much there, and the release of the G5 was over four weeks away at the time. Well, OK, Final Cut Pro 4 debuted there, but that's about it. So I took some time off.

Piracy vs. Infringement

Most of the above-mentioned technologies and more are being used to pirate movies on the Net. Or so the MPAA (read: Jack Valenti) would have you believe. In a draconian move to curb piracy, he banned the studios and producers from passing out screener copies of their movies and films, not to mention their motion pictures. Of course, the independent production companies complained, stating that academy voters wouldn't have an opportunity to view the smaller films (meaning any film that cost less than \$50 million to make, the industry average).

So, the MPAA capitulated. And, guess what happened? Well, they thought that since everyone needed to sign a release to receive a screener copy of the various films, that that simple fact alone would stop someone from putting the various films online. However, about a month ago, four different films showed up online. An arrest was made. The trial is over. The bigshot MPAA has won. OK, what's wrong with this picture?

Was Mr. Valenti proved right? I'm sure this is what most of my three readers are thinking. And if he was, what steps should the industry take, if any? Personally, I believe that whether or not screener copies were made available, the various movies in question would've showed up online eventually. Maybe even in time for Oscar voting, who knows. Furthermore, I believe that screener copies were sent, whether or not the release was signed.

I've spoken on this issue before, and apparently, the fine folks in Hollywood haven't been listening. Or, maybe they don't read my column; one of the two. Creating additional laws, or crippling technologies such as the broadcast flag, is not the answer. Copyright infringement laws are already on the books, and allowing companies such as Apple free reign to improve existing technologies dealing with digital video and HiDef broadcast can only bring down prices for us, the consumer.

Music Is Affected, Too

And, we haven't even talked about the RIAA and their lawsuit. It has always been my contention that if I buy a CD, I should be allowed to share it with a million or so of my closest friends. However, some don't agree, and this is why we no longer have Napster. Would I have bought the tracks from the various music companies had I not had Napster available to me? *No!* I would've gone without. Meaning, that there's no lost income to the various record companies from me downloading music. However, a judge disagrees with me, so 261 names of people that have downloaded music using Verizon have had their names released to the RIAA. But, wait, another judge agreed with me, and reversed the ruling. So, where do we stand? Usually, I stand downwind. Because this stinks of rotted landfill.

The good news is, some recording artists aren't taking this sitting down, and they've gone and done things. Peter Gabriel and Brian Eno are launching a musician's alliance that would allow musicians to sell their music online as well as through the various studios. Or even instead of. Some of you may remember that Peter Gabriel had one of the first interactive CDs available for the Mac, if not the first. Embracing technology and forward thinking should be rewarded, and I look for good things to come out of this alliance.

In Conclusion

Jack Valenti has announced his retirement. That collective sigh of relief is coming from the technology companies. However, there is no joy in Muddville. We may be better off with the devil we know. If the new head of the MPAA believes as Jack Valenti does, we may be in for a bigger uphill battle. However, if we get a young, forward thinking guy, like Peter Gabriel, maybe he'll see the error of his ways. One can only hope.

Eminem Sues Apple

Just this morning, actually. About a week ago as you, my three readers, will see this. Apparently, conversations between Steve Jobs and Eminem's manager broke down, and a ten-year-old tune was used in a commercial on MTV last July anyway. Now, I don't know too much about this, as this is breaking news. My guess is that someone made a mistake. Hint: it wasn't Apple. What I can tell you is one of two things will happen. They'll settle, or they'll go to court. If they go to court, either Apple or Eminem will win. It's like the Super Bowl, as I already knew what the score of the game would be before it started: 0-0.

72 and sunny in Redondo Beach.

e You Next Time.

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About This Particular Outliner

by Ted Goranson, tgoranson@atpm.com

Legacy Outliners

Most of us have such a focus on the Macs we now work with that it is almost impossible to imagine the state of affairs only ten to fifteen years ago. This was before the Internet, folks. It was before Microsoft finally came out with a reasonable facsimile of the Mac.

This was when the personal computer was more of a privately sequestered personal assistant than a gateway to the rest of the world. Basically everyone who was clever in what we then called the “Free World” was a Mac user, and much of the software we used was clever as well. Innovations were rushing at us faster than we could follow.

Much of the idealistic promise of the sixties was transferred to the creative and revolutionary world of the Mac in the eighties and early nineties. Nowhere in that flow of applications was this more obvious than in outliners. They appeared first on the Mac and were stretched every way possible before our eyes. A breed of outliner products emerged in that period that was so superb that many still have an enthusiastic following today, long after their host companies have evaporated.

Consider also that this loyalty has been through some pretty significant hardships. All of these products—the really superb ones—were discontinued. Many of them stopped working well for a period between System 7 and Mac OS 8, but they all more or less now work under Classic, and many are free.

What’s amazing is how feature-rich these products are. They can do things that are not common and in some cases not available today. I’d be interested in hearing theories why this is the case; my guess is that market dynamics have changed. It used to be that we Mac users valued experimentation more—our very use of the Mac was part of a reinvention of self, and we were more adaptable and curious. Now we tend to have comparatively settled ideas about how a computer fits in our life. So there is a higher barrier to novelty than in the golden era. For example, just look at what is coming from open software and how hard those applications try to look like existing (often Microsoft) products.

We'll take a look at some of the great old outliners in this month's column. As with all our columns, the idea is to help you design your own particular toolset, based on how you work. So we'll focus on features and capabilities rather than history.

All of these outliners may have a few screen refresh and printing glitches when running under Classic. Import and export where they exist are limited to old formats. And help is not always complete because this was from an era where bound manuals were expected. Installation may be tricky for some if you are not booted in Mac OS 9.

If you've been following our column, you'll recall that we've been providing background on Mac outliners. We started with some [history](#), then described features in [one](#), then [another](#) column. Then we got into [use patterns](#) and [user interfaces](#).

We'll refer to the usage patterns and feature descriptions in the process of describing these wonderful legacy outliners.

Acta

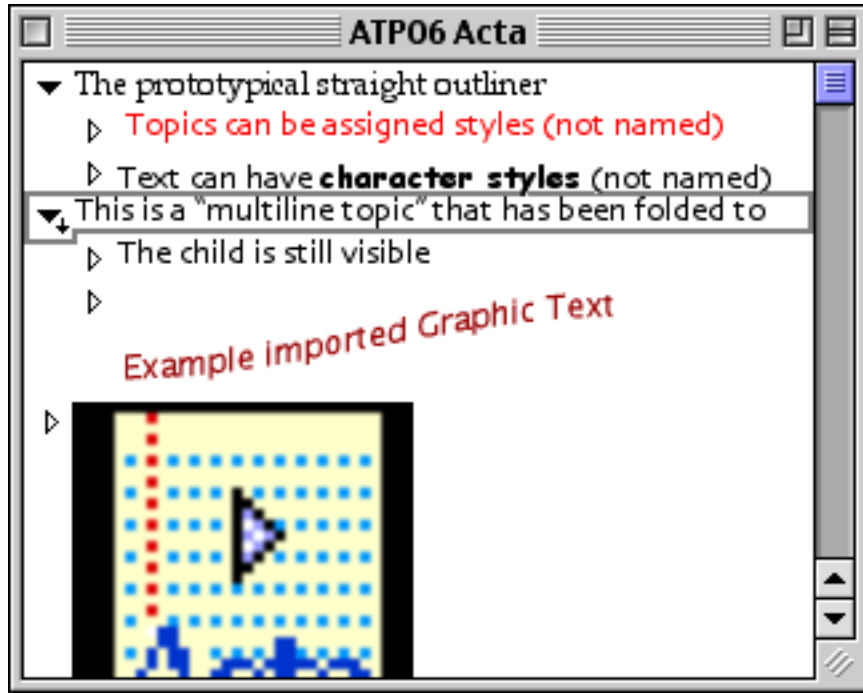
[Acta](#) is one of the oldest, and is in a sense the purest outliner on the Mac. Its appeal is in the straightforward implementation of the paradigm.

Working with Acta is like visiting Florence because so many innovations appeared here. This, folks, is where "smart quotes" first appeared anywhere—not the curly characters themselves, but the technique of correctly curling them when the ordinary quote key is used.

Acta also implemented the "flippy triangle," as we described in [last month's column](#). This was a very big deal, fellow outliners, and is still one of the key elements that makes a Mac a Mac.

The paradigm is simple: there is only one sort of entity, the header (which Acta calls a "topic"); there is no separate entity for notes or paragraphs. The font control is rudimentary with no named styles. Similarly, keyboard navigation is strong but not unusual. Acta also has comparatively strong sort capabilities, sorting numerically or alphabetically among "sisters" or "daughters."

Acta is one of the few outliners that folds headers to a single line (they call it “shrinking”). It has an excellent sound recording capability. Otherwise, the outlining basics are here and little else. [Last month](#) we addressed user interface details. Note how the screenshot denotes the header that has folded text with the little downward pointing arrow.



Acta

What makes Acta interesting is that it leverages the fact that topics are all the same beast. It is one of the few Mac outliners that handles graphics gracefully and without restrictions—a graphic can be placed anywhere as a topic. It is the feature that keeps this on the list of interesting legacy outliners. In fact, the existence of this feature embarrasses just about everyone else as many of them (like OmniOutliner) don't handle graphics at all, and those that do handle them only within notes, seldom within headers.

You could even rig up a text-to-graphic AppleScript and paste graphic text as topics as the screenshot shows.

The Feature Score-card

Acta has: prototypical collapsing and re-arranging; AppleScriptability to some extent; folding of multiline headers; sort; and most especially support for graphics and speech.

Acta doesn't have: a separate class of "note" object; any sort of meta-outline; integration with the Finder; named styles; alternative views; snippet input; external links; internal scripts or events; search, mark, and gather; hoist; columns; standard export; tagging; keywords; indexing; or header notation.

Availability

David Dunham has kindly [offered Acta for free](#) (with no support).

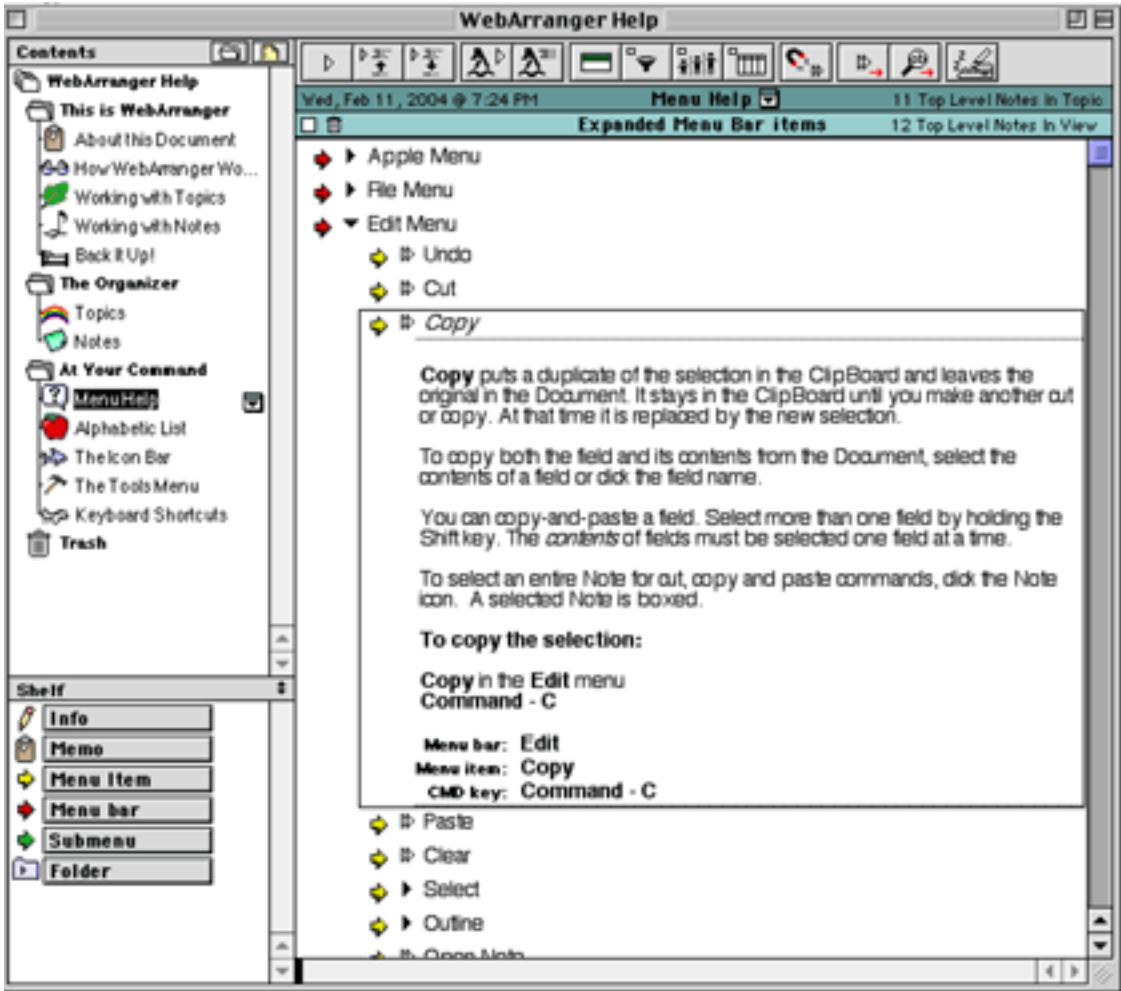
Arrange

As we go through this little survey, you'll probably relate the different applications to those you know well: InfoDepot is like FileMaker but with outlining; INControl is similar to [Now Up-To-Date](#) plus [OmniOutliner](#); WordPerfect compares to [Word](#) plus MORE, and so on. Arrange is unlike anything you know. In some ways it is similar to Tinderbox or some elements of [NoteBook](#); DEVONthink may eventually develop into something like this, but for now Arrange is different from anything else on the Mac.

It was developed by Common Knowledge, Inc. In the early 90s, Arrange sold for about \$500. Then in the middle of the decade—just when the Web appeared—it was revamped as WebArranger, and transferred to CE Software's product managers. They began by making it a free download, then sold it at \$40.

It is basically a database—the first instance of a PIM based on an object-oriented database—that allows you to create data fields and relationships on the fly. Everything is geared to support advanced outlining, but you have table and calendar views as well. Every trick in the book is pulled to create outliner power in the rows: entity types and instances, links, clones, and recursion. It suffers from a couple problems: there is a learning curve because it is so novel, and it has a simplistic-appearing interface by today's standards because of the old 8-bit small icons the Mac used to use. Don't let that deter you, because just exploring how they put this together will make you more capable in thinking about outlines.

The general layout is shown in the screenshot. It has one of the most detailed and handy outliner user interfaces I have seen—and as you know, I’ve seen a lot. The panel on the left is an outline of notes. This is an outliner like most, except you can assign custom icons. The items in this outline are called “topics.”



Arrange Outlines of Outlines

The pane on the right opens a topic, and it consists of an outline as well! Elements of this outline are called notes. Superficially, it is like NoteBook and NoteTaker, which also support outlines of outlines. Ah, but these notes aren’t plain vanilla cells that you dump text and media into. These are data elements. They have types, like “appointment,” “person,” “company,” and so on.

Each type has fields. For instance, an appointment type would likely have a "Person" who you had the appointment with. But there would also be a "Person" type that has its own fields, for instance "Company." And in turn, you may have a "Company" type. Perhaps you can see where this is going.

How it works is neat. Usually, the outline defines the relationship, and you can do that here manually as you do in ordinary outliners. But in Arrange, the fields in a topic can "grow" the outline. So you could set up an outline template that outlined appointments by date and have people then companies under. But you could define another view that showed all interactions by company, with subheads of date, then person met.

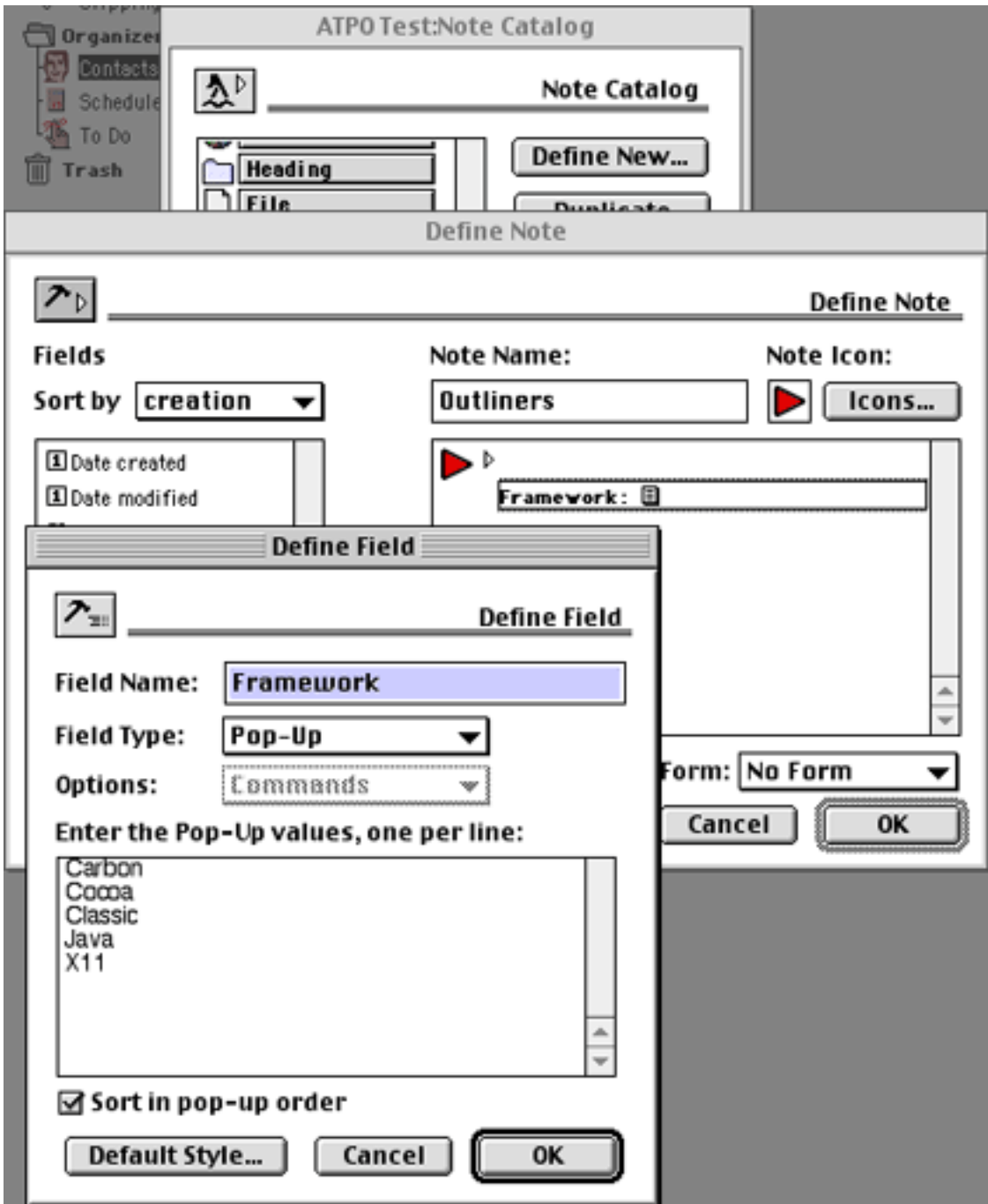
Arrange comes with certain types built in, all the expected stuff: contacts, dates, URLs, currency, and text notes of course. There are lots more, and some of these have special abilities: dates can sound alarms; URLs can launch and store pages; phone numbers can auto-dial, and so on. But you can define anything you wish in terms of note types and fields. Arrange even contains a robust plug-in software development kit (SDK) that effectively turns it into a development platform. For example, CE software used it to add Netscape bookmark import and mail linkage plug-ins when rebranding it as WebArranger.

Arrange failed to gain traction because what makes it so powerful is hard to simply explain. But I'll try by focusing on the one thing that might make you want to seek it out above all other options anywhere.

Each item in the outline on the right is called a note. Casual users would use notes that have simple fields, for instance a note type of "former high school teachers" with fields of "name" (being a simple text field) and a rating (being a pop-up of great, average, and so on).

As we've already noted (oops, sorry for the pun), you can base a field on a note type. This means that if you wish, you can extend the tree structure of outlines into a more dense structure. The compound screenshot shows several windows stacked on top of one

another. (We had to shrink it.)



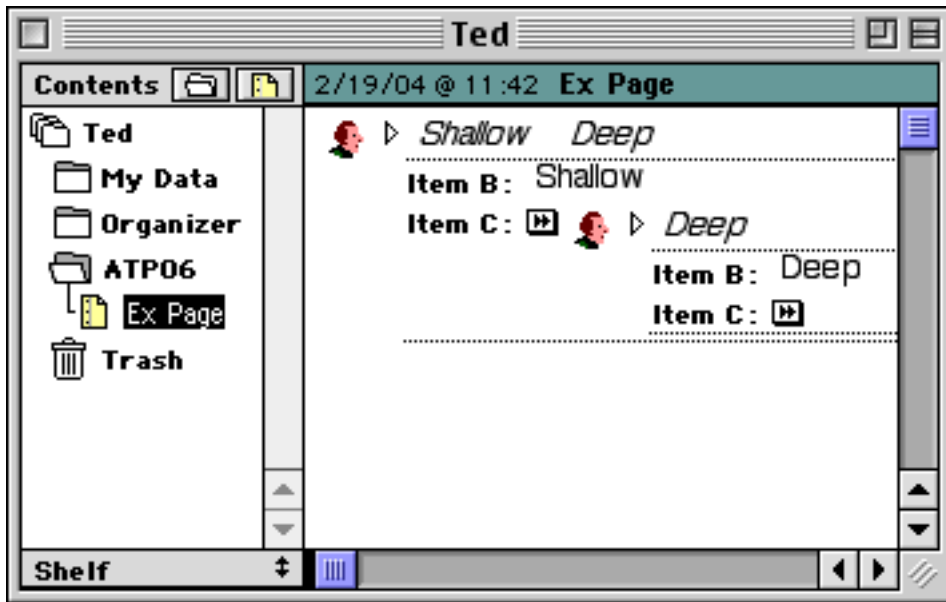
Arrange Note and Field Definition

You've already seen the window furthest in the back. That's the window with the outline of outlines on the left and the outline of notes on the right. Instead of using an existing note type (like text, event, contact, or URL), we'll define a new one. So we open the "Note Catalog" window and hit the "Define New..." button that you can see. That opens the "Define Note" window. On the right, it has a place to name the note type, which we've called "Item A" for this example and assigned a face icon.

The list on the left is all the predefined and supplied field types. You can see that it contains things like "Date Created," "Date Modified" and so on. If you were defining a sales contact note type, you might want to have these fields. We already chose one field, "Item B" to be a simple text field.

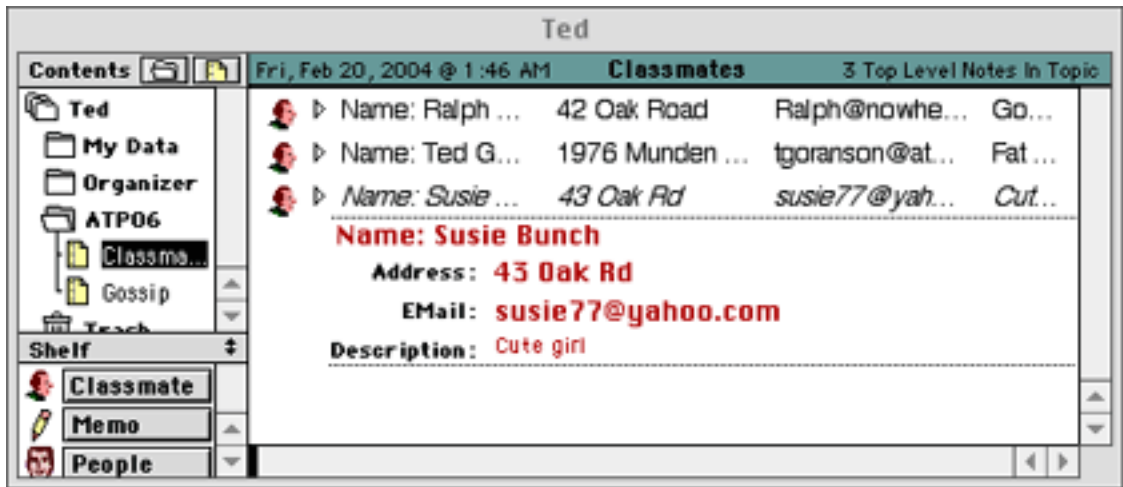
We then clicked the button in the lower left to create a new field, "Item C." This brings up the frontmost window, "Define Field." Once again, we could have selected an existing Field Type (text, pop-up, number, and so on) but in this case we selected a "Note Link," and chose Item A, to match on the text field.

This is pretty powerful stuff. The result of this recursive inheritance looks like the next screenshot.



Arrange Note Display

See that I have a note that references a note? The master note is shallow, the embedded note is deep. The next screenshot shows some populated names not nested, just listed. Note how you can set the fields so that they display as columns when not expanded.



Arrange Classmates

These two notions together: inherited object-oriented data elements and outline views really add up to some heavy power. For example, I might make an outline of who met who in what location. Each time I enter a name, it can be keyed to display their office address. I can later sort and build an outline of locations and their utilization.

This is why you might consider this as your particular outliner. This feature set is not particularly intuitive, but it makes it truly unique and powerful for some applications.

The Feature Score-card

Arrange has: service-like snipping through the "Grabber" extension (which doesn't work in Classic); outlines of outlines; header relationships which use iconic metaphors; something that serves as cloning; effective import/export in terms of delimiter options; a novel type of folding (not quite complete); a rudimentary hoist; tailorable outline views via "filters;" relationships that serve as a sort of internal link; events; (very nice) topic and field-specific styles; and most strikingly the object database that can populate your outline.

Arrange doesn't have: columns; graphical layouts; integrated multilevels; support for multimedia (other than PICTs); or internal/external scripting.

Availability

Printing in Classic is broken and on some systems (we think large HFS+ disks) you'll have to create a small disk image to save your outlines in.

We were unable to find a source to download this, but we'll keep trying. The last incarnation was a free giveaway (supposedly for a limited time) by CE Software, so possibly someone may make that version available as a download. Amazingly, I found apparently boxed retail copies for sale for \$5 (plus an equal amount for shipping) at [Software Outlet](#). To test the company, I purchased a product via Web and got it.

FullWrite Pro

[FullWrite Pro](#) is unique among the products discussed here. It was a remarkably advanced word processor in its day, one that included an outliner.

FullWrite entered service some time before 1988 on the Mac from Ashton-Tate, but when they were sold to Borland, it disappeared for a while. Then it got spun out to Akimbo who improved it and later repurposed some of the code in a Web tool called Globetrotter. That Web authoring tool failed to get traction, and Akimbo went under in 1997. FullWrite was made free in 1998.

FullWrite was the first word processor to have a self-completing keyword glossary. It has "walk down" menus that support navigation and selection from the keyboard and lots of cool word processing features, but that's not why we are here.

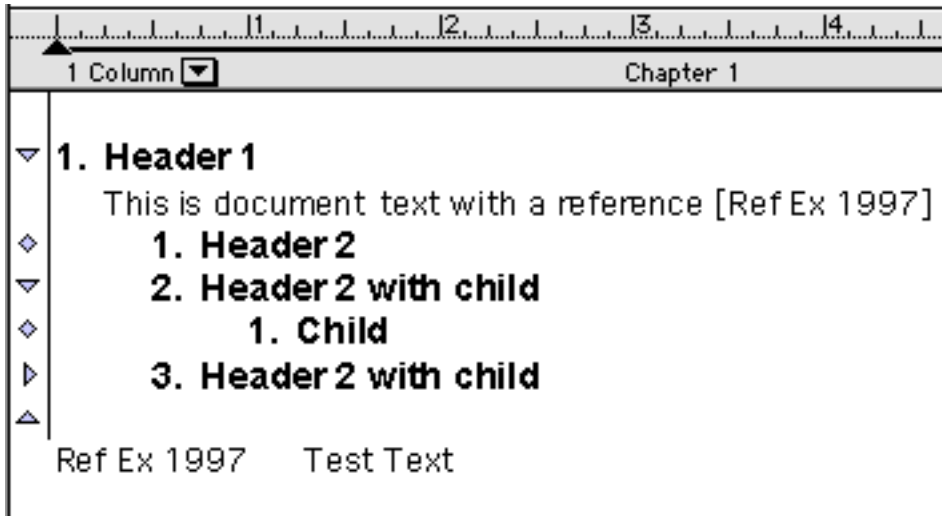
Because the outliner is part of the word processor (as with WordPerfect below), it supports named styles. No OS X outliner today does excepting Word. But Word's implementation of styles is convoluted and annoying. FullWrite's is elegant in comparison, with the styles cascading in the manner we now use in Web design.

Here's what makes FullWrite's outliner unique: in all current Mac outliners, the outline headers are an intrinsic part of the document. As the outline gets "filled out" the headers become chapter and section titles. That means that you cannot put notes to yourself in the headers, or if you do you need to clean things up at the end.

FullWrite's outliner is an overlay on the emerging document. You can see the outliner by itself without the document text. Or you can see the document without the outline headers. The intended way of working with outlines is to dump all sorts of unformed ideas into them that are intended to be in the document, but also dump all sorts of meta-comments and notes to self *about* the document. As the document matures, these meta-comments may even grow.

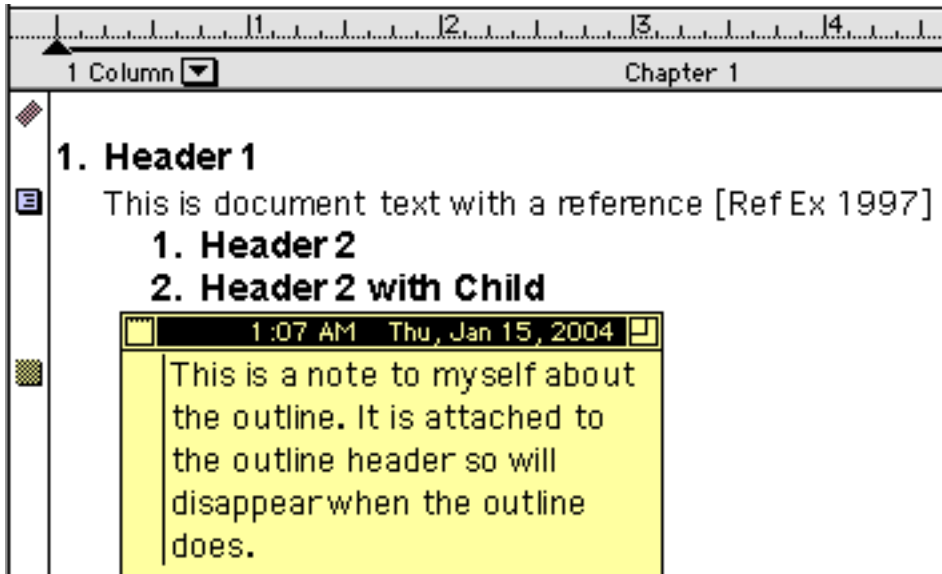
Then, at last, you can just turn the outline into invisible text, or alternatively remove the outline controls and indents and keep the headers. Our feature list described something like this capability in terms of outlines about outlines and such. FullWrite takes this simpler and more direct approach to annotation. The idea is extended by a cool way of inserting "notes" anywhere.

The screenshot shows an outline with a couple lines of document text. The first non-bold line is a document paragraph, while the bold lines are outline headers. I used this form so you could compare it to last month's column on user interface strategies.



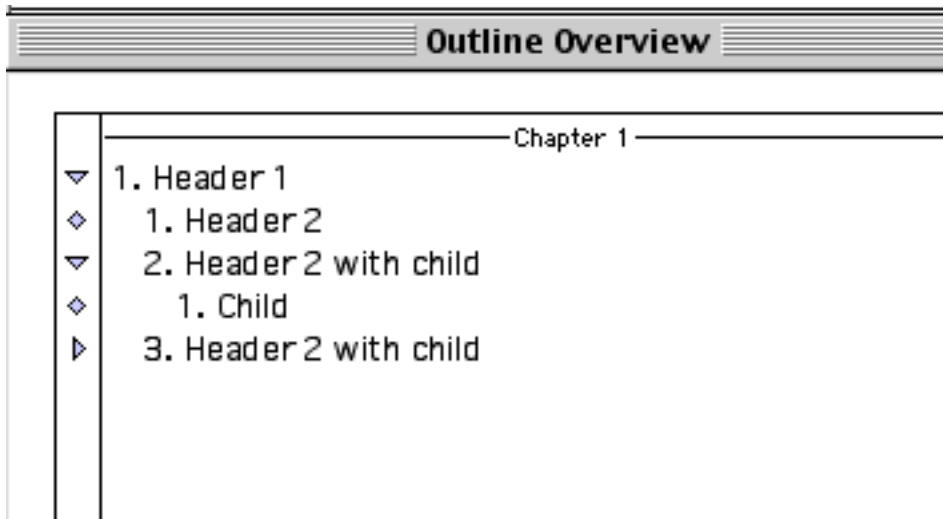
FullWrite Outline

Now we can change the display on the left so that it shows the notes icons. One “post-it” note is expanded, and you can now see that the other note is a bibliographic marker whose text appears at the bottom of the document in the references section.



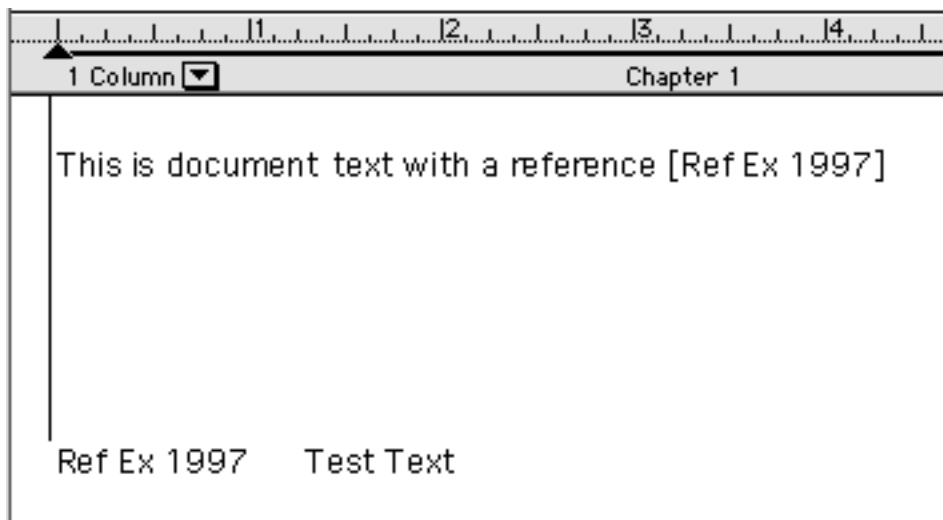
FullWrite Notes

There is a separate pane you can open that displays the outline only. In either view (outline or document), you can re-arrange the outline in the usual ways.



FullWrite Outline View

Our final screenshot shows the very brief example document with the outline removed. Once it is removed, it is gone forever.



FullWrite Outline Gone

You can save your document (with or without outline) as a MacWrite file, which the [MacLinkPlus translators](#) used to be able to massage into nearly any word processor. We have reports that DataViz changed the recent set of translators, creating problems, so if you try this, use an older version. Alternatively you can export directly to InfoDepot, another extraordinary outliner that we will discuss below.

The Feature Score-card

FullWrite Pro has: reasonably handy outline manipulation; named styles; strong editing tools including notes, tables, and index tagging; full media support; export to word processors; and, most interestingly, meta-comment capable outline headers, with views that exclude the document or the outline.

FullWrite Pro doesn't have: folding; hoist; metaphors, scriptability of any kind; snippet input; internal or external links (excepting the prefab references, endnotes, and footnotes links); mark and gather; clones; events; columns (in the outline); or advanced header relationships.

Availability

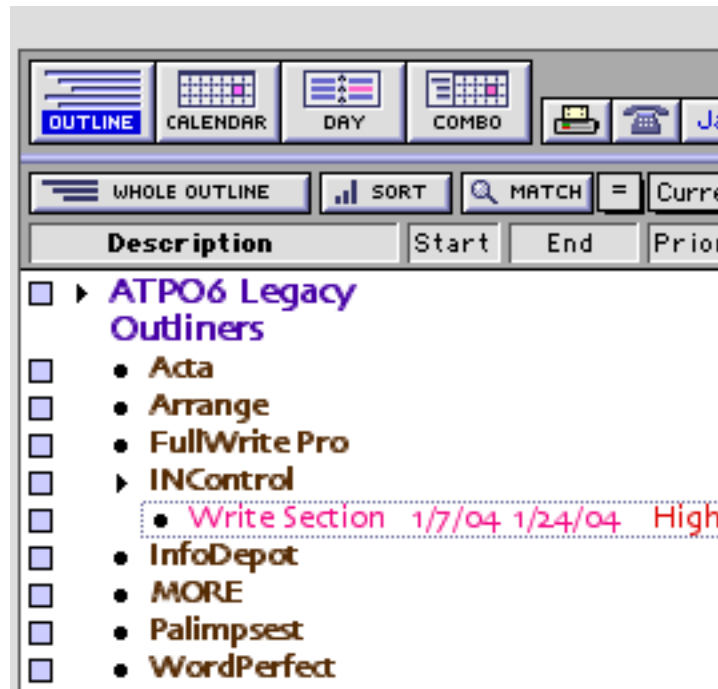
Available free—with no support—[from Dave Trautman](#).

INControl

Oddly, though I know that MORE has the staunchest user community, my mail has been an order of magnitude greater in favor of INControl and InfoDepot.

INControl (that combination of caps is the most common) was developed and marketed by Attain; like so many other outliners it suffered during the period of the *great extinction* and went under. As with all we discuss here, it appears to work well enough in Classic.

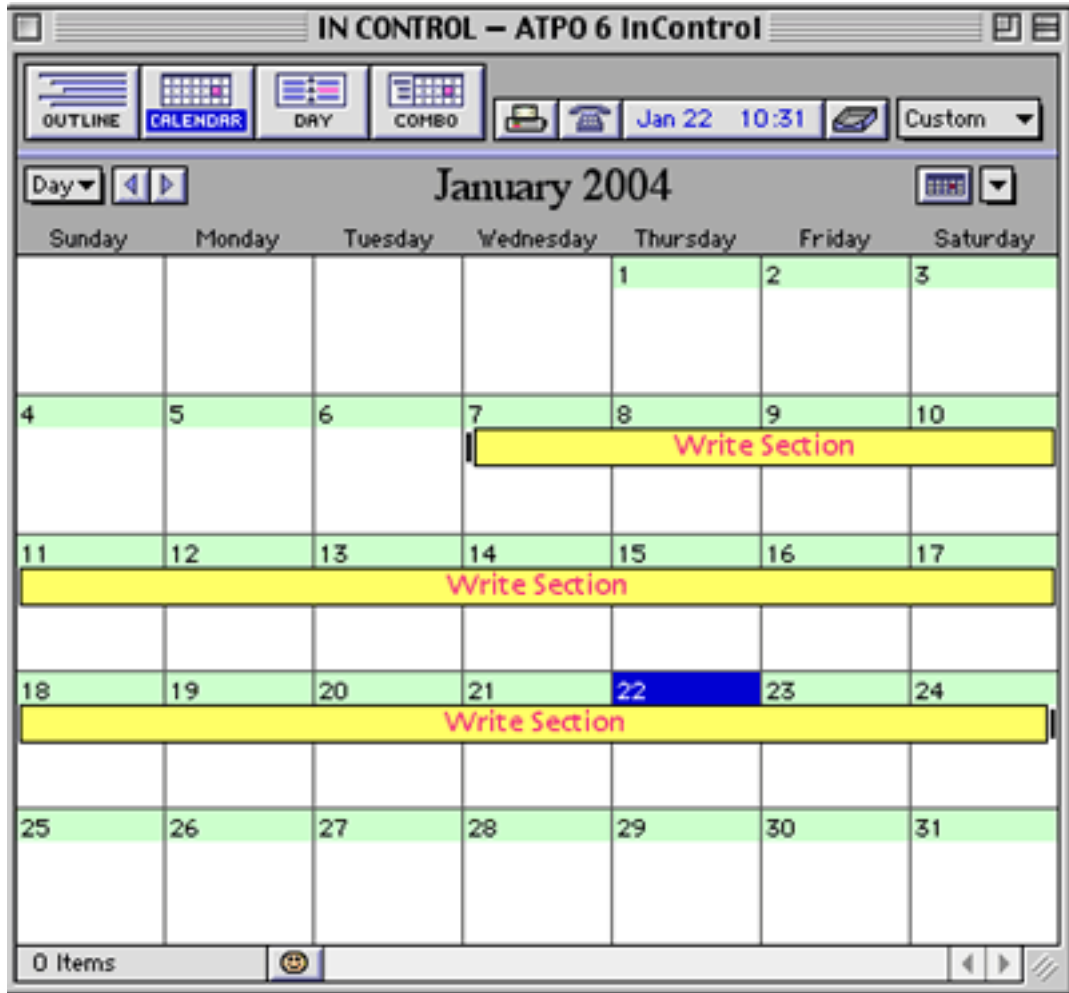
The design strategy for this application was to excel at task and event management using outlines. Toward that end, the developers employed an outliner with columns much like OmniOutliner's and InfoDepot's. Three columns were built-in: start date, finish date, and priority. Filling in those turned that row into an event data element. The screenshot shows several rows with one event.



INControl Event

Events are special citizens in INControl; they appear in different ways in all sorts of different views. You can view several different types of calendar view and see those items as you would in iCal or Now Up-To-Date. The views are: outline, table (where all rows are at the same level of indention—nice for sorting), monthly calendar, and daily schedule. Any of these could be displayed in combination with the others in the same window.

The screenshot shows the same event in a calendar window. The ways these views integrated for events was notable: no one seems to have done it as well for calendars. Calendars can be published and shared over networks. This one was captured on the 22nd of January.



INControl Calendar

Quite apart from the event type, the columns can be used in much the same way that OmniOutliner's are today, with pop-ups and data types and sorting and such. But it had a feature I don't think anyone has: you can set a shortcut to go to a database (several PIMs

plus FileMaker Pro) and automatically enter a data item in an INControl cell—or alternatively launch the database and display a record. Notice in the screenshot how we were able to have the parent header span across the columns; now that’s nice.

Description	Fold	Clone	Links	Meta	Event	Views	Script:	SM&G
<input type="checkbox"/> ATPO6 Legacy Outliners								
<input type="checkbox"/> ● Acta	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<input type="checkbox"/> ● Arrange	-	+	+	+	-	+	-	-
<input type="checkbox"/> ● FullWrite Pro	-	-	-	+	-	+	-	-
<input type="checkbox"/> ▸ INControl	+	-	+	-	+	+	+	+
<input type="checkbox"/> ● InfoDepot	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
<input type="checkbox"/> ● MORE	+	+	-	+	-	+	-	+
<input type="checkbox"/> ● Palimpsest	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	-
<input type="checkbox"/> ● WordPerfect	+	+	+	+	-	-	+	+

INControl Columns

In the screenshot, that little square to the upper right of the flippy arrow on the INControl row indicates a link to a file. The columns are cool, especially when mixed with the event types and some pretty complete search and mark features. But it is the extraordinary handling of events and calendar displays that would prompt you to look at it today. You can get columns by themselves in OmniOutliner and even better ones in InfoDepot.

Oh, one more thing. See that button in the first screenshot with the purple that says “Match?” How this works is simple and amazingly powerful. You put your cursor in a cell and Match will narrow the outline to just the elements that match, but including all their parents. Suppose you were a professional writer and you had a column that indicated whether a section of paragraph was finished or not. You could match on “unfinished” and see all the work you had to do in the context of the structure of the book. Or if you had many distributed storylines like Tom Clancy, you could just show one to check for continuity.

The Feature Score-card

INControl has: folding; definable styles by rows and columns; several novel views (outline, table, several calendars, to-do list); metaphors in the form of calendars and day planners; links in the form of file aliases and URLs; assignable styles by rows and columns; rather competent internal macros that affect sort and view; columns; some mark and sort (but not quite “gather”); the ability to hide and show columns in saved or scripted custom views; and most supremely, both outline rows as events that are elegantly integrated into non-outlining views and the powerful “match.”

INControl doesn't have: AppleScript (except for the way-cool data lookup, which is implemented by AppleScript); hoist; any standard export; support for multimedia; any meta or multi-levels; snipping (except for URLs/bookmarks); header relationships, or even label/bullet control.

Availability

We've been unable to locate someone who can make this available. If anyone has a lead, we'll send an *ATPO* ambassador out armed with doughnuts.

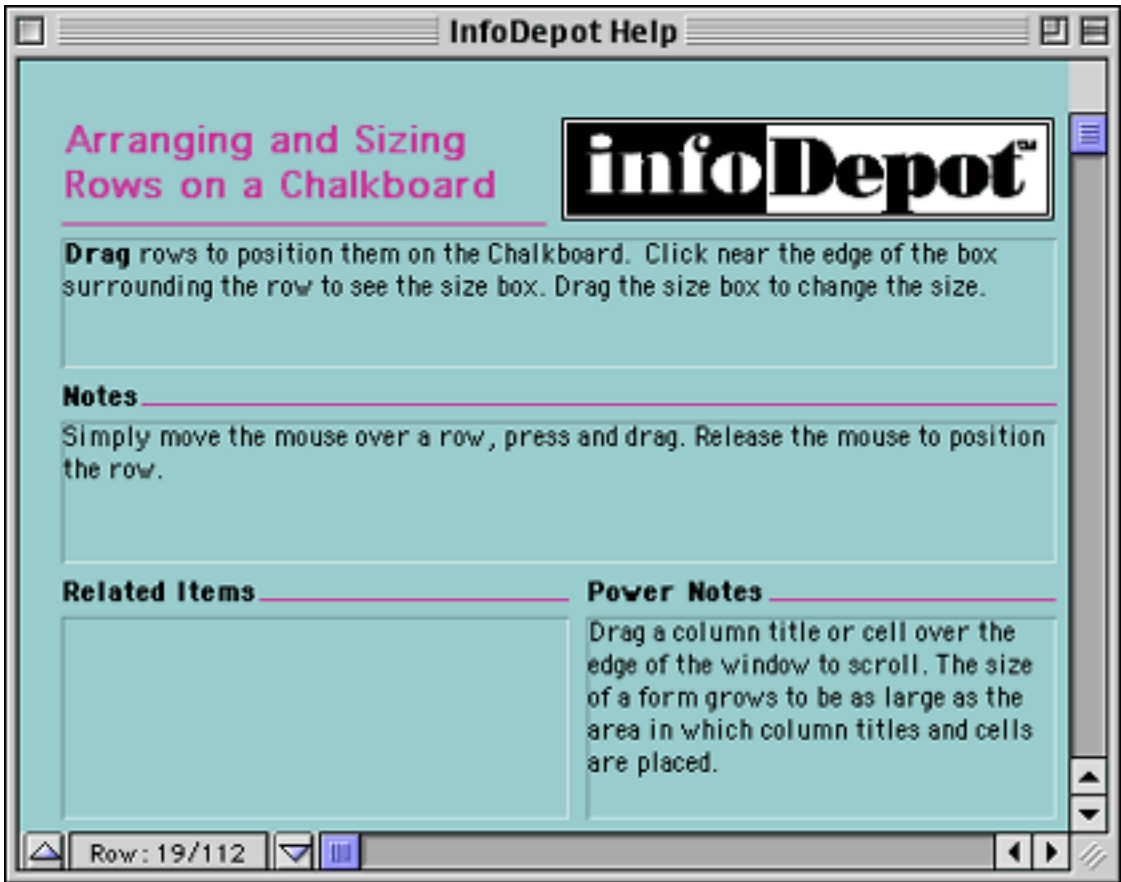
InfoDepot

The story of InfoDepot is surely one of the saddest in this column. It started life as Fair Witness. This was in the days when the layout tools of FileMaker were really making people pay attention. Fair Witness was as strong a database as FileMaker but with heavy emphasis on collecting disparate information, then organizing it by most of the paradigms we noted in *ATPO* [number one](#): spreadsheet, database, graphical layouts, and of course outlining. Fair Witness was targeted at lawyers for building their cases and arguments.

As the outlining features grew, it took on a whole new identity as InfoDepot and became the very best of a certain class of outliners, the class that's today represented by OmniOutliner: multifunction repositories. Its developers, Chena, sold it to [West Publishing](#), a electronic publisher of case law used in building legal arguments (and competitor to Lexis) who were going to make a Windows version. A 3.0 beta was distributed. But West was in turn acquired by a [much larger firm](#) who shelved it. When it was shelved, the beta had support for collaborative outlining over a network.

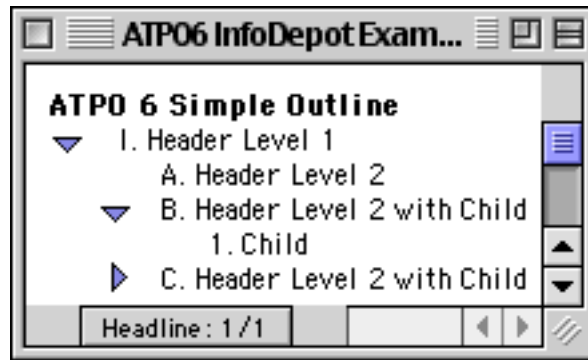
InfoDepot 2.5, the latest, still runs under Classic if you can acquire a copy. It ships with a large, comprehensive manual as an InfoDepot document. It continues to amaze me how few OS X outliners do this; if their product is good enough, where better to use it than in its own documentation?

The screenshot shows one page of the help document. That window displays a row and its column cells shown in a "form" view, precisely identical to what you would see as a record layout in FileMaker. (The outline header is the text in pink, the column headers are the bold black text, and the text in boxes is from the column cells.) The only difference is that when you see all the records in InfoDepot, they are in an outline. Oh, how I wish FileMaker had this!



InfoDepot Help

At root it is a single-pane outliner similar to Acta, with no separate category of notes or paragraph text. As a straight outliner, it is pretty good, supporting a number of style and printing options still notable today.



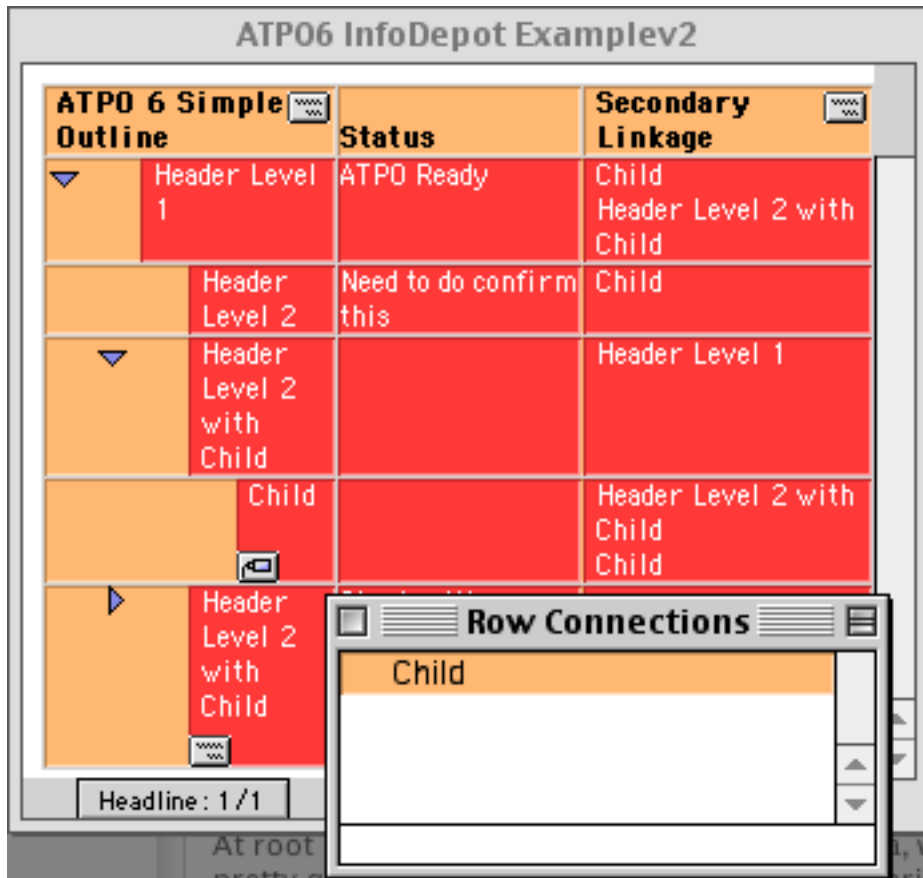
InfoDepot Outline

To that, it adds columns like INControl's that can be hidden, even password protected. Many calculations, sorts, and layout features are supported in these column cells. A cell can contain all the normal text numbers, dates and such, plus graphics, movies, and sound. This part is much like OmniOutliner except with style/layout control, password protection, scriptable drop, and multimedia support.

In this edition of *ATPO*, we only focus on features that are unusual compared to OS X outliners. Here are some that will blow holes in your booties.

The screenshot shows some columns added to our outline, plus some cell formatting. InfoDepot makes heavy use of "badges," those little grey icons in the cells. The one in the "Child" cell (which looks like an old ADB connector) is a link to another outline, but could have been any document. Clicking the badge launches the application and opens the

document. In my usage of InfoDepot, I nested outlines this way, the “outlines of outlines” feature we’ve mentioned. Other badges exist for speech, AppleScripts, “crop” (a cell can be partially displayed) and mark.



InfoDepot Row Links

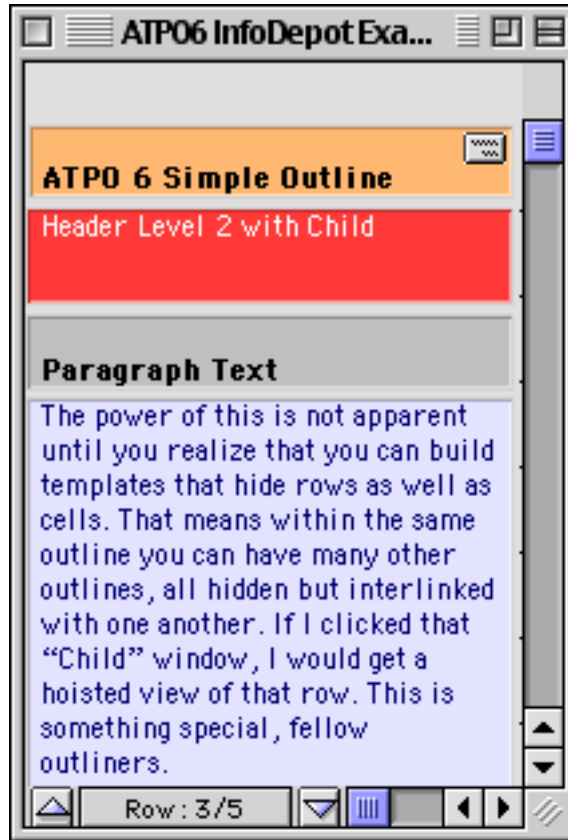
The first column is a simple text column where we have made notes on sections. That could be hidden in the “writing” template and shown in the “editing” or “administration” ones. But look at the second column. That badge at the top of the column is a pop-up that shows all the rows of the same outline. Selecting one enters that row into the selected cell. This is a novel way of linking rows that I have seen nowhere else.

But it gets cooler. See the same badge in the outline column, the one that's labeled "ATPO6 Simple Outline?" It allows something similar but oh so powerful. Placing the cursor in a row and selecting from the outline pop-up puts a badge in that row in the "outline column." See one in the header of the lower left. Clicking that opens a window (shown on the lower right) that links to that row, here "Child."

The power of this is not apparent until you realize that you can build templates that hide rows as well as cells. That means within the same outline you can have many other outlines, all hidden but interlinked with one another. If I clicked that "Child" window, I would get a hoisted view of that row. This is something special, fellow outliners.

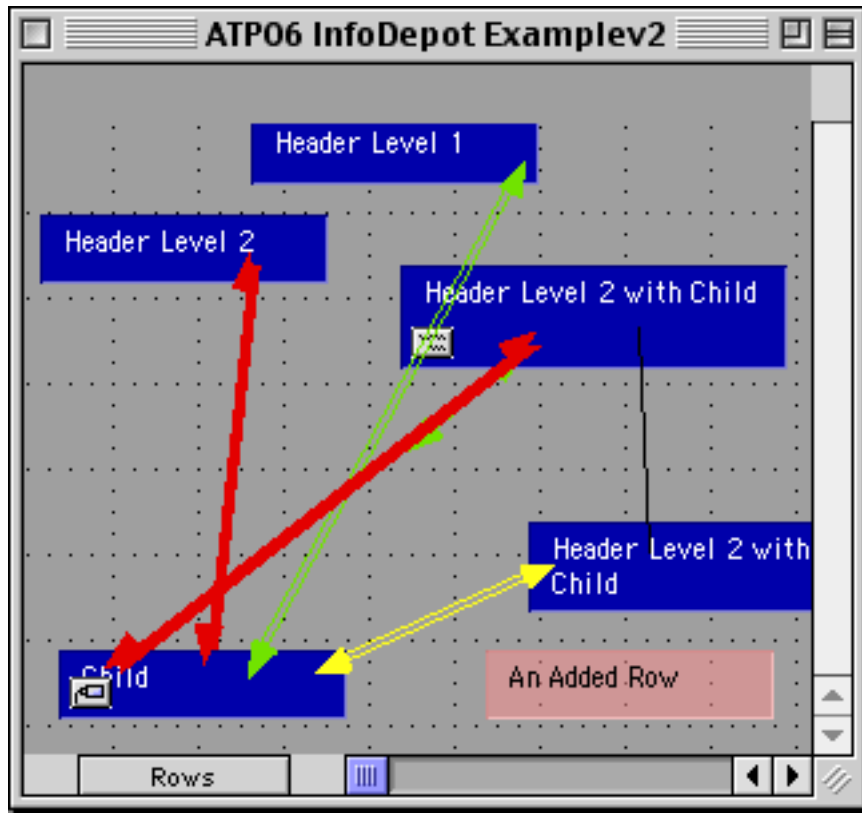
And the whole thing is AppleScriptable, even to the point of attaching scripts to cells that can be triggered with a badge or any of several actions like drag row or add connection. (We'll get to connections in a moment.)

But there's more. The cells could be moved about as if they were fields in a database and presented in a "form view" that could be shifted about using layouts just as in FileMaker. Here we show a cell in a form we made that shows one of the hidden columns, in this case, text.



InfoDepot Form View

Finally there is a “chalkboard view,” not unlike [Inspiration’s](#) brainstorming view, but without the option for symbols instead of text rectangles (and other graphic niceties). Here is where you can make your connections.



InfoDepot Chalkboard

Inspiration is one of the two legacy outliners that is still sold. It migrated to Mac/Windows and targets schoolchildren. Inspiration is not surveyed here because it continues to be developed and is a strong product. We’ll revisit it properly in a future column, but for now you can read an excellent [ATPM review](#).

[TakeNote!](#) is the other one still sold. It is also dual-platform, but the Mac version runs only in Classic and it doesn’t seem to have been updated since 1996. It is likewise targeted at schools. Its paradigm is a bibliographic reference card metaphor. I could not find any limits on the Mac demo.

And on and on, InfoDepot has time lines, calendars, scrapbooks, glossaries, worksheets, layout templates, categories, sketchpads, drawing tools, support for multimedia/speech, and even more. Having all those features in one package is great; most of them you can find piecemeal in later applications and some even do them better.

What makes InfoDepot worth exploring for you is that it is still the very best column outliner in the world, on any platform. It is still the most scriptable, and it has those unique row-to-row and outline-in-outline relations.

The Feature Score-card

InfoDepot has: extremely good AppleScriptability, at the level of no current OS X outliner as it is scriptable, recordable, and attachable (this last means that the script effectively becomes a part of the application); columns (with high level of appearance tailorability) and flexibility; folding; export as MORE files (which some current outliners import); one of the best “hoist” features; events; and most uniquely of all, the FileMaker-like “form” views with a brainstorming “chalkboard” view.

InfoDepot doesn't have: a separate outliner entity for paragraphs or annotations.

Availability

We know of no source, but as with Arrange and INControl, there are several hundred thousand installer floppies out there. Surely now with this column, there should be a market for used legal copies. I know that serious efforts have been made to purchase the source code. Rumors have it that the source code has actually been lost. Printing is broken.

MORE

Of all the legacy outliners we mention, MORE has the largest following. That may be in part because its primary developer, Dave Winer, is a tireless promoter. Dave has also boldly led a movement to make these abandoned outliners available at no cost, a noble gesture.

MORE is a one-and-a-half-pane outliner; notes exist in pop-up windows. It has very strong keyboard control, setting the undisputed standard that many modern outliners follow. Per-level styles (called “rules”) are supported, and it can handily “hoist” in useful ways.

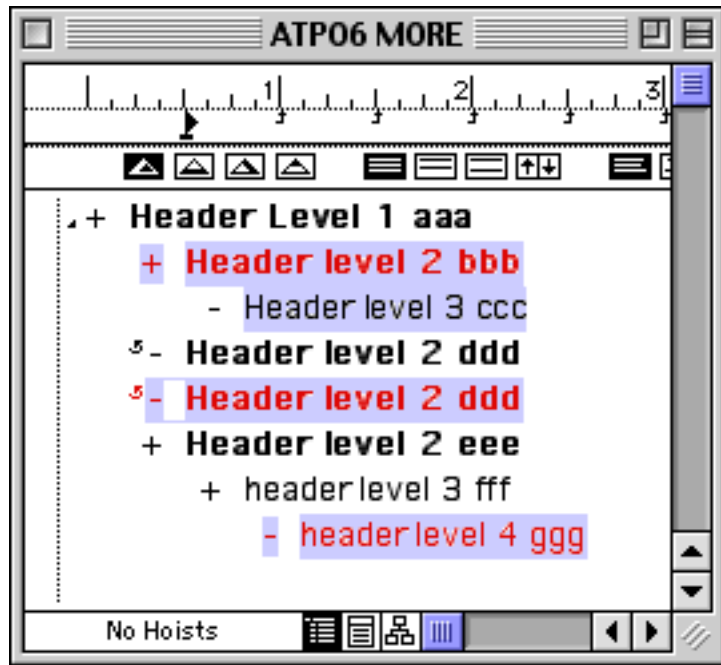
MORE was a leader in several ways, including the display of tree and bullet views, rather mundane by today's standards. But that bullet display contributed to its own undoing. Symantec bought MORE with the intent of turning it into a competitor to PowerPoint and the like. (Hard to recall: there really was competition in those days.) The cost of converting turned out to be too great when added to the (for that time) high acquisition price, so it was killed.

What makes MORE so interesting to a user today is its still impressive search, mark, and gather capabilities, combined with cloning. These are four independent features that have not been matched in this form by anyone else. Somewhat similar capabilities exist in the powerhouse outliners of today, like [Tinderbox](#), [NoteTaker](#), and [NoteBook](#), but MORE's implementation is simple and elegant.

"Cloning" makes a copy of a header that can be relocated elsewhere. It is much like a Finder alias, but predates them. Any number of headers can be manually marked, turning them red. The search command can find any header with a string and mark it. Or if the string is in a note (which MORE calls "comments") its header is marked.

The screenshot shows some example headers. One of these (with the trailing "ddd") is cloned. Three have been manually selected (indicated by the highlighting) and "marked" which turns them red. We could have marked by searching. (MORE's search was powerful

in its day but is poor by modern standards.) Last month, we highlighted some of MORE's [user interface gizmos](#), which are pretty impressive—so note the status message at the bottom of the window that is set to advise on the levels of hoisting. A nice touch.



MORE's Marked Headers

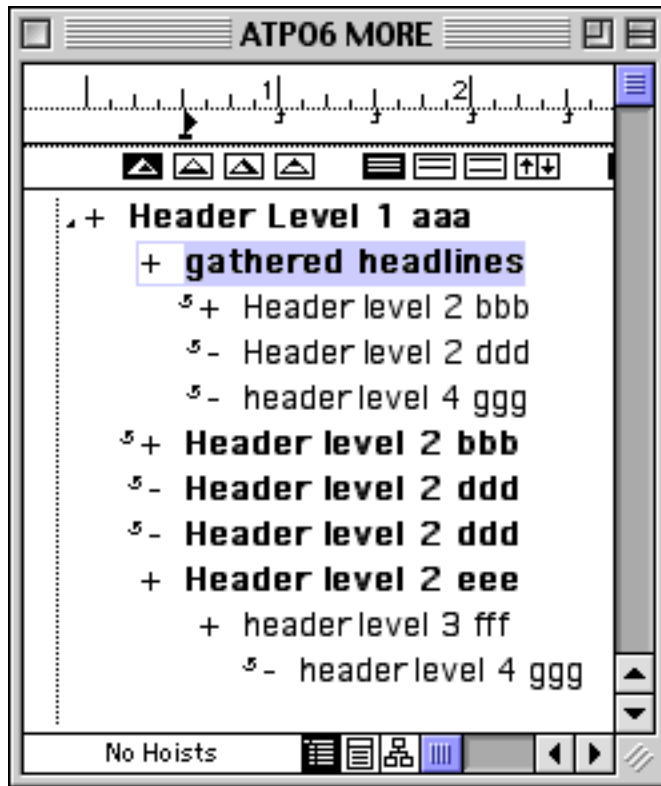
Gather is still an impressive experience: you have choices to clone, copy, or move the selected headers. You also have several choices as to how to gather them as shown. It takes a whole lot of adjustment to actually use this in how you think, and may require some tricks. But if it matches how your mind works, it is very impressive. (Modern outliners that gather tend to use keywords and attributes rather than relying solely on text.)

Here is the options dialog:



MORE's Gather Options

And next the gathered headers using those options. Note that MORE flattens the results: a gathered header cannot have children. (Tinderbox follows this convention.) A little scriptability would have gone a long way here.



MORE's Gathered Headers

If you want to use an outliner to write a complex document and all you want is basic outlining, some reasonable control over styles, plus the remarkable "gather"—and you don't mind losing the features of OS X—you might not do much better than MORE.

The Feature Score-card

MORE has: hoisting; folding of multiline headers; cloning; header level (but not character) styles; alternative views in the form of rudimentary bullet slides and tree views; support for graphics in headers and comments; good keyboard control; annotations; strong print options; and most notably search, mark, and gather.

MORE does not have: any sort of internal or external scripting; (in its current state) reasonable export formats; any sort of meta-outlining, any Finder integration; hyperlinks; links; metaphors; columns; snipping input mechanism; events; tagging (other than “marking”); indexing; or header relationships.

Availability

Available free—with no support—[from Userland](#).

Palimpsest

I’m guessing that few people ever heard of [Palimpsest](#), one of the most interesting legacy outliners. It was created by [Western Civilization](#) (John Allsopp, of the highly regarded [Style Master](#)).

It was innovative in several ways, beginning with its development environment: Prograph, an advanced visual programming system that was Mac-only and very, very cool. Alas, Pictorius—the developer of Prograph—went under in the dark days of Apple, but you can get a feel for the system in this 1993 [MacTech article](#). Note that Prograph structures are something called “dataflow trees,” structures very close to the outlining paradigm.

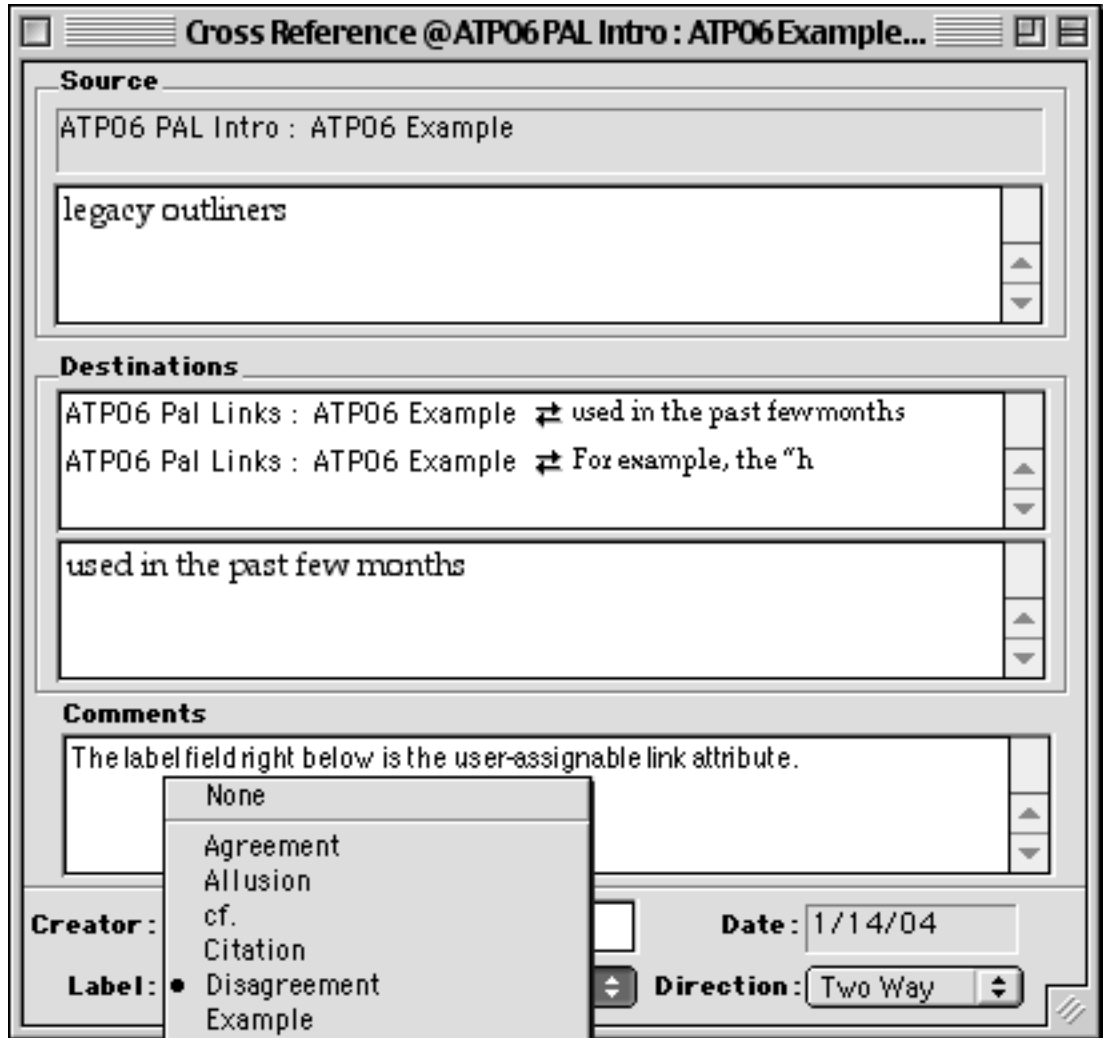
Palimpsest was designed for a very specific purpose: to take literature, “pour” it into outline form, and add comments, notations and even books about the books. All Palimpsest documents start with a book structure which is where the primary outlining comes in. These books are not intended to be re-organized once entered, so tools for flexibly shifting things around were less well developed.

What made it mind bogglingly advanced was how it used hyperlinks. These were very much in the tradition that Tinderbox supports today: a link could be named, and have an attribute. They could be one- or two-way. Links of many types could overlap—in such a case if clicked an option pop-up would display the possible paths. Links could even be “half-way,” which Palimpsest calls annotations.

The screenshot shows the link attributes for one piece of text, “legacy outliners.” It has two links from it, both to the section “ATPO Pal Links” in the document “ATPO Example,” but to different destinations. The window below those two destinations displays the

complete text of the target selected from the list right above. Each link has several attributes: the user who made it, the date made or modified, and a user defined "label," whose assignment pop-up you can see at the bottom.

A similar dialog exists for the other link types.



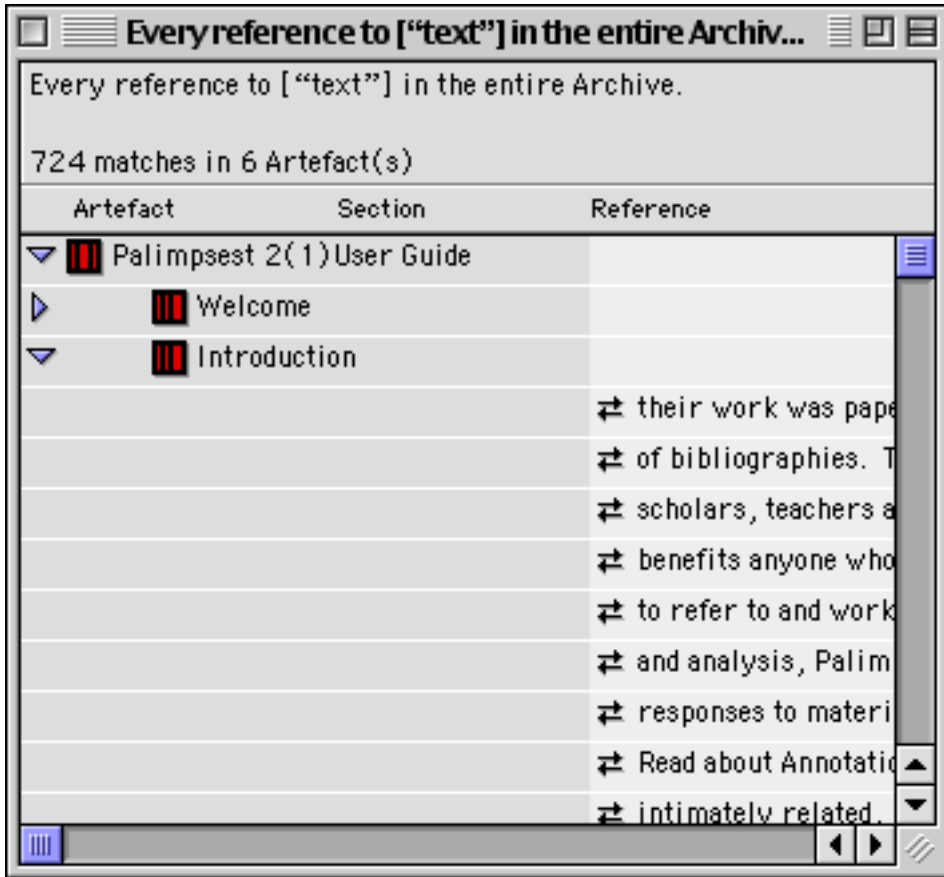
Palimpsest Link Types

A next frontier in outliners is how databases, advanced hypertext, and outlining can be combined. Tinderbox is the leader among current outliners in scope, but many of the outliner examples we've used in *ATPO* in the past few months explore this synthesis to some degree. Palimpsest had a few things really right, and some capabilities even Tinderbox is lacking.

For example, the "header" structure of the outline was implemented as a built-in type of link, coexisting with all the custom link types one may define. The link types also formed a sort of attribute, not unlike a database category.

Palimpsest's "Search," capabilities are what remains extraordinary. You can combine search rules over both contents and link attributes. The report was implemented as a dynamic hypertext outline and is still the best I have ever seen. The screenshot truncates the lines of context.

What Pal has done is find every instance of the word “text” in the help document. Each line in the list on the right is a line which contains that word so you can see the context. The outline is the relationship of the sections in which those lines were found. Wouldn't you like to have that today?



Palimpsest Search Results

There are several useful visualization tools to show maps of cross-references, even a “path” view, which showed a history of various link sequences.

When started, the application searches every file on your hard disk to build a dynamic library of Palimpsest documents (which could be interlinked). That made sense ten years ago, but means very large startup times now. A preference will just use the old index.

But there are other scalability problems. I believe I was the world's heaviest user of Palimpsest, with hundreds of thousands of links. On those old Macs, these documents were really stressed. My biggest project was a complete gloss of *Finnegans Wake* with every annotation you could find and keyed to every geographic feature mentioned, including a map of Dublin. It took me years.

It was the first application I knew that allowed you to author a complex hypertext document and export painlessly to a complete Web site. I created a [Beatles information site](#). You can see there how the different types of hyperlinks are "flattened" to HTML.

Like most of the applications discussed here, it broke somewhere around Mac OS 8, but now it seems to work fine in Classic. When it broke, Western Civilization abandoned it. Their business model was to have schools be their anchor customer, with students clicking and adding glosses to classic texts, writing and submitting their essays in Palimpsest format. But public domain etext didn't take off like we all thought it would.

The help and tutorials (which still come with the download) were amazingly thorough and clear, except they invented a whole new lingo to describe what they were doing. This was unnecessary in most cases and really adds to the learning curve. But once inside, it is a beautiful experience.

The intended use pattern was to develop a coherent document based on an existing document. If this is close to what you do, check it out.

The Feature Score-card

Palimpsest has: reasonable outline manipulation tools; one of the best implementation of headers as distinct from paragraphs; fairly strong integration with the Finder outliner; something like "hoist"; some rather flexible layout view design tools, but these are not switchable on the fly; exports to simple HTML in a way that elegantly translates the complex links; support for images (but lots bog it down); and most especially the internal link mechanisms, which even rival Tinderbox's in a few ways.

Palimpsest doesn't have: named styles (though export to HTML can translate some applied styles to names); "outlines of outlines" or meta-outlines; folding independent of the headers; snipping input; capability of linking to external files; mark-and-gather; cloning; columns; events; tagging apart from the link type; indexing apart from the "search" feature; metaphors; or any sort of internal or external scripting.

Availability

The Palimpsest Web site is more or less still there, but is not linked from the active parts of the site. Western Civilization is not currently returning queries related to Palimpsest, even from registered users. But you can still download and explore the demo.

WordPerfect

What an amazing story! For many years, WordPerfect was the number two word processor on the Mac, superior in many ways to Word. WordPerfect was developed by Satellite Software of Orem Utah, which renamed itself WordPerfect Corp. They rewrote the DOS version for Unix and NeXT. This became the basis for both the Windows and Mac code base, but the Mac version advanced faster. WordPerfect was bought by Novell, and WordPerfect 3.5 for the Mac was released to much fanfare.

Then the whole product line was acquired by Corel who updated the application through 3.5.4 and readied an impressive version 4 that was never released. Along the way, all the various owners took nosedives after suffering severe defeats on the Windows side. We won't go into the legends of evil here...in any case, support for the Mac was an early casualty. In an amazing act of grace, the program was made available as a free download by Corel as 3.5e (enhanced) in 1997. Through some unknown channel, a patch for later OS compatibility appeared.

WordPerfect has a Mac-specific macro language that was very capable, so while its original internal outlining capability was weak, super-user John Rethorst wrote some outlining macros that are pretty cool. WordPerfect eventually bundled them with the application, and they come with the free download.

What makes this legacy outliner unique is that almost all of the possible outliner commands are implemented and in a robust word processor (more robust than FullWrite) with all that implies: tables, layout, bookmarks, index tools, named styles, and so on. Therefore, it stands apart from all Classic and OS X outliners excepting Word; it even beats

the modern Word in several respects so far as outlining (and a few other features); Word's outliner is really just another view of the document with some drag and collapse commands.

This little baby supports things like cloning, and it does it using the Mac Publish and Subscribe technology. That means you can clone from other outlines! No one else clones from other documents, even today. Publish and Subscribe means that you can have text under headers that is "live imported" from other documents (even itself), so that in effect paragraphs or paragraph parts can be cloned as well. This is something OS X can't do—yet, and possibly never—it was even removed from Office v.X.

The most-used commands are on a handy toolbar plus pop-ups for all the rest. Every command has pop-up help, not just a little label. All commands can have keystrokes assigned and reassigned. It supports folding, has a robust internal scripting language, and is highly AppleScriptable. It supports all sorts of media, including speech. About the only notable things it doesn't have are hoist, columns-in-the-outline, and corporate support.

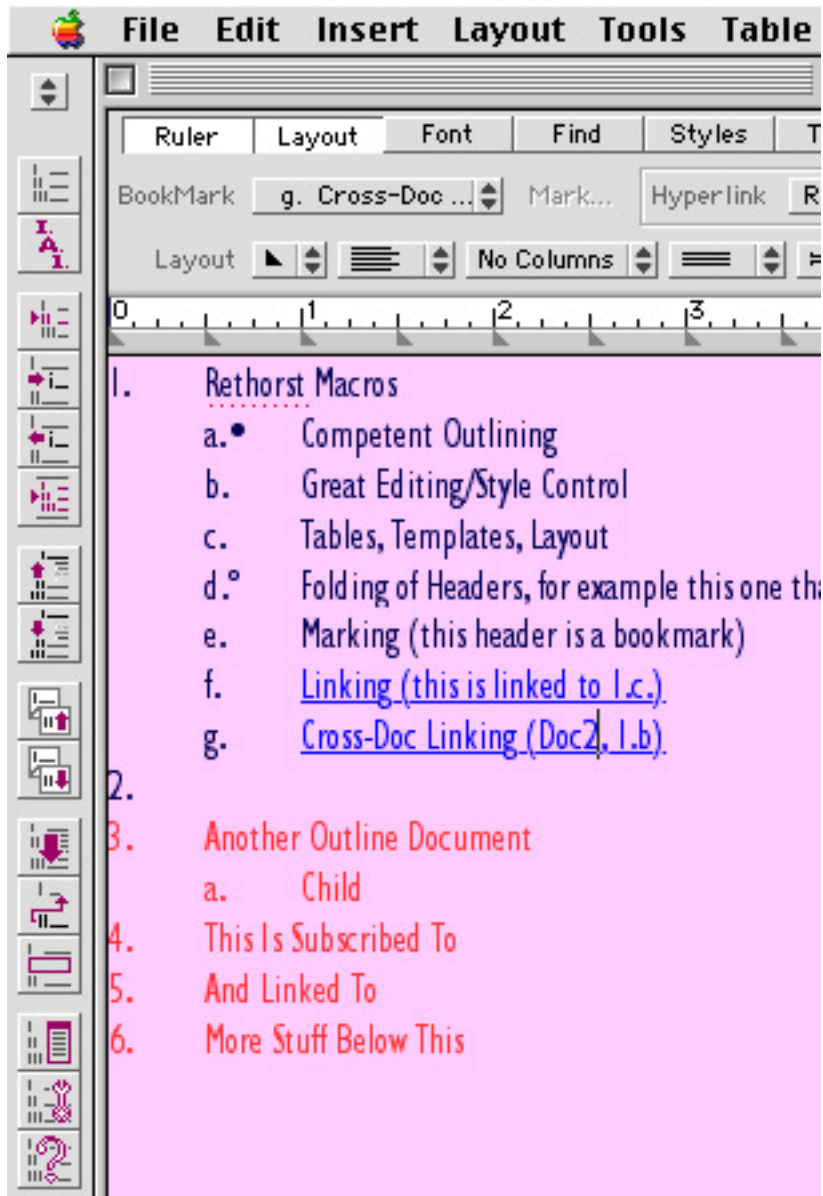


	Command	Keystroke	Mo
	Mode Menu	ctrl-O	Features, Uti
	Label Type Menu	ctrl-L	Utilities
	Outline Return	ctrl-return	—
	Outline Tab	ctrl-tab	—
	Outline Back Tab	ctrl-shift-tab	—
	Add Outline Labels	—	Utilities
	Collapse this Topic	—	Features
	Expand this Topic	—	Features
	Fold this Topic	—	Features
	Unfold this Topic	—	Features
	Show Everything	—	Features
	Join Topics	ctrl-J	—
	Comment Box	ctrl-C	—
	Features Menu	ctrl-F	Mode, Utiliti
	Utilities Menu	ctrl-U	Mode, Featur
	Help Menu	ctrl-H	Mode, Featur
	Topic Up/Down	ctrl-up/down	—
	Jump Up/Down Topics	ctrl-shift-up/down	—

WordPerfect Outliner Toolbar

The screenshot below shows a few of the assets of this outliner. It has a collapsed header (marked by the dot), a folded one (noted by the little square), a marked one, a linked one, and an imported-by-reference secondary outliner. If you are used to working in a word processing environment, this could be the most writer-friendly outliner available.

Still.



WordPerfect Outline

The Feature Score-card

WordPerfect has: great outline manipulation commands; extreme internal and external scriptability and macros; named style options that make Word's seem clunky; annotative comments; clones of any element; hyperlinks, including across documents; superb multimedia (and table and drawing) support; folding; multilevels in the sense that outlines can be nested by subscription; markers/tags (as bookmarks) that can be "gathered;" index markers; and—most notably—it is embedded in a macro-capable integrated word processing environment that is impressive even by today's standards.

WordPerfect doesn't have: high flexibility in numbering/label/bullet styles, including header relationships; hoist; columns in the outline; Finder outline integration (though you can build your own hyperlinked Finder table of contents); snipping management; alternative views; events; and standards-based export in the sense of XML/OPML (but it does support the Claris translators to Word and is one of the frequently-included import formats).

Availability

Corel's free download site doesn't work anymore. There are two alternative download sites known to me: a [Web site](#) and an unrelated [FTP site](#). When installing, it seems you must be booted in OS 9. It will ask for a serial number, which you should leave blank. There is also a helpful, active [mailing list](#). The application runs fine in Classic. If you just want to see a short list of features and picture of the outlining "button bar," download the document "Enhanced WordPerfect Outlining 1.01" [from MIT](#).

This is a double gift: we have John Rethorst to thank for writing these rather amazing macros, and Corel for updating and giving this little gem away.

What to Do

I've used all of these and each delivers its own joy. Play with them a bit and you may be able to find your own particular outliner among them, depending on your needs, work style, and imagination. Working on this column refamiliarized me with these gems, every one. As a result, I have shifted some of my outlining tasks back to one of them.

You may also want to keep some of these features in mind when interacting with the developers of your favorite OS X outliner—there is no reason why we can't have outliners as good as we once did, and better.

About 60 readers had direct input into this column, an amazing display of enthusiasm and unselfishness. With all that help, I can assure that mistakes are mine. If you see any, let me know and we'll note the fixes.

This is the next-to-last of our originally planned overview columns. The last was planned as an exploration of features that can be found in Windows outliners that are lacking in Mac OS X, a tricky idea and possibly not so interesting. I remind readers to send suggestions for columns. Items on the requested list at present are:

- A survey of concept/mind mapping techniques and products (which involve outliners)
- The NoteBook/NoteTaker comparison
- [Hog Bay Notebook](#), [SkinkHunt Notes](#), and similar outliners compared
- Comparisons of snippet managers (like [DevonThink](#))
- Options for designing workflows
- Windows outliners with features that Mac outliners don't have
- Interviews with outlining mavens like Marc Barrot ([activeRenderer](#)), [Mark Bernstein](#) (Tinderbox), [Marc Canter](#) ([WebOutliner](#)), and [Dave Winer](#) (MORE and [Radio Userland](#))
- In depth reviews of specific outliners, of course
- Accessibility issues
- Specific product and scenario how-tos

Department of Corrections, Apologies and Additions

We've become aware that [DeltaGraph for OS X](#) is now available. It has an internal slide show capability; attached to that is a rudimentary outliner that mimics the outline view in [Keynote](#) and [PowerPoint](#). You can indent and collapse but not much more. You can only export the slide view of your outline and then only as a graphic. But I can see that this

might satisfy some folks who might have DeltaGraph open all the time and need to make simple notes.

Alert readers have revealed more outliners previously unmentioned.

[Notes](#) and [Alepin](#) are outliners in the mold of [Caboodle](#), Hog Bay Notebook, and SkinkHunt Notes. Both appear to be fine applications worthy of exploration in their category. As with Caboodle, Notes is free.

[Hog Bay Notebook](#) is a class act among its type of outliners. A new version extends its reach in interesting ways that are worth tracking. The new version 3 is now in beta. You can check it out by [contacting the author](#) at Hog Bay Software.

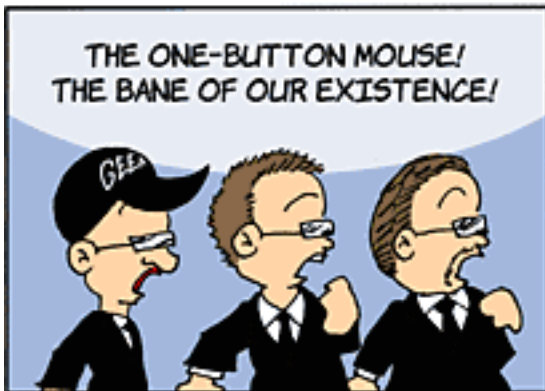
Also, the Palm outliner [Shadow Plan](#) has an OS X beta that you can check out for free. And there is yet another novel outliner in the works: the evolution of a new outliner Iron Lute is being covered on the [developer's weblog](#).

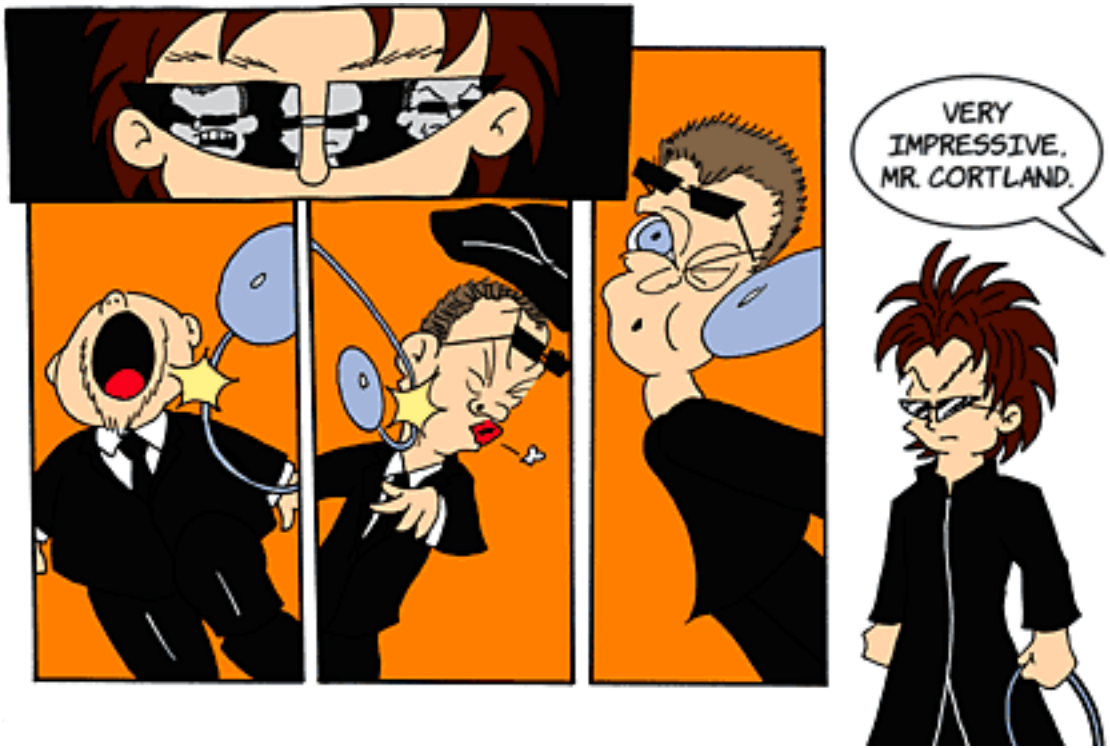
Copyright © 2004 Ted Goranson, tgoranson@atpm.com. Ted Goranson has been thirty years in the visualization and model abstraction field, and has had careers in defense and intelligence spook labs. He is now beginning a [new user interface project](#).



Cartoon: Cortland

by Matt Johnson, mjohnson@atpm.com



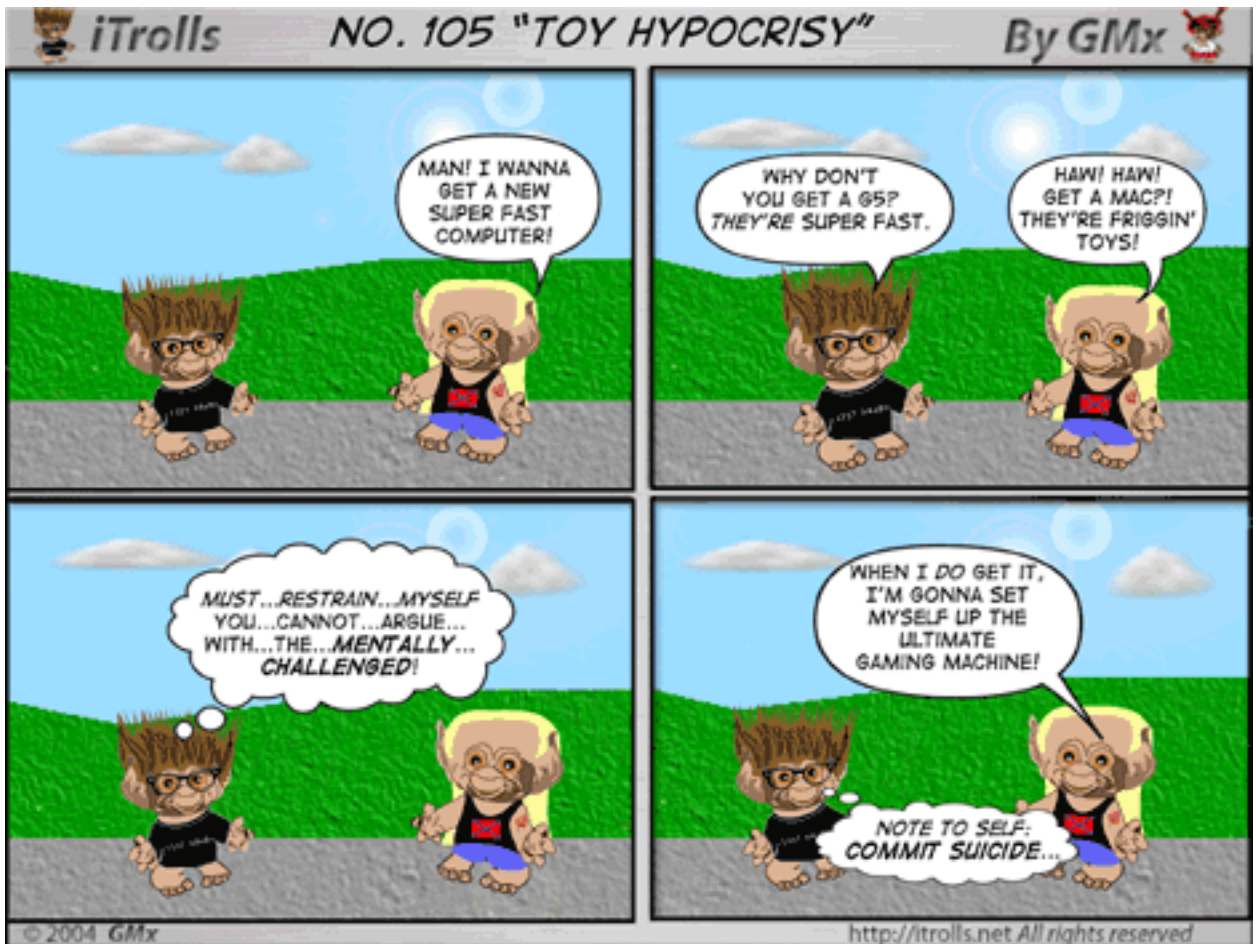


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Cartoon: iTrolls

by GMx, <http://homepage.mac.com/gregmx>





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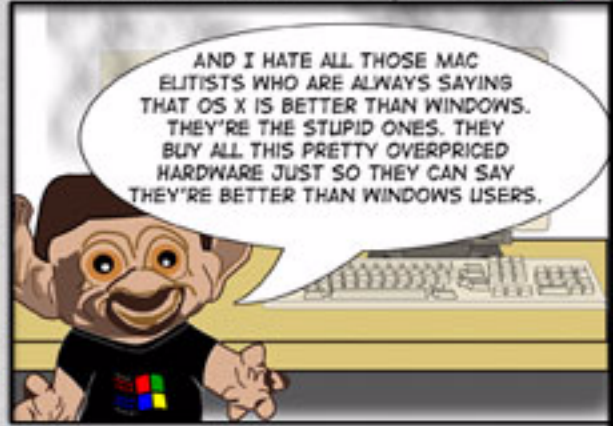
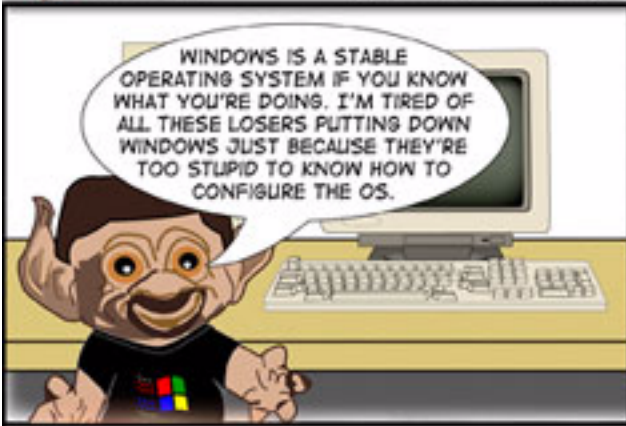
CAPTAIN'S LOG STARDATE 3822.4—THE ENTERPRISE HAD BEEN PATROLLING SECTOR 0028 JUST OUTSIDE THE ROMULAN NEUTRAL ZONE WHEN A BLUE SPHERE APPEARED IN FRONT OF THE SHIP KEEPING THE ENTERPRISE AT BAY WITH NO ESCAPE...

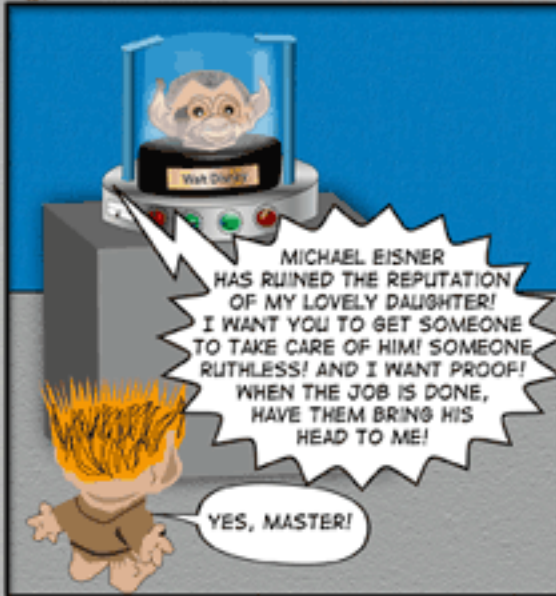


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Extras: Desktop Pictures

Bora Bora

Bora Bora

This month's desktop pictures, submitted by an ATPM reader, were taken on a vacation to Bora Bora and Moorea, two islands in French Polynesia.

Previous Months' Desktop Pictures

Pictures from previous months are listed in the [desktop pictures archives](#).

Downloading all the Pictures at Once

iCab and Interarchy (formerly Anarchie) can download an entire set of desktop pictures at once. In iCab, use the Download command to download "Get all files in same path." In Interarchy, use HTTP Mirror feature.

Contributing Your Own Desktop Pictures

If you have a picture, whether a small series or just one fabulous or funny shot, feel free to send it to editor@atpm.com and we'll consider publishing it in next month's issue. Have a regular print but no scanner? Don't worry. E-mail us, and we tell you where to send it so we can scan it for you. Note that we cannot return the original print, so send us a copy.

Placing Desktop Pictures

Mac OS X 10.3.x

Choose "System Preferences..." from the Apple menu, click the Desktop & Screen Saver button, then choose the Desktop tab. In the left-side menu, select the desktop pictures folder you want to use.

You can also use the pictures with Mac OS X's built-in screen saver. Select the Screen Saver tab which is also in the Desktop & Screen Saver System Preferences pane. If you put the ATPM pictures in your Pictures folder, click on the Pictures Folder in the list of screen savers. Otherwise, click Choose Folder to tell the screen saver which pictures to use.

Mac OS X 10.1.x and 10.2.x

Choose “System Preferences...” from the Apple menu and click the Desktop button. With the popup menu, select the desktop pictures folder you want to use.

You can also use the pictures with Mac OS X’s built-in screen saver. Choose “System Preferences...” from the Apple menu. Click the Screen Saver (10.1.x) or Screen Effects (10.2.x) button. Then click on Custom Slide Show in the list of screen savers. If you put the ATPM pictures in your Pictures folder, you’re all set. Otherwise, click Configure to tell the screen saver which pictures to use.

Mac OS X 10.0.x

Switch to the Finder. Choose “Preferences...” from the “Finder” menu. Click on the “Select Picture...” button on the right. In the Open Panel, select the desktop picture you want to use. The panel defaults to your “~/Library/Desktop Pictures” folder. Close the “Finder Preferences” window when you are done.

Mac OS 8.5–9.x

Go to the Appearance control panel. Click on the “Desktop” tab at the top of the window. Press the “Place Picture...” button in the bottom right corner, then select the desired image. By default, it will show you the images in the “Desktop Pictures” subfolder of your “Appearance” folder in the System Folder, however you can select images from anywhere on your hard disk.

After you select the desired image file and press “Choose,” a preview will appear in the Appearance window. The “Position Automatically” selection is usually fine. You can play with the settings to see if you like the others better. You will see the result in the little preview screen.

Once you are satisfied with the selection, click on “Set Desktop” in the lower right corner of the window. That’s it! Should you ever want to get rid of it, just go to the desktop settings again and press “Remove Picture.”

Mac OS 8.0 and 8.1

Go to the “Desktop Patterns” control panel. Click on “Desktop Pictures” in the list on the left of the window, and follow steps similar to the ones above.

Random Desktop Pictures

If you drag a folder of pictures onto the miniature desktop in the Appearance or Desktop Pictures control panel, your Mac will choose one from the folder at random when it starts up.

DeskPicture

An alternative to Mac OS's Appearance control panel is Pierce Software's DeskPicture, [reviewed](#) in issue 5.10 and available for [download](#).



Review: Digital Photography Pocket Guide, 2nd ed. (book)

by David Ozab, dozab@atpm.com

Developer: [O'Reilly](#)

Author: Derrick Story

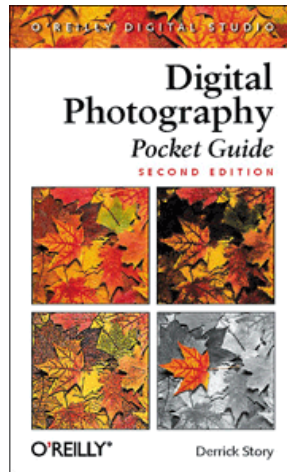
Price: \$15

Trial: [Table of Contents](#) and [Index](#).



Overview

This book is intended for anyone who owns, or is planning to buy, a digital camera. For novices, it explains in clear concise language the parts of a camera, and each part's respective function. For experienced photographers, it goes in depth, using terms familiar to anyone experience in film photography, and thus helping complete the transition to digital media. And for everyone, it is truly a "pocket guide," measuring only 7" X 4 1/4".



Organization

The book is divided into three chapters:

The first chapter, “What is it?” is an alphabetical guide to all the parts of a digital camera. Features are divided into three categories: basic features, those found on all cameras; intermediate features, those useful to people with previous photography experience, or those hoping to advance their skill level; and advanced features, those of interest to experienced photographers looking for the most versatile camera. The individual entries are marked by letter (B for basic, I for intermediate, and A for advanced). This way, each individual can quickly find the entries relevant to his or her camera. In addition, for someone who’s camera shopping, a clear listing of camera features at each level is essential. In my case, having received a review copy prior to purchasing a camera, this book confirmed that the camera I was considering was an intermediate level model, and was priced competitively with other comparable cameras.

The second chapter, “What Does it Do?” describes the practical applications of all the parts and functions covered in the first chapter. Topics are again listed alphabetically, essential in a well-organized reference book, and range from the practical (i.e. Digital vs. Optical Zoom, File Compression) to the technical (i.e. aperture value, exposure metering) to the aesthetic (i.e. composition, close-ups). The language is carefully crafted to be easily understood by the novice shutterbug, while experienced photographers will appreciate the use of familiar terms (i.e. f-stop, shutter speed).

The third chapter, “How Do I ...” brings the information in the first two chapters to bear on a number of common photography situations. Though not every instance is covered (or could possibly be covered), the selection of situations are those most likely to compromise a potentially great shot. Outdoor photography, existing-light photography, action shots, architecture shots, and table-top photography are among the common situations covered. Entries cover both technical procedures (i.e. when to use flash, where to place a subject relative to the sun) and aesthetic issues (i.e. where to place the horizon in a shot, taking multiple shots at various distances). Again, the language is clear, concise, and always to the point. I expect this to be the most valuable, and most oft-referred to chapter, of this book.

Other Features

The book features excellent photographic examples throughout, and, most importantly, all of them (except for a single example illustrating sepia tone vs. black and white) are in color. One thing I've never been able to understand is books on photography and photo editing software printed entirely in black and white. Of course, it's cheaper, but an example explaining some aspect of color photography should be in color.

The book also features "Pro Tips" and "Practical Examples" throughout. These are set off from the main text, but always provide information relevant to the topic at hand. For example, in the section on self-portraits (in Chapter 3), the pro tip suggests to "position a mirror behind the camera so that you can better pose yourself at the moment of exposure." Simple, and seemingly obvious once one reads it, yet how many of us would think of that ahead of time on our own?

The Bottom Line

The preface of this book is titled "Who's in Charge?" In other words, who decides what the photos will look like, the photographer or the camera. Auto-settings are fine for point and shoot, but those who want to take their photography to the next level will greatly value all the information contained in this book. And it's small enough to fit in a pocket or a camera bag. What more could you want?

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Review: NoteRiser

by Chris Lawson, clawson@atpm.com

Developer: [Contour Design](#)

Price: \$130

Requirements: any laptop computer

Trial: None



With the ever-increasing ability of computer manufacturers to package serious computing power into a tiny space, more and more people are selecting laptops as their primary computer. Apple [recently announced](#) that portable sales accounted for nearly half of all Macintosh sales in the last three months of 2003, an all-time high. PowerBook sales, in particular, nearly doubled over the year-ago quarter, rising from 101,000 units to 195,000 units.



All these portable Mac sales are a great boon for Apple and, undoubtedly, to their purchasers as well. It's a safe bet that most of these portables are being used as desktop replacements for on-the-go students, businessmen, and others who are willing to sacrifice

some high-end computational power for the great increase in mobility. But it has long been known that laptop computers, on the whole, offer poor ergonomics when compared to their desktop counterparts. Furthermore, recent laptop designs from Apple and other manufacturers have been well-known for their heat output, a consequence of the ever-increasing power present in a seemingly ever-shrinking package. A multitude of products have attempted to solve both ergonomic and heat issues, but few have succeeded. The two most notable portable laptop stands, both from RoadTools, are the CoolPad Traveler and the [Podium CoolPad](#). (Targus sells a re-branded version of each.)

Contour Design has thrown its hat into the portable laptop stand ring with the NoteRiser, a six-ounce, German-made, brushed-aluminum-and-plastic contraption that folds down to file-folder thickness. Contour thoughtfully supplies an instruction sheet for using the NoteRiser, which is a good thing, as the NoteRiser is possibly the most complex laptop stand on the market. Fortunately after setting up the NoteRiser the first time, you won't need the instructions any more. Six self-adhesive "ClickStrips," Velcro-like plastic fasteners, are also included, along with instructions for attaching them to the NoteRiser and your laptop for additional resistance to gravity. Not wanting to deface my TiBook, or wait 48 hours specified in the instructions for the adhesive to set, I chose not to utilize the ClickStrips, and I suspect most users will do the same.

This attractive laptop stand boasts of its ergonomic prowess, and in this regard, it succeeds admirably. While improved heat dissipation is not a claimed feature (as it is with so many modern laptop stands), the NoteRiser certainly does no worse than any other passive-cooling stand. The improved ergonomics come at a price, however: at any angle higher than the lowest offered, typing or mousing becomes essentially impossible, necessitating the use of an external keyboard and mouse. This isn't all bad, however, as laptop keyboards and trackpads tend to be ergonomic nightmares in the first place.

The NoteRiser has seven levels of adjustment, allowing the base of the laptop to sit at angles from approximately 25 to 55 degrees. Most laptops will work just fine at any level, but users whose laptops only open to about 120 degrees (most iBook users, for instance) will find that only the two lowest angles are suitable, effectively negating the NoteRiser's ergonomic advantage over a Podium CoolPad.

Another feature of the NoteRiser is its high portability, something that few other laptop stands offer. The NoteRiser folds flat, to a thickness of less than one quarter-inch, but its length and width are enough to leave the RoadTools CoolPad the portability champion. The NoteRiser must be unfolded and set up each time, a 10-second operation that, though a minor inconvenience, does detract somewhat from its portability.

The impressive portability of the NoteRiser is actually a bit of a puzzle. In its most ergonomic configuration, the NoteRiser *requires* the use of an external keyboard and mouse, but carrying an external keyboard and mouse with you is impractical at best. At its lowest angle, the only setting where typing and mousing are comfortable in the long term, the ergonomics are little—if any—better than a PodiumPad. Furthermore, at its lowest setting, there is a noticeable and disconcerting flex in the stand, a problem from which the NoteRiser’s competition never suffers.

Finally, we come to the NoteRiser’s fatal flaw. Two support tabs hold up the base of the laptop and prevent it from sliding down onto the desk. The right support tab sits right in the middle of the slot of a TiBook’s optical drive, completely preventing use of the drive as long as the laptop is on the stand. Apple’s current large PowerBooks and many Wintel laptops have similarly located optical drives, and they would suffer from this as well. To be fair, installation of the ClickStrips will allow the tabs to be folded down, but at higher angles, even the ClickStrips may not be strong enough to counteract gravity, and the optical drive will be prevented from accepting or ejecting media by the surface of the desk. Furthermore, the competition isn’t immune to this problem—the PodiumPad, when adjusted to maximum height, also ejects media into the desk. However, the front of a laptop on a PodiumPad may be easily lifted up when inserting or removing optical discs; if the ClickStrips are installed on the NoteRiser, you have to lift the entire assembly.

At nearly \$130, \$100 more than other portable laptop stands and substantially more than even the non-portable “ergonomics-first” stands like the Griffin iCurve, the NoteRiser isn’t a great value. With its various limitations, I would see its primary market as those people who value ergonomics over portability. However, you could buy a RoadTools portable

stand *and* an iCurve for use at home or at the office for about half the cost of a NoteRiser. Unless the NoteRiser is redesigned to fix its fatal flaw and improve its ergonomics for iBook users, Mac laptop owners would be advised to look elsewhere.

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Review: XRay 1.0.9

by Eric Blair, eblair@atpm.com

Developer: [Rainer Brockerhoff](#)

Price: \$10

Requirements: Mac OS X 10.2

Trial: Feature-limited (fully-functional for 15 days; after that, Administrator authorization works once per launch).



Although the Finder's Info window has improved by leaps and bounds since it first debuted, it still has some shortcomings. Some of these, like the inability to edit pieces of file metadata, would appeal mostly to power-users. Others, like the failure to display file labels or access multiple files at the same time, can impact anybody using a Mac.

XRay is a utility designed to address the shortcoming of the standard Info window, much like the previously reviewed [FileXaminer](#) and [Super Get Info](#).

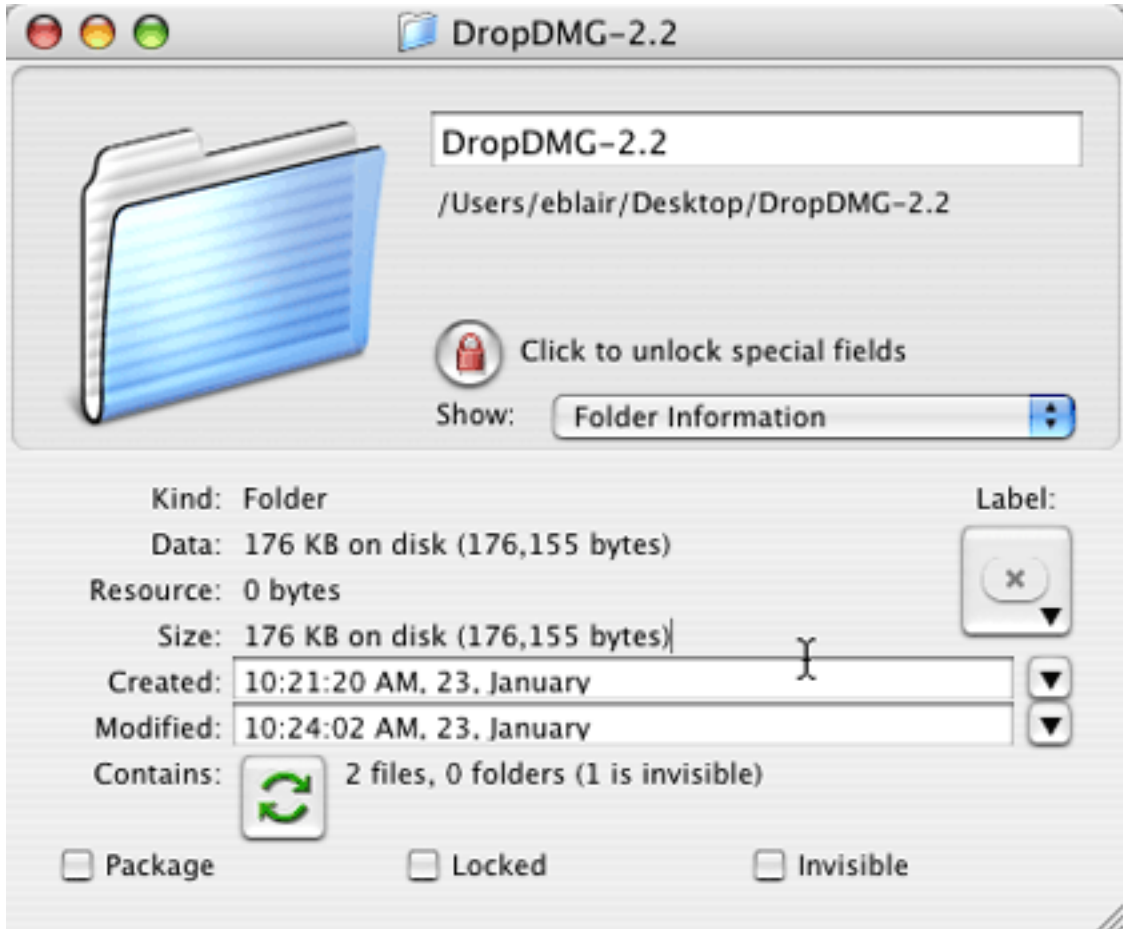
As one might expect from a get info utility, XRay shares some basic functionality with the Finder and the aforementioned programs. It also has some features these applications lack and lacks some features that these applications have.

Getting Info

The XRay interface is split vertically in two. The top portion of an info window shows the file name, icon, and path, along with an option to authorize yourself as an administrator so you can alter certain protected pieces of data. The top portion of the info window also contains a pop-up menu for choosing which information should be displayed in the bottom portion of the window.

This Show pop-up menu always contains three items, but the menu contents are not static. You always have the option to display the file permissions and the type and creator information. The first item in the menu, though, changes depending on the type of file you are currently viewing.

Customized data display depending on file type is one of XRay's unique features. Other info tools have some limited form of this (Super Get Info hides the Type and Creator fields for folders and the Finder displays Select New Original button for aliases, for instance), but none take it as far as XRay. There are customized displays for 8 different file types: basic files, folders, packages, aliases, volumes, frameworks, special files, and special folders.



Displaying information about a folder.

Portions of these customized data displays are the same for each of the file types—for instance, each data display contains fields for the size, creation date, and modification date of the file being examined. The customized portions of the data displays include things like the number of files of in a folder, the Backed-Up and Checked date values for volumes, and the version of frameworks.



Viewing information specific to volumes.

The permissions display uses the now-familiar 3 x 3 checkbox grid for setting owner, group, and world permissions. Pop-up menus are used to modify the file's owner and group.



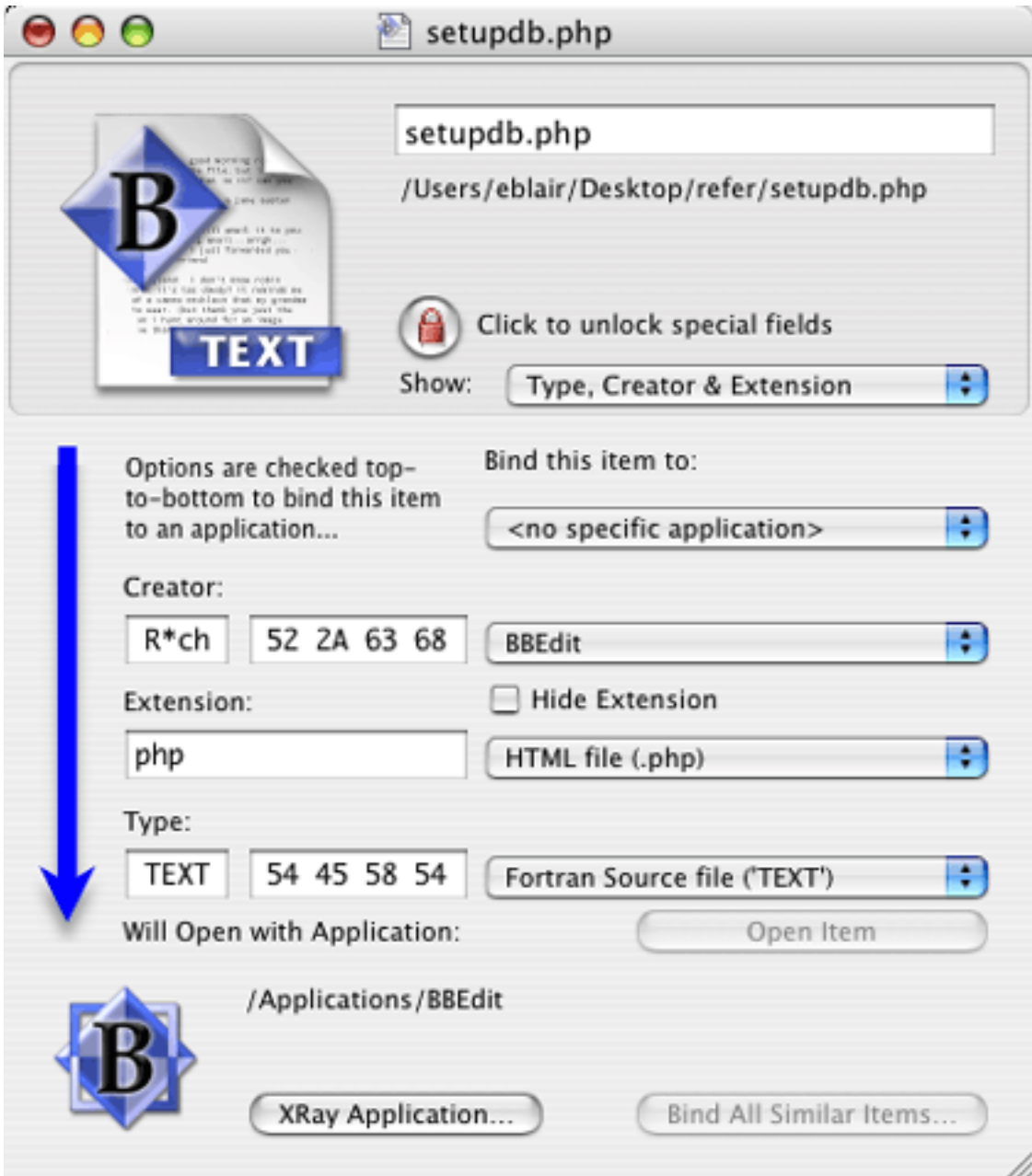
Editing file permissions using a familiar interface.

Additional Unix file system options can be accessed by clicking the Show Obscure Options button, which expands the XRay window to show the root flags, owner flags, and special mode bits. Also, you can apply permission changes to all of the files in a folder from the expanded window. I think the idea of hiding the Unix options works well, since most people won't need these, but I do think the options should be exposed by a disclosure triangle instead of a push button.

XRay's type and creator interface easily goes beyond any other get info tool that I have used. The Finder lets you change the file extensions and the application binding. Super Get Info and FileXaminer let you change the file extensions and the type and creator

codes. XRay is the only tool that lets you change all four attributes. Furthermore, it gives you a graphical representation of the precedence of these properties, from application binding (highest priority) to type code (lowest priority). Like the Finder, XRay also lets your

bind all similar files to an application.

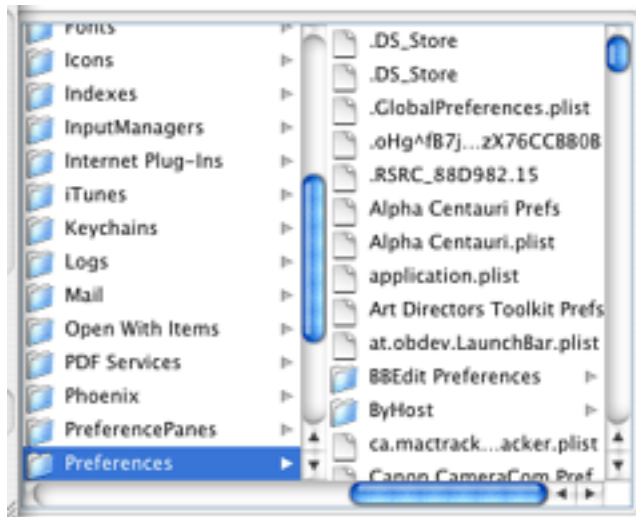


XRay's advanced interface for modifying file type information.

XRay supports multiple ways of setting the type and creator codes for a file. You can either enter the entire code string, enter the individual bytes of the code string, select an entry from a pop-up menu, or drag another file into the type and creator display. The drag and drop method alters both the type and creator codes; there is no way to drag a file to a single field. Also, dragging highlights the extension field in addition to the two fields that are altered, though this appears to be a side effect of XRay displaying these file attributes in order of precedence.

Another nice touch, which I haven't seen elsewhere, is that XRay can display the list of file extensions and type codes that applications claim as their own.

If you want to view information about multiple files, you can always use the traditional multi-window view. If you want to consolidate your file viewing to a single window, XRay offers a file browser that slides out of you current XRay window and lets you navigate to other files. Double-clicking on a file in the browser displays it in the current XRay window. Via the contextual menu, you can display the file browser selection in a new window.



Browsing your files from within XRay.

Missing Info

As I said earlier, XRay has features that its competition lacks. However, it is also missing features that can be found in its competition. The first two of these shortcomings are the inability to display either a file preview or file comments.

Like any other info utility, XRay includes a keyboard shortcut—Command-Shift-X—for accessing files from the Finder. Unlike the other get info applications I’ve used, the shortcut is implemented as a Service, so it is available from the application menu. At times, though, it seems a bit flaky.

For starters, you can only XRay a single file at a time using the keyboard shortcut. If you have multiple files selected, pressing Command-Shift-X doesn’t do anything. Looking at the list of services revealed that the XRay service was disabled whenever multiple files were selected.

One work around to this problem is to use the XRay contextual menu item. Not only can it operate on multiple files, but it displays the number of files that will be examined.

I’ve also seen some intermittent strangeness from this feature. For a while, the keyboard shortcut stopped working (but the accompanying entry in the Services menu worked fine). Also, XRay was ignoring the Desktop whenever any other folder was open. I had my home folder displayed with the desktop active, but whenever I selected the XRay option, XRay would display an info window for my home folder. In both cases, logging out and logging back in to my computer solved the problem. I couldn’t think of any other reliable way to quit and restart the service.

I do have one other complaint about XRay’s keyboard shortcut—it’s not editable. I understand the thinking behind “X = XRay,” but I my brain still says “I = Info.”

The XRay keyboard shortcut does have one key advantage over Super Get Info’s implementation: if you invoke it without anything selected, XRay displays info about the current Finder view, be it a folder or the Desktop. This is the same way that the Finder works and I’ve lost count of the number of times I’ve triggered the Super Get Info keyboard shortcut only to get error that the current selection is empty.

XRay does not support copying and pasting icons.

One other shortcoming that could be problematic to some is that XRay can only be registered by users with Administrator privileges. I imagine that most people who would use XRay are probably already Administrators on their systems, but this limitation could still cause issues for some.

Additional Features

XRay has some other niceties that I haven't seen in other applications. None of these are earth-shattering, but they may enhance your experiences with XRay.

One such nicety is that XRay's Dock icon changes depending on the file you are currently viewing. Only the icon for the front-most XRay window is shown, though, and Finder previews are ignored.

Another nicety is that XRay can display a resizable window that acts a drag and drop target for opening files in XRay. This can come in handy in you are a more mouse-oriented person.

One feature I find useful is XRay's Make Alias command. Using the same keyboard shortcut as the Finder (Command-L), XRay gives you the option of making a standard Mac alias or a Unix-style symbolic link. Since I'm always forgetting the syntax for the `ln` tool, I find this rather handy.

It appears that all of XRay's text field are selectable, so any file information can be copied and pasted into another application.

Additionally, XRay can generate a report, either as plain text or RTF, of all the information about a file.

Money Time (Again)

It has been almost a year and a half since I said you should let your money do the talking if you found the OS X Info window lacking. At that time, I had investigated Super Get Info (\$20) and FileXaminer (\$10). Now, the XRay (\$10) joins the list.

XRay certainly bring some interesting features to the table that no other info utility can match. XRay's customized data display and superior control over type and creator information are definitely more advanced than anything the competition offers. The lack of basic file info features like comments and previews is annoying, though.

As it stands right now, I'll probably keep Super Get Info as my main tool due to its integration with the command line and BBEdit, in addition to the basic functionality XRay is missing. However, XRay's advanced features mean it will have a place in my tool kit. At half the cost of Super Get Info, it is up to you whether XRay's advanced features outweigh the missing functionality.

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Review: You Control 1.0.1

by Lee Bennett, lbennett@atpm.com

Developer: [You Software](#)

Price: \$70 (download); \$80 (physical delivery)

Requirements: Mac OS X 10.2.6

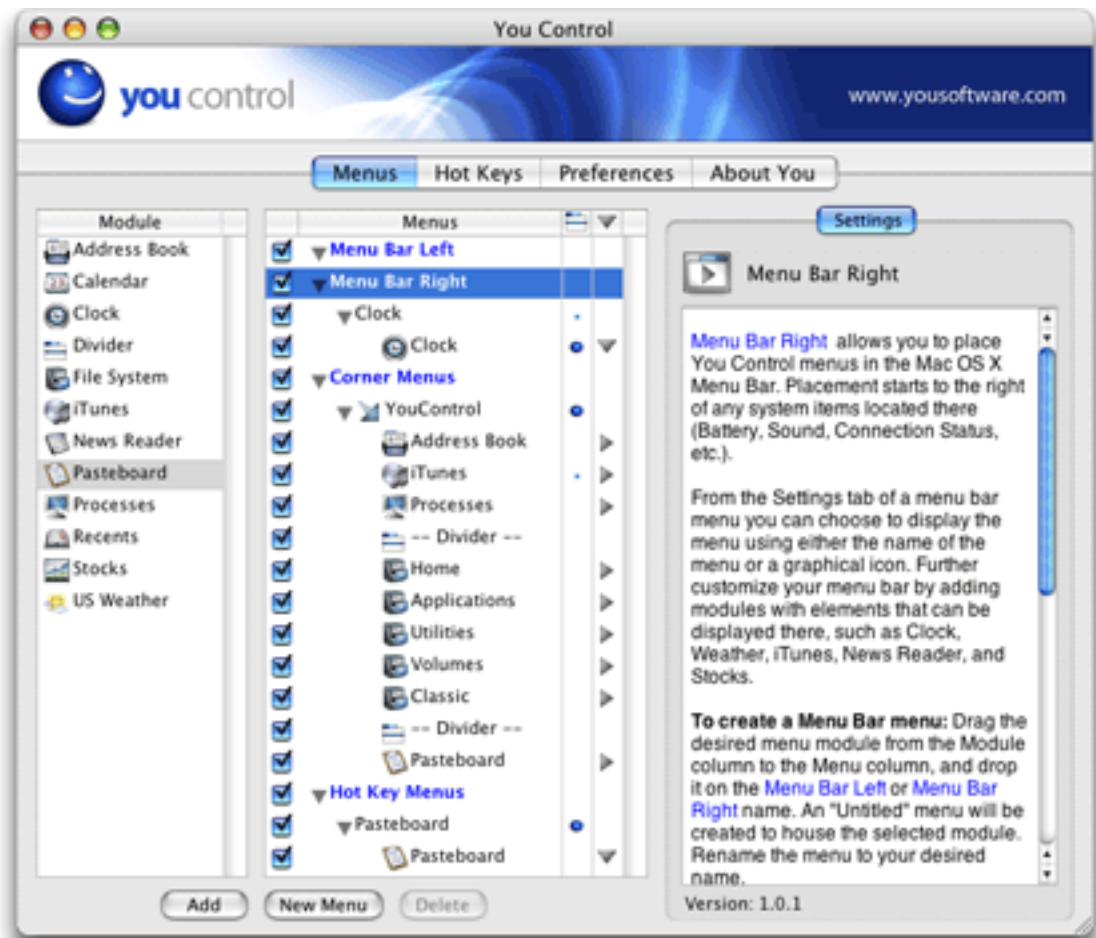
Recommended: OS X 10.3, Internet connection for some modules.

Trial: Fully-featured (15 days)



We've seen it before. iTools became .Mac, iApps became iLife, NetZero became...uhh, a nickel shy of ten bucks a month. No one likes paying for something that used to be free, but the relative success of .Mac and iLife (let's not delve into NetZero's story) implies that people are willing to pay for a previously free product if it appears much improved from the free version or if the price is reasonable.

Enter You Control, the reincarnated form of [PTH Products](#), which makes 11 handy utilities accessible through any of its customizable access locations. The company that offers these utilities, You Software, is working to develop system enhancement utilities for Mac OS X and was created by Extensis/Now Software founder Craig Barnes and others, including the developer of the former PTH products, Paul Haddad.



Referring to its utilities as modules (left pane) would imply that additional You Control modules could be in the works.

You Control's modules include four of the original utilities plus seven new ones. I doubt the remaining PTH utilities will be missed.

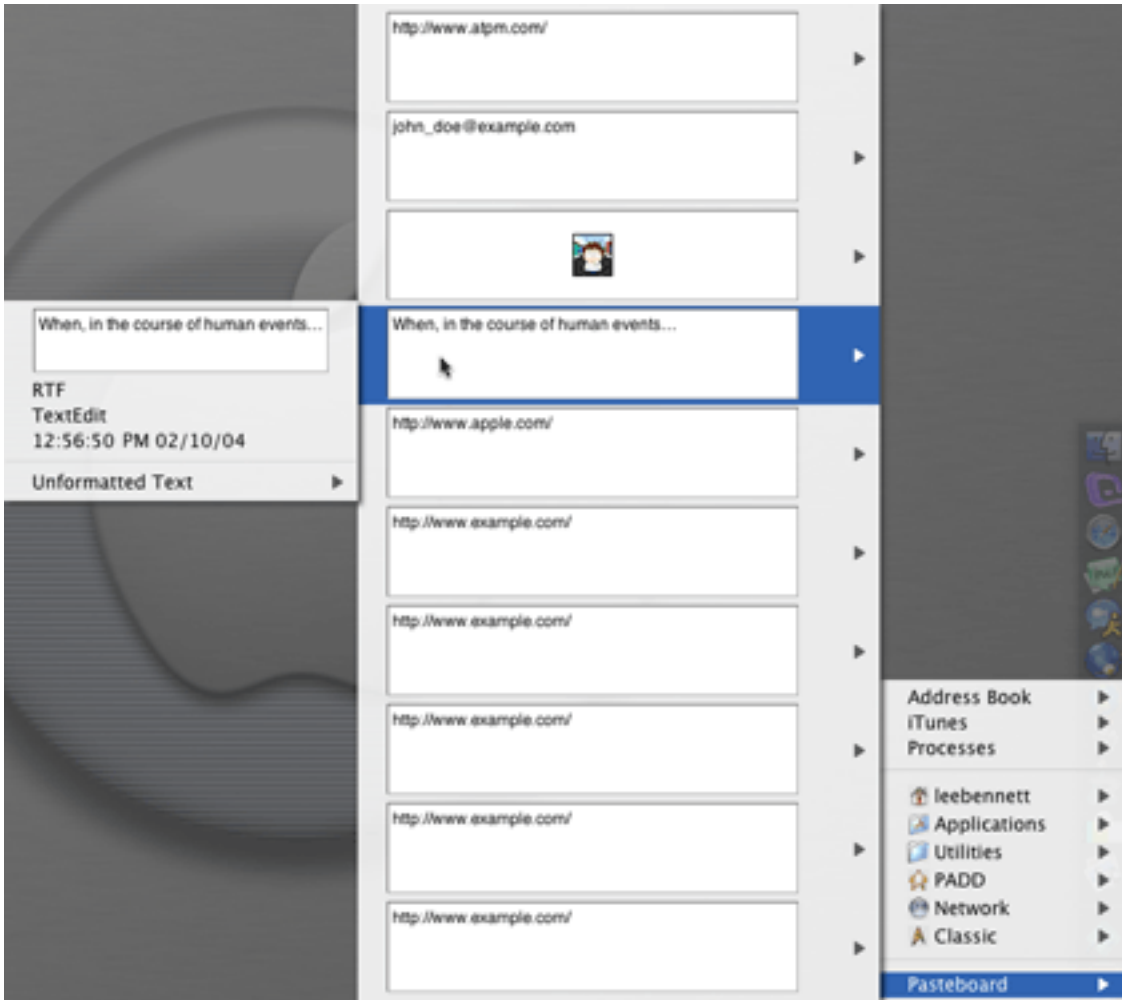
Actually, I lied just a bit. You Control's modules do not include four of the original PTH utilities. It includes four utilities that are souped-up versions of the original PTH utilities. Now, I know what I'm going to write later in this review will sound like I'm unhappy with You Control. Not true. It runs very reliably and is very stable. While I, personally, only make use of about half of the modules, each of them does exactly what it should with little room for improvement. You Control even made [Macworld's 2004 Best of Show list](#).

As it turns out, if I were reviewing *only* the modules themselves, you'd see an "Excellent" rating badge at the top of this review. Here's why:

The Fab Four

Arguably, the most valuable of the original PTH products is the Pasteboard module. Nothing I've found surpasses Pasteboard's seamless operation with the Mac operating system. You don't even realize it's there until you access the Pasteboard display. Once you do, you can retrieve up to 50 things you previously cut or copied to the clipboard, and clipboards can optionally be remembered after restarting or logging out and back in.

The equivalent products I found cost between \$15 and \$20—in other words, between a fourth and almost a third of You Control’s price—and didn’t appear to be as well-implemented.



The Pasteboard module remembers multiple items recently copied or cut to the clipboard. New since PTHPasteboard’s release is information about the type of material contained in the selected clipboard, the application it was taken from, and the date and time when the material was cut or copied. There’s also an option to paste the material as a different format, if available.

PTHClock’s claim to fame was providing greater control over your menu bar clock (replacing the Mac OS clock, to be specific) and the information it displayed. It could be set to show the current full date, day, and time if you had the horizontal real estate to

spare. More practically, it could be configured to show the time and have the date become visible in tooltip fashion when you hovered your mouse pointer over the time—no clicking required. Plus, clicking the time would reveal an adjustable month calendar.

You Control's Clock module takes the feature's usefulness up a big notch. Rather than showing just one month at a time, a definable number of months can be shown at once. Three or four months will fit on most monitors. Plus, a year's worth of additional months—past and future—can be accessed from a menu at the bottom if the feature is

enabled. Alternatively, you can get out of the pull-down menu view and display an independent calendar window. It can be stretched to any size you like and display any month you choose.



Hmmm, so my birthday is on a Sunday this year.

The original PTHiTunesNotifier utility offered a handy and customizable pop-up to briefly inform what was being played in iTunes. The pop-up appeared at the beginning of each new track and generally did not disrupt whatever you were doing on the computer. The utility also provided menu bar and hot key playback controls.

From what I can tell, the iTunes module is missing the hot key feature. You Software's Web site specifically says you can set hot keys to control any or all of the iTunes controls including next or previous track, play, pause, and volume, but I found no way to do this. The feature was either forgotten or the steps to accomplish it were never incorporated into the You Control setup window.



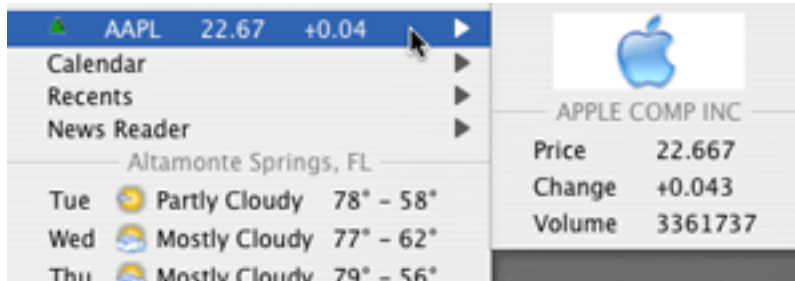
The iTunes module's pop-up feature is largely unchanged from PTHiTunesNotifier.

Among the iTunes module's new features is the ability to display album cover art in the pop-up window. The image above does not show this feature, and I don't believe the reason to be the fault of You Control. iTunes does not send album art to a computer that is streaming music from its library, as I was doing when I took this screen shot.

The module can provide a menu to browse your library by tracks, playlists, albums, artists, etc., and a menu bar ticker can be defined to scroll track name, artist, and album information.

One other quirk in the iTunes module is with choosing the text color for the notification pop-up window. A standard text modification window is invoked by You Control to define the look of the notification window. I believe white text is going to be the most common choice, but the background of the text entry portion is always white, regardless of the color that is chosen for text and for the notification window's background. The only way to see white text is to highlight some or all of it. This, of course, means that actual edits have to be made blindly. The only workaround I can think of is to set up your window with black text and only change it to white after you've got the layout exactly how you want it.

The Stocks module needs little explanation. Information can be displayed either from a menu or in ticker-tape fashion in the menu bar. Simply enter the symbol of each stock you wish to track.



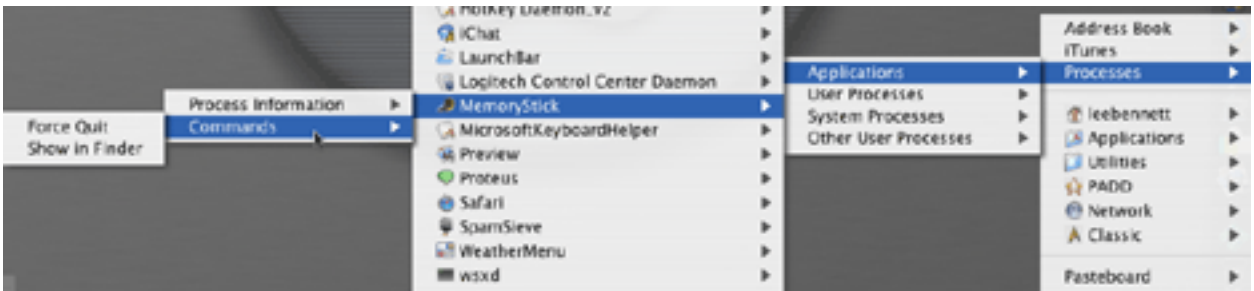
Changes from PTHStockTicker to You Control's Stocks module are essentially cosmetic. This image shows the default information displayed for a company. A *lot* more can be shown.

More Modules

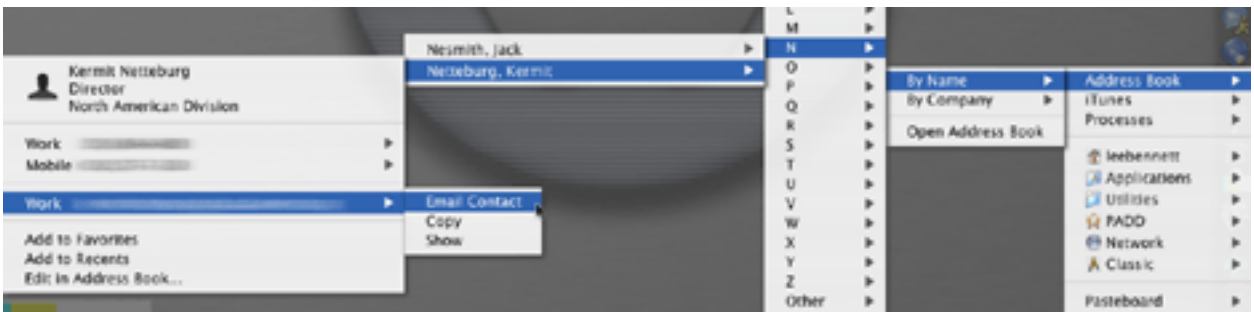
You Control didn't stop at just updating the four best PTH utilities. It brought seven new, equally useful functions to the table.

The File System module adds a hierarchical navigation menu for any volume or folder of your choosing. It can be configured to reveal hidden files, display file attributes and a preview, and even permit navigation of an application's package contents. The module's usefulness really shines when you add multiple copies of the module to a menu and define each one to navigate a different location on your hard drive(s).

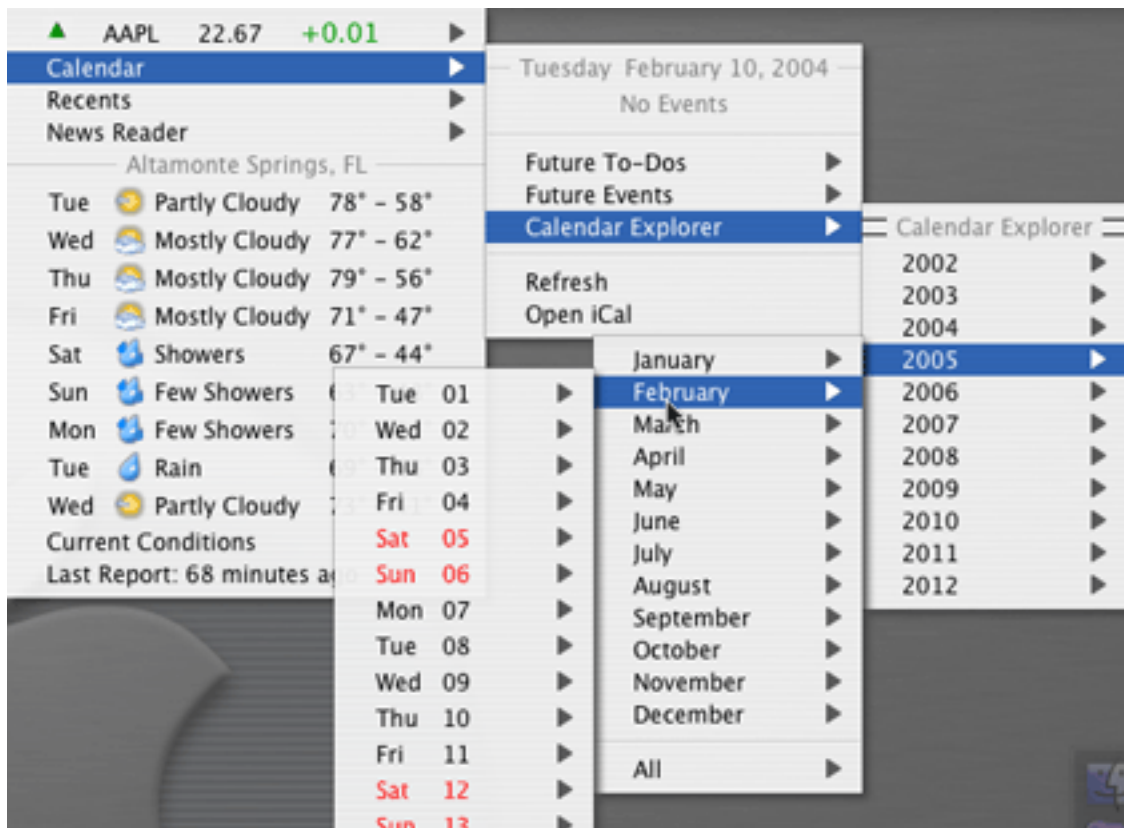
One may wonder why You Software would bother including the Recents module that performs exactly the same function as OS X's access to recent applications and documents from the Apple menu. The answer is very simple. You Control lets you access those Recents from any of its four menu locations: the left side of the menu bar (where non-Apple menu items normally appear), the right side of the menu bar (automatically pushing Apple's own menu bar icons to the left), any of the four screen corners, or as a pop-up menu invoked by a definable hot key. Any of the modules can be placed in any of the locations, and you can even add a module to more than one location for greater accessibility options. The Recents module also lets you display only recent applications, only recent documents, or both.



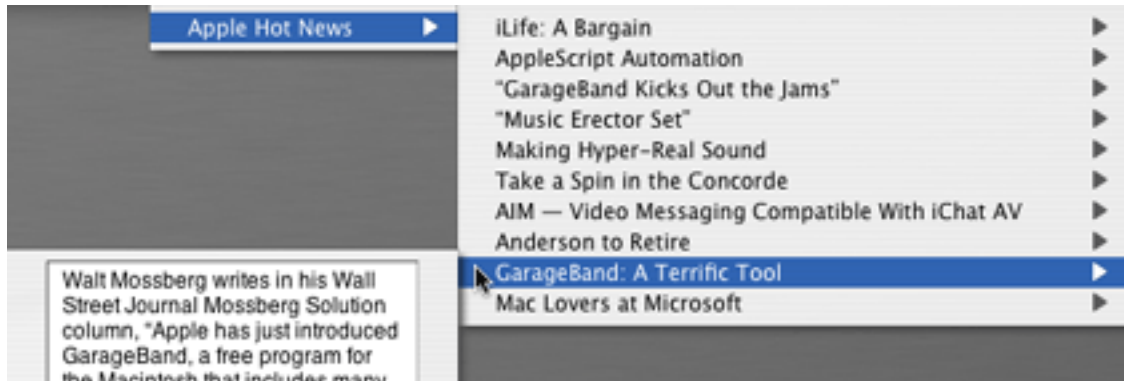
The Processes module provides quick access to the information normally found in OS X's Process Viewer (now known as Activity Monitor in OS X 10.3). It can also be used as an application switcher.



Quickly access contact information with the Address Book module. Phone numbers, e-mail addresses, and physical addresses can all be copied to the clipboard or shown in large print on the monitor. Physical addresses can be automatically shown on MapQuest.com, and e-mail addresses can be selected to instantly open a new message window for the chosen contact.



Yet another module that customizes accessibility to your information is the Calendar module. Simple navigation reveals upcoming iCal tasks and events.



If the rage of syndicated news feeds appeals to you, but you don't yet want to dive into a full-blown RSS aggregator such as [NetNewsWire](#), the News Reader module is just what you need.



Keep tabs on conditions and forecasts with the Weather module.

Cost vs. Value

I said earlier that I would give excellent marks to each individual module—perhaps excluding the iTunes module. So why, then, does only a “Good” rating badge grace this article’s header?

First, let’s talk about the bottom line—money.

You Control’s price is 70 bucks—80 if you want an installation disc mailed to you. It’s not pocket change, and it’s definitely not the average shareware fee, but look at it this way: \$70 translates to \$6.36 per module. I found practically no equivalent for a few of You Control’s modules—at any price—and other competing products ranged from \$5 to \$25 to perform what just one of You Control’s modules do. If most, or all, of the modules interest you, then You Control is a bargain.

The problem, however, is sticker shock. If You Control had come onto the field as a brand new player in the Mac software arena, the story would be different, but many people had come to know and respect PTH products both for price (or lack, thereof) and quality. PTH's Web site even stated in FAQs that the products were free and would always be free. Technically, that is not a lie. While the PTH products don't work properly in Mac OS X 10.3 and you can no longer download them from the PTH Web site, they're apparently still free to use if you can find them in software archives. But, like Apple's iTools, it feels as though we're being charged for something that was advertised as being "free for life."

Incidentally, You Control was initially offered at an introductory price of \$50. A You Software representative informed me that "the regular price of You Control will be \$70 starting in February." I took for granted that meant February 1 but, as of press time, the You Software Web site still listed You Control at the introductory price. If the representative's assertion was correct, the introductory price will be gone by the time you read this review.

To its credit, however, You Software is being extremely kind to those, like myself, who supported PTH products. Anyone who registered PTH products prior to November 15 last year should have received an offer via e-mail to purchase You Control for \$10. If you received this e-mail, run—don't walk—to wherever you keep your credit card and buy You Control for this price. It's an absolute steal.

Using the Control Panel

Am I the only one who felt that the user interface for the old Now Utilities products was a little clunky? If you share my opinion, you won't find much improvement in You Control. For example, it isn't too hard to guess that a column of checkboxes adjacent to each installed module, each defined menu, and each menu location is used to quickly enable and disable various functions. Yet, there is nothing in the setup window saying so, and I don't like having to guess what a control is used for.

Two additional narrow columns in the list of modules and menus have iconic labels at the top, but the meaning of those icons is only apparent after you've mastered what these columns do.

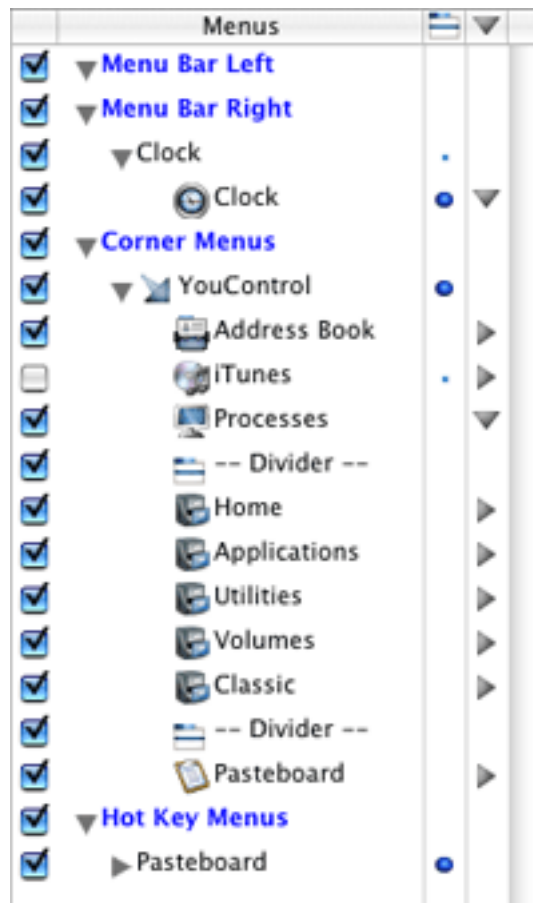
Before I continue, you need to understand how module placement works. You Control modules are always placed within a You Control menu. Those menus are always placed in one of the four menu locations listed in the Menus pane and identified with blue, bold-faced type.

Since you can have multiple modules and multiple menus in each of the four menu locations, one of the two narrow columns in the Menus pane is used to designate whether the menu itself or one of the menu's modules has ownership of the menu. If the menu has ownership, its name or icon is visible. If one of the modules within that menu has ownership, that module's data is used instead, such as the current time produced by the Clock module.

Large blue dots in this ownership column indicate which menu or module has ownership. Tiny dots indicate that a menu or module can potentially have ownership. Many modules aren't designed to have ownership, thus no dot is displayed for those modules.

What's awkward is that the ownership selection column spans the entire height of the Menus pane, but only a menu can have ownership when it is in a corner menu or hot-key location. A module can only have ownership if its parent menu is in a menu bar location.

A module that can be granted ownership dutifully displays its small dot regardless which menu location it's in, but if the location is not the menu bar, nothing happens when you click the small dot.



In this configuration, the Clock module has ownership of its parent menu and displays its extra information in the primary menu instead of a hierarchical submenu. The Processes module is also displaying its information inline. The iTunes module is disabled and will not appear in the corner menu location. It could be granted ownership of a menu if it were moved to a menu bar location.

The second column is somewhat less weird. It contains a triangular icon for each module to define whether that module should display its data as a hierarchical submenu within the menu (right-pointing triangle) or as inline data within the menu (down-pointing triangle).

The right-side pane is a catch-all location for You Control's settings. The entire pane changes for each menu or module to display that item's settings. This pane also displays instructional information for modules in the left-side pane or menu locations in the center pane.

It is very much a good thing that the modules can be so intricately customized, but a lot of modules produce a settings pane full of adjustments you have to pour through, and some of the modules have as many as three or even four tabs at the top of the settings pane, multiplying the number of adjustments you can make. If that weren't enough, some of the panes contain buttons to reveal sheets for making a specific adjustment. Consequently, some module settings are buried deeper than [Davy Jones' Locker](#)!

I was initially bothered by a point of redundancy in the interface, but I've since come to appreciate it. A You Control menu is automatically created to hold modules if you drag a module to one of the menu locations. If you change your mind about which location you

wish to use for accessing the module, you can drag the module or the entire menu to a new location. Alternatively, you can relocate menus (but not modules) by choosing a menu location from a pop-up menu in the settings pane.

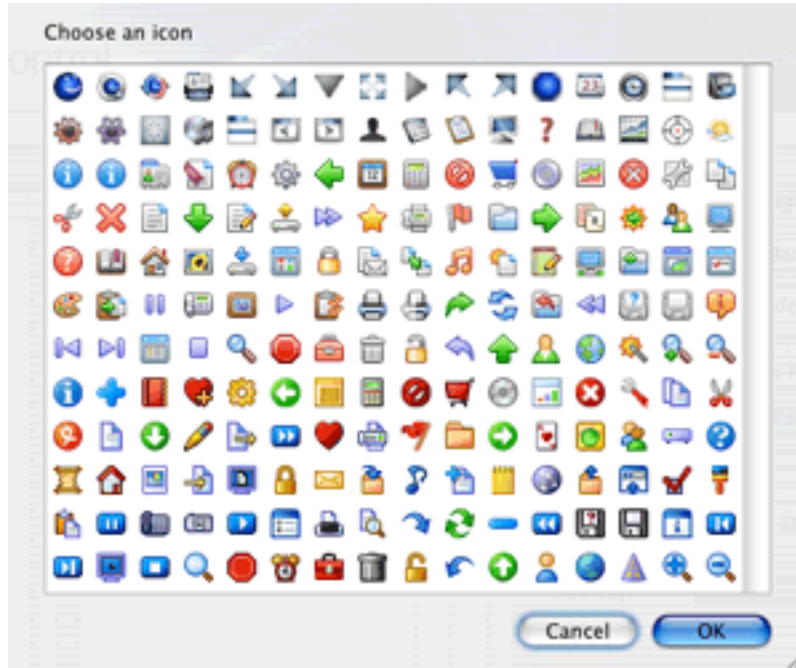


A menu's settings pane contains everything you can configure for that menu in one screen. Both a text label and an icon can be defined for a menu, but only one that you choose is visible, and only if the menu is in a menu bar location. A hot key location can be defined for a menu that has been placed in another menu location, or a menu can be accessible only via a hot key.

Before you chime in to say that you saw 12 modules in the first image on this review and not 11, let me tell you about that Divider module. It's not exactly a module, and the jury is still out as to whether listing it alphabetically with the rest of the modules or putting it in a

different location is smarter. Its function is, as its name implies, to create a divider between modules in a menu. The divider can be a standard OS X-style line, or you can customize it by changing its color, making it a double line, and/or adding a text label.

The last nitpick I have is strictly a matter of personal taste. You can select an image file of your own to use as a menu bar icon or you can select one of the nearly 200 icons in You Control's palette. These icons, though...well, see for yourself:



Icon Palette

It sort of looks like someone at You Software has spent more time developing icons for Windows XP than for Mac OS X, doesn't it?

So, Is It Worth the Money?

For me, absolutely. You Control's value is worth the introductory price and is most definitely worth the price offered to previous PTH supporters. I would probably moan and groan a lot if I had to pay the full standard price. Ultimately, I'd pay it, but would be simultaneously crossing my fingers that more modules will soon be offered and hoping that someone is working to improve the user interface.

This is not a case of a small company with inflated ambitions and overpriced amateur products. We're talking about the version 1.x release of an already-excellent collection of utilities regrouped into a single new product by someone who's already established other successful software companies. More than a few eyebrows were probably raised over the pricing of certain Extensis and Now Software products. But, in time, virtually all of them went on to be very successful. I predict the products that come out of You Software will be similarly pricey, yet successful, and I look forward to what else they have planned to help me customize my Macintosh computing experience.

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