ATPM

About This Particular Macintosh: About the personal computing experience™

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ISSN: 1093-2909

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Welcome

Welcome to the May issue of ATPM.

Poll

[Last month's reader poll](http://www.atpm.com/polls/)[1] asked what other retro color motif would you choose for the next iMac line, now that Apple has introduced Flower Power and Blue Dalmatian? Lava Lamp led the fray, gaining 28% of the vote. The second most popular answer, interestingly, was "I don't like retro," claiming a whopping 25%. The remaining votes were divided among Tie Dye (21%), Disco Ball (10%), Mood Ring (8%), and Pollock-Style (8%).

This month we want to know which version of the Mac OS you use most often. Go [vote](http://www.atpm.com/index.shtml#poll)[2]!

Columns

Apple Cider: The Amazing, Expanding Iovino Clan[3]

Tom Iovino shares his joy with ATPM readers, as he announces the arrival of the latest Iovino.

> On Friday, April 13th, I became a dad for the second time. I know it sounds like bad luck, but that couldn't be further from the truth. Our new son, Steven Michael, is one healthy, handsome fellow. He's a lot of fun to be around. Except for one problem…

Beyond the Barline: Why I'm Waiting to Upgrade[4]

David Ozab explains why upgrading to OS X is unwise for those ATPM readers who use their Macs for MIDI or other professional audio applications.

> The present lack of support for MIDI and audio applications is quite possibly the worst kept secret on the Internet. Despite the self-conscious silence on the part of both Apple and all major third-party developers, the issues are numerous and appear unlikely to be solved anytime soon….Two stumbling blocks on the path to carbonization (that is the modification of existing software to run in OS X) specific to audio and MIDI applications respectively make a significant change in this situation unlikely in the short term.

The Personal Computing Paradigm: Mac OS X—Finally[5]

Michael Tsai shares his experiences with OS X:

> These days I spend most of my time in OS X. This is partly because programs like Terminal and OmniGraffle let me do things that were impossible on OS 9, and partly because Mac OS X really is the future and I'd best start learning about it. Every night I reboot into OS 9 so that Retrospect can do its backup. But other than that I can do most of my daily work in OS X. Apple clearly has a lot of work to do, but I am confident that in the coming year it will add the requisite optimizations and polish so that veteran Mac users will enjoy using it. Despite all my complaints, I can't help but be pleased that Apple has finally succeeded in shipping its next-generation OS. It is not the same product that was envisioned back in the late 80s; but, unlike Pink and Taligent and Copland and Gershwin, it is here today.

On a Clear Day You Can See the Hollywood Sign: Did You See the Super Bowl?[6]

Mike Shields expresses his remorse over the end of a Super Bowl tradition:

> Apple, arguably the company that started the big Super Bowl ad campaign craze with "1984," was conspicuously missing from the proceedings. OK, there were a smattering of dot com ads this year, a huge contrast from last year, when every other spot was from a dot com company. At $600K per thirty-second spot, no less. Probably why most of them went bankrupt.

About This Particular Web Site[7]

This month, Paul Fatula provides some interesting Web sites containing information on editing Macintosh resource forks; shopping for tea; Paul Valery, and other authors; the first 1000 digits of π (Pi); and a successful lawsuit against spam.

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1. http://www.atpm.com/polls/
2. http://www.atpm.com/index.shtml#poll
3. http://www.atpm.com/7.05/cider.shtml
4. http://www.atpm.com/7.05/barline.shtml
5. http://www.atpm.com/7.05/paradigm.shtml
6. http://www.atpm.com/7.05/hollwood.shtml
7. http://www.atpm.com/7.05/atpw.shtml

Reviews

Shareware Roundup[1]

Brooke Smith compares MacCleaner, Trash Sack, Mac Strip, Greg's Browser, and Navigator—a group of shareware utilities that help users trim the fat from their hard drives, and keep files organized intelligently:

> I sometimes wonder what we would do without filing cabinets. They keep our papers and file folders together (usually in alphabetical order) so we don't have papers strewn across the floor. Nowadays, most of us still have those filing cabinets but have also acquired a computer. But computers, too, need organization. They too have their share of files that could be scattered at random across the desktop (I've actually seen this and it's not a pretty site).

Datahand Professional II[2]

Paul Fatula tests a unique input device with a uniquely high price tag:

> The Datahand is not another run-of-the-mill ergonomic keyboard with a slight curve between the keys of the right and left hands. Rather, it was designed from the ground up around the human body, the hands and muscles involved in the typing process. The result is decidedly strange-looking, but it is also far better than any other ergonomic keyboard I've tried.

Dreamweaver 4/Fireworks 4 Studio[3]

Jamal Ghandour reviews what some readers might label the ultimate WYSIWYG Web site design suite:

> Despite the ease with which WYSIWYG editors generate Web pages, they tend to generate sloppy code that makes a large Web site's maintenance difficult, if not impossible. This is, in fact, the most frequent criticism that WYSIWYG editors have been subject to….Developers who are not impressed by these editors will have second thoughts with the introduction of Macromedia's Dreamweaver…Dreamweaver may well be the first visual authoring tool that successfully combines the flexibility of WYSIWYG with the simultaneous ability to generate a clear and easy-to-edit source code. Dreamweaver also offers high-end features such as Dynamic HTML (DHTML), Cascading Style Sheets, and Layers.

FILTERiT4[4]

Jamal Ghandour evaluates a robust set of plug-ins for Adobe Illustrator:

> FILTERiT4 offers a wide variety of options, from basic distortion to 3D Transform on outlined objects. The 3D Transform filters come in 12 different shapes and forms. 3D Transform makes FILTERiT4 exceptional because of its refined algorithms for Bézier curves. Version 4 makes this feature even easier and faster than before. It not only allows you to rotate the object after the effect has been applied around the XYZ axis, but you can also rotate the original object even before you apply the effect, so that creating various transformations is possible. A new trace option makes preparing images for Web animation a snap.

Monopoly Casino[5]

Ellyn Ritterskamp checks out the latest game from MacSoft:

> Monopoly Casino makes me wonder what would happen if someone constructed casinos using game themes from other favorite board games. Can you imagine a casino based on Clue, for instance? You've got all your separate rooms for various games; the dealers could be characters from the game—now that'd be lots of fun, playing blackjack in the Conservatory with Colonel Mustard as the dealer! For added excitement, if you started winning too much money from the house, they could send someone in to bop you over the head with a candlestick—well, okay, there are a few kinks to work out. For now, we'll stick with giving them the Boot in Atlantic City.

Sharity 2.4[6]

Eric Blair reviews a useful networking add-on for Mac OS X users:

> Sharity does not just let you access Windows shared directories. In fact, it can access any computer that uses the CIFS (Common Internet File System) protocol. In all likelihood, most users will only be exposed to shared Windows computers, but systems like SAMBA and OS/2 also serve files using the CIFS protocol.

1. http://www.atpm.com/7.05/roundup.shtml
2. http://www.atpm.com/7.05/datahand.shtml
3. http://www.atpm.com/7.05/dreamweaver-fireworks-studio.shtml
4. http://www.atpm.com/7.05/filterit.shtml
5. http://www.atpm.com/7.05/monopoly-casino.shtml
6. http://www.atpm.com/7.05/sharity.shtml

Sound Studio[1]

Dierk Seeburg sounds off on an audio recording and editing suite for the Mac:

> As you may have guessed from its name, Sound Studio is essentially a little recording studio for your Mac! You can use it for audio playback, recording, and editing in various audio file formats. In particular, it features two-channel editing, several effects filters, sample rate conversion, and support for many file formats including AIFF, Sound Designer II, System 7 Sound, WAVE, and anything QuickTime can import: movies, MP3, etc.

Unreal Tournament: Game of the Year Edition[2]

Matthew Glidden enthusiastically shares his experiences with this fast-paced first-person shoot-'em-up:

> If you made the initial choice between Quake 3 and UT and went with Quake, this is a good way to see what you missed. The better Mac gaming climate means better Mac games, and this choice of first-person shooters is a good example. I prefer UT's weapons "feel" myself, and will probably spend more time behind the UT rocket launcher over the long term.

Extras

Desktop Pictures: Hawaii and London[3]

The Hawaii pictures were taken in September 2000 on the island of Kaua'i, Hawai'i by Christopher Turner with a Nikon CoolPix 950. They include shots of Hanalei Bay, made famous by the song "Puff the Magic Dragon" by Peter, Paul & Mary; Opaeka'a Falls; Waimea Canyon, which rivals the Grand Canyon in beauty and bests it in depth; the Na Pali Coast; and the most sought-after shot in all of the South Pacific, the Kalalua Valley.

The London pictures were taken by John Miller. The pictures were all taken in the early 90s when he was aspiring to be an architectural photographer. London was less congested with traffic, and the shops were closed on Sundays. They were all taken on a 4x5" Sinar camera and the original transparencies were scanned using a Linotype Hell (now Heidelberg) Jade flatbed scanner.

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a.   mailto:chri@worldonline.se

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1.   http://www.atpm.com/7.05/sound-studio.shtml
2.   http://www.atpm.com/7.05/unreal-tournament-goty.shtml
3.   http://www.atpm.com/7.05/desktop-pictures.shtml

E-Mail

Happy Birthday, Apple

You forgot to mention Apple's 25th birthday on the 1st of April! Tut, tut—have you no respect for age?

—*Anonymous*

Customizing Colors

Hello from Toronto,

I run OS 8.6 on a Power Mac. Someone told me there is a color palette, available to the user, to modify desktop icon colors, and perhaps a few other items. I'm not confusing this with the Appearance desktop control panel.

In Apple Help, at the Apple Web site, and 10 other sites where people discuss Mac stuff, I cannot find anyone who knows about this. Are you aware of a color wheel palette in OS 8.6?

—*Jim Brunswick*

Perhaps this is what you mean: under the Edit menu in the Finder select Preferences, click on the Labels tab, then click on the colour next to the label's name.   —*Evan Trent*

Resetting File Sharing Passwords

I am trying to connect three Macintosh computers to an Ethernet LAN. All machines are able to connect to the system, but they seem to have passwords that I did not assign and I cannot change them. I have been able to connect two computers by assigning guest status to one and server status to the other. When I try to connect the third it searches for the server and then a message says it could not be found. When I use the Chooser to activate the AppleShare feature it asks for an IP address. When I enter the server address it will only allow a registered users connection (guest is grayed out). I cannot access the correct passwords and then I am unable to complete the connection. My original passwords seem to have changed. How can I reset the passwords?

—*Anonymous*

First I need to know which operating system you are using. Since you can connect to your server using an IP address, the server machine must be running OS 9 (since IP File Sharing is new to OS 9) but I am not sure which OS your clients are running. Below are two sets of instructions—one for OS 9 machines and one for earlier OS machines.

If you are using OS 9.x you should locate the File Sharing control panel, and from there you can modify the owner password and any other Users' passwords.

If you are using an operating system prior to OS 9, you need to find the Sharing Setup control panel to set the owner password and then the Users and Groups control panel to set other users' passwords.

Based on what you have reported it sounds to me as if your server machine is the only machine which needs its password(s) reset, but it is always good to go through each machine's users and set the Owner information to something you will remember. Also, depending on your setup, it is usually unwise to leave Guest access turned on. If you are not behind a firewall it is possible for anybody out on the Net to gain access to your computer and files if Guest access is turned on. To switch it off follow the above instructions for all of your computers, and when you find the Users and Groups list, double-click "Guest" and uncheck the Allow Guests to Connect to This Computer box.   —*Evan Trent*

The Amazing, Expanding Iovino Clan

Zzzzzzz……

What? Hmmmm. Sorry, I was drooling on my pillow. I'm awake now. Quick, give me a cup of coffee!

On Friday, April 13th, I became a dad for the second time. I know it sounds like bad luck, but that couldn't be further from the truth. Our new son, Steven Michael, is one healthy, handsome fellow. He's a lot of fun to be around.

Except for one problem.

Come on, you parents out there. You know what I'm talking about.

It's that whole overnight sleep deprivation thing. I'm convinced that our boy is part vampire. Once the sun goes down, he wakes up, ready to have some fun through the evening hours.

For the uninitiated, imagine that you own an alarm clock. All night long, this alarm clock goes off for an hour at a time. Beep. Beep. Beep. Beep. And, there's no way to turn it off or get away from it. After the hour, the clock goes silent for about two hours, then it goes off again for a full hour. Beep. Beep. Beep. Beep.

That would explain why whenever you visit or call a house with a new baby in it, you can get some interesting responses from the new parents.

Caller: Hey, Tom. Congratulations on the new baby!

Tom: I didn't take the trash out yet.

Caller: Uhh, OK. So, how are you guys doing?

Tom: No, Mom, I don't have school today. It's Sunday.

Caller: OK. Let me call you back later.

Our family has also been celebrating a Babymoon of sorts. I took two weeks off from work to help out around the house while we get into a routine, and we have been keeping the visitors to a minimum. After changing dozens of diapers, allowing our older son to watch *Thomas the Tank Engine* videos all day long, and trying to dig out from under a mountain of dirty laundry waiting to be washed, I'm just about ready to have some contact with other adults.

Unfortunately, the only people I have been in touch with have either been those at my office ("So, Tom, are you going to be awake enough to come back to work any time soon?") and our friends and relatives who love to get the boys all fired up and then take off, leaving me and wife to get them calmed down.

One outlet I have had during our Babymoon has been our computer. Computers have really revolutionized the lives of new parents. There are a number of sites on the Internet that deal with parenting issues. From the health of your new child—Hey, is it ok for my child to spit up all over himself after every feeding, and just how do I get spit-up stains off of my couch?—to negotiating the tricky interpersonal arrangements between you and your spouse in the aftermath of the new child's arrival (When will the crying, screaming and drinking out of the bottle end, or will I be carrying on like this until my son sleeps through the night?).

One word of warning, however: a few discussion boards are frequented by people with some extreme viewpoints. Three topics in particular—breast-feeding, circumcision of boys, and anesthesia during labor and delivery—can spark some intense and ill-tempered responses from these—for lack of a better term—combatants. Unfortunately, some people who post to these boards fancy themselves experts whose viewpoints are not open to debate. My advice to any new parents out there who want to post to these boards is to either ignore the extremists, or to look for a message board that is carefully monitored to ensure that posts remain respectful and germane.

Another thing I have been using my computer for is to take my mind completely off the entire baby thing. No, I'm not ignoring my kids, but I can surf the Internet to look for topics that can distract me from the daily grind of parenthood. I've been going to the Internet Movie Database[1] to check out potential movie rentals for me and my wife to enjoy while the kidlings are asleep.

Finally, I have found my computer invaluable for communicating with my friends and relatives from across the country about the good news. When we purchased our photo package from the company that takes baby pictures in the hospital, they offered a free site for us in their virtual nursery to post our son's photo. I know that my mom has taken Steven's picture off of the Web site and made it her screen saver at work. Who ever said that my mom never got excited about her new grandchildren? Also, we've been able to keep in touch with other friends and relatives via e-mail, saving lots of money on the old long distance phone bill.

Well, my three-year-old boy has just woken from his nap, and he's begging for more videos. At least our new little one is snoozing right now, which makes it easier for me to handle. Of course, the fact that our newborn is sleeping in the middle of the day means that he'll be up all night.

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1. http://www.imdb.com

Oh, well. Knowing in the end that my two boys will grow up to be men one day makes it all worthwhile.

Someone get my pillow!

Why I'm Waiting To Upgrade

As I write this column, it's been exactly one month since the official release of Mac OS X. During that month, I've been pondering what exactly to write about it from a musician's point of view. The present lack of support for MIDI and audio applications is quite possibly the worst kept secret on the Internet. Despite the self-conscious silence on the part of both Apple and all major third-party developers, the issues are numerous and appear unlikely to be solved anytime soon. To illustrate my point, I will first list the MIDI and Audio applications supported by OS X: Felt Tip Sound Studio[1].

In contrast, here are a few of the unsupported applications that will only run in Classic mode: Peak, Deck, Metasynth, Metatrack, Xx, Unity DS- 1, Retro AS- 1, Finale, MAX/MSP, Pro Tools, CuebaseVST, Logic Audio, Digital Performer, and Reaktor.

Two stumbling blocks on the path to carbonization (that is the modification of existing software to run in OS X) specific to audio and MIDI applications respectively make a significant change in this situation unlikely in the short term.

The Problem With Virtual Memory

Virtual Memory (or VM) is the method by which computers add headroom to existing RAM through blocks of free hard drive space. In previous versions of the Mac OS (beginning with System 7), this option is provided as a cheap alternative to buying extra RAM. Beginning with OS X, however, it is activated automatically whenever the software exceeds physical RAM. Most users already leave VM on (in its default setting), but those with sequencers or digital audio applications usually see some variation of the following message:
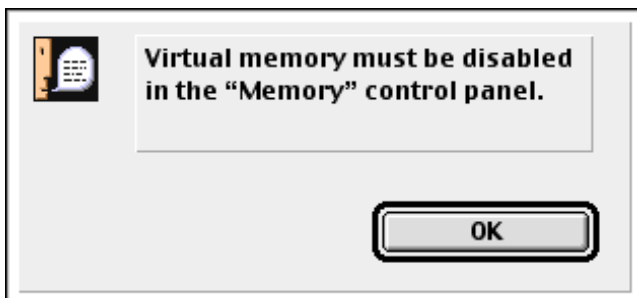
The Virtual Memory warning in Digidesign's Pro Tools

Then the program quits, and grumbling, or audible profanity, follows. This incompatibility is intentional, though, since disk memory is considerably slower than RAM. The difference is usually negligible, except when precise timing is required, say to stream a steady word clock in sync with multiple audio tracks.

Of course, if you never exceed your physical RAM (I'm up to 512 MB), virtual memory never kicks in, and the problem should be avoided. The lack of a quick fix to this problem (i.e. disabling the check which causes the software to fail) leads me to suspect that the problem is deeper. I wish I knew more. The lack of clear information is frustrating.

The End of OMS

It's been about two years since the purchase of Opcode Systems by Gibson Musical Instruments Inc. Shortly thereafter, the fate of Opcode, OMS, and Vision were sealed. The problem was that while Vision was just one of several competing sequencing/digital audio hybrids (others include CuebaseVST, Logic Audio, and Digital Performer), OMS had become the industry standard software-based MIDI environment. The last version (2.38) works fine under OS 9, but since it runs as a system extension, OS X breaks it by default. Had Opcode survived, or had OMS been open-sourced, this problem would have been avoided. Instead Gibson, for reasons only known by their board of directors, let OMS die. So until a new standard arises, MIDI applications will only run in Classic mode.

What To Do?

First off, as Douglas Adams said, "Don't Panic." The music industry is rooted in the Mac platform. History and a strong user base are both on our side, and the companies in question would be stupid to abandon the platform that made their greatest successes possible. The problem with virtual memory will be solved, and a new MIDI standard will replace OMS, perhaps MOTU's Free MIDI, with long-overdue improvements, or a new solution from Steinberg, who have already provided VST and ASIO standards. In the meantime, we'll keep making music on OS 9, and let the braver (or less musically inclined) souls work out the bugs. By next year,

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1.   http://www.atpm.com/7.05/sound-studio.shtml

we will all inherit a far more stable OS. To quote a fabled sage: "Patience, Grasshopper."

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1.   http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/%7Edlo

Mac OS X—Finally

The Macintosh press has thoroughly covered Mac OS X already, so I won't belabor the obvious points. Instead, this article will focus on my experience with OS X and opinions about it. For a thorough overview of OS X, I highly recommend John Sircusa's comprehensive article[1] at ArsTechnica. It's also chock full of sensible opinions, many of which I will echo and amplify here.

Stability

Because OS X 10.0 was released on March 24, I had planned to use it for final production of ATPM 7.04[2], then squeeze in my article about it at the last minute. However, OS X was such a disaster for me that I was forced to give up. It crashed several times a day with kernel panics and old-style Mac freezes. I couldn't drag a file in Finder, unstuff a file with StuffIt Expander, or click a button in Network Utility without fear of a freeze. Despite its fancy protected memory, OS X was far less stable for me than OS 9, which often runs weeks without crashes on my computer.

Fortunately, this experience is *not* a typical one. Most people report OS X to be very stable, and for many it has never crashed. Trying to experience this for myself, I updated my Mac's firmware, replaced the Heat driver on my external FireWire drive with an Apple one, reformatted my internal hard disk, reinstalled OS X, and then applied the just-released 10.0.1 update. I guess there's still some voodoo in the Mac experience because I now have a stable OS X system that has only panicked once since (still one time too many for a "modern" OS).

That's not to say that applications don't crash. The Carbon version of iCab spontaneously quits several times a day (it never did that on OS 9), OmniWeb crashes daily, and I lose the Finder now and then. But thanks to protected memory my other applications keep on running, and I can simply restart the offending program. The verdict right now is that OS X is roughly as stable as OS 9: programs crash more, but the system seems solid.

Speed

Classic performs surprisingly well for me. Unfortunately, nearly everything else about Mac OS X is slow on my machine (a 450 MHz G4 with 640 MB of RAM). Applications take forever to launch, even little ones like StuffIt Expander.

Live window resizing is painful. Menus don't snap down as fast as they do in OS 9. iTunes' sound skips when playing MP3s. About the only things that are truly fast are the Dock's magnification eye candy, live window dragging, and tasks that don't involve Aqua (for example, file sharing performance is excellent). I suspect that Apple simply hasn't had time to optimize OS X much because it was so busy making it mostly feature-complete and stable. But speed will have to improve over the coming months if it expects OS 9 users to migrate. The increased responsiveness from pre-emptive multi-tasking is not enough to compensate from such a speed hit.

Aqua

I like the way Aqua looks. If Apple can make it fast, then I'll be all for it. The only ugly part about it is the flat gray disclosure triangles. And the only annoying visual effect is the throbbing default buttons. (The Dock's magnification can be turned off.) The anti-aliased text looks very nice, but I wish it were as configurable as OS 9 because I find small anti-aliased text difficult to read. This ceases to be a problem when I crank my monitor up to its highest resolution, but then I get a flickery refresh rate and everything in Classic is way too small. Aqua seems to be designed for a Cinema display; it feels too big for my PowerBook, and I can't imagine using it on an iBook.

Windows have a much cleaner look because, as with System 7, they aren't surrounded with thick borders. Yet, unlike some borderless X Window systems, the subtle shadows make it easy to see where one window ends and the next begins. This is one instance where the eye candy is actually useful.

I also like that OS X lets me mix windows from multiple applications on the same layer. This makes it easier to work with more than one application at a time, and I believe it's the reason that I don't miss window shading at all, despite using it frequently in OS 9. The window layering model would be perfect for me with two additions: a keyboard shortcut for Bring All to Front and a quick way to send a window to the back (perhaps by clicking its title bar while holding a modifier key).

Dock

In its default configuration at the bottom of the screen, the Dock is a disaster. Windows open up behind it, their grow boxes unreachable behind the row of icons. Auto-hiding is an

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1. http://www.arstechnica.com/reviews/01q2/macos-x-final/macos-x-1.html
2. http://www.atpm.com/7.04

improvement, but every bit as annoying as the auto-hiding Windows TaskBar. Thankfully, there's an [unsupported option](1) to move the Dock; I keep mine on the right side of the screen. I hope Apple makes this a supported option because I find that I like the Dock on the side better than my [DragThing](2) setup on OS 9. It's easy to switch between applications and their windows, and to drop files onto program icons. And, as long as I refrain from putting windows or folders in the Dock, I can keep the item count less than 30 so that the tiles don't become unreasonably small. Now, if only the Dock showed all the labels at once…
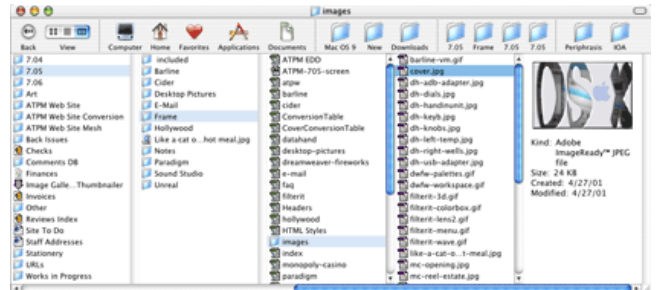
Finder

The Finder is the least polished component of OS X. It's extremely slow and not very multi-threaded, often locking up with the spinning rainbow cursor for extended periods. The OS 9-style [spacial Finder](3) is partially back, after being totally absent in the public beta. Unfortunately, there are a lot of problems with the OS X implementation of the spacial Finder, to the point where I find the icon and list views almost unusable. Disclosure triangles in lists don't remember whether they were open. The default grid spacing is huge, so it's impossible to create compact small-icon views. Likewise, the font is so large that the Finder can't display full filenames in the list view unless you make the name column wider. This must be done for each folder because it's not available in the global list view options. But even then it takes up more space to show me less information than the OS 9 Finder using the hand-tuned ultra-readable Geneva 9 bitmap. There are plenty more problems with the OS X spacial Finder that I won't go into because John Sircusa has already [explained them](4) so well.
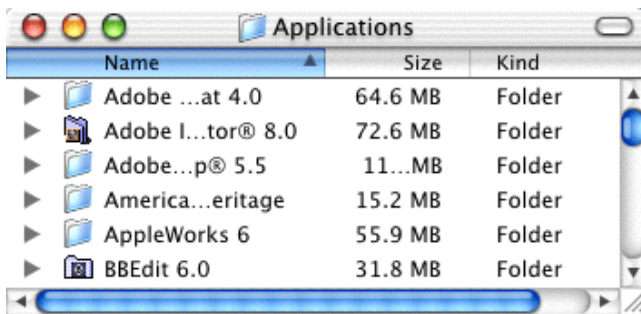
The Finder's List View (Note Ellipsed Names)

Because the spacial Finder is so poorly implemented, I find myself using the Columns view almost exclusively. It's not bad, but I don't understand why people love it so much. FinderPop (or even the old Apple menu) was much faster for tunneling down a folder hierarchy. Columns view needs a huge window to work smoothly, and even then I feel like it's

working against me. The strength of the Columns view seems to be that it can show more than one level of the hierarchy at a time, but I much prefer to see all the files in one folder than some files from multiple levels. And, when I want to see files from multiple levels there's nothing quite like opening lots of disclosure triangles in the OS 9 list view. I don't want to take Columns view away from the people who like it; I just don't want to be forced to use it because the alternatives don't work properly.


The Finder's Columns View

The other Finder problems are the many features that just aren't implemented yet. Labels and Put Away are nowhere to be found, there's no way to open more than one Info inspector to compare files, and I can't scroll with the hand tool. I'm giving Apple the benefit of the doubt here because this is a 1.0 release; I hope these features will find their way into a Finder update soon.

Rough Edges

Many features that we have every reason to believe Apple will implement simply aren't there yet. There are no options for controlling power management or automatic startup settings. You can't boot from a FireWire drive. There are few contextual menu items. And so on.
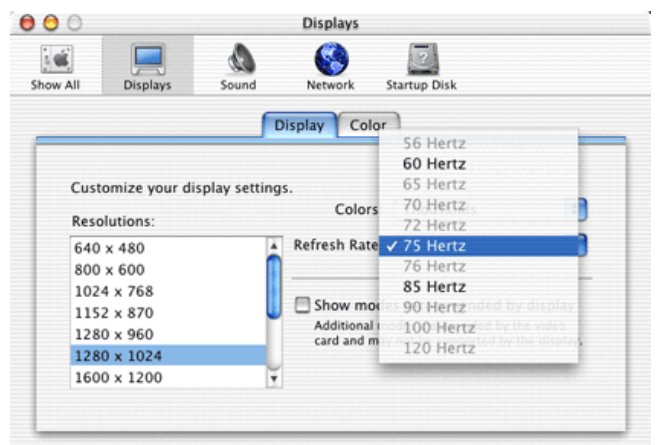
Try Selecting 1280 x 960 at 85 Hz

There are also some strange design limitations. For instance, because there are separate controls for setting the display resolution and refresh rate, some combinations that

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1. http://www.versiontracker.com/moreinfo.fcgi?id=10291
2. http://www.dragthing.com
3. http://www.asktog.com/columns/034OSX-FirstLook.html
4. http://www.arstechnica.com/reviews/01q2/macos-x-final/macos-x-9.html#finder

are supported by your hardware are not accessible. If your monitor can display 1280 x 960 only at 85Hz and has no other resolutions that support 85Hz, then it's impossible to select 1280 x 960 at 85Hz: setting either the resolution or refresh rate first will bring the monitor into an unsupported mode where you can't see anything.

Unixisms

The Unix core is both the greatest strength and greatest weakness of Mac OS X. I mostly see it as a strength because it lets me use best-of-breed Unix software like Apache and CVS. It lets me descend into the murky world of the command line for the rare tasks that are vastly easier there than with a GUI.

There are plenty of problems with the Unix base, though. Mac OS X relies on DOS-style file extensions to a much greater extent than OS 9. I was dismayed to see that programs like Apple's own TextEdit silently insert file extensions; if you choose to save a file as "My File," TextEdit will actually save it as "My File.txt" or "My File.rtf"!

Type and creator codes are unevenly supported. Most of the files Apple installs don't have types or creators, and some applications do not preserve them. If you save a TextEdit file with a name ending in ".html", double-clicking it will open it in your Web browser, not in TextEdit.

Cocoa applications use paths instead of aliases to track files, so they lose track of files and folders when you move them. If you move a TextEdit file while it's open, choosing Save in TextEdit will create a copy of the file in its old location. Apparently the engineers from NeXT don't value these Mac OS niceties like we do.

The other main problem is that Apple wants to do away with resource forks in favor of packages, which are really folders presented as files. Packages are great for applications because they let users install and uninstall programs with simple drag and drop. They're also much easier for developers because they work like folders. But packages fail miserably when it comes to storing meta data about files.

For example, I do a lot of work in BBEdit. When I save a document, BBEdit saves the window's position, the selection, the scrolled state, the font, and other such information in the file's resource fork. If I need to upload the file to a Windows or Unix system, the resource fork silently goes away, but the text (the contents of my document) is transferred. On the Mac, of course, all that information is preserved. Thankfully, BBEdit still works this way in OS X. But many other applications, especially the new Cocoa ones, lack such polish.

There's really no Unix-style solution to the problem. If these other programs use standard formats like plain text, there's nowhere to save the meta data. Alternatively, they can store whatever meta data they like using packages, but then transparent compatibility with Windows and Unix systems breaks. The built-in Apache Web server handles my BBEdit files fine, but it wouldn't know what to do with HTML file packages.
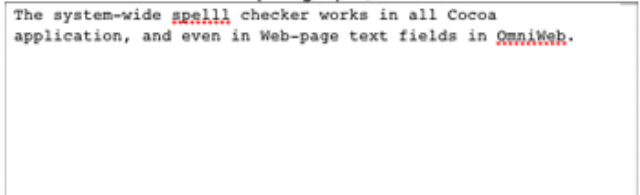
I hope that Apple will stress to its developers that resource forks (as used above) and type and creator information are important parts of the Macintosh experience. Compatibility with systems that don't support these features is important, but there are certainly ways to have that without making Mac users settle for the lowest common denominator.

Cool Things

Most of the above has focused on complaints because, frankly, Apple has a lot of work to do before OS X is as polished as OS 9. However, a few features are so cool that I must mention them:

- Classic just works.
- Waking a PowerBook from sleep is almost instantaneous.
- The system-wide spell checker works in all Cocoa applications, and even in Web-page text fields in OmniWeb.

Comment (You may use <A>, <I>, and <B> tags. Use a blank line to start a new paragraph.)

> The system-wide spelll checker works in all Cocoa application, and even in Web-page text fields in OmniWeb.

☐ E-mail me new comments on this article. (Post Comment)

- All Cocoa text boxes have a powerful and consistent set of keyboard navigation shortcuts.
- I can scroll background windows (of Cocoa programs) without bringing them to the front by holding Command and dragging the scroll bar thumb.
- Services let my applications work together. I can make a new sticky or look up the definition of a word (using OmniDictionary) just by selecting the text and going to the Services submenu. (I wish it were a top-level menu.)

Verdict

Mac OS X contains so many omissions and rough edges (not the least of which is its slowness) that I can't recommend it yet for most users. No one point I mentioned above is a show-stopper, but together they create a Death of a Thousand Stings[1] for all but the most Unix-happy Mac users. That said, I disagree with the critics who have said that Mac OS X 10.0.1 is nothing more than a second public beta. This doesn't feel like beta software. It's stable, and most of what's there works

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1. http://www.digiserve.com/eescape/mac/Death-of-a-Thousand-Stings.html

well. OS X's main flaw is that it has not yet experienced the nearly two decades of refinement that made OS 9 what it is today. Yet clearly Apple couldn't wait until OS X was perfect; it had to release a "final" version so developers could be sure that if they migrated their software there would be an OS for it to run on.

These days I spend most of my time in OS X. This is partly because programs like Terminal and OmniGraffle let me do things that were impossible on OS 9, and partly because Mac OS X really is the future and I'd best start learning about it.

Every night I reboot into OS 9 so that Retrospect can do its backup. But other than that I can do most of my daily work in OS X. Apple clearly has a lot of work to do, but I am confident that in the coming year it will add the requisite optimizations and polish so that veteran Mac users will enjoy using it. Despite all my complaints, I can't help but be pleased that Apple has finally succeeded in shipping its next-generation OS. It is not the same product that was envisioned back in the late 80s; but, unlike Pink and Taligent and Copland and Gershwin, it is here today.

Did You See The Super Bowl?

OK, I admit, that took place at the end of January, and here we are in May. Football has long been forgotten, basketball and hockey playoffs have begun, and the start of the baseball season has just taken place. OK, the XFL has had its million dollar championship game, but from what I understand, they have fewer viewers than readers of my somewhat monthly column.

So, for my three loyal readers, a review. Apple, arguably the company that started the big Super Bowl ad campaign craze with "1984," was conspicuously missing from the proceedings. OK, there were a smattering of dot com ads this year, a huge contrast from last year, when every other spot was from a dot com company. At $600K per thirty-second spot, no less. Probably why most of them went bankrupt.

An unnamed source at Apple stated that Steve didn't want to use up six months' worth of his ad budget. Of course, a little sprucing up[1] of the ad and they'd be good to go. OK, it's been taken down from there, however, the story of how it was made is still available from that page. For approximately the price of a DV editing suite with a Canon XL 1 DV camera, this commercial was made by two guys who just wanted to get work in the advertisement industry. Apple should've jumped on it, as they would've outclassed anything that was aired this year. OK, they still would've had to pay the spot rate, however, that's only 200 Cinema Displays, after the Macworld price drop. Now, if I can just get Peggy Shim's phone number….

End Of An Era

March 6th, 2001. A day that will live in stupidity. My last recorded day at Rocket Science Central, although I was put on administrative leave pending investigation five days before. I was then given the opportunity to either be fired for cause, or resign. I chose the option that allowed me to collect unemployment. Not too much to actually say here, as I signed a non-disclosure agreement; however, the moral to the story is: make sure when reinstalling core software on the assistant to the executive assistant vice president in charge of a lot of things' boot drive, that you save the Eudora Folder. So, once again, I'm looking for work, in all the wrong places. At least I've kept my sense of humor. Only if you laugh, of course.

Conspiracy Theory

Not the movie with Mel Gibson, but an incredible simulation. "I don't know what I know, but I know that it's big." There are three levels of conspiracy, in increasing order of severity: a conspiracy, The Conspiracy, and of course, The JFK Conspiracy. The latter is so far reaching that it transcends all understanding, and involves the highest reaches of the government, so much so that it deserves its own category.

Today's conspiracy fits somewhere between the first two categories. I'll let you, my three loyal readers, decide where that is. A recent post on the MacDV list (that I hope by now all of you are familiar with) came up with the following:

> I smell politics between Apple and Adobe, and it stinks awful. Obviously, Apple held the codec/OS/QT close at hand without letting one of their biggest supporters/developers work with it to develop their own product…simply to have a brief edge by way of releasing Final Cut Pro 2.0 before Adobe could get their stuff to work right.

This sounds like The Conspiracy Guy from the early days of *Late Night with David Letterman*. The purveyor of this bunk will thankfully remain anonymous, and I don't need his permission, because it's Fair Use. The rest of the listers were fast and furious, myself included. We all came to either Apple or Adobe's defense, or both. The Apple defenders maintained that it wouldn't be good business for them to do this, and the people speaking for Adobe stated that Adobe simply isn't ready to release its products yet.

The dictionary definition of a conspiracy is: an agreement to perform together an illegal, wrongful, or subversive act. The legal definition is a bit more complex; however, we don't need to enter into it here. Suffice to say, it involves big men named Bubba. And in a sense, it is a conspiracy. I mean, Apple did give the codec in question to any and all developers that needed it. Where the conspiracy breaks down is meeting the requirement of being an illegal, wrongful, or subversive act. Unless of course you describe Apple attempting to create a *de facto* standard as subversive. Many would say that QuickTime already is a standard that others must adhere to, while still others would say, "Can't you do this stuff on a PC?" To which I always reply, "The Macintosh *is* a Personal Computer…," and watch them wiggle and squirm when they have no response.

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1. http://www.adcritic.com/content/speculation-apple-g4-espionage.html

But I digress…at a recent lafcpug (pronounced laugh see pug) meeting, I was witness to all the new things that you can and cannot do with Final Cut Pro 2.0. One of the creators of the software was there to demo all the latest tips and tricks, and to answer questions. Not once did the mention of a conspiracy come up. Don't you think if one exists, it would be mentioned here, where most of the people that are actually using both pieces of software get together and meet? OK, I admit, I just went looking for a job, and most were there to win the world-famous raffle. I was two chairs away from the guy who won Final Cut Pro 2.0, complete with 1400-page manual. Not a joke, not even a punchline—the manual is actually that long. If there's any conspiracy here, it's that.

72 and sunny in Redondo.

e You next time.

About This Particular Web Site

by Paul Fatula, pfatula@atpm.com

kicking giants[1]

I discovered this site while looking for information on Paul Valéry. The "universalities" section has short biographies and excerpts from the writing of a number of carefully selected authors, a photo archive of Valéry, and a beautiful bit of interactive fiction called "the island of Xiphos." Other sections of the site contain images, poetry, and stories, often with a surrealistic tone. It's a very visually appealing site, which just begs to be explored and enjoyed.

ResExcellence[2]

If you're into customizing your Mac's user interface, this site is a gold mine. Going well beyond ResEdit hacks, everything from desktop pictures to shareware utilities to themes to customizing OS X is covered. It also published an editorial[3] recently, taking a firm stand against Apple's attempts to prevent the creation of themes for OS X. If the ability to customize your Mac is important to you, you should read the editorial and send Apple some feedback on the issue.

Todd & Holland Tea Merchants[4]

This is the Web site of my favorite tea store. It offers a great variety of the highest quality teas, and, just as importantly, it offers expertise on the tea world. The site's UniversiTea gives information on harvesting the tea plant, types of tea, and how best to prepare and enjoy its many different varieties. You can also browse Todd & Holland's selection by choosing a flavor characteristic or kind of tea. My current favorite is a Lapsang Souchong called Fujian Smoky #1.

Spertus vs. Kozmo.com[5]

The true story of someone who sued a spammer and won. While the results of the lawsuit could have been better (she only won $50, and it looks like she wouldn't have won at all if she hadn't been her own e-mail service provider), it is definitely reassuring that some judgment was awarded. Spam is common not because of its high success rate, but because of its near zero cost. If suits like this become more popular, perhaps they will serve to deter spamming.

Otanoshimi Page[6]

Everybody knows the first 1,000 digits of π are:
3.14159265358979323846264338327950288419716939937510582097494459230781640628620899862803482534211706798214808651328230664709384460955058223172535940812848111745028410270193852110555964462294895493038196442881097566593344612847564823378678316527120190914564856692346034861045432664821339360726024914127372458700660631558817488152092096282925409171536436789259036001133053054882046652138414695194151160943305727036575959195309218611738193261179310511854807446237996274956735188575272489122793818301194912983367336244065664308602139494639522473719070217986094370277053921717629317675238467481846766940513200056812714526356082778577134275778960917363717872146844090122495343014654958537105079227968925892354201995611212902196086403441815981362977477130996051870721134999999837297804995105973173281609631859502445945534690830264252230825334468503526193118817101000313783875288658753320838142061717766914730359825349042875546873115956286388235378759375195778185778053217122680661300192787661119590921642019889.

But if precision is important to you, you can download the first 400 million digits (in convenient 10 million–digit segments) from this site.

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If you'd like to suggest a site to be featured in a future *ATPW*, please send the URL to atpw@atpm.com.

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1. http://www.kalin.lm.com/index.html
2. http://www.resexcellence.com
3. http://www.ResExcellence.com/hack_html_01/04–23–01.shtml
4. http://www.todd-holland.com
5. http://www.spertus.com/ellen/Kozmo/kozmo.html

6. http://www.hepl.phys.nagoya-u.ac.jp/%7Emitsuru/pi-e.html

Extras: Desktop Pictures

Hawaii

[These pictures](1) were taken in September 2000 on the island of Kaua'i, Hawai'i by [Christopher Turner](2) with a Nikon CoolPix 950. All pictures were taken at normal settings, and no filters were utilized.

Kaua'i is still largely a tropical paradise, with approximately 90% of the island, mostly the interior but also the northern Na Pali Coast, unreachable by automobile. The only way to get to these areas is to go in on foot, by boat, or by helicopter.

These pictures include shots of Hanalei Bay, made famous by the song "Puff the Magic Dragon" by Peter, Paul & Mary; Opaeka'a Falls; Waimea Canyon, which rivals the Grand Canyon in beauty and bests it in depth; the Na Pali Coast; and the most sought-after shot in all of the South Pacific, the Kalalua Valley.

All of these pictures are provided as desktops at 1024 x 768 resolution for your enjoyment. To learn more about Chris's Hawai'i trip, you can point your browser to his [Hawai'i page](3).

London

[John Miller](4) contributes his [photographs of London](5). He writes:

> The pictures were all taken in the early 90s when I was aspiring to be an architectural photographer. London was less congested with traffic, and the shops were closed on Sundays. They were all taken on a 4x5" Sinar camera and the original transparencies were scanned using a Linotype Hell (now Heidelberg) Jade flatbed scanner. Because of the size of the originals, a flatbed scanner is good enough for preparing them for my Web site. A critical look at some of the original scans leaves a lot to be desired (newton rings, flare, high and low density). The originals are, of course, of a very high quality. I still occasionally sell the shots through a photo library called Collections, based in London, but I earn my living as an architectural assistant with the London Borough of Enfield.

He then describes the photos:

- Buckingham Palace, London home of the Queen. A policeman came and told me to be gone by the time he returned in 20 minutes. There were also five armed soldiers about 100 yards away looking very twitchy. We're not used to guns here! You need a licence to take photographs in the Royal Parks. This doesn't apply to tourists, only people with old fashioned cameras on tripods with black cloths over their heads!
- Harrods, Knightsbridge, large posh and very expensive (it costs £1 /$1.40 to go for a pee).
- Houses of Parliament, seat of British government, the clock tower houses the bell known as Big Ben.
- National Gallery, houses some of the most famous paintings in the world. The fountains were off when I set up my tripod, but a friendly chap who looks after Trafalgar Square asked if I wanted the fountains back on, promptly disappeared underground and obliged!
- St. Paul's Church, Covent Garden, a quiet little oasis away from the busy market place of the same name.
- Tate Gallery, modern art, 19th c. onwards, Turner and Constable, that sort of thing.
- Tower Bridge, built between 1886–1894 by J Wolfe Barry and Sir Horace Jones engineer and architect respectively. Open to the public, the view of the City from the upper walkway is excellent. The bridge still opens (the centre sections pivot from each tower) for large ships passing up and down the river. The original steam-driven engines are now housed in a museum at the South end.

Previous Months' Desktop Pictures

If you haven't seen the rest of the series, it includes: [Yellowstone National Park](6), [Drops](7), [Toronto](8), [Niagara Falls](9), [Monaco](10), [Montréal](11), [Bahamas](12), [Clouds](13), [Aerial](14), [Made with Macs](15), [Landscapes](16), [Northwest](17), [Animals](18), [Spring Flora](19), [National Parks](20), [Insects](21), [Konstanz](22), [Mark

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1. http://www.atpm.com/7.05/hawaii/
2. mailto:cturner@atpm.com
3. http://www.digitalpembroke.com/hawaii/hawaii.html
4. mailto:jmiller3@lineone.net
5. http://www.atpm.com/7.05/london/

6. http://www.atpm.com/5.03/yellowstone.shtml
7. http://www.atpm.com/5.05/drops/
8. http://www.atpm.com/5.07/toronto/
9. http://www.atpm.com/5.08/niagara/
10. http://www.atpm.com/5.09/monaco/
11. http://www.atpm.com/5.10/montreal/
12. http://www.atpm.com/5.11/bahamas/
13. http://www.atpm.com/5.12/clouds/
14. http://www.atpm.com/6.01/aerial/
15. http://www.atpm.com/6.02/madewithmacs/
16. http://www.atpm.com/6.03/landscapes/
17. http://www.atpm.com/6.04/northwest/
18. http://www.atpm.com/6.05/animals/
19. http://www.atpm.com/6.06/spring-flora/
20. http://www.atpm.com/6.07/national-parks/
21. http://www.atpm.com/6.08/insects/
22. http://www.atpm.com/6.08/konstanz/

[Montgomery's Desktop Pictures](http://www.atpm.com/6.09/montgomery/)[1], [Konstanz Part II](http://www.atpm.com/6.09/konstanz2)[2], [British Columbia](http://www.atpm.com/6.10/british-columbia/)[3], [New York](http://www.atpm.com/6.10/new-york/)[4], [France](http://www.atpm.com/6.11/france/)[5], [Maine](http://www.atpm.com/6.11/maine/)[6], [From ATPM Readers](http://www.atpm.com/6.12/from-atpm-readers/)[7], [New York II](http://www.atpm.com/7.01/new-york-ii/)[8], [Washington, D.C.](http://www.atpm.com/7.01/washington-dc/)[9], [Lighthouses](http://www.atpm.com/7.02/lighthouses/)[10], [Mobius](http://www.atpm.com/7.02/mobius/)[11], [St. Lucia](http://www.atpm.com/7.03/st-lucia/)[12], [Icicles](http://www.atpm.com/7.04/icicles/)[13], [Winter in South Hampton](http://www.atpm.com/7.04/winter-south-hampton/)[14], [Hawaii](http://www.atpm.com/7.05/hawaii/)[15], and [London](http://www.atpm.com/7.05/london/)[16].

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 publish 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

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.

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 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 8.5–9.1

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](http://www.atpm.com/5.10/roundup.shtml)[17] in issue 5.10 and available for [download](http://www.peircesw.com/DeskPicture.html)[18].

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1. http://www.atpm.com/6.09/montgomery/
2. http://www.atpm.com/6.09/konstanz2
3. http://www.atpm.com/6.10/british-columbia/
4. http://www.atpm.com/6.10/new-york/
5. http://www.atpm.com/6.11/france/
6. http://www.atpm.com/6.11/maine/
7. http://www.atpm.com/6.12/from-atpm-readers/
8. http://www.atpm.com/7.01/new-york-ii/
9. http://www.atpm.com/7.01/washington-dc/
10. http://www.atpm.com/7.02/lighthouses/
11. http://www.atpm.com/7.02/mobius/
12. http://www.atpm.com/7.03/st-lucia/
13. http://www.atpm.com/7.04/icicles/
14. http://www.atpm.com/7.04/winter-south-hampton/
15. http://www.atpm.com/7.05/hawaii/
16. http://www.atpm.com/7.05/london/

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17. http://www.atpm.com/5.10/roundup.shtml
18. http://www.peircesw.com/DeskPicture.html

Review: Shareware Roundup

by Brooke Smith, bsmith@atpm.com

I sometimes wonder what we would do without filing cabinets. They keep our papers and file folders together (usually in alphabetical order) so we don't have papers strewn across the floor. Nowadays, most of us still have those filing cabinets but have also acquired a computer. But computers too, need organization. They too have their share of files that could be scattered at random across the desktop (I've actually seen this and it's not a pretty site). This month's shareware roundup contains five programs to help keep those files organized. And we all could do with a little more organization.

MacCleaner 1.2.1

Developer: 2100 Software[1]
Price: $10 (shareware)
Requirements: PowerPC-based Mac with Mac OS 7.6
Trial: Fully-featured

MacCleaner is a shareware program that is true to its name. It cleans, tidies and organizes those files that you didn't know you had and those files that you may not really need.

When you open up the MacCleaner window, it lists 12 different kinds of files that it can find on your computer. For example, it can find all the Read Me files, find and/or delete all the Old Files between one week and 10 years old, locate all the empty file folders, or it can find FAT applications (applications that run on both 68K and PPC computers) and change those files to PPC native. Cleaner will also run a full maintenance check on eight of those 12 types of files.
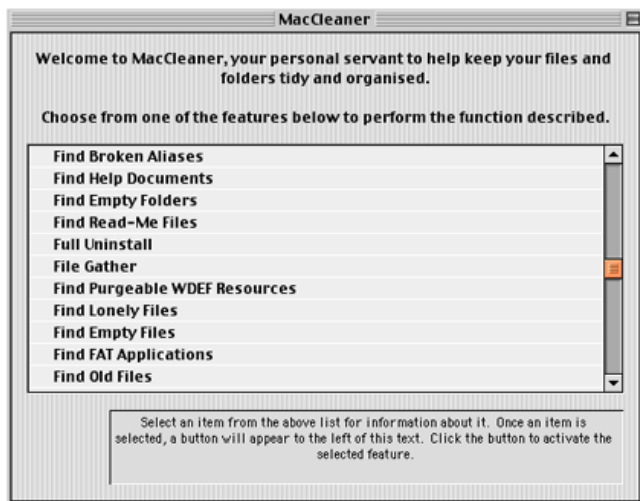
When MacCleaner's search for the chosen files is complete, you can then choose to view the files (Show in Finder) or Delete them. If you are searching for Read Me files, you can choose from Open with SimpleText, Open Normally, or Delete. Under Preferences in the File menu select File Handling where you can choose which action to take when you're going to delete a file (or files). Choose from: "Move the file to the Trash," "Move to…," "Delete the file completely," and "Don't move or alter the file at all."
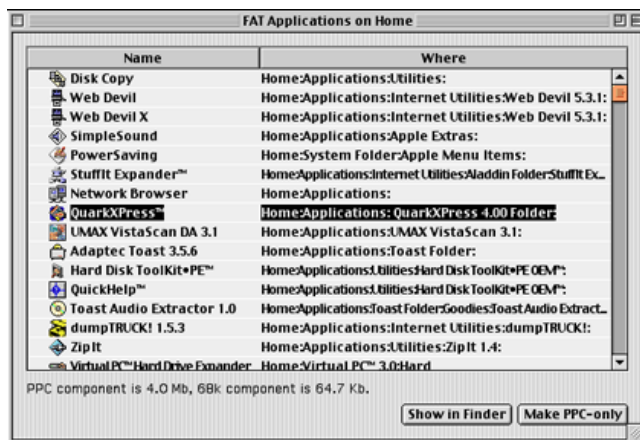
Also under the Results in the Preferences menu, you can change the font and font size, and under AutoUpdate you can choose to automatically check for updates on startups (but this is only available if you register).

This is a useful program to help you discover all those files you don't really need—it's especially good for those who are pack-rat computer junkies and store away every file. I mean really, do you truly read the Read Me files? Anyway, I haven't

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1.   http://www.2100software.com

experienced any errors or problems in using MacCleaner, but just in case you do, MacCleaner Online Help is under the Help menu.

Trash Sack 1.0.2

Developer: Lazy Mountain Software[1]
Price: $10
Requirements: PowerPC-based Mac with System 7.5.5
Trial: Fully-featured (30 days)

Have you ever dumped files into the trash can and then realized a few hours or days later that you needed them? With a little help from Trash Sack, you can retrieve (or undelete) those "deleted" files. Trash Sack stores any deleted files in the Cache, allowing you to get them if you really need them, simply because they weren't really deleted in the first place. In the Trash Sack window select Cache, which will list the files that you "deleted." Double click on any file(s) you want to keep, and a dialog box appears allowing you to save the file(s) to a desired location on your computer.

You can vary the limits in Trash Sack—limit the size of the cache file, the number of files in the cache, and the number of days you wish to keep the cached files. If you wish no limits, type zero in any of these boxes. You can also choose to Delete Trashed Items immediately or keep them stored in the cache.

Trash Sack is a good program for those who procrastinate about files. However, I have two concerns. First, I'm not sure it follows my preferences in terms of limiting the number of files and MB in the cache. Even though I input a limit of two files, the cache loaded up the files and ignored my preferences. Also, I felt that my computer was sluggish with this program—perhaps it had something to do with the

number of files in the cache (the more files, the slower the machine). Yet according to the Read Me file, "Trash Sack should run fine on all current Macintoshes."

Greg's Browser 2.7

Developer: Greg Landweber[2]
Price: $20
Requirements: System 7
Trial: Fully-featured

Greg's Browser is a file browser program that does a number of things. First and foremost, Greg's Browser lets you view a number of folders in a single window and at the same time, lets you see the contents of a folder, its parent folder, and its subfolder. If you click on any file it will spill its contents into the next pane to the right. If you double-click on the folder, it will actually open up the folder. You can also look inside StuffIt archives as if they were regular folders.

Here's how it works. Open up Greg's Browser. It will have three panes where you can list the hard drive and then open up a file which will open up in the second pane. Click on a file from the second pane and it opens up in the third and last pane. Click on a folder and that folder's subfolders open up in the next pane to the right. If you double-click on these folders or files, they will not only open up in Greg's Browser, but launch in the Finder as well.

1.   http://www.lazymountainsoftware.com
2.   http://www.kaleidoscope.net/greg/

Greg's Browser also allows you stuff and mail files. You can even encode a file as a MacBinary or BinHex if you need to.
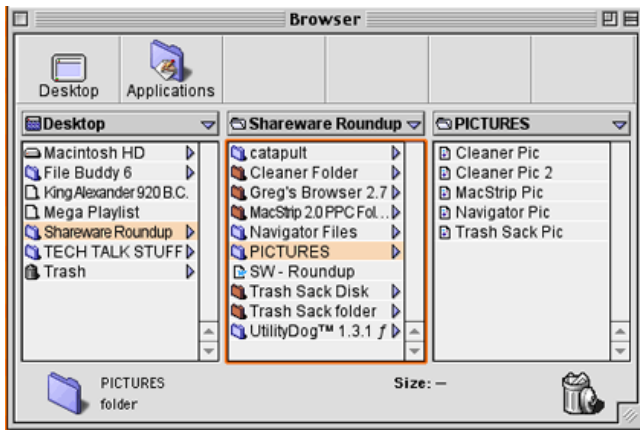
Above the three panes is a place for six bookmarks (basically your favorite files, docs, etc. that you work with a lot). To make a bookmark, simply drag a file, application, etc. from one of the panes below to one of the six squares above and let go—the file icon will appear in the box. You can also expand Greg's Browser to four pane and eight bookmarks by clicking and dragging on the lower right corner of the browser.

Under the Special menu you can empty the trash, sleep, restart your computer, as well as choose a new browser (a new window). And under the Label menu you can label your files Hot, Cool, Essential, just as you would in the Finder.

Select Browser Docs under the Help menu for some added info. (Browser Docs can also be found in About Browser under the Apple menu.)

Navigator 1.0.1

Developer: MacEase[1]
Price: $19
Requirements: System 7
Trial: Fully-featured (10 days)

Navigator is a file program that allows you instant access to all your computer files with the click of a mouse. And the best thing about this file launcher is its size. Navigator is nothing more than a tiny rectangle (about the width of your pinky) with a blue file folder and the letter N on it. Navigator attaches to the title bar of the active window. Click once on Navigator to choose the Auto Position on (the title bar) or off (anywhere you choose to place it). Click and hold on Navigator to view a list of your files in your computer in alphabetical order. Click on the file you wish and Navigator opens the file or folder in lightning speed.

And the Navigator icon jumps to that open window, so you always know where Navigator is (exception: it doesn't attach to any kind of Applications, e.g. MS Word).

If you choose a folder, Navigator opens it and displays the contents. Select a file and Navigator opens it in the program that created it. Select an application from Navigator and it automatically launches the program.

For some quick tips in using Navigator hold down Shift-Option while the cursor is over the Navigator icon. To turn Navigator off, choose the OneClick under the Apple menu.

This little program is so fast, you have to beware you don't end up opening stuff you don't need. It's that fast.
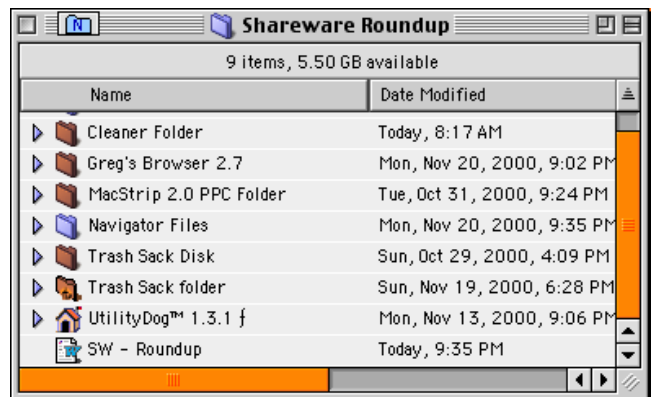
MacStrip 2.0

Developer: Split Software[2]
Price: $5.99
Requirements: PowerPC-based Mac with Mac OS 8.1
Recommended: Mac OS 8.6
Trial: Feature-limited (can only add three of each type of file)

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1. http://www.kagi.com/macease
2. http://www.splitsw.com

Formerly known as FileStrip, MacStrip is great for those of us who work with many applications or files for days or weeks on end. MacStrip is a control panel/strip that launches any document, program, MP3, bookmark, or e-mail address from anywhere in the computer, without having to return to the Finder.

To set up MacStrip, drag and drop an application icon, *e.g.* BBEdit or Microsoft Word, into the Applications Folder that's found in the MacStrip Folder. Similarly drag and drop your desired MP3s and documents into the folders labeled MP3s and Documents respectively. Now MacStrip is ready to go. Click on Applications, MP3s, or Documents in the MacStrip, and a list of choices (the icons you just moved into the folders) appears.

To bookmark one of your favorite Web sites, click on Bookmarks, choose New Bookmark, and type the name of the site and the Web address in the boxes provided. If you want to add an e-mail address, insert "mailto" in front of the person's e-mail address.

If you want to save a section of text from a document, highlight the text and drag it to the box named Text Clippings (found right below Bookmarks) on MacStrip.

This is an excellent program simply because it gives you easy access to various programs. I don't know about you, but I like to have an MP3 playing while I'm working on a Word document.
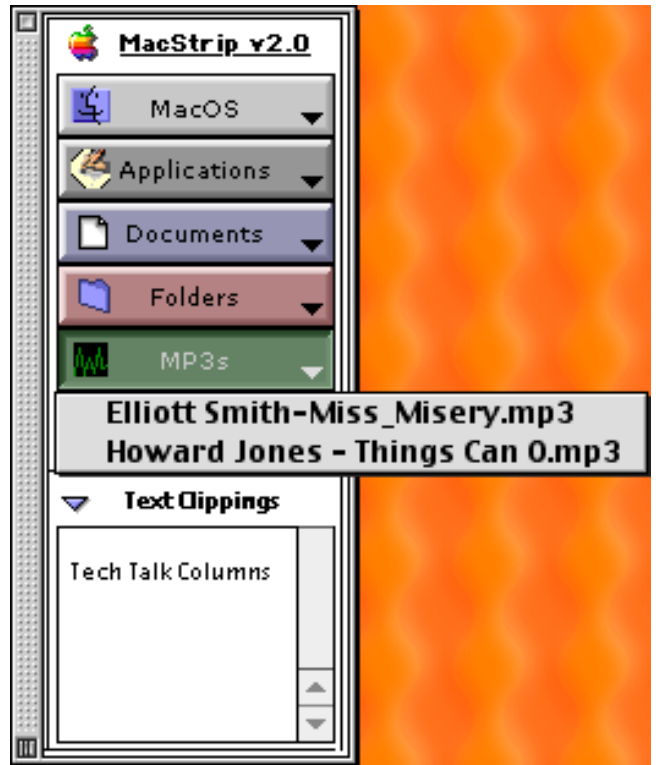
Review: Datahand Professional II

by Paul Fatula, <u>pfatula@atpm.com</u>

"A man and his machine may be regarded as the functional unit of industry, and the aim of ergonomics is the perfection of this unit so as to promote accuracy and speed of operation, and at the same time to ensure minimum fatigue and thereby maximum efficiency." —W. E. Le Gros Clark in Floyd & Welford, Sympos. Human Factors in Equipment Design, 1954.

The word "ergonomic" is applied to all kinds of computer-related equipment these days, in an attempt to win over buyers who worry about developing Repetitive Strain Injuries (RSIs). However, most keyboards that claim to be ergonomic merely use the term as a marketing ploy, sticking essentially to the familiar keyboard form and its numerous disadvantages. The Datahand is not another run-of-the-mill ergonomic keyboard with a slight curve between the keys of the right and left hands. Rather, it was designed from the ground up around the human body, the hands and the muscles involved in the typing process. The result is decidedly strange-looking, but it is also far better than any other ergonomic keyboard I've tried.

The Keyboard

One of the ways the Datahand helps to reduce RSI-related pain comes through requiring far less finger movement to type than do other keyboards. Each finger rests in a "well,"

sort of akin to the "home row" on a traditional keyboard, except that the finger never has to leave its well. Each finger has five keys assigned to it, pressed by moving the finger north, south, east, west, or pushing down. Since a regular keyboard just uses one kind of finger motion (down) as opposed to Datahand's five, the Datahand allows a greater variety of finger motions, reducing the repetition that can aggravate certain kinds of RSIs.

The finger keys give you all the most commonly used keys: the alphabet and the most common punctuation marks. But still, five directions times eight keys (plus thumbs) seems like a poor substitute for the 101 key keyboard most people are used to. Thus, the Datahand operates in several different possible modes. Each mode (normal, Numbers And Symbols (NAS), and function) maps the finger keys in different ways. Most of the time, you'll be working in normal mode. If you need to access NAS mode, for a number or a less common punctuation mark, you do so much like you use the "shift" key on a regular keyboard: you can either hold down a modifier key, or "Lock" into that mode.

How It Works (Mouse)

The Datahand's built-in mouse (yes, these guys think of everything) will not replace your regular mouse, but it's

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1.   http://www.datahand.com

convenient for short, simple mousing actions, and saves you from having to take your hands from the keyboard.

You enter mouse (and "function") mode with a flick of your thumb. That done, you have a mouse, literally, at your fingertips. The left and right index fingers control mouse movement. The left moves the mouse at medium speed, north, south, east, or west; the right moves it slowly, and the two together are additive for high speed. Diagonals are possible, if not easy, by pressing two keys with one finger, or by moving in two directions (albeit at different speeds), one with each finger. Pressing down with either finger clicks the mouse button.

The shortcomings of this setup are pretty obvious: you have far fewer speed and directional possibilities than you have with a traditional mouse, and over time your index fingers will likely get tired. That said, the built-in mouse is very convenient when, say, you just want to activate a different window. As much as I'd like to be harsh on the mouse's shortcomings, I frankly can't think of a better way Datahand could have done it without substantially increasing the cost of the keyboard.

Mac Issues

The Datahand is made to connect directly to PCs through a 5-pin serial port; an adapter is necessary to connect it to a Mac, via either USB or ADB. I tried one of each, as provided by Datahand. The ADB adapter worked flawlessly, giving me access to the Mac command and control keys, though not the Option key. Not a big loss since I seldom need it anyway. Like the current Mac keyboards, there is no Macintosh power key on the Datahand, so if you're using an older Mac, you might need to keep an older keyboard attached for its power key.

ADB Adapter

The USB adapter works just like the ADB one, but Datahand initially sent me the wrong one. Because of the LEDs the Datahand uses to indicate which mode you're in, the keyboard requires more power than most keyboards, and thus a standard USB adapter can't handle it: it stopped functioning altogether after a few days. To their credit, Datahand's tech support staff troubleshot quite well, although it took nearly two weeks for the replacement adapter to arrive: disappointing, they really should keep a few units in stock. The USB adapter does work with my USB PC card.

USB Adapter

Adjusting to Fit Your Hand

Clever key layout isn't the only thing that makes the Datahand so comfortable. Since everyone's hand is slightly different, the keyboard is adjustable in a tremendous number of ways. Unlike the overwhelming majority of keyboards, the Datahand offers two separate units for the left and right hands, allowing you to place them at a comfortable distance apart from each other, and at any angle you like. This is very effective against ulnar deviation, or the outward bending of the wrist that is pretty much unavoidable with a traditional keyboard.

Underneath the inner sides of the Datahand are tabs that can be flipped down to give the hand units a slight angle to the side, meaning your hand won't have to be in a completely palm-down position while you're typing. While this adds to comfort, I would have liked to see Datahand go all the way, and allow the hand units to rest at a full 90-degree angle.

Perhaps some sort of separate mounting stand could be devised to allow this.

Adjustability doesn't stop there. Since we all have hands of slightly different shapes and fingers of slightly different lengths, the positions of the finger wells themselves are adjustable. On the sides of the hand units are knobs which you can loosen, and then raise or lower the level of the wells. Dials on top of the unit allow you to adjust how far forward or back the finger wells are from the palm rest. I found adjusting the height of the wells a bit difficult, since there are knobs on both sides of the hand unit. If I loosened them both, the wells sank. Then I'd place my hand on the hand unit, and have to, very awkwardly, reach over the unit and try to lift, tighten, and then lift and tighten the other knob. Ideally, the height of the finger wells should be adjustable with dials, as the distance is.

Finally, the Datahand comes with a Laplander, an extremely comfortable foam-backed pad to which the hand units can be securely bolted, allowing the Datahand to be used on your lap. Of course, the side-to-side angles of the individual hand units remain adjustable on the Laplander, as does the distance between the hand units. A slight tilt is available thanks to optional foam pads on which the hand units can rest. Personally, I've always preferred to use a keyboard on my lap, but have gotten away from it using traditional keyboards: since they have a bunch of extra keys off to the right, it's impossible to comfortably hold a traditional keyboard, centered on your lap. The Datahand, thankfully, doesn't suffer from this problem.

As, however, Emil Pascarelli and Deborah Quilter point out in their book *Repetitive Strain Injury: A Computer User's Guide*—an excellent book, which should be required reading for anyone who uses a computer on a daily basis—adjustability only takes you so far: it can even be detrimental, if you don't know how to properly adjust the

keyboard. With the extreme adjustability of the Datahand, the potential for maladjustment is quite high.

Enter the manual, which describes a comfortable distance of separation for the hand units and gives instruction for properly positioning the finger wells to match the shape of your hand. If you currently suffer from RSI and are working with a physical therapist, I would suggest asking your therapist to help you adjust the Datahand (and your workstation in general); but if that's not an option for you, the manual should allow you to optimally adjust the Datahand on your own.

The Learning Process

You would expect, just from looking at it, that the Datahand would take some getting used to. While Datahand's own literature suggests that a month is typically needed for a new user to get up to their traditional keyboard typing speed, I found I was comfortable using the Datahand after far less time than that. A training guide and some typing templates are provided to help you learn how to use the Datahand.

With exactly four exceptions, you use the same finger to access a given letter key on the Datahand as you would on a traditional keyboard. Typically, the "home row" key is the "down" button on the Datahand, the key on the upper row is "north," and the lower row is "south." While this is surely done to make transition from a traditional keyboard easier, I'm not sure how much it helped: the first few days of using the Datahand, I was constantly looking at the keyboard (or the provided postcard-sized templates, taped to the monitor in a well-intentioned but futile attempt to prevent me from looking at the keyboard as I type) and searching for a key I needed. After a few days of solid use, my search-and-peck days were pretty much over, though it took a few weeks for me to get up to my flat keyboard typing speed.

If you are thinking of getting a Datahand, though, I'd suggest you switch to the Dvorak keyboard layout at the same time: your fingers are learning something new anyway. For those who don't know, Dvorak is a substantially more efficient keyboard layout, which places the most used keys in the easiest-to-reach positions, and which is designed with the intent of minimizing instances of using the same finger for two letters in a row, etc. I can type much [faster on Dvorak](http://www.thisistrue.com/dvorak.html)[1] than I can on QWERTY. A Dvorak option is available for the Datahand for an extra $119, providing Dvorak templates and the ability, within firmware, to switch back and forth between Dvorak and QWERTY layouts; but, that said, you can just as easily draw up your own template, and use your "Keyboard" control panel to select a Dvorak layout.

Professional Extras

The difference between the Professional and Personal Datahand models is simply one of firmware: the keyboard itself is the same. The Professional model allows you to set up short macros and to remap keys. Like the Dvorak option, however, these abilities can be done far more cheaply with software, and so I suspect the Professional's functions may be geared more towards Windows users. Mac users can remap keys using ResEdit (though that will effect any keyboard connected to the computer, not just the Datahand), and there are shareware programs available ([KeyQuencer](http://www.atpm.com/3.07/page15.shtml)[2] and [QuicKeys](http://www.atpm.com/3.06/page16.shtml)[3] come to mind) that allow the creation of macros. In addition, the ability to create macros activated by function keys is built into Mac OS 9.1. For most users, therefore, the Professional model is likely not worth the difference in price over the Personal model.

RSI and Pain

Let's face it, this is an expensive keyboard, no matter how adjustable and comfortable it is. Adjustability and comfort are not goals of the Datahand: they're merely the means to an end, the end being pain-free keyboarding. When you

consider the cost of ongoing physical therapy and/or surgery (not to mention permanent damage to your hands), the Datahand comes out looking like a real bargain.

To that end, Datahand doesn't just rely on a few quotes worth of user feedback (although there are plenty of positive user experiences posted on their Web site). They've commissioned several thorough scientific studies of exactly how much the Datahand helps reduce the occurrence of factors that cause repetitive strain injuries. Again, see their Web site. I'm not an expert on RSIs; the groups that conducted the studies are.

A lot of the ergonomic advantages of the Datahand, I'd suggest, you can see for yourself using nothing more than common sense. On a flat keyboard, 100% of your key presses are "down"; on the Datahand, only 20% are, with 20% each in each of the four cardinal directions. That's pretty obviously a great decrease in repetitive motion. Your hands rest above the finger wells on a palm rest, meaning your wrists aren't bent upwards as they can be using a regular keyboard.

The keys on the Datahand require significantly less pressure from your fingers to activate them than do keys on regular keyboards: again, the advantages are obvious as your fingers are doing less work. (I didn't feel this until I switched back to a regular keyboard, when I felt how much *more* pressure was needed from my fingers to activate its keys.) Use

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1. http://www.thisistrue.com/dvorak.html
2. http://www.atpm.com/3.07/page15.shtml
3. http://www.atpm.com/3.06/page16.shtml

of the Laplander lets you relax, sitting back on your chair instead of leaning forward.

My personal experience with the Datahand, after a month of use, is that RSI pain is reduced considerably, especially in the wrists, but not gone altogether. That is likely due to a number of factors. Firstly, it takes time. The Datahand isn't a pill, it's a tool: its effects are gradual. Secondly, I use a number of different computers during the day, and moving the Datahand from one to the other is obviously not always possible: I trust the Datahand would have better effects if I were able to use it exclusively. Finally, the NSWE movements are pretty new to my fingers: they aren't really used to pushing keys in those directions, so perhaps those muscles need to develop a little bit, just like your pinky finger had to when you first started typing.

Overall, I find that I can type considerably longer on a Datahand than on a regular keyboard before I start to feel any pain whatsoever. Before I started using the Datahand, I would occasionally find pain in my hands even while not typing; after a month of Datahand use, my hands have at least healed to the point where I don't have persistent pain any more. All that comes at nearly no expense in terms of typing speed.

While my experience with the Datahand by no means constitutes a controlled scientific study, it certainly was a positive experience; enough so for me to believe that "ergonomic" is far more than a marketing slogan for Datahand. It is quite literally what this keyboard is all about: the perfection of the single unit whose parts are man and machine.

Review: Dreamweaver 4 Fireworks 4 Studio

by Jamal Ghandour, jghandour@atpm.com

It is a well-known fact that the Internet sector is important for software companies. Anyone who controls it can nearly have world dominance. If you only imagine what Microsoft was able to do by merely dominating the OS market then, imagine the power that someone will acquire by controlling the Internet technology.

Therefore, it comes as no surprise, that blue-chip companies like Microsoft, Adobe, and Macromedia throw out their best artillery to control it. As a result, we have such a large number of Internet tools. Making the right choice of tools has become a difficult and tricky business for anyone. Good luck.

Sometimes, however, software is born with a golden spoon, destined to make an industry standard. Apple's QuickTime, Macromedia's Flash, and Adobe's Photoshop come to mind. Welcome Macromedia's Dreamweaver to the club; it is a WYSIWYG editor like no other.

Despite the ease with which WYSIWYG editors generate Web pages, they tend to generate sloppy code that makes a large Web site's maintenance difficult, if not impossible. This is, in fact, the most frequent criticism that WYSIWYG editors have been subject to.
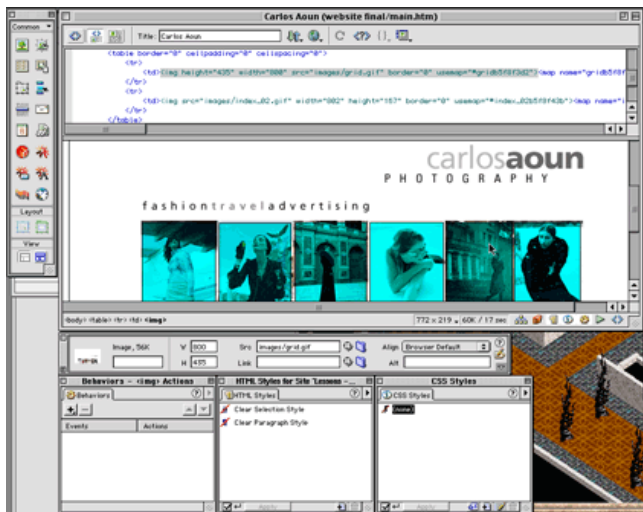
Developers who are not impressed by these editors will have second thoughts with the introduction of Macromedia's Dreamweaver. This release is aimed at professionals who want to add high-end features to their sites and capitalize on the advancements which new browsers offer. Dreamweaver may well be the first visual authoring tool that successfully combines the flexibility of WYSIWYG with the simultaneous ability to generate a clear and easy-to-edit source code. Dreamweaver also offers high-end features such as Dynamic HTML (DHTML), Cascading Style Sheets, and Layers.

Some of the new Dreamweaver 4.0 features include:

Code View

Use the Code View to access the new integrated Text Editor, or use the new Split View to see both Code and Design views simultaneously. The Code View has new live syntax coloring, tag balancing, and auto indenting.

JavaScript Debugger

Debug client-side JavaScript directly in your browser. The JavaScript Debugger lets you watch JavaScript execute in Netscape Navigator or Internet Explorer, helping you understand how each browser implements JavaScript. Debug your code by setting breakpoints and then watching your variables update as you step through the code.

Asset Panel

Track all site media in a central location. Use the new Asset Panel to preview and manage images, colors, external URLs, scripts, Macromedia Flash content, Shockwave content, QuickTime content, templates, and library items.

Macromedia Exchange for Dreamweaver

Download powerful extensions. The Macromedia Exchange for Dreamweaver is a centralized location offering everything from Macromedia Flash and Fireworks extensions to search engine extensions. You can also use the exchange to share objects, behaviors, and commands with your team.

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1.   http://www.macromedia.com/software/dwfwstudio/

Furthermore, Dreamweaver4 Fireworks4 Studio comes with Fireworks (Macromedia's response to Adobe's ImageReady). Fireworks basically creates, edits, and animates Web graphics using a complete set of bitmap and vector tools. You can also use export controls to optimize images, give them advanced interactivity, and export them into Macromedia Dreamweaver and other HTML editors.
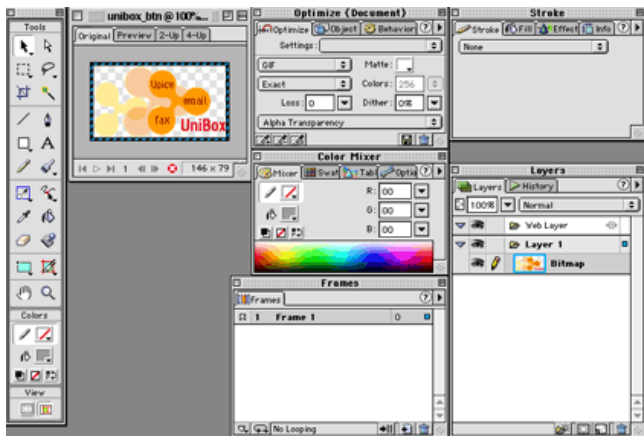
Some of the new Fireworks 4.0 features include:

Pop-up Menu Creator
Give your site a step-by-step visual environment including sophisticated navigation effects with multilevel pop-up menus.

Drag-and-Drop Rollovers
Create complex rollovers quickly by simply dragging and dropping from one slice to another.

Masking and Layers Panel Enhancements
Navigate and edit files easily using the new Layers panel, which offers both expanded thumbnails of each layer's objects and advanced masking capabilities.

Refined Photoshop Import and Export
Share Photoshop files freely among teams with improved fidelity, better layer mask handling, and the new Photoshop export feature.

Live Animation
Use accessible controls to reposition, redirect, and reanimate simple animations across multiple frames from within the Fireworks workspace.

Batch Process
Quickly set up and execute batch processes, including commands, with the step-by-step Batch Processing Wizard.

Roundtrip Table Editing with Dreamweaver
Edit and update HTML and JavaScript code and graphics from Dreamweaver while maintaining edits to your table.

Export Controls
Use enhanced setup and export of HTML/JavaScript and images to customize automatic file naming, table handling, and other output options.

The DW4/FW4 Studio is probably the best solution when it comes to Web development. It is rapidly becoming the industry standard.

The whole product is top-notch and I'm having a really hard time finding a downside to the product (well, maybe the fact that the huge amount of features can become overwhelming sometimes). Even the manuals are outstanding and comprehensive. The only reason not to go for DW4 FW4 Studio is if you need it for personal use, then maybe the price is not justified. However, if like me you're stuck on a 150-page Web site that needs to be finished in a week then don't blink—just buy it.

Review: FILTERiT4

by Jamal Ghandour, jghandour@atpm.com

In an age when software powerhouses are gradually dominating the industry, the room is getting smaller and smaller. The game is simple: either be acquired by larger companies slowly go bankrupt or play it middleware. Middleware basically means writing software which enhances or adds functionality to current power applications (plug-ins, filters, XTensions…).
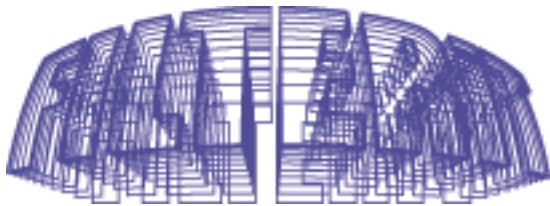

A very popular company in this area was MetaCreations, which was responsible for hits such as Kai's Power Tools. After discontinuing its line of production, in favor of Internet streaming technologies, the company left a huge gap behind. Now, companies like Cvalley are quickly filling up the gap.

Last year I reviewed[2] a copy of Cvalley's FILTERiT3 for Adobe Illustrator. The package presented a combination of 82 Illustrator plug-ins varying from the downright essential to the more "fun to use" filters. This time around the company has released an update to its successful software, bringing it up to version 4.

FILTERiT4 offers a wide variety of options, from basic distortion to 3D Transform on outlined objects. The 3D Transform filters come in 12 different shapes and forms. 3D Transform makes FILTERiT4 exceptional because of its refined algorithms for Bézier curves. Version 4 makes this feature even easier and faster than before. It not only allows you to rotate the object after the effect has been applied around the XYZ axis, but you can also rotate the original object even before you apply the effect, so that creating various transformations is possible. A new trace option makes preparing images for Web animation a snap.
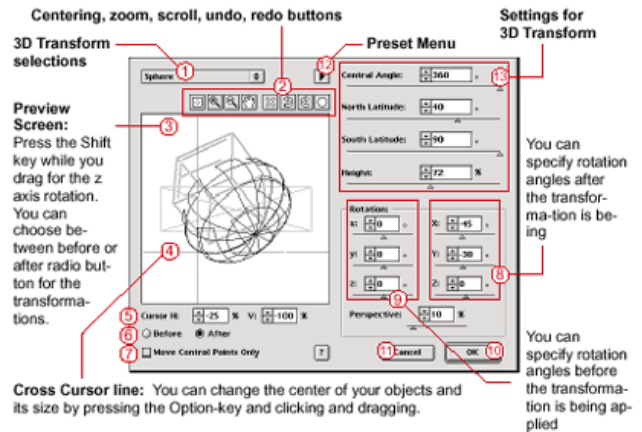
Another major addition is Fractalize. This feature allows you to modify the segments of the object to appear rough and zigzagy. This feature was evolved to improve Illustrator9's "zigzag" and "rough" live effects, and it combines them to create an even more powerful effect. Using Illustrator's Appearance and Style functions together with this effect will add more creativity to your artwork.
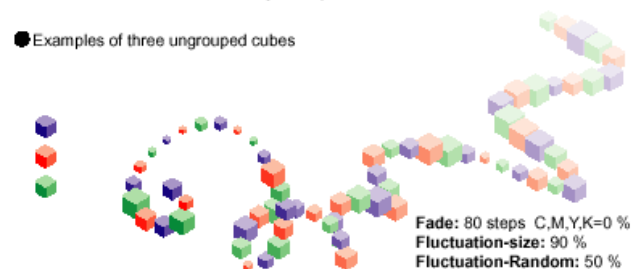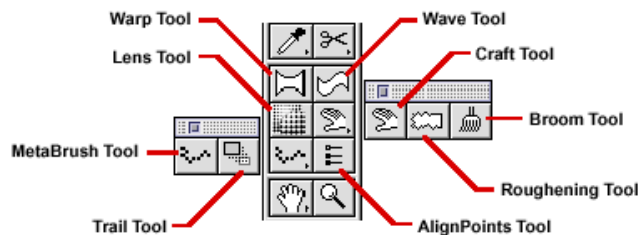

The remaining filters have equal punch power, producing effects hard (if not impossible) to achieve with Illustrator's native capabilities. They include: Live Border, Live Circle, Live Cutout, Live Emboss, Live Explosion, Live Frame, Live

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2. http://www.atpm.com/6.07/filterit.shtml

1. http://www.cvalley.com/

Galaxy, Live Generation, Live Neon, Live Reflections, Live Shadow, Live Tiling, and Live Trail.

The thing that you will love about FILTERiT4 is the immense control it grants to the end user. The interface seamlessly integrates into Adobe Illustrator; in fact, the first time around you might not even notice that it is installed. Whether you're a beginner or a veteran user you can operate the software with equal ease. I have to admit, however, that the interface does tend to look intimidating at times (especially with the more complex filters). A "beginner<>expert" switch would be welcome here.
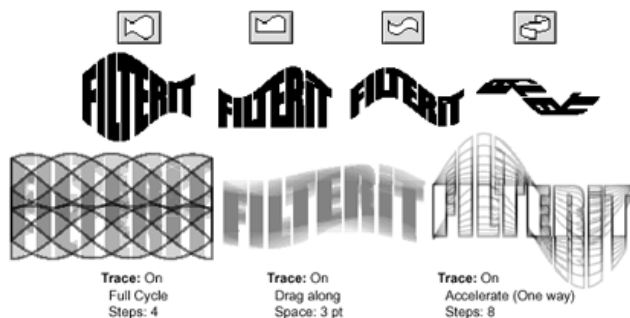
Finally, once the manual books are available, the company will send one to each of its users (even the ones who have already purchased the software). Fortunately, the PDF format manual on the CD is comprehensive enough. I whole heartedly recommend it to all Illustrator users, and kudos to Cvalley for this excellent title.

Review: Monopoly Casino

by Ellyn Ritterskamp, erritterskamp@atpm.com

MacSoft has done a lot of things right with this game. It installs and plays easily, and as we expect from a company specializing in Macintosh software, the presentation leaves little to be desired. I wish a few things could be speeded up or altered in a player controls menu, but surely those things will be addressed in future versions. For now, we have a very playable casino with plenty of games inside. There really is a game for everyone here, including slots, video poker, roulette, a money wheel, keno, craps, blackjack, and table poker games.

MacSoft is even good about its packaging, including a 52-page instruction book that walks the player through technical elements such as installation and network play, and also provides rules for play on all of the games. Yes, I know you want to hear more about the games: we'll get there in a minute.

Most of my testing was done on a 350MHz G3; its main claim to fame is over 700 MB of RAM and a fresh new 40 GB hard drive. Otherwise it's all factory specs, including ordinary video and graphics setups. Game play was fast enough, although I wanted the ability to skip to the next hand once I'd folded from a poker hand. For those good players who know the value of studying their opponents, though, this is a handy feature that makes you pay attention to some of their bets.

I also tried the game on a 300 MHz iBook, which was bearable until the screensaver came on. After that, game play was horrendously slow. To be fair, the iBook is running both OS X and OS 9, and the system software is gobbling up much of the 160 MB of RAM. This sort of game isn't what I had in mind for that unit anyway, but bear in mind that if you want to play it on a similar computer, you'll at least want to shut down OS X or anything else that chews RAM.

Other technical stuff: you must leave the CD in to play the game, and I had to reinstall Sound Manager (part of QuickTime).

Network Play

Network play comes in two varieties: you can host your own game on a local area network, or you can go to GameRanger[2] to find online opponents. GameRanger's services are unrelated to those provided by MacSoft, so if you have any online issues, they're not MacSoft's fault. That said, several of MacSoft's games are available for play there, including Scrabble and Risk II, both of which really rock with online opponents. For Monopoly Casino, you'd probably only want to play against humans if you really wanted to play lots of the table games. Keno, money wheel, video poker, and slots are pretty much you against the machine, and the machine's going to win anyway, so there's not much point in trying to play them online.

For those table games, though, you could arrange to meet your buddies for poker one night a week, and not even have to leave your own house. If you met up on your local network, or arranged to play together at GameRanger, you could save yourself the trouble of getting dressed. Several of the games also have tournament play options, with 25 hands and set dollar amounts.

If you want to dive right in and get started playing, the one thing you need to know is that when you finish playing at a game or table, be sure to click Cash In—otherwise you'll lose your winnings. You did win, didn't you?

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2. http://www.atpm.com/5.09/gameranger.shtml

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1. http://www.wizworks.com/macsoft

When you first enter the casino floor, you'll see the familiar Atlantic City-themed game board layout, with slot machines in the center of the board and everything else around the sides of the room. You can mouse over a table or machine to find out what it is, or you can use the Games menu to quickly select a game and dollar amount.

The Games

The instruction book is very helpful at explaining the game levels and rules. My eyes still glazed over when I read the instructions for craps, but I've never been able to really grasp that particular game, so probably nothing they could have written would have made a difference. All the other games made sense to me after a quick glance through the book.

I've found that most of us have between one and three casino games we really like, and the rest we either don't like or don't understand. My personal favorites are the ones in which I have lots of control, especially blackjack and table poker games. Bear that in mind as we go through the games.

Slots—16 different machines ranging from the familiar 3-line version to some really complicated stuff with five reels and nine bet lines. These fancy-dancy machines have Bonus Rounds that kick in if you hit a certain combination of symbols, but it's all explained in the instruction book. Whichever slot game you play, make sure you always bet the maximum, otherwise you can't win the big jackpots and you might as well not bother (true on any slot machine). An easy way to do this is to click on a large amount of money, hit Place Bet, and then all you have to do is click Bet Max each time. Use this same tactic on video poker, keno, and the money wheel.

Video Poker—six machines, three with wild cards, varying dollar amounts. Pretty standard play controls—you click on the cards you want to hold, not the ones to discard.

Keno—choose up to ten squares on an 80-square board, then watch the balls drop. The pay table shows you how much you win based on how many squares you picked correctly.

For me this is only fun in a real casino if there's a drawing every half hour or so, as a distraction from other games.

Roulette—place bets on various possible numbers, rows, columns, etc., according to where you think the ball will land when the dealer spins his wheel. Two versions: a standard table and the Monopoly version, which is fun for the casual player.

Money Wheel—another one that's more fun if played only now and then, but I could actually have fun with some strategies on this one. Similar to Roulette, except the object is to place your bet on the currency denomination that wins if the money wheel's pointer lands on it. There's an odds table in the book to help you figure out that continuous play will wipe you out very fast unless you get lucky.

Craps—this is the one game I've never really understood. The idea is that you place bets based on what you think the roll of the dice will be, or what you think it won't be, but beyond that I have no clue. The book spends three pages on this game, so even for them it's not a simple game.

Blackjack—my favorite. This is the game in which proper play gives you the best chance against the house. The house percentage against proper play is something like 0.6%, less than a penny on the dollar. I'm willing to live with those odds, especially since in many other games the house percentage is more like 8 or 9%. The dealer in this and the other games, is Mr. Monopoly, the dude with the top hat and bushy white mustache from the original board game. As a human player against three computer opponents, you sit in the third seat of four, and I couldn't figure out how to take over the prized final seat. Other than that, I enjoyed playing this game.

Table poker—include Five-Card Draw, Seven-Card Stud, Texas Hold 'Em, and Omaha Hold 'Em all in either high only, Lowball, or Hi-Lo. For the biggest pots, play Hi-Lo, because more players stay in with chances to win either way. Pai Gow Poker is the final table game, in which you get seven cards and have to split them into a five-card hand and a toward hand, but the toward hand can't be better than the five-bagger. Trust

me, it's fun, except there are lots of pushes, where you beat the dealer on one hand and lose on the other.

Bet 'em Up

Monopoly Casino makes me wonder what would happen if someone constructed casinos using game themes from other favorite board games. Can you imagine a casino based on Clue, for instance? You've got all your separate rooms for various games; the dealers could be characters from the game…now that'd be lots of fun, playing blackjack in the Conservatory with Colonel Mustard as the dealer! For added excitement, if you started winning too much money from the house, they could send someone in to bop you over the head with a candlestick…well, okay, there are a few kinks to work out. For now, we'll stick with giving them the Boot in Atlantic City.

Review: Sharity 2.4

by Eric Blair, eblair@atpm.com

ATPM RATINGS
EXCELLENT

When the iMac was released without a floppy drive, one of the messages Apple wanted to send was that networked computers were in all of our futures. Apple extended the network onto the Internet with iTools, giving every Mac user with an account an iDisk to store files online. With OS X comes tighter integration with iTools, emphasized by one of the first installation screens, which gives the option of creating an iTools account or using an existing one.

Along with setting up an iTools account, Apple also makes it simple to connect to other Macs on the network. With OS X, the Chooser is banished and networked computers are accessed directly from the Finder. Any Mac with File Sharing active will be listed.

With all these advances, there is still one area where Mac networking falls short—accessing Windows networks. With the Classic Mac OS, utilities like Thursby Software Systems' Dave and Connectix DoubleTalk worked to fill this gap. Under OS X, Objective Development's Sharity fits the bill.

To be fair, Sharity does not just let you access Windows shared directories. In fact, it can access any computer that uses the CIFS (Common Internet File System) protocol. In all likelihood, most users will only be exposed to shared Windows computers, but systems like SAMBA and OS/2 also serve files using the CIFS protocol.

Setting Up Sharity

Having some experience with setting up networking under Unix, I was a little concerned what sort of configuration work Sharity might require. After a few moments, I realized my fears were without foundation. Both the installation and setup of Sharity were far easier than I would have dared imagine. All installation required was copying a folder into the Mac OS X StartupItems folder, dragging the Sharity application to where I wanted it (I chose the Utilities folder), adding the Sharity application to the Login Items panel, and rebooting.

Setting up Sharity is even easier. When I rebooted, the Sharity application opened and asked for my Workgroup

name and my WINS server. After entering this information, I was able to browse the CIFS network from the Finder.

Browsing the CIFS Network from the Finder
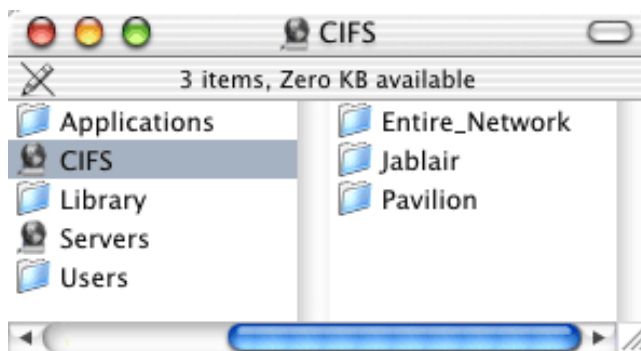
Using the Sharity application, you have access to Sharity's more advanced features via seven option panels. The two that will interest most people are the "Sharity Mounts" and "CIFS Logins" screens. Sharity Mounts shows all the CIFS network objects that are currently mounted by Sharity. CIFS Logins shows the both the computers that you are currently logged into as well as any logins that are inactive but saved for future use. A saved login means that the username and password have been saved by Sharity so that information will not need to be re-entered the next time the you log in to the server.

Sharity Mounts

The CIFS General and Sharity General screens let you modify the basic settings Sharity uses for accessing the network.

As their names would suggest, the CIFS Servers and CIFS Browsers screens let you create and modify your own Browser and Server information. The CIFS Servers screen is useful if you need to access a server not accessible from the network browser, through hard-coding the server information so it is mounted automatically. I'm not really

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1. http://www.obdev.at/products/sharity/

certain why you would want to create your own CIFS Browser, but I suppose that it might be more useful to somebody running a more complex network than I have at home.

The last screen is used for registering your copy of Sharity. Personally, I don't really think this needs to be accessible from the main screen, but fortunately the information is locked from the time you first login to another system until the time you reboot the computer.

For those who prefer commands lines to GUIs, Sharity also provides Unix command line tools for accessing most of its features. This is a separate install for those who desire it.

Definitely Not One Size Fits All

If you looked at the product information at the top of this review, you may have noticed the plethora of different prices for Sharity. If you feel slightly confused by all this, don't feel bad about it—I think I got a headache pulling all the information together. Here's the Cliffsnotes version:

- Sharity Single allows you to install on a single client and mount one server at a time. It costs $99 for commercial use and is free for home use.
- Sharity Twin allows you to install on two clients and mount two servers at a time. It costs $179 for commercial use, $59 for home use, and is free for students.
- Sharity Office allows you to install on five clients and mount 10 servers at a time. It costs $479 for commercial use.
- Client Licenses are sold on the basis of how many systems will have Sharity installed on them, ranging from a single client to site licenses. They can connect to any number of servers. A special 20-Client license is available to non-commercial educational institutes that meet certain criteria.

- Server Licenses are sold on the basis of how many servers can be accessed at one time. They can be installed on as many clients as you want.

A Little Help

Thanks to its Mac OS X Unix underpinnings, Sharity is remarkably stable, exhibiting almost none of the glitches you would expect in a product for a month-old operating system. Since Sharity began several years ago as a Unix application, it has had time to work out all the version 1.0 kinks. In fact, Sharity is now at version 2.4. In the time I've spent using Sharity, I've only come across two problems, both with the Mac OS–specific help system.

First, when you select the Sharity Help menu item, it displays the help in Internet Explorer. This is wrong for two reasons. First, every other application I've used displays its help in the Help Viewer application. Second, I have OmniWeb selected as my default Web browser.

Second, Sharity has a help system reminiscent of the Help Balloons in the Classic Mac OS. Clicking on the ? is supposed to change your pointer to a question mark and display help when you point at an option. I could not get this to work on my computer.

Obviously, I cannot vouch for the pop-up help system, but the HTML help was very complete and addressed every issue I could think of.

Conclusion

If you use Mac OS X in a mixed computing environment, Sharity is an absolute must. Before I switched to OS X, I used a variety of tools to move files between my Mac and my PC without really finding a combination that I liked. With Sharity, I can now access my PC from my Mac just like it was another Mac. To be honest, that's just the way that I like it. Aside from the small glitches in the help system, Sharity is an excellent product.

Review: Sound Studio

by Dierk Seeburg, dseeburg@atpm.com

Hi everyone!

Remember my report[2] last month when I suspected that Apple was pushing to regain the undisputed number one spot as educational computer platform? I stumbled upon an article in Business Week Online[3] that corroborates many people's suspicions: Apple is on the rebound in education. Let's hope that there's a new iMac in the pipeline in time for the start of the new school year this fall.

My contribution this month is a review of the shareware program Sound Studio[4] by Felt Tip Software[5]. For this review I tested version 1.5.4, which was published on February 20, 2001 by its author Lucius Kwok[6].

What's That Sound?

As you may have guessed from its name, Sound Studio is essentially a little recording studio for your Mac! You can use it for audio playback, recording, and editing in various audio file formats. In particular, it features two-channel editing, several effects filters, sample rate conversion, and support for many file formats including AIFF, Sound Designer II, System 7 Sound, WAVE, and anything QuickTime can import: movies,MP3, etc.

Requirements

Sound Studio requires Mac OS 8 or later (the author recommends Mac OS 9) and QuickTime, running on a Power Mac. Sound Studio has only a moderate RAM requirement of 6 MB. As for hard disk space, the program and all associated files occupy only about 1.1 MB, but be prepared to have an extra hard disk ready to hold audio files, if you're ever thinking about recording CD-quality sound in AIFF format: every minute sound file requires about 10 MB of hard disk space. One average CD will set you back 700 MB.

Functionality

Sound Studio fills the basic need for recording sound in CD-quality 16-bit stereo at 44.1KHz using most Macs' sound capabilities. It allows recording from any Sound Manager input device like your external microphone or other external sound source, any built-in sound device, or your CD (or CDR/CDRW/DVD, I assume). The external microphone port on your Mac can be used just like a Line In port on your stereo, but more on that later. What's nice about Sound Studio is that it allows background recording and playback of other files during recording. Last but not least, Sound Studio is AppleScriptable.

Uses

So, if you've ever thought about preserving your vinyl LP collection, this program will go a long way to help you do just that. All you need for that is large amounts of disk space, if you're planning on preserving music of similar sound quality. I recommend saving your albums in AIFF (Audio Interchange File Format), which is recognized by many audio programs and can be easily converted to other formats like MP3.

Hook up your turntable from your amplifier's audio out to the microphone port of your Mac. Usually, that requires an RCA-to-1/4 inch adapter cable that has two RCA plugs on one end and a 1/4 inch stereo plug on the other. Of course, you can also convert your CDs to audio files that way.

Another useful function for many people is Sound Studio's editing capability. You can virtually cut and paste virtually anything, splicing together sound bites to your hearts's content or the sound track to your new iMovie from your last vacation.

Sound Studio's playback capabilities are designed to aid in audio editing, but you can use it for playback just as well, if you have it open anyway and don't want to open any more applications than necessary or than your RAM allows. Of course, many other players are more versatile for storing albums, creating personalized collections, conversion to compressed files, and handling more file formats.

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2. http://atpm.com/7.04/segments.shtml
3. http://www.businessweek.com/bwdaily/dnflash/mar2001/nf20010328_888.htm
4. http://www.felttip.com/products/soundstudio/
5. http://www.felttip.com/
6. mailto:lucius@felttip.com

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1. http://www.felttip.com/products/soundstudio/

Documentation

The program comes with documentation in PDF format, so keep your Acrobat Reader software handy. It is dated December 15, 2001 when version 1.5 was released, which was the last revision with new features. The PDF file contains bookmarks, a table of contents, a reference section, and an index to locate chapters easily. These are thoughtful features that many other software authors neglect when building their PDF files.

User Interface

My favorite feature is Sound Studio's simplicity, the one feature the Mac OS shines at. All basic features are combined in one main window, no clutter, no confusing assemblage of windows, no button for every single feature, but several features are accessible through menu shortcuts. The only other window is the sound input palette, which works as a simple level meter and adjuster.
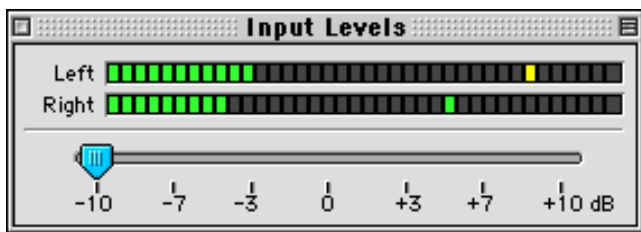
Sound Input Palette
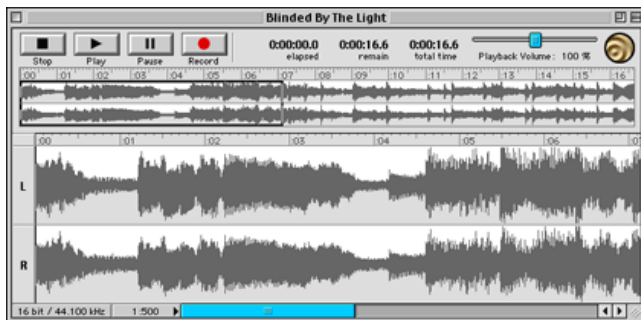
Sound Studio Main Window

Sound Editing

Similarly elegant in simplicity, you can perform all basic editing functions in Sound Studio. While the top half of the main window shows an overview of the entire sound, the lower half lets you zoom down to see every single peak of your sound sample. This allows for very precise editing using the standard Macintosh editing commands Cut, Copy, Paste, and Clear. Not only can you use these to cut and paste portions to and from other sound files, but to other applications, as well: take your favorite sound bite, cut it out, and paste it into a letter to your friend (obeying all copyright laws in the process, of course). And you can do this for both channels or either the left or right in stereo, or for one channel in mono. Just point, click, and drag a section of

sound you want to select and then edit it or apply one or more of the filters described below.

If you are trying to use the built-in counters to help you during editing, you're out of luck. This is where a small counter next to the selection arrow would help, but that space is already used to indicate the channel. Sounds like an option that could be included in the preferences panel.

Filtering Fun

Sound Studio's filtering functions will satisfy most hobbyists. It features filters to amplify, reverse, delay, echo, emphasize, fade in or out and variably, inverse, noise gate, normalize, smooth your audio, and reverse channels. In addition, you can resample your sample or change its pitch. If you need more filters I advise you to look at sound editors featuring more and more advanced audio filters like Sound Sculptor II or Amadeus.

If your volume of your sound is too low, you can boost it using the Amplify filter. You can adjust it from 0 to 200 percent, or more than that by typing in any desired percentage, but beware, Sound Studio will clip your sound, if it is louder than the channel allows. As Sound Studio's author explains, "Clipping is when the waveform tries to be bigger than the height of the channel it is in, and since there's no more room (headroom), the parts that don't fit simply get chopped off." This is commonly known as distortion, so be aware of that as you perform amplifications. Thank heaven for the Undo command : - >

If you just want to get the sound amplified to its allowable volume, have Sound Studio do it for you by using the Normalize filter. This will adjust the sound to a specific peak loudness which you can set as a percent value of the channel height. That can be useful in boosting weak sounds automatically that are too quiet otherwise, for instance, you can boost a question asked by an audience member that is barely audible during a lecture to a volume level that is on par with the volume of the lecturer.

Two other filters perform similar functions: Delay and Echo. This adds the effect of echoing the sound; the difference between the two filters being that Delay adds a false echo that is reflected only once, like shouting out over a vast, open valley, while Echo adds numerous duplicate delayed sounds, like shouting into a canyon where you can hear yourself over and over again. By adjusting the volume and offset of the echo you can essentially simulate greater or lesser landscapes.

If your sound needs some help in the trebles, you can boost them using the Emphasize filter. This will make your sound more crisp, but may add more noise, as well. Keep in mind that clipping might occur, similar to when you apply the Amplify filter.

If you want to accomplish the opposite, basically smoothing out your trebles, use the Smooth filter. This works in principle like a Dolby® filter.

Another very useful set of filters are the Fade filters. You can fade in and out sounds linearly and even adjust the slope of the fade. This comes in handy when adjusting sound clips to a particular length, e.g. just select the portion of your sound you want to fade in, apply the fade, and now your sound sports a smooth beginning.

If it sounds like no audio is coming from the center, it may have one of its channels inverted, and it's time for the Invert filter. Just double-click the channel, apply the filter, and away you go. Your audio will sound normal again.

The filter most useful for transferring your vinyl albums to computer is the Noise Gate. It can silence those pesky passages on your album that have become so scratchy that you think you can hear the dust particles that are embedded in the groove.

Last, if you hooked up your stereo wrong and you recorded the right channel on the left and the left channel on the right, fret not, just use the Swap filter and you've got the situation licked.

I have left one filter for the fun part of this review, more on that below.

MYOS—Make Your Own Sound

Sound Studio provides the option to generate sounds, as well. Not only can you generate simple waveform sounds, but you can also insert sounds generated using the built-in sound synthesizer. Before long, you'll be generating sounds resembling sensor sweeps from the original *Star Trek*. That may take some practice, but it may just be what you were looking for.
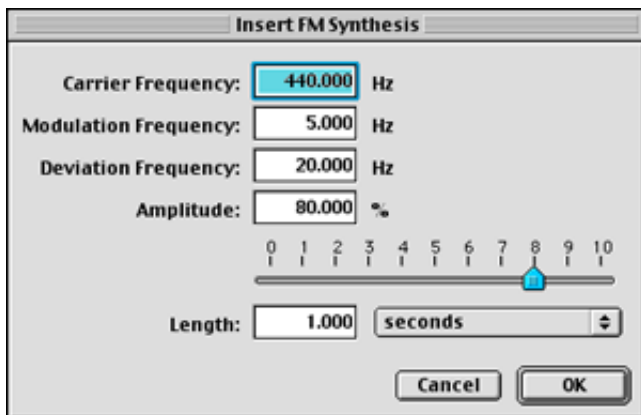

Adding Generated Sounds

Your Preferences

To me, preferences are an important feature of every program. This is where you can customize the program to fit your needs. Sound Studio doesn't have much to customize, in fact, really one thing only, and that's the scratch disk used for temporary storage of sound files, similar to how Photoshop handles temporary storage of graphics files. Also, I expected

to be able to set the sound input source in the preferences panel, but I found it pretty quickly under the audio menu.
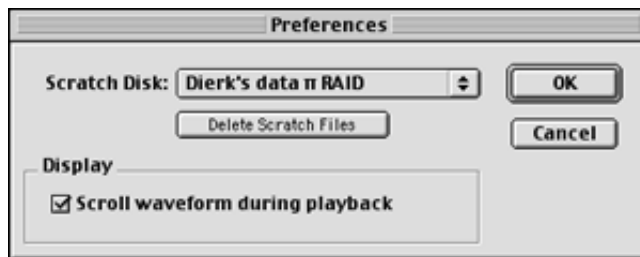
Sound Studio Preferences Window

Let's Have Some Fun!

Remember when I said I left one filter for the fun portion, sort of like saving the best for last? Well, before you end your trial of Sound Studio I recommend applying at least one filter: the Backwards filter. Remember those stories about songs with lyrics that were supposed to say "devil" and "hell" and "satan" when played backwards? Now you can try it out for yourself! Put on "Stairway to Heaven" by Led Zeppelin and listen for yourself, if the line "Yes, there are two paths you can go by, but in the long run there's still time to change the road you're on" when played backwards really says: "*It's my sweet Satan…*Oh I will sing because I live with Satan." The least this will do is get you to giggle, maybe even send a sample to your friends :->

What? You want more? Try the pitch shifting! Slow down a recording of your voice until you sound like Barry White, or speed it up until you sound like Mickey Mouse! Of course, either of these filters can be used for more serious purposes, but don't forget to relax once in a while—I know I should.

Bonus

The one area where Sound Studio is clearly superior to its competitors is its scriptability. If you know your way around AppleScript, you can, e.g., have Sound Studio in your absence automatically record your favorite radio show off the tuner that you hooked up to your Mac's external microphone port—the sky is the limit. E-mail me your favorite script and let's share it with other Sound Studio users.

Take Note

The biggest problem I had with Sound Studio was its inability to handle the sound input source correctly. Do not run Sound Studio if you have another program already running that could possibly have taken over the sound input port. This includes anything from TV tuner applications to audio software players including iTunes. Also, do not start another application that may hook into the sound input source on top of or after Sound Studio. This seems to cause a problem for Sound Studio trying to release the sound input port. The worst that can happen is that Sound Studio will crash. This

only happened to me once, and I'm mentioning it here so it doesn't happen to you.

In addition, Sound Studio has some problems recognizing the sound input source between closing and opening files. This requires quitting and restarting, after which the sound input source is recognized as normal.

These deficiencies and the missing features suggested below caused me to only rate the program Good, but once these are ironed out the program certainly deserves a rating of Very Nice.

Another problem I encountered was related to the fact that some CDs are recorded at fairly high levels. Sound Studio does have an input level adjuster in the input level palette, but adjusting your audio sample to the lowest level at -10 dB may still cause some peaks to remain in the yellow and even red level areas.

Suggestion Box

A feature I would like to see in future versions is multiple undos, although I am aware that that would require even more disk space and longer processing times. Maybe that's a feature that could be turned on and off in the preferences panel.

Since the input level is already split up into left and right channels, the input level adjuster should be split up into two channels, as well. This would facilitate recordings of audio material with only one channel above input limits.

To complete the button strip in the menu window, fast forward and rewind buttons would be nice. They would fit nicely next to the buttons for stop, play, pause, and record.

In contrast to other, similarly priced programs, Sound Studio does not allow you to save your sound in MP3 format. For me, that meant using another program to convert my AIFF files to MP3, but luckily, iTunes comes to the rescue to finish the job for free.

My Final Answer

I have used Sound Studio for a couple of weeks now and recorded a few lectures off of a Minidisk player. Keeping in mind the couple of idiosyncrasies described above, I have been able to record and clean up some lecture audio tracks with the help of Sound Studio, and then webify them. I can appreciate the straightforward functionality of the program and see more room to grow.

Sound Studio is a little on the expensive side in comparison to other programs that essentially perform the same task and then some. To some people, that may be outweighed by the simple elegance of the user interface; they might be happy to pay a few dollars more to be more productive. I usually evaluate my computer tools by assessing Total Cost of Ownership (TCO), and sometimes that means investing a few more bucks up front to be more productive in the long run.

Review: Unreal Tournament: Game of the Year Edition

by Matthew Glidden, mglidden@atpm.com

Developer: Westlake Interactive/Epic (product page[1])
Price: $19.99 (MSRP)
Requirements: 200MHz 603-based Mac, 64 MB of RAM, Mac OS 7.6, 120 MB hard disk space
Recommended: G3-based Mac, 96 MB of RAM, Mac OS 8, Rage Pro or 3D card
Trial: Feature-limited (LAN play on limited set of levels), 47.3 MB[2]

A few years back, the release of the original Unreal introduced a new echelon of first-person shooters, featuring outstanding graphics and a creepy and high-tension combination of story line and game design. Unreal Tournament (UT) takes the Unreal concept and moves it to arena combat, akin to the deathmatch games of the Quake series (which leads to things like this[3]; can't we all just get along?).

Wreaking Havoc With the Minigun

Gameplay

The purpose of UT is simple. Survive in the arena and accumulate as many opponent kills, or "frags," as you can by taking out as many trigger-happy opponents as possible while avoiding the same fate yourself. Each arena map is littered with weapons, armor, and player enhancements, allowing you to "power up" your character along the way.

A typical match ends when a player reaches a set number of frags and/or a certain amount of time elapses, or a player reaches a predetermined goal. Some matches are free-for-all, but others feature opposing teams.

A one-player version of UT is included, which consists of a training stage and a number of arena combats against "bots" (computer-controlled opponents).

Training Mode

You can spend a while honing your skills in one-player mode, but most players will eventually join a multi-player UT game through either a local area network (LAN) or the Internet. Support for both methods is included, and the game tracks available-to-join LAN or Internet games. You can even choose to host your own game that others join.

Graphics

Ooo! Pretty! The first thing you'll notice about UT is the smooth, high-gloss look of the arenas and players, showing off the updated graphics engine also used by games such as Deus Ex. I used the baseline 450 Mhz Cube as my play machine, and had no hiccups or problems with up to the 800x600 setting on its ATI Rage 128 video card. Try out different video settings to find what works best for you, as CPU and video card speeds will affect your results.

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3.   http://www.penny-arcade.com/dogs.shtml

1.   http://www.wizworks.com/macsoft/Unreal_T_Mac/Unreal_T_Mac.html
2.   http://macgamefiles.com/detail.taf?item=10172

Mods

Another feature of UT is the ability to use game modifications, or "mods," which are new arenas or game items created by fellow gamers. The list of available mods is rather large. A search for "Unreal" on Macgamefiles.com returned over 100 related files, most of which are new arenas or mod utilities. Mod quality varies widely, but they keep the game fresh by adding a new look and feel once you've seen all that the basic game has to offer.

Overall

At $19.99 this edition of UT is a painless way to satisfy your trigger finger for a long time. If you made the initial choice between Quake 3 and UT and went with Quake, this is a good way to see what you missed. The better Mac gaming climate means better Mac games, and this choice of first-person shooters is a good example. I prefer UT's weapons "feel" myself, and will probably spend more time behind the UT rocket launcher over the long term.

An Internet UT Server List

A Mod Map of a Desert Base

Copyright © 2001 Matthew Glidden, mglidden@atpm.com*. Matthew Glidden is the webmaster of* Threemacs.com[1]*, a guide to constructing and maintaining home and small-office Macintosh networks. He can also tango and juggle, not necessarily at the same time.*

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1. http://www.threemacs.com

FAQ: Frequently Asked Questions

What Is ATPM?

About This Particular Macintosh (ATPM) is, among other things, a monthly Internet magazine or "e-zine." ATPM was created to celebrate the personal computing experience. For us this means the most personal of all personal computers—the Apple Macintosh. About This Particular Macintosh is intended to be about your Macintosh, our Macintoshes, and the creative, personal ideas and experiences of everyone who uses a Mac. We hope that we will continue to be faithful to our mission.

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Segments: Slices from the Macintosh Life

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What If My Question Isn't Answered Above?

We hope by now that you've found what you're looking for (We can't imagine there's something else about ATPM that you'd like to know.). But just in case you've read this far (We appreciate your tenacity.) and still haven't found that little piece of information about ATPM that you came here to find, please feel free to e-mail us at (You guessed it.) editor@atpm.com.

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1. http://www.atpm.com/reviews
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