

ATPM

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

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Welcome

by Robert Paul Leitao, rleitao@atpm.com

Welcome to the October issue of *About This Particular Macintosh!* This month's issue contains a medley of stories, reviews, and columns designed to enhance your personal computing experience. I wanted to use the word potpourri to describe this month's content. But Chris Turner, our managing editor, doesn't like words that might hint at incongruous things. Instead, we talk about our content as a tightly woven blend of harmonious articles carefully crafted and compiled to synthesize our work and to epitomize the best of the Mac Web. Don't believe me? Then please read our October issue!

Speaking of Hyper-Synthesis...

The folks at Virginia Tech have undertaken an ambitious plan. They are crafting a supercomputer to synthesize the work of 1,100 dual 2 GHz G5 Macs that will rival the top supercomputers in terms of performance and best the other contenders on price.

Virginia Tech's request for 1,100 of the high-performance Macs delayed delivery of Apple's latest and greatest top-of-the-line product to retailers and other customers. At press time the Virginia Tech Mac-based super computer was coming online. The price/performance ratio of the G5s makes the Virginia Tech effort not only a significant technology accomplishment; it has also been put together at a fraction of the cost of other world-class supercomputer clusters.

101 Iterations

What comes in black and white (mostly) and numbers out at 101? No, it's not another movie about dogs and Cruella DeVille, it's this issue of ATPM! Our October issue is the 101st edition of your favorite monthly Macintosh Internet magazine. Since April 1995, the editors and writers at ATPM have been covering the dog-eat-dog world of personal computing from the Macintosh point of view. In an industry filled with super villains and an occasional hero, we continue to report on the ever-changing state of the Mac in a unique and often entertaining way. We appreciate your loyal support!

.Mac Attack

Well it's not really an attack by .Mac, but inaugural subscribers of Apple's fee-based service may feel a bit of a pinch in their wallets during October. The first year of .Mac service (which was discounted for subscribers who migrated from the former iTools program) has come to an end. The \$99 annual renewal fee will be charged to credit cards this month. Apple has been adding new promotions to the service over the past few months and is offering either a \$20 coupon redeemable at the online Apple Store or a free game from a short selection of titles to subscribers who gladly renew their accounts.

New Products for the New Year

That is of course new products for the new fiscal year. Apple ended its fiscal year at the close of September. The 2004 fiscal year begins as this issue is distributed to readers. Before the end of the September quarter (and thus the fiscal year) Apple refreshed its PowerBook and iMac lines for the holiday season. The first fiscal quarter of each year is traditionally Apple's strongest quarter for sales and earnings. There's something to be said for starting the year off right. The Windows version of iTunes is scheduled for release this quarter and will compliment the new 40 GB and 20 GB iPods recently released by Apple. At press time Apple has not announced a release date for the Windows version of its popular music service.

Fiscal Fourth Quarter Webcast

Apple's results for the fiscal fourth quarter and the fiscal year will be discussed with Wall Street analysts via of webcast on October 15, 2003. Analysts will be interested in learning the scheduled release date for Panther (Mac OS X 10.3), the renewal rate for .Mac subscribers, and the total number of G5 CPUs shipped in the September quarter. Of course, the debut of the Windows version of iTunes and the iTunes Music Store will be on every investor's mind. We will provide coverage of Apple's financial results in the November issue of ATPM.

10.2.8 We Hardly Knew You

Within hours of posting the Mac OS X 10.2.8 update on its servers, Apple Computer quietly pulled the file. Users who were quick to update their Mac OS X system software to 10.2.8 are left guessing as to when a new update will be released. Those of us who did download 10.2.8 eagerly await a fix for the problems many of us have encountered.

But We Won't Keep You Guessing

One thing's for sure! The latest issue of ATPM will provide each of our readers with answers to many Macintosh questions. No longer are we known as an eclectic collection of Audacious Tidbits and Puckish Musings. ATPM is now a symphony of sight, a harmony of contributed text, a veritable ensemble of the finest Mac-related literary work available in a monthly publication format. That's why our managing editor makes the big bucks (or at least gets first pick of the software to be reviewed).

The ATPM Staff

Our October issue includes:

Apples, Kids, & Attitude: Good Morning America, How Are You?

Robert Paul Leitaó, his kids, and their digital devices embark on a cross-country train trek.

The Candy Apple: How Do You Like Them Apples?

Right there during your morning java, up popped an applet...

Machine Language: California Dreamin'

Matt Coates takes measure of California's impending anti-spam law and is ready to sit back and see what happens.

Segments: Consumeritis

Andrew Kator notes the shift towards buying Macs as a statement of identity and looks at the future of Macintoshes in the consumer market.

Segments: 9 Ladybugs at the X Ladybug Picnic

Striving to not specifically advocate one over the other, Andrew Kator sifts through the major pros and cons of upgrading to OS X or sticking with OS 9.

The Legacy Corner: Picking the Optimal OS for Your Mac—Part 2

Chris Lawson is back again with part two of his run-down on how to pick the best system software for Macs that are still able to run OS 9.

Quick Tips in Design: Line

Andrew Kator continues his series of graphics tutorials looking at the use of line and how to suggest proximity, continuity, and value.

About This Particular Outliner: Outliner Features—Part 1

This month Ted Goranson continues his overview of outlining as the second column in his *About This Particular Outliner*. There is no well accepted definition of what an outliner is. So this month, Ted begins a review of every feature related to outlining ever found in any outliner, with examples.

The Bottom Line: Are You Ready for a Disaster?

After enduring a crippling fire in her home and later lying in wait for power to be restored in the wake of Hurricane Isabel, Mary E. Tyler evaluates what she's learned and shares her tips for prevention, preparation, and how to prevail.

Cartoon: Cortland

An unexpected twist finds *Cortland* facing an uncertain future.

Cartoon: iTrolls

The *iTrolls* learn to speak Unix, take pride that at least one technology won't be "assimilated," learn the consequences of revealing the secrets of Unix to newbies, and are introduced to "the agonizer."

Desktop Pictures: Grand Canyon & Kona

Reader Philip A. DiMarzio contributes photos from the South Rim of the Grand Canyon and reader Marijke Wilhelmus shares shots taken in Kona, Hawaii.

Review: Amazon Hacks (book)

So, you want to be an Amazon.com guru? Eric Blair has the book for you.

Review: iSight

Robert Paul Leitao and Clayton Spayer remind us that even though videoconferencing is, in no way, the same as actually being there, using an iSight and iChat AV is often a better, and cheaper, solution for both personal and professional communications.

Review: PagePro 1250E Laser Printer

Syvester Roque chooses a new laser printer for its speed, connectivity, cost, and flexibility.

Review: Spring Cleaning 6.0

In spite of some nit-pickable items, Robert Paul Leitao is largely pleased with Aladdin's Spring Cleaning.

Review: Sling Pack

Lee Bennett discovers an extremely functional backpack for his PowerBook that meets a very specific and unpredictable need.

Review: TypePad

Raena Armitage tries out TypePad and finds it to be an attractive weblogging tool for newcomers and veterans, alike.



E-Mail

Outliner History

Thanks for the great article. I always enjoy knowing the history of things. I, too, missed Idea Keeper, but have found a wonderful replacement—DEVONthink. I've quickly become dependent on it as the organizing center for many of my computing activities.

—*Michael McKee*

Terrific article! I've been blazing through several nascent outliners and have—for now—settled on OmniOutliner. We'll see how it goes. This is still an immature category, as far as I'm concerned, but one that's been long overdue.

I look forward to reading further columns.

—*Larry Stevens*

Laptop or Desktop

There's another option—a new desktop and an old laptop. I use a Duo 280 (3 lbs., greyscale) for travel. It runs Eudora (a quick copy of the Eudora folder and all mail is transferred), Word 5 (conversion is easy), Excel 5 (ditto), PowerPoint, and even SPSS 4 for statistics, and it does them all quite nicely. The only thing an old, very cheap (under \$300) laptop does *not* do well is Web surfing. Batteries are the most expensive part of an old laptop, but if you only use them in a hotel room or a car or on the train, you can hook them up to a power supply and do just fine.

—*Dave*

Up front cost is only one component of total cost and I've found that having a laptop has saved me time and allowed me to secure a number of sales that were helped by being able to instantly demonstrate an idea. Also, I don't want to have clients in my home. That's private.

If I were buying today, I'd get the 12" PowerBook. It will drive a larger external monitor than my iBook, and it has AirPort Extreme. I sometimes use an external monitor and keyboard at home. A PowerBook won't keep up with a G5, but I don't game, do video production, or work with huge Photoshop files. I also don't own a race car. Massive speed is nice if you need it, but most of us don't. Almost any computer sold today is fast enough for general business use.

—*Michael*

I'd go with Dave's suggestion: Laptops are *still* too slow, confining and, to put it bluntly: unusable, for serious computing. Even word processing and (gag me with a spoon!) Web surfing are painful on a laptop's tiny, low-res screen (though I'll admit that even working on a single-monitor desktop gives me fits of claustrophobia).

Desktops aren't just superior in terms of power, but display space, keyboard/mouse space, and ergonomics.

—*Eric D.V.H.*

[Hello Again](#)

A great article! You had me laughing, nodding my head in solemn agreement (except about the Newton—I still use my 130), and tilting my head in rank nostalgia. Thanks for the memories.

—*Mike Welsh*

Excellent! I love to remember all the amazing history crammed into the past 20 years. Thanks for reminding us.

Welcome home, Angus!

—*Chris Smith*

Color Commentary

Red, green, and blue are the primary colors of light. Magenta, yellow, and cyan are the primary colors of transparencies and dyes. Red, yellow, and blue are the primary colors of opaque pigments.

The Red-orange-Yellow-green-Blue-violet-Red color wheels used in elementary school are based on pigments (such as fingerpaints), not dyes or light.

Inkjet printer inks are neither pure dyes nor pure pigments, which complicates matters. They are closer to dyes, which is why many printers use CMYK inks. But, because they aren't pure dyes, many printers have added more ink colors to expand their gamut of colors.

—Gregory Tetrault

Picking the Optimal OS for Your Mac

When working at a full-time job, I think I've used everything from the last version of System 6.x to OS 9.22. Frankly, I'll use whatever a *paying* employer gives me. But, at home, I have a sweet penchant for my G3 Wallstreet and 3400c PowerBooks, both on OS 8.1. Memory is maxed on both, both run identical software (Quark 4.1, Illustrator 8.0, Photoshop 4.0...you get the point).

The beautiful thing is, unless I get into production work (which I don't), this stuff is *more* than sufficient. A few of my colleagues use System 7.5/7.6 and earlier apps...and are perfectly happy. I mean, what gives with these bloatware software manufacturers? Don't they realize there comes a certain point when people are "just fine" with what they have? My gear is from 97–98, and I love it because I am very productive with it. It doesn't surprise me the least that the hardware side of the market is hurting, as I know there are scads of others like me out there. Call me a "retro-grouch" if you wish, but I'm doing just fine, thank you very much!

—Sprocket999

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Apples, Kids, & Attitude

by Robert Paul Leitao, rleitao@atpm.com

Good Morning America, How Are You?

“OK,” I thought, “this sounded really cool when I dreamed up the idea.” Those words were running through my head as my kids and I arrived at Union Station in Los Angeles on our way to boarding Amtrak’s Southwest Chief to Chicago. Now that we were seated at the station with all of our travel stuff I began to wonder if this really was the best of ideas.

Southwest Chief						
Chicago • Albuquerque • Los Angeles						
3	◀ Train Number ▶				4	
Daily	◀ Days of Operation ▶				Daily	
◀ On Board Service ▶						
Read/Down	Miles	▼		Symbol	▲	Read Up
3 15P	0	Do	Chicago, IL—Union Sta.	(CT)	◀	3 20P
			☞ Madison—see back			
R 3 48P	28		Naperville, IL	◀	▲	D 1 48P
R 4 37P	93		Mendota, IL	●		12 58P
R 5 00P	104		Princeton, IL	●		12 37P
R 5 52P	162		Galesburg, IL—S. Seminary St.	▲		11 45A
6 49P	220		Fort Madison, IA (Track 4)	◀		10 49A
7 59P	298		La Plata, MO (Kirkville)	●	▲	9 41A
10 10P	437	Ar	Kansas City, MO	(CA)	Do	7 20A
			☞ Tulsa, Oklahoma City—see back			

A Dream Becomes Reality

I had long thought of taking my kids to and from my home state of Connecticut by train. I wanted to experience the romance of the rails and for my kids to see the country in an up close and personal kind of way. Although in a few minutes from that moment the romance of the rails would take on a whole new and unexpected meaning (please see the [iSight review](#) in this issue of ATPM), the reality of three days on Amtrak trains began to sink in.

The Southwest Chief was running late on that July day. It gave us more time to become acquainted with Sue and Clayton Spayer, our surprise companions on the trip to Chicago. We were scheduled for a three-hour layover in the Windy City before my kids and I were

to board Amtrak's Lake Shore Limited and its overnight trek to Penn Station in New York. But for now, getting settled for the two-day wheeled excursion to Chicago was foremost on my mind.

I had arranged for my kids and I to share what's called a "Family Bedroom" from LA to Chicago. The first impression as the three of us loaded our gear into the sleeper was that Amtrak's version of a family must have come from Lilliput during Gulliver's stay in the land. There was barely enough room for the three of us to sit in the space and accommodate our carry-on bags. It was obvious we'd spend little non-sleeping time in the room.

Prepared for three days without Internet access, my kids and I had our iPods, and I brought along my Titanium PowerBook for notes and writing along the way. But once the wheels began to move, all agendas and preconceived ideas had to be left at the station.

On Our Way

We felt a little jolt as the train pulled away from Union Station, taking slow and winding turns as the locomotives and cars moved through the expansive yard of tracks heading in all directions and passed the collection of rail cars seemingly marooned by the side.

The rhythm of the rails has a kind of inebriating effect on the mind and body, but soon after settling in to our room it was time to head to the dining car for dinner. Already behind schedule for a 6:45 PM departure, the crew lost no time readying the tables for the Southwest Chief's eastbound guests.

The dining car was positioned about four cars forward from the sleepers, and learning to straddle the short tubes that connect the rail cars was our first lesson in the peculiarities of train travel. As we navigated the narrow corridors in the coach cars, in turn yielding the right of way to other passengers, it came to mind this was less of a trip home and more of

a pilgrimage across America. It was an opportunity to take in the sights and sounds of places in America hidden away by the matrix of superhighways and long forgotten by a nation of people that prefer to travel by air.



A few days before the trip, and still using a dial-up connection at home, I drove to the Glendale Apple Store to use my AirPort card on the store's broadband network to purchase a few songs for the journey. I wanted a copy of Arlo Guthrie's "City of New Orleans" on my iPod for the trip. The song's refrain "Good morning America, how are you?" was a unanswered question to which I wanted to see and hear a reply as my children and I ambled across the country on wheels at sixty to eighty miles an hour.

After dinner, as we sat with our travel companions in the Southwest Chief's observation car, we engaged alternately between active conversation and silence as we watched the day give way to night. By midnight the crowd in the observation car had mostly dispersed. Remaining in the car was our party of five and a few other passengers, seeking refuge from the cramped conditions of the coach cars or desiring to be wakened by the first rays of the new day's sun as it splashed through the floor-to-ceiling glass of this special-purpose rail car. The only light in the car a couple of hours after midnight was the glow of the Apple logo on my PowerBook as it reflected in the windows.

Good Morning, America

Morning comes early on the train. Within minutes of waking, we hurried to the dining car for breakfast in an effort to beat the crowd. We walked quickly through the coach cars as passengers slowly got themselves ready for the day. Many travelers were still sleeping as

the clock's minute hand moved through the 7:00 AM hour, but the narrow corridor between the rows of seats began to fill quickly with hectic human traffic. We stepped almost apologetically past the sleeping passengers, hoping a sudden and abrupt bank in the train's movement wouldn't throw us off balance and make us an impromptu wake-up call for a resting guest.

Breakfast over, my kids and I worked through the logistics of showers. The family bedroom contained a small bathroom compartment that combines a shower and toilet. A sit-down shower in cramped confines didn't look like a comfortable solution, but it was surprisingly refreshing.

Albuquerque

By midday we were on route to our biggest stop on the schedule, a forty-five minute stay in Albuquerque. The train station and its surroundings had an old southwest charm, and vendors were ready at the tables with goods to sell to passengers. Native Americans, touting their heritage, eagerly offered blankets and jewelry to the weary travelers seeking a moment's respite on unmoving ground. Cheryl's Bus Stop, a converted old school bus, sold snacks and other refreshments. My kids and their 15-year-old traveling companion enjoyed a popsicle treat in the sweltering New Mexico heat. Rather than board early, they chose to play on an abandoned piece of track between the train and the station. It was a timeless pursuit that has been enjoyed by generations of children.



Santa Fe and The Raton Tunnel

Soon after Albuquerque, time lost its conventional meaning. We were no longer concerned with the actual hour of the day. The change of time zones and the striking changes in topography distorted time's meaning. Time was now measured in distance between stops, the schedule for the dining car, and the remaining time needed to recharge our digital devices. I spent a lot of time watching the signal indicator on my

digital cell phone for periods when calls could be made. The journey through the southwest's barren terrain, and now the southern reaches of the Rockies, left me without cell phone service—which I would otherwise take for granted.

We reached the Raton Tunnel during daylight. A sign just short of the tunnel indicated we had reached the highest point on the Santa Fe railway. At an elevation of 7,588 feet as we approached the tunnel, the train paused as if it were triumphantly taking in the moment.

Horseshoe Bends

As the Southwest Chief snaked its way through the mountains there were points at which we could see the locomotives in the front and the cars at the end of the train. Set against the backdrop of the mountains, it was a picture postcard view of rail travel in America. But the horseshoe bends provided evidence as to one of the reasons the train was now well behind schedule. The Southwest Chief was loaded down at the rear with freight cars and mail cars. This added to the train's burdens. By now the published schedule was little more than a reference to the time between stops rather than an indicator of when we might arrive at a particular station.



Fire In The Sky

At 5'9" my 12 year-old daughter is an imposing presence on the court for her parochial school basketball team. She also guards the heart of her single father better than a talented NBA point guard protects the lane. A child of divorce, she knows the bitter pains of separation and instinctively appreciates the emotional dangers that might come from

her father seeking camaraderie or friendship with a member of his opposing sex. With nothing more than a glance, she can dispel her father's sometimes-whimsical notions. Rarely would she consider befriending a woman of the approximate age of her father.

But here, suspended somewhere between the real and the unreal, experiencing a means of travel trapped between yesterday and today, even her vigilance gave way to the magic of the moment. For hours she sat talking and laughing with Sue, our surprise travel companion on the journey to Chicago.

Jessica and Sue spent the afternoon hours huddled together in conversation, but brilliant flashes of lightening in the early evening sky abruptly silenced their dialogue. We all sat in awe as we witnessed the splendor of nature filling the sky above the flats of Colorado with a spectacular performance of sight and sound. The Rockies were now miles behind us, and we were heading into Kansas and across the Breadbasket of America.

The Mighty Mississippi

Evening quickly turned to night and night passed swiftly into a new day. By now we had become accustomed to the constant forward movement and not-so-subtle vibrations of the train. We had acclimated to the Southwest Chief's unique exercise in time and learned to navigate the paths between the sleeper car and the observation and dining cars. Adapting to the motion of the train while walking is the closest a landlubber might come to learning sea legs.



Overnight we had slept through most of Kansas but we were well awake by the time the train entered Missouri. It was a bittersweet day. In a few hours our travel companions would be departing a few stations before Chicago. The remainder of the journey to Connecticut the three of us would experience together but alone. But on our minds this morning was the mighty Mississippi.

I had read many of the great classic novels to my children over the years, including two books by Mark Twain that featured characters who lived on or near this greatest of the American rivers. My kids eagerly awaited the river crossing. Without saying a word, I knew as we crossed the river's expanse that my kids were comparing their eye's view of the river with their mind's view of the Mississippi that had been conjured by their imaginations over many nights of my reading. Matthew and Jessica were not disappointed by what their eyes beheld. Mark Twain's work artfully mixed the natural beauty of the river with the colorful lives of his fictional characters.

Between the Mississippi and Chicago the train made a lone stop in Iowa. It was a brief visit to the Hawkeye State, but my kids could count Iowa among the sixteen states they would visit on our trek across America. After our companions departed at a remote stop in central Illinois, we prepared for the change of trains in Chicago.

The Windy City

We arrived in Chicago desiring to finish our journey to Connecticut but happy to have a rest at Union Station. It's a cavernous train station with many shops for train passengers and rail commuters. Sleeping car accommodations afforded us entry to Amtrak's 1st class lounge with free beverages and couch seating. It was a relief. An ample number of outlets allowed us to charge my laptop, my daughter's digital camera, and our iPods at the same time. We ventured outside for a few photos, but my kids were just as happy to sit in the lounge and watch a movie on my laptop. They were restless and just wanted to see the end of the three-day ride.



I ventured out of the station to buy snacks and saw a number of Amish families changing trains. It reminded me of the conversation in the observation car the evening before with an Amish man who approached me and asked about the appropriateness of the content

of a movie being shown in the car for his young kids. We discussed our views of today's movie industry, and he volunteered a few insights into Amish theology. He was now a cabinetmaker, married with two young boys. From our conversation I surmised he was a convert to the Amish faith and culture. Many Amish sects eschew modern modes of transportation and other trappings of our material world. After traveling 2,000 miles from LA to Chicago with a number of Amish families, I was surprised by their comfortable synthesis of sophistication and simplicity.

Back at the lounge, my kids busied themselves watching movies and taking advantage of the beverage fountain. My son had two goals during our travels—Chicago-style pizza in Chicago and a New York-style hot dog in New York. Both goals were accomplished, but the pizza would wait until the return trip and the longer layover in Chicago when we headed west.

The Lake Shore Limited

The boarding call for the last leg of our eastbound journey came late, long after the scheduled 7:00 PM departure. The family bedrooms were sold out from Chicago to New York, so we took the available sleeper space. Choosing not to check our carry-on bags, there was little room to sit, and the accommodations were downright uncomfortable for three passengers. My daughter, by virtue of her gender, had the top bunk to herself. My son and I managed an uneasy sharing of the scant remaining space.

The Lake Shore Limited lacked an observation car and the lateness of the departure meant the dining car did not fully open. There was no time to seat all the passengers who desired dinner. To satisfy the hungry passengers our sleeping car attendant took dinner orders and delivered the food prepared in the dining car to us in carryout trays. Our trip east had quickly turned from an adventure to an odyssey.

Lacking space in the sleeper, I took advantage of every opportunity to detrain and stretch my arms and legs. With brief overnight stops in Toledo and Buffalo, I became acquainted with the heavy air of the lakeside region and remembered the high humidity of the northeast I experienced as a kid. With each passing mile I now felt closer to home. The topography had changed from prairie towns to small industrial cities of the east.



There wasn't a shower in the sleeper but a shared shower space at the end of the car. Though the shower handled one person at a time, my kids were too bashful to shower outside the room. Having wakened for the stop in Buffalo before sunrise, rising with the attendants and engineers, I could sense their fatigue from an evening of little rest. I was the first passenger in the car to use the shower facility and then woke my kids for an early breakfast. Weary from three days of travel, they were ready to feel the comforts of a Connecticut countryside home.



The final stop before Penn Station was Albany-Rensselaer, NY. It has a large and modern rail station that serves as a hub for passengers traveling to and from Boston. The sleek design of the station's building stands in striking contrast to the ornate older buildings of the city in the distance. It was our last resting point before the scheduled two-hour, forty-minute stride to New York City.

The trip from Albany to New York paralleled the western border of Connecticut. I grew up in a town on the Connecticut–New York state line. I saw again the familiar names of towns and cities I had long ago left behind. The train took us past these familiar towns only for us backtrack to the area by car. The lush summer greenery enlivened my senses. For so many years I was accustomed only to the sights of summer in LA's coastal desert basin. The last time I was home was a few months before my daughter was born. After twelve years it was like coming home to a place I had never been before.

Connecticut At Last

We arrived at Penn Station, grabbed our carry-on bags, and made a mad dash for the exit. It was a weekday afternoon, and I wanted to find our waiting car as quickly as possible. We rushed from Penn Station's subterranean lighting to midtown-Manhattan's afternoon sun. The change in brightness combined with my inherent lack of a sense of direction left me momentarily disoriented, so my daughter stepped in to take charge of finding our

bearings. Penn Station shares space and the city block with Madison Square Garden. After a couple of quick turns and a pedestrian crossing at the corner, we were on West 33rd Street and had found our car.



In an effort to avoid rush hour traffic, the driver took us up Manhattan's upper West Side, past Central Park and through Harlem. I was startled at how clean New York City had become in the dozen years since my last visit to Gotham. Soon we were out of the City and in Westchester County. The route became hauntingly familiar and my mind raced back to much younger days. Soon we were driving the winding country roads of Connecticut and arrived at my mother's home. It was a long overdue reunion that seemed far too slow in coming but not a moment too late.

From Sea To Shining Sea

The arrival in Connecticut was not the end of our travels. On Sunday we drove with members of my family back to Manhattan for Mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral and lunch in the City. My son realized his goal of a New York-style hot dog in New York at a Manhattan restaurant called Ellen's Stardust Diner. The wait staff dresses in 50s and early 60s attire

and entertains the patrons with song. Ironically, his New York–style hot dog was served to him not by a native New Yorker, but by a talented young lady who had migrated to New York from Van Nuys, CA, just a few miles from our home in Burbank.



My daughter's goal for the trip was a bit more problematic. She wanted to put her hand in the Atlantic Ocean. She would not be satisfied with a stroll along the Connecticut coast. The waters off of the coast of Connecticut are in the Long island Sound. She wanted to put her hand in the Atlantic Ocean proper, not the waters between Connecticut and the Island.

The day after the trip back to Manhattan, my sister drove my kids and me to Mystic Seaport and then on to Westerly, Rhode Island so that my daughter could touch the ocean water. She dropped my daughter and me off at a sandy entrance to Misquamicut State Beach. My daughter and I walked over the sand mounds that separated the beach from the street while my sister turned the car around to head home.

It was close to low tide at Misquamicut, so accomplishing my daughter's goal required a sojourn of another fifty feet. I remembered that a week before our own journey my daughter had spent the weekend with her mother near the Channel Islands Harbor outside Ventura, California. As we walked toward the approaching waves I realized we had traveled from sea to sea, a distance of almost three thousand miles without ever leaving the ground.

The eccentricities of rail travel and its unreal distortion of time were more than matched by the awesome sights and sounds of a beautiful land. "Good morning America, how are you?" I asked myself one more time as my daughter set her hand in the waters of the Atlantic. "At this very moment in time," I said to myself, "America is just fine."

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How Do You Like Them Apples?

In a London court on July 4, Apple Corps Ltd. filed suit against Apple Computer Inc. The suit claims that the computer company breached a 1991 contract, and asks for monetary damages. They say that when Steve Jobs named the company way back then, he did so as a tribute to the Beatles and Apple records. Those filing suit say that the agreement included Jobs' promise that Apple Computers would stay out of the music business. I believe them; it's Paul McCartney, Ringo Starr, Yoko Ono, and the estate of George Harrison. I also believe that this should not and will not get ugly, in the legal sense. They have a point, in that now that Apple Computer is selling music with the iTunes Music Store, perhaps consumers will get them muddled up in their heads.

Of course few consumers today would do so, because we are aware of the history of the two companies. The problem is that if we don't resolve it, future consumers might not understand that the two entities are unrelated. If I were a businessperson involved in the negotiations, I'd suggest that Apple Corps consider an arrangement with Apple Computer such that we could indeed purchase Beatles music via download. Everybody wins, except that maybe the music people think their brand name has been diluted. Whatever the result, I hope it is settled calmly and without rancor.

This whole thing raises a delicate issue, though: what if we get mixed up any time we see or hear the word "apple"? Do we need more lawsuits to straighten these out?

- "An apple a day keeps the doctor away." If I purchase a downloaded song every day will it keep me healthy?
- Should we rename the Adam's apple so medical students don't get confused?
- I never knew where the expression "apple of my eye" came from anyway, so I can't make fun of it. But I bet you can.

- New York City will need to rethink the Big Apple idea. Somebody might wonder what it has to do with computers or music.
- William Tell and Isaac Newton can just go on and get new publicity agents right now.
- The towns of Appleton, Wisconsin and Apple Valley, Minnesota need to get their lawyers ready. The Beatles are coming, and it's not to do a concert.
- Write it down: Snapple changes its name to Snorange.
- Fiona Apple is in big trouble. She's got the brand recognition *and* is in the music business.
- Apple Jacks cereal needs to find a new flavor, and a new name.
- Applejack cider, well, that's sort of unregulated (wink, wink), but roadside vendors might need to be thinking about a new name anyway.

I suppose that's enough. I don't want to upset the apple cart anymore than Steve already has. The apple never falls far from the tree, and one bad apple spoils the bunch.

If you want to have a picnic and listen to some music: remember, don't sit under the apple tree with anyone else but me. I won't tell.

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California Dreamin'

California is set to launch a full-scale assault on the junk e-mail industry, and while it may not be the knife through the heart most computer users wish for, the state's new anti-spam measure will be by far the strongest challenge yet to the marketers and con-artists who clog our in-boxes.

The new state law, which embattled governor Gray Davis says he will sign (no word yet from Arnold), will outlaw sending unsolicited commercial e-mail to Californians. If an Internet user didn't ask for it, it will be illegal to send it to them. "There are no loopholes," the bill's sponsor, Democratic State Senator Kevin Murray, told the *New York Times*.

Let's hope that's true, because Murray's legislation is a worthy blueprint for new and revised laws in other states. Although 35 states have anti-spam laws, only Delaware's has anything close to the sharp teeth of the California legislation, and, so far, the state's attorney general has declined to do much with it.

Good Spam vs. Bad Spam

And then there's Congress and its wimpy, half-hearted anti-spam legislation which would allow a company to send unsolicited e-mail until a recipient specifically says to stop. The *Washington Post* reports that the proposed law, which already has been sharply criticized by anti-spam activists as being too cozy with the interests of the bulk e-mail industry, now includes a provision to let the e-mailers regulate themselves via some sort of electronic seal of approval. The idea, apparently, is to draw a sharp distinction between *good* and *bad* e-mailers and thereby legitimate the junk messages from the good ones. Never mind that many Internet users draw no such distinction.

Congress appears to be headed toward feel-good anti-spam legislation, which will let politicians on the campaign trail claim success against Internet pornographers and swindlers without actually having to do anything that might upset corporate interests. Congress also may forbid states to impose restrictions on e-mailers that are harsher than the federal standard, so expect any law that emerges from Capitol Hill to take a protracted

detour through the courts. The states will complain that Congress has exceeded its authority, and the government will counter that the Internet is properly overseen only by federal authorities.

California's new law may be in court soon, too. Marketers are already howling that their constitutional right to free speech will be trampled by the anti-spam law, a dubious claim which we'll consider in a moment and the US Supreme Court may be forced to take up shortly thereafter. But other provisions of California's legislation seem less likely to survive a constitutional challenge: the law would forbid California companies to send unsolicited commercial e-mail outside the state and companies outside of California to send spam into the state, and that raises some thorny issues about unconstitutional interference with interstate commerce.

Playing Hardball With Spammers

But if the cross-border provisions survive, the benefits would likely be felt far beyond the Golden State. The executive director of Network Advertising Initiative, a group of companies which handle marketing e-mails for technology companies, told the *New York Times* that California accounts for up to 20 percent of all incoming and outgoing e-mail and that would incline marketers to make the state's new standards the "lowest common denominator" in their e-mailing strategies. It's just too much work to determine where an e-mail address holder lives; it's easier to make all e-mail conform.

The provision of the new law that should scare marketers the most appears to be safe from a court challenge: unlike most state anti-spam laws, California's gives the state, providers of e-mail service, and all spam recipients—in other words, just about anyone—the right to file suit against spammers. Uninterested, disinterested, and overworked prosecutors would be no impediment to action.

California's anti-spam law allows companies to send e-mail only to existing customers, to people who inquire about products and services, and to those who have "expressly consented to receive e-mail advertisements from the advertiser." Bought or rented lists of e-mail addresses, even those legitimately gathered by another advertiser, would not skirt the law's requirements on consent. If other legal challenges fail, expect the definition of "consent" and when and if it has been granted to be the battleground on which marketers fight back.

It will be interesting, and probably entertaining, to see Californians make use of their new law. E-mail marketers predict that small claims courts will be clogged by people who don't remember agreeing to receive e-mail and are unfairly implicating legitimate marketers. Such accusations would be a terrible travesty of justice, of course, because marketers would never send e-mail to someone who didn't want it.

Another provision of the anti-spam law may open the door to cases bigger than small claims courts can handle. Unlike most anti-spam laws, which apply only to the company that actually sends the marketing e-mail, California's measure does not shield the company whose product is being advertised. Advertising and marketing agencies, and the guy shipping penis enlargers out of his basement, will have to factor this new liability into marketing plans.

Sure, the law may create a whole new field for ambulance-chasing trial lawyers, but that's OK with me. It may not be pretty, but there is a genuine public benefit in flogging recalcitrant insurance companies, health care providers, and government bureaucrats. I welcome the addition of spammers to the list.

The Microsoft Loophole

Despite the "no loopholes" claim by the bill's sponsor, Microsoft apparently managed to create at least a small one. The *Times* reports that the anti-spam bill "exempts some e-mail advertising sent by the provider of a free e-mail service" such as Microsoft's Hotmail. The *Times* calls this an apparent concession to Microsoft, which had opposed similar California legislation earlier this year but is now on board with the new bill. I usually don't condone Microsoft throwing its weight around, but this time it seems reasonable: Hotmail customers already know, or should know, that there is no such thing as free; the quid pro quo for Hotmail is advertising.

But let's get back to that constitutional question. Do e-mail marketing companies have a *right* to free speech? Would California violate the First Amendment if it restricts their ability to send spam? My first impulse is an unequivocal "no!" but the issue isn't that simple, and I'm forced to fall back to an equivocal "no" while we await judicial clarification. The issue of corporate speech is coming to a head on several fronts (including campaign finance reform), and it's only a matter of time, and not much time at that, until the US Supreme Court will have no choice but to clarify a hodgepodge of free speech rulings (and non-rulings) and Congress will be forced to put up or shut up.

A Dilemma for the Whirlwind Congress

A federal judge in Denver recently put the national do-not-call registry on hold saying regulators discriminated against commercial telemarketers by exempting political parties, charities, religious institutions, and pollsters from the restrictions. It was the second time in a week that a federal court had blocked the no-call plan. Earlier, a court ruled that the Federal Trade Commission had not been given the legal authority to establish the registry. In a whirlwind of activity, a nearly unanimous Congress took care of the problem. And no wonder: 50 million potential voters have signed up for the do-not-call list and that was more than enough votes to shove corporate interests to the back seat. But no speedy vote followed the second court ruling; the free speech issue is more complicated and the most likely solutions may prove painful for Congress.

The federal judge didn't specifically instruct regulators on what to do to pass congressional muster, but he suggested in his ruling that broadening the no-call list to include the exempted organizations might be enough. Or, Congress could create a mechanism through which people could choose which, if any, categories of annoying phone calls to accept. You could, for example, opt out of all marketing calls except those from churches and charities.

Oooh!—such a dilemma for Congress! Either bag the registry and risk handing 50 million votes to the opposition in the next election or jettison the self-serving exemptions for political parties and polling.

The registry may be tied up in court for while, but no matter how the constitutional issues are resolved, you can bet that Congress will still bend to the collective will of those 50 million Americans and do something about abusive telemarketing even at the expense of its own interests.

Critical Mass

Congress snapped to when it saw how Americans jammed the FTC's phone lines and Web site in a rush to sign up for do-not-call registry. And it snapped to again when it became clear that Americans objected to an FCC plan to further loosen restrictions on mega-media mergers and broadcasting industry consolidation. Now it's time for 50 or 60 million Americans to tell Congress to get serious about spam, too.

The pending federal legislation isn't nearly good enough; Congress needs to get out of bed with the spammers and follow California's lead in flat out banning unsolicited e-mail.

Stopping spam may be just as important as the do-not-call registry to tens of millions of Americans, but the issue hasn't reached critical mass. The stunning popularity of the do-not-call registry and the defeat of the FCC suggest that it will, and likely sooner than later.

When it does, every politician who wants to get re-elected will suddenly, miraculously, become a champion of the people.

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Segments: Slices from the Macintosh Life

by Andrew Kator, akator@atpm.com

Consumeritis

Some of the arguments about PCs, Macs, OS 9, and OS X are just a result of the human condition in general. People are just unable to see the forest through the trees.

A sad but real example of this is around me in my neighborhood. Isabel has left millions in Virginia without power and water, still the case several days after the storm. My neighborhood is located between a hospital and a government complex, so we only lost power for a few hours and water was restored within a day.

The biggest complaint from my neighbors is that we still don't have cable. How can someone complain about cable when in the neighborhood behind us they still don't have electricity? When people's homes are destroyed? When millions of our neighbors are without potable water?

There are three trees in my parents' house. Their power and water won't be restored for weeks, let alone cable. They are still in the house because they have to wait around for the insurance adjuster. There is so much damage in the state that the insurance adjuster won't visit them for a few more days. They visit us every few days to take a shower, recharge all of their devices, fill up with gas and water, and go back to wait.

None of the trees hit the various Macs at my parents' house, so I guess that's all they need! Unfortunately, the batteries in the iBooks and PowerBooks don't last *that* long.

Sarcasm aside, Macs have gradually been shifting away from just computers people choose for productivity and ease of use. Since the introduction of the original iMac, Macs have been becoming a statement of identity for a new generation of users. For them, owning a Mac defines who they are more than what they actually do with it. This trend has been capitalized upon by Apple, seen in the switcher ads highlighting Tony Hawk, Yo Yo Ma, and other personalities.

Is there anything wrong with owning a Mac because Tony Hawk uses one? It's not a motivating factor in my purchasing, and I'm somewhat unable to relate to someone who makes purchasing decisions based upon celebrity—but I can't say it's wrong. I hope all of the consumers who might buy Macs for such superficial reasons will eventually use the machines to discover something within themselves they might otherwise have ignored, such as developing an interest in video or photography through the use of the iApps.

Either way, one thing is for sure. This isn't your mother's Apple, nor the Apple that created the computers of years past. Most public and consumer opinion of Apple is based upon the Macintosh and the company's history as an innovative computer manufacturer, but Apple is changing with the times. Some of these changes make more sense with some brief background about Apple's current management lead by Steve Jobs.

Early in Apple's history, Jobs had obviously brought success to the company, but his unconventional management style clashed with the corporate culture that overwhelmed the 1980s. In 1986, Jobs was ousted from his leadership position and he left the company. That same year he purchased a special-effects computer division that George Lucas had recently created within Lucasfilm. Pixar started with 44 employees, and over the next several years Jobs navigated the company into the production of short animations, television commercials, and motion pictures. Pixar's financial success with 1995's *Toy Story* and subsequent films promoted Jobs to a new position as media mogul.

In 1997, Jobs returned to Apple Computer and brought with him the decade of media and consumer experience he had gained through Pixar. Under his new leadership, Apple moved into the professional media production markets with Final Cut Pro (1999), and subsequently purchased and developed other production technologies. Each of these moves further into the professional market led to new products for consumer use, such as the iLife suite of applications. Apple's turnaround and continued success has led to the company branching into other consumer genres with the successful iPod consumer music products and the iTunes Music Store.

Pixar, Jobs, iPods, and the iTunes Music Store all point to Apple moving into more consumer markets. Apple is in a unique position to continue delivering new consumer technologies, and they will expand into other media markets.

Apple will continue to develop professional production tools, further entrenching itself in the media production industries. Apple's inclusion of Cinema Tools with Final Cut Pro 4 indicates its continued interest in motion picture production solutions. The professional tools will continue to trickle down to consumers, giving more tools for consumer creativity. Expect future consumer applications to offer the ability to create content previously only seen in professional products.

Media will be streamlined as the same technologies used for creation will be used for delivery, with everything in the same digital formats from start to finish. There will be no more need to transfer from film to digital and vice versa. Apple's Xserve with QuickTime Broadcaster and QuickTime Server will continue to develop into a digital broadcast server, including motion picture projection abilities and satellite network integration. Apple's products will provide an integrated, networked, and complete solution, including digital broadcast and motion picture delivery systems for studios and theaters.

Consumers will have more options than ever before to legally own and view high-quality digital content. Media will be less dependent on technology penetration (DVD, CD, VHS) and other consumer media formats because the information will be delivered via software and independent of individual consumer devices. Owning an Apple product will mean easy access to all media in high-quality formats, the same way that owning a Mac now offers easy legal ownership of downloaded music with the iTunes Music Store.

Make it, distribute it, and view it—all using Macs and Apple products.

George Lucas is confident that motion pictures will make a full digital conversion within the next ten years, where movies are delivered digitally to theaters and distributed to consumers at home in a similar pay-as-you-view basis. Steve Jobs has management background in both the media and technology industries. Apple has created a model for digital media delivery and is known for technology innovations. Expect some interesting developments.

Of course, Apple could "drop the ball" as it has many times in the past. Six months after introducing the iTunes Music Store to Mac users, the world is begging for it to be available for Windows—and it's still missing.

Apple is moving away from just making better tools for productivity to making better tools for consumers. I think it may be a good thing that Apple is changing strategies, but there are going to be (more) growing pains.

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9 Ladybugs at the X Ladybug Picnic

“Why are there Mac users still using OS 9?” is an ongoing question asked by many. With OS X’s stability, ease of use, and the obvious fact that OS 9 has been abandoned by Apple and other software developers, many wonder why anyone would still be using OS 9 as their primary Mac OS. This isn’t the first time these issues have arisen. Looking at some Mac background, starting in the 80s, can shed some light on things.

The Mac Plus (released in 1986) was not the first Mac, but it is often considered the model that created the “Mac standard.” It offered extra RAM slots and an external SCSI port, so it was the first Mac to offer more options for users to upgrade and customize their systems. The Mac Plus was produced for four-and-a-half years, and could run ten years of Mac OSes from Systems 1.1 to 7.5.5. This amazing computer established what was expected by many Mac users, that a Mac’s base hardware would have a useful and upgradable lifespan of a minimum of five years.

Between 1984 and 1996, Macs ran the 68000, 68020, 68030, and 68040 series of Motorola processors. There were a few “bumps” in software compatibility during the 68040 upgrade, but overall the platform was extremely kind to consumers by allowing them to run older 680x0 software on their newer Macs. For example, someone could run the same word processing and graphics software they purchased for a 68000-based Mac Plus on their newer 68030-based Mac IIci. Like hardware expectations, a Mac user could easily expect his software purchases to last five years or more.

In the middle of 680x0 Mac production, Apple began introducing OSes that offered radical new features. System 6 (1989) marked the end of a phase of evolution for the Mac OS. It was the last 24-bit Mac OS. System 6 offered the Finder for running one application at a time, useful for older machines with less memory, and the MultiFinder which allowed users to run more than one piece of software at a time. One major problem with System 6 was its 24-bit limitations, since by 1989 Apple was already selling Macs with the 32-bit

68030 processor. No matter how much RAM was installed (from 4 to 128 MB depending on the model), Macs running System 6 could only use 9 MB of RAM for software, with the rest used as a RAM disk.

In 1991 Apple introduced System 7, a behemoth that created more problems than it initially fixed. The disk space and memory required to run 7 were significantly higher than 6, making 7 much slower even though it could use 32-bit processing. Many software titles from 6 couldn't run in 7 without updates and upgrades, and to make matters worse System 7 was bug-ridden and unstable. Many Mac users begrudgingly switched from 7 back to 6 because their computers became practically useless. Sound familiar?

Eventually Apple managed to make System 7 more stable and even more usable with 7.1. Different versions of 7.1 persisted through to the introduction of PowerPCs in 1994. The PowerPC brought RISC computing to Macs, but there were many problems in the transition. System 7.1.2 and subsequent updates emulated the 680x0 processor chipset to allow older software to run on PowerPCs, but that same emulation meant the overall speeds of the early PowerPCs were little if any improvement over their 68040 cousins. To make things worse, the usefulness and stability of System 7.1 wasn't found in subsequent System 7.x updates, and in many cases it actually became pointless to upgrade the OS from the version that shipped with the computer. Some 7.x.x updates were specifically written to only run on certain models of machines and would be completely useless when installed on another. Of course this problem was usually discovered only after trying the installation. Apple got things under control in 1997 with System 7.6, but by that time many people had abandoned the Mac platform because it wasn't offering its unprecedented reliability over PCs.

In July 1997 Apple introduced Mac OS 8, and in November 1997 they released the first G3s. System 8 offered most of what Apple had promised six years earlier with 7 and without the same stability and incompatibility problems. The G3s also had comparatively few problems since they were an evolution in the PowerPC family and most of the serious issues had been worked out with the earlier processor transition. One of the only major complaints at the time was the "premature" abandonment of some recent Mac models, since Mac OS 8 only ran on 68040s and PowerPCs. Mac Performas with 68030s were sold as recently as 1996, and their owners were left out of the Mac OS 8 upgrade path. Their Macs were made obsolete and unable to take advantage of the new OS in less than two years. It made financial sense for Apple to only support the more recent processors, but this strategy clashed with precedents for Mac hardware longevity. Sound familiar?

Mac history explains one of the most fundamental reasons people purchase Macs: they don't want to waste their time with frequent and repeated upgrades. They want something that works now, and for as long as possible, with a minimum of fuss. The problem is that we are in another transitional period. It is natural to expect the longevity and durability of Macs and their OSes to conflict with the transition to newer technologies as we are experiencing with OS X. That doesn't mean the older Macs and OSes are any less useful or functional, since they have the same features that made them superior options at the time they were purchased. Believe it or not, there are many reasons to still be using OS 9 instead of OS X.

The first reason can be simplified by the expression, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." One of the primary reasons people use Macs is because they increase their productivity. Creative professionals and the publishing industry have gotten a lot of attention for this, but the same applies to scientists, engineers, and office assistants. Many people really don't care what computer they use, as long as it does what it's supposed to with the minimum amount of complication, maintenance, and tinkering.

Mac OS 9 still offers those advantages to many people. Anyone who assembled a complete system with peripherals and necessary software using OS 9 or earlier systems has a functional and productive tool that does what they need. For these people what they have does the job efficiently and with little or no maintenance because the bugs in their system were worked out years ago. They have no need to upgrade either software or hardware because what they have functions perfectly as a tool.

Suggesting that someone upgrade from a functional, comfortable computer that works well is dictating that these people abandon their productivity for days, weeks, or even months to install new software and hardware. New software and peripherals take more time than the 30 minutes required for initial installation, since getting the bugs worked out, functions tweaked, and personal preferences adjusted can take much longer. That is time dedicated to the computer instead of time dedicated to using the computer for productive work. Time is money, and time spent upgrading a computer, its peripherals, and software is money lost.

Money brings us to the second reason to stay in OS 9. Depending on the software, serious money can be required to upgrade core productivity applications to OS X. If all of the software has been incrementally upgraded each time a company has a new release, the upgrade costs per software title average around \$150 each. With a suite of several

products that require upgrading, a Mac used for productivity may cost as much \$1,500 to upgrade ten software titles. Anyone who suggests that upgrading from 9 to X “only” costs \$129 must be getting their other software for free.

Most software companies make more money from upgrades than from the original software purchases. Many of these upgrades do not offer significant added features over the previous version, but the upgrades are an ongoing revenue stream that is significant to a company’s profits. Many people do not upgrade with every release because they understand the upgrade revenue system or they just don’t feel the upgrades offer a value for the money. Upgrades may also present new bugs and changes to the way software is used that can affect productivity. It is very common in the professional sector for people to hold on to useful older software that is “outdated” or “archaic” because it does the job. After missing previous upgrade “opportunities” these people are not eligible for the OS X upgrades, and must spend the money to buy the full software version to replace their older products. This makes the OS X upgrade cost significantly higher.

The only things creating the opinion that most older software is archaic are the version number and the date of release. As an example, Adobe Photoshop has been around for years. In 1995 Photoshop was at version 3.5 and optimized for PowerPC processors, so this same software can be used on G3s and G4s running OS 9. Photoshop 3.5 offers many of the major features of Photoshop 7, and there is no reason it can’t still be used for professional work. For some people, Adobe never really offered them anything new that enticed them to upgrade.

Photoshop 3.5 also has something that 7 doesn’t: speed. 3.5 was created when PowerPCs ran no higher than 100 MHz, 128 MB of RAM was enormous, and a 750 MB hard drive was top-of-the-line. Because 3.5 was made to run on those more limited older systems, it offers efficiency missing from newer software. Running Photoshop 3.5 on a 500 MHz G3 with 512 MB RAM is an impressive experience, and running it on a 1.25 GHz G4 is almost unbelievable. Similar speeds can be experienced running other PowerPC software titles from years past on newer OS 9 Macs.

Speed issues have affected OS X since the beta version, and while Apple has made significant improvements with 10.2 Jaguar (with more expected in 10.3 Panther), OS 9 is still more responsive. It isn’t reasonable to expect someone with a two-year-old Mac to

abandon their investment to buy new machines that are better able to match OS 9 speeds when running OS X, at least not when they get the same responsiveness from their older equipment.

Compatibility is still a problem preventing many users from upgrading to X. Many legacy applications, those great and reliable programs that many veteran Mac users have been using for years, are pretty much worthless in OS X. Many pieces of software written in 1994–95 can still run on 9 but not Classic. Some of these software titles have no counterparts in X.

Hardware drivers are finally catching up and becoming available, but many of the drivers are only available for the larger consumer market. High-end professional devices are still missing drivers. We can't expect a newspaper or print house to upgrade to X when their printing equipment won't work with the new OS. These problems are compounded by the changes in interface standards, where older but extremely expensive equipment is not designed for USB and FireWire. Businesses relying on hundreds of thousands, even millions of dollars in equipment are not able or willing to make the investment to replace functioning equipment just to run OS X.

Last but not least, efficiency of screen real estate is one basic thing that OS 9 has over X. Even with all of its years of evolution, OS 9 still uses the interface and display conventions of the original Mac OS, which displayed 512 x 384 pixels and eventually grew to VGA (640 x 480), SVGA (800 x 640), and XGA (1024 x 768). Now XGA is the minimum sized display standard with Macs, and XGA is necessary to use OS X for anything useful. OS X uses that "extra" space to present all of the pretty 3D effects and shadows, texturing, and transparency. These new interface conventions mean that windows, fonts, and information take up just a little bit more space on the screen, effectively making an XGA screen "feel smaller" than it did in OS 9. Because of its roots, OS 9 displays information more efficiently for "smaller" displays by using smaller fonts and without the fancy new interface conventions. It's just easier to use OS 9 than OS X on XGA displays.

The OS 9 versus OS X debate really boils down to whether or not you are satisfied with what you have. There is nothing wrong with staying in OS 9 if it continues to offer usefulness and productivity. Many who suggest otherwise are not aware of or responsible for the finances involved with your hardware and software purchases, and many do not use their Macs for your tasks and cannot speak about your productivity.

Now that some of the reasons for staying in OS 9 are covered, there are some strong reasons to spend the money and make the switch to OS X that just can't be ignored.

Stability is the one reason above all others to make the upgrade. The reliability of OS X more than makes up for the costs and speed decreases by increasing productivity. The occasional (or frequent) problems inherent to OS 9, such as system freezes, application freezes, and "unexpected quits," are mostly missing from OS X. It is common for many OS X users not to reboot for months, and most mainstream OS X software has become undeniably stable with few, if any, quits or freezes. The stability alone increases productivity, even on older G3 systems that take a significant speed hit when running OS X. \$2,000 in software upgrades is easily offset in the first year by the increase in productivity and billable hours.

In general, OS X takes "plug'n'play" to levels that OS 9 never reached. Internet connections are easier than ever using either dialup, DSL, or cable. As simple as OS 9 is, networking and server configuration is even easier in X. Many USB peripherals require no additional driver installation, and those that do are generally more reliable than they were in OS 9. Less time spent tinkering with things to make them work means more time spent doing something profitable.

The third reason to upgrade to OS X is less objective, but still valid: OS X is fun. Combined with the pleasures of its stability and reliability, OS X is also pretty. Some of the new interface conventions may take a few days to get used to, but OS X becomes addictive to the point that switching back to OS 9 feels dull and gray in comparison. OS X's "eye candy" makes using the computer for several hours a day a more bearable experience. By itself, being fun isn't a great reason to upgrade, but it makes thousands of hours of computer use per year more pleasant.

No matter how great OS X is, it is unrealistic to expect everyone to abandon their investments, including OS 9 software, to have "the latest." Throwing something away that is still useful is a waste of resources, even if it isn't as "cool" as something new. It is only logical to get the most out of what we already have before replacing it, even if financial resources aren't a limitation. We should expect to see Macs running OS 9 for many years to come. As the older equipment dies, it will be replaced with new machines running OS X, XI, or XII.

There's no need to rush things. OS 9 users will upgrade—eventually.

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Picking the Optimal OS for Your Mac—Part 2

Picking up where we left off last month, we must now address the question of whether OS X or OS 9 is the optimal OS for a Mac that shipped from the factory with a G3 or better.

If you have a G5, you have no choice. You have to run OS X. Boo hoo. Tough cookies. Really, I feel terrible for you. Will someone please remind me why I'm discussing your computer in a column entitled *The Legacy Corner*? :-)

If you have a recent G4, you likely can't run OS 9 either, and if you can, you probably bought the computer for that purpose, so this advice doesn't apply to you.

That leaves us with older G4s, the various G3 iMacs, and the Blue and White and beige G3s. On the portable side, we have all iBooks and the Pismo, Lombard, and Wall Street PowerBooks. Because everything except the beige G3s and Wall Streets is fully supported in OS X (with the exception of some features of the optional DVD-RAM drives in the desktops and the hardware DVD decoders), the question is really one of "Does OS X or OS 9 fit *my* needs better?" That's a question you'll have to answer for yourself, though bear this in mind: OS X is the future of the Macintosh, whether you like it or not. If you plan to stick with the platform for your next computer, you should probably start getting used to OS X if you haven't already. If you don't plan to stick with the Macintosh, don't waste your money on OS X or upgrades that would be necessary to run it.

That pretty much narrows it down to the beige G3s and Wall Street PowerBooks. I've run OS X on my Wall Street (266 MHz, 384 MB RAM, 20 GB HD), and while it's usable, I'm very glad it isn't my daily driver any more. The unsupported graphics chip (a Rage Pro 4 MB) is a large part of that problem, and it can't be upgraded. The relatively low 512 MB RAM ceiling (as an aside, I never thought I'd see the day when I'd say a half-GB RAM ceiling was "low") is also a minor hindrance to running OS X effectively, though anything from 256 MB on up should be sufficient to avoid too much chewing on the hard drive.

OS X is, however, a great improvement over anything OS 9–based for Web and FTP serving, which is the only thing it does now, and I can't even remember the last time I rebooted it for something other than upgrading software. I remember averaging a couple weeks' uptime in OS 9 with the Wall Street as my daily driver, and OS X easily quadruples that, when I can avoid software updates for that long.

OS X also brings its share of incompatibilities. The floppy drive (if you still use it) has no official drivers for OS X, though a freeware third-party driver has been written. I've never tried it (I sold my floppy drive years ago) but I've been told it's buggy. Those of you with the DVD decoder card will find that OS X refuses to work with that as well. Though I never use either, it wouldn't surprise me to learn that both the expansion bay Zip and SuperDisk drives have been left behind by OS X as well. (Interestingly, expansion bay devices for the Lombard and Pismo seem to be well-supported in OS X.) If you have a large assortment of 1998-era accessories for your Wall Street, you should perhaps consider sticking with OS 9 until your next upgrade. The upside to this is that your Wall Street is ideally equipped to be a bridge between legacy and modern hardware, with its ADB, SCSI, and serial ports, and any future upgrade should be considerably simplified by this.

The bottom line: if you have a Wall Street as your main machine and you want to run OS X, max out the RAM, stick in the biggest hard disk you can afford, and accept the fact that no amount of upgrading will make your Wall Street feel much better than, well, a IIcx running 7.5 did. If you want to do Web, FTP, e-mail, or other assorted server tasks, use OS X. If you want the most speed and responsiveness, go with OS 9.2.2. And please, make sure you're running 9.2.2. Those of you stuck with 9.0.x simply need to trek down to your public library, borrow the broadband for an hour, and run Software Update until it doesn't find anything else.

Because of the greater expansion capabilities of the desktop beige G3s relative to the Wall Street, and because the beige G3s had been around nearly 10 months before the Wall Street shipped, a great deal of the beige G3 hardware has no way of running under OS X. The hardware DVD decoders are all useless, the A/V capabilities of the Personality Card are useless, the floppies are unsupported (but enabled with yet another free third-party driver, reputed to be more reliable than the Wall Street version), and the onboard video is terribly slow (even more so than that in the Wall Street). Fortunately, video cards can be cheaply upgraded (a used Rage 128, the standard in the B&W G3 and a decent video card by most standards, is nearly free, while a low-end Radeon will be under \$100), and OS X actually

removes one of the biggest ROM problems with the early beige G3s: slave IDE devices are supported just fine under OS X. ZIF upgrades for the CPU, while not officially supported by Apple, mostly work.

As with the Wall Street, if you have a rather basic beige G3, upgrading it to OS X specs and making the transition (which I highly recommend if you plan to stick with the Macintosh as a platform) is largely easy and painless. In fact, beige G3s can be brought up to spec much more cheaply than can Wall Streets, and they can be upgraded further as well. If you were unlucky enough to have bought a tricked-out beige G3, however, you'll find that most of your specialty hardware won't work in OS X. As a result, you'll be better off sticking with OS 9, or selling off the specialty bits and putting that money toward a newer Mac that will run OS X without fuss.

Whew. All this talk of "G-whatever" processors is making my techno-luddite brain hurt. Can someone please suggest a nice System 7-era topic for next month? :-)

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Quick Tips in Design

by Andrew Kator, akator@atpm.com

Part 4: Line

Line is one of the oldest and most fundamental tools in the visual arts. The use of line is found in cave paintings and rock carvings dating back well over 20,000 years, making it one of the most ancient documented artistic techniques.

In geometry, a line is described as the shortest distance between two points, but that only describes a straight line when talking about visual art. In art and design, the definition of line is not so limiting. The aesthetic definition of line is the visual connection of two points. A stroke is one continuous mark. Line can be made up of many different strokes, with even or varying thickness in the same stroke.

Straight



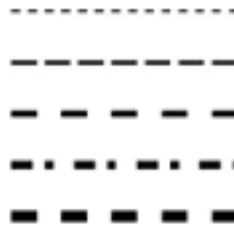
**even thickness
in same line**

Broken



**varying
thickness in
same line**

Dashed



**even thickness
in same line**

Curved



**varying
thickness in
same line**

When using natural media or a computer drawing tablet, line can be changed by the tightness of grip, position of the fingers, position of the wrist and arm, pressure, and speed of the stroke.

Contour with line is the outline of a shape or object. A contour drawing is only made up of outlines, and depending on the application the drawing may be composed of one unbroken line to create the entire image.

The quality of line has many applications, depending on the desired reactions from the viewer.

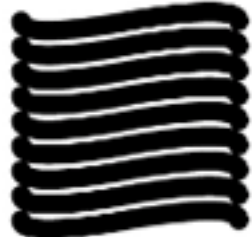
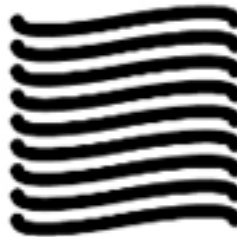
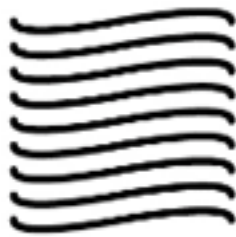
Long even lines feel artificial.

Variations in the same line can create a more natural effect.

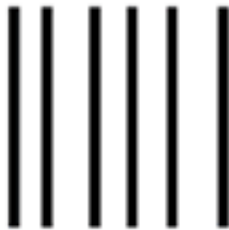
Technical drawings use thin lines of equal width, because even line is less distracting and allows the viewer to focus on the content of the drawing. Thin even lines also give a more precise point for measurements, allowing technical drawings to be used as blueprints for construction. Delicate, broken, tenuous line can suggest nervousness.



Lines with uniform width and placement create a conservative, static, and orderly psychological effect.



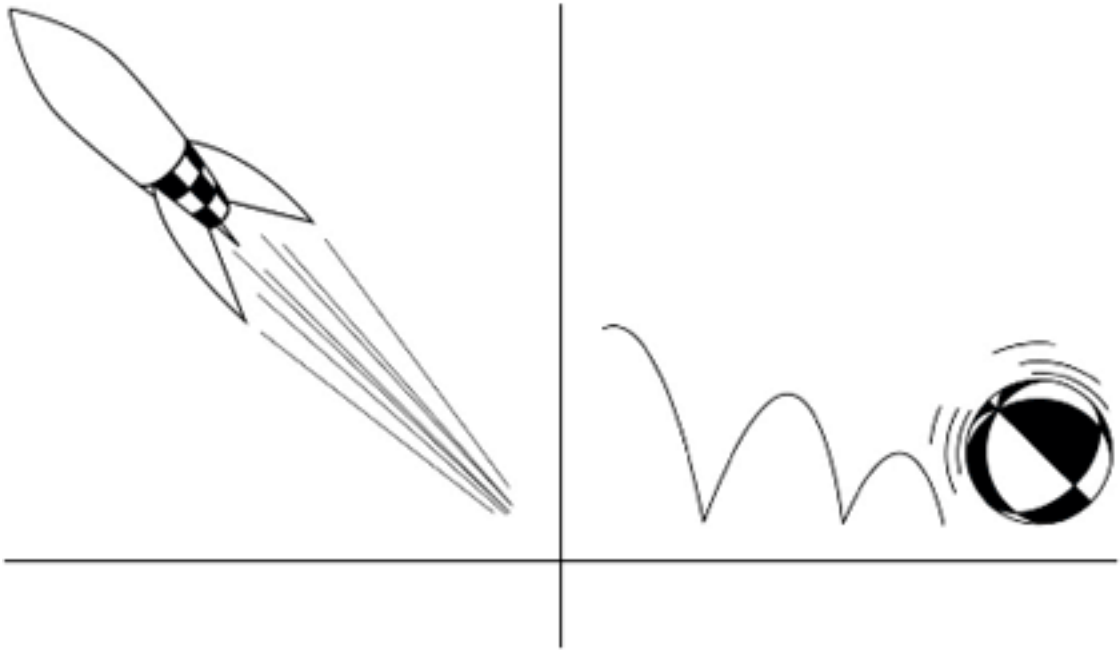
Curved lines can create movement, even though their even placement is still static and orderly. The curved lines create a more dynamic feel.



Randomly varying line placement can create a more dynamic effect, even though the consistent thickness still has an orderly feel.

Randomly varying both placement and thickness results in a more chaotic and disorderly effect.

Line can be used to indicate movement, a technique commonly used in illustration and comic books.



Line is also used to organize, as with the dividers separating the rocket and the ball.

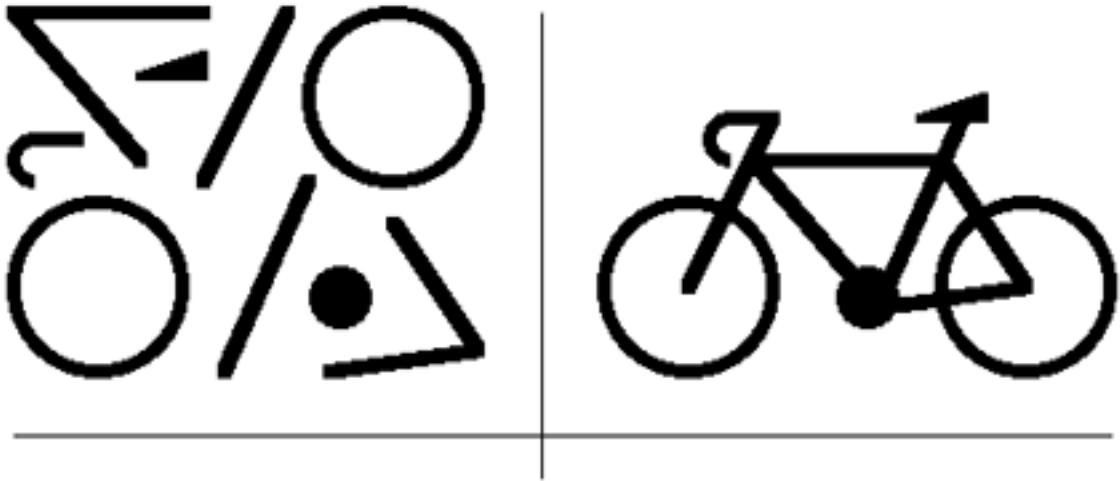
Line is also used to abstractly describe the separation between areas of change, when objects are aligned, or when the repetition of objects creates “line” and visual movement. Instead of being a mark between two points, line is used to describe a visual connection.

Gestalt Theory

An easy way to understand Gestalt Theory is by imagining that we are baking a cake. The ingredients for the cake are arranged on a counter, but individual ingredients cannot begin to describe the cake. For example, an egg might be a cake ingredient. If we examine

the egg, it tells us about the egg, but not how it will be used to create a cake. It is only when assembled that the ingredients form the completed product. The whole cannot be seen by looking only at the individual elements.

The unified whole is different from the sum of the parts.



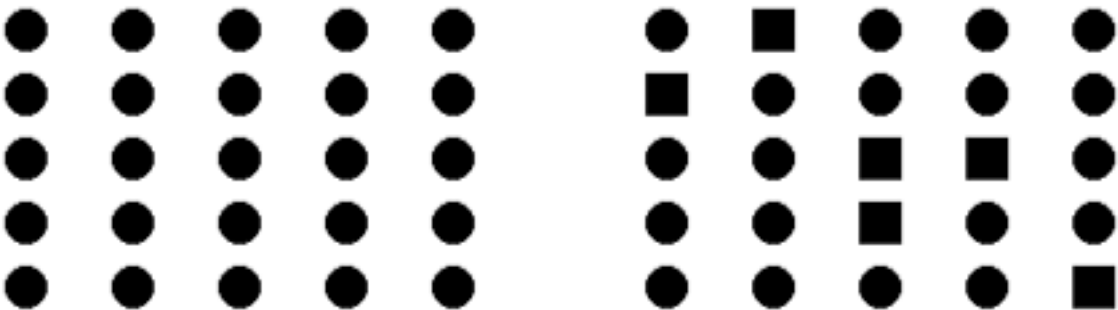
Gestalt Theory is a set of rules for describing how the various ingredients of visual art come together to form the whole. Gestalt is the German word for “form, shape, pattern, or configuration.” “Good gestalt” is when elements work together to create a unified aesthetic. Gestalt Theory helps explain many of the abstract principles used in the visual arts.

Gestalt: Proximity

Proximity is the first Gestalt principle discussed because it relates directly to line. The Gestalt Law of Proximity states that elements that are closer together will be seen as a coherent object. As objects become closer they are seen as more unified. Proximity explains why broken or dashed lines and separate shapes can be interpreted as line.



Elements that are closer together will be perceived as an object. In this example the same dots are used, but their proximity creates two lines.

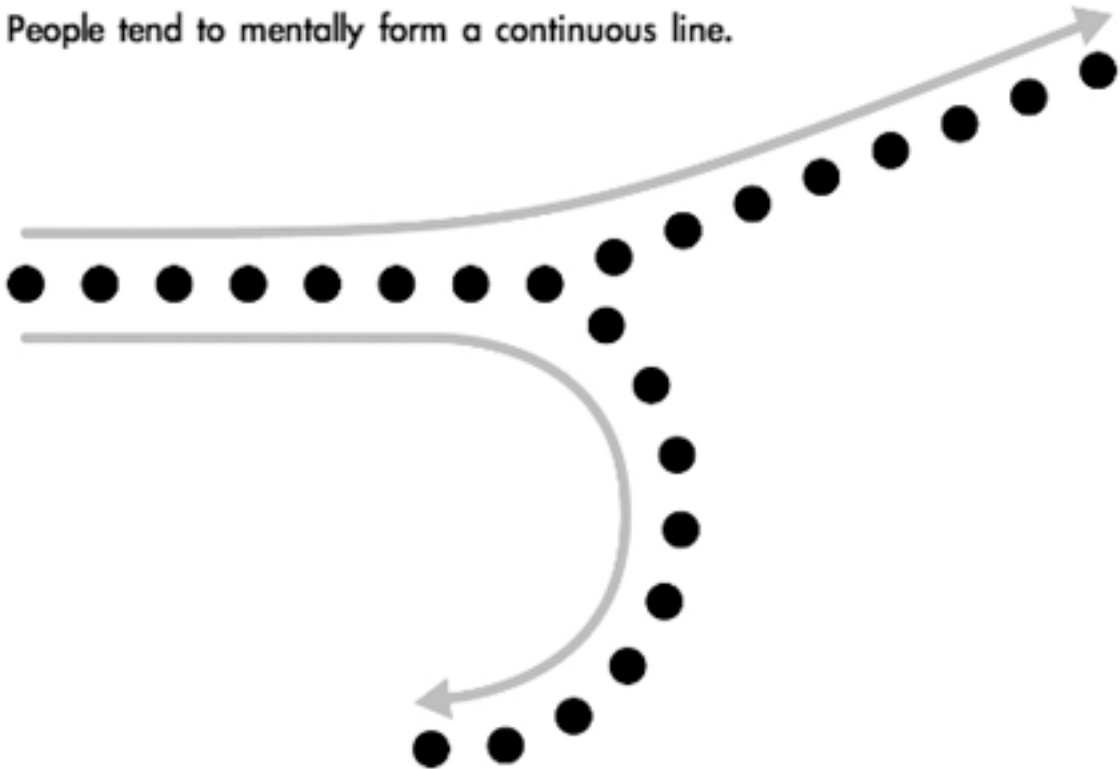


The vertical distance between the dots is less than the horizontal distance. This creates the visual effect of columns instead of rows, even though all of the elements may not be the same.

Gestalt: Continuity

People tend to interpret line and contours whenever the visual elements of an image establish a direction. This explains “movement” in an image, since the eye continues in the direction that has been established. The viewer follows a larger uninterrupted form composed of smaller separate forms.

People tend to mentally form a continuous line.



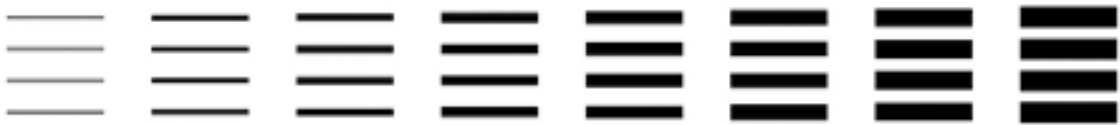
Value With Line

Changing line frequency and thickness are the most fundamental techniques to suggest value using line. Interpretation of line as value is an application of both Proximity and Similarity Gestalt principles. Line frequency and thickness can be used separately, or together for a more natural effect.

using line placement (frequency) to suggest value

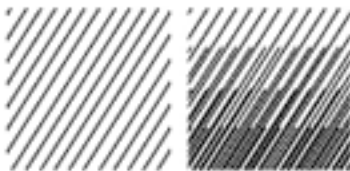


using line thickness to suggest value

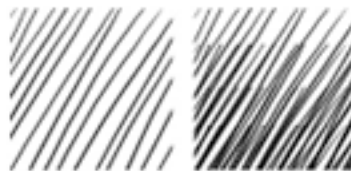


Hatching is the technique of using parallel lines to create value. Feathering is a variation of hatching in which the thickness and placement of the lines change to create value gradations.

Hatching



with straight lines



by hand

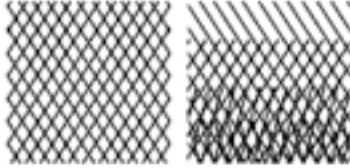


feathering

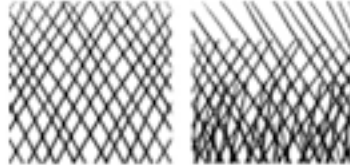
The direction of line can also be changed. When sets of parallel lines are used together crossing in different directions, the technique is called cross-hatching. Feathering can also be used in cross-hatching.

Varying frequency, line thickness, direction, and stroke length within the same image can create a sketchier quality with richer depth of tone.

Cross-hatching



with straight lines



by hand



feathering

More about value and its uses can be found in [Part 1: Using Value](#).

The next article will discuss shape (simple, complex, geometric, natural, and abstract) and more Gestalt Theory.

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About This Particular Outliner

by Ted Goranson, tgoranson@atpm.com

Outliner Features—Part 1

The Story So Far

This is our regular column about outlining on the Mac. Before digging into reviews of individual products and product classes, we'll work through three overviews. [Last month's ATPO](#) concerned history. In two months we'll look at the various types of outliner uses. This month and next month, we tackle the core of the problem: outliner features.

Outliner Features

No one has a generally accepted definition of what an outliner is. One could approach a definition by describing what one uses an outliner for, but here we'll take a different tack; we'll provide all the features that exist in certain products that exploit the nesting paradigm. Then, you can compare your needs to this list and match it to the product or workstyle you are evaluating. In the December issue, we'll explore usage patterns.

In the following list we will give an example screenshot from an application with that feature and we will separately list other applications with that feature, in order of robustness of the implementation. If no OS X example exists, we'll use one from another platform in the priority of OS 9, OS X-accessible Unix, Linux, others. We'll also try to list all the OS X applications with that feature.

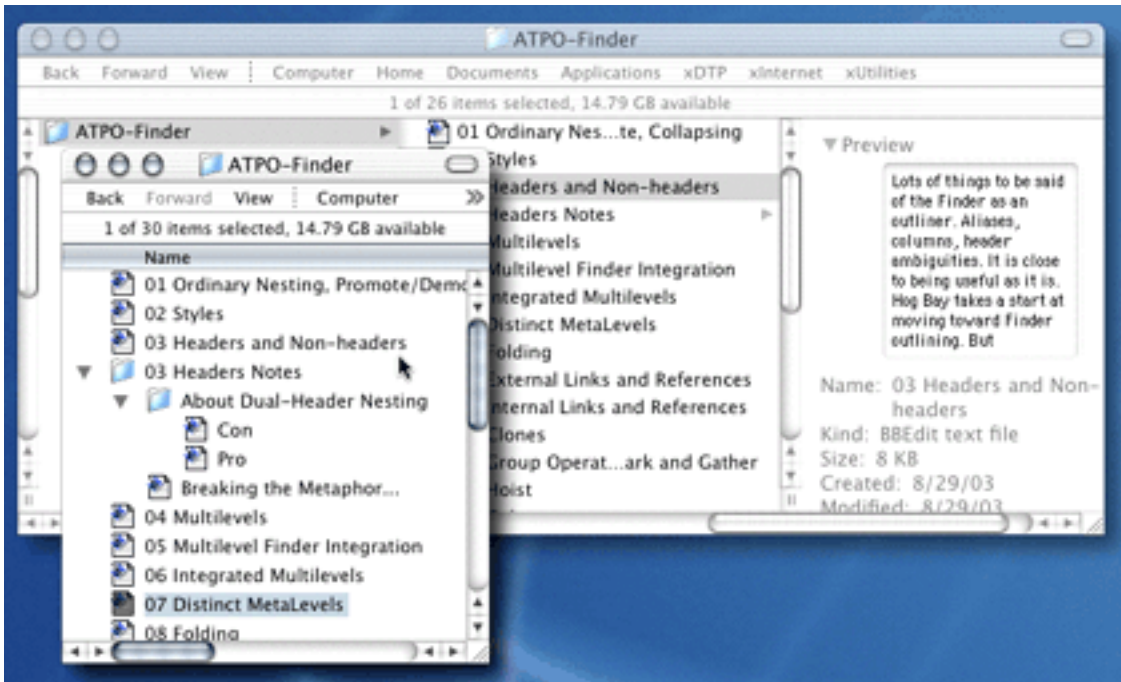
Some products have nearly all the features we list. But rather than show a screenshot of the same application over and over again, we tried to have as many different applications displayed as possible. That helps broaden your horizons a bit and set the stage for the scope of our review.

(We know that we will overlook many cases and ask you—the reader—to help us out. If you are reading this off-line, send additions or corrections to tgoranson@atpm.com—or visit the [article](#) at the AT^PM Web site and add a comment. In my experience, the community of outline users on the Mac are to the rest of Mac users as Mac users are to Windows users: extremely generous and helpful.)

Ordinary Nesting, Promote/Demote, Collapsing

This is the absolute basic core of an outliner. Nesting is the simple operation of putting something in or under something else and having that relationship displayed, usually by indenting. Pretty much any outliner allows this to be controlled by the keyboard (except the most common outliner: the Finder). Mac outliners almost always show nesting with a triangle that rotates, while Microsoft Windows and Word products still use DOS-derived plus and minus characters.

The Finder is the basic reference for Mac outliner interfaces. All the products mentioned here have these basic capabilities (excepting VoodooPad and IdeaKnot).

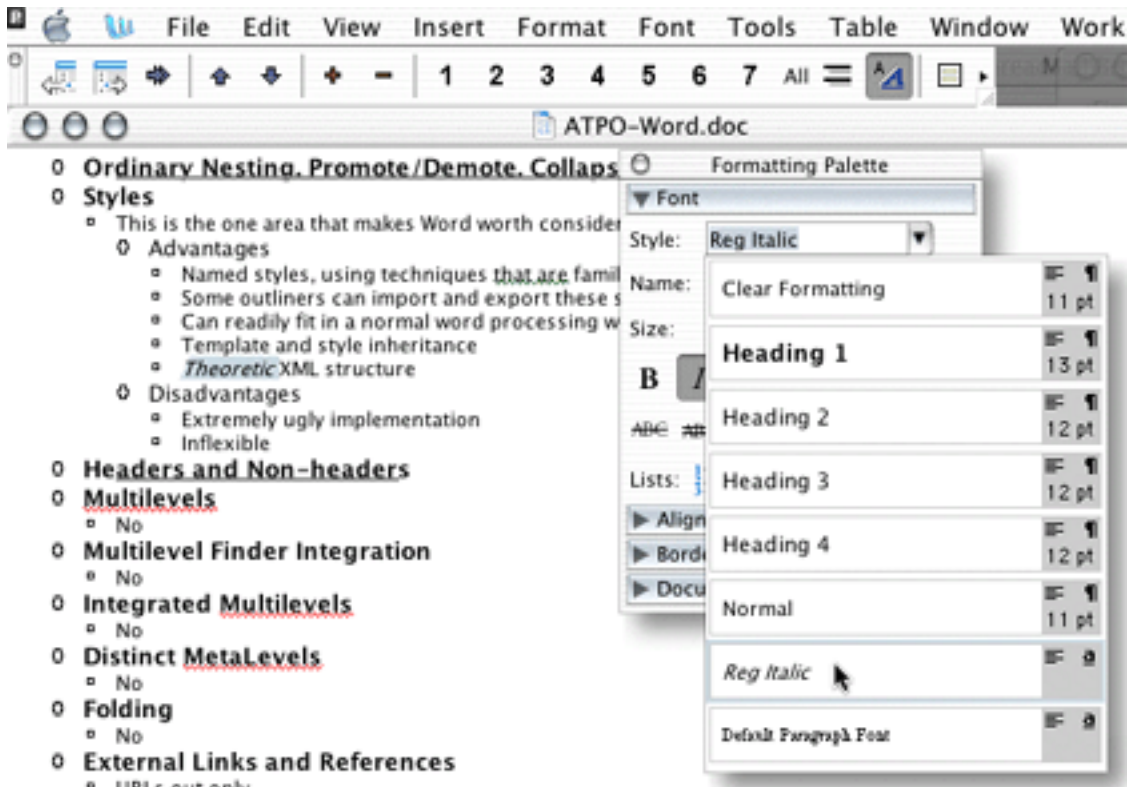


Finder

Styles

Nearly all outlining is primarily text-based. Some outliners provide ways of setting and controlling styles in both the header and paragraph text. The style is reassigned automatically as the entry changes position in the hierarchy.

Word's outliner handles this, albeit awkwardly because headers must be named and styled in a particularly rigid way. But otherwise, it handles named styles as a word processor, except header character styles do not change as the header levels do. The screenshot shows Word. OmniOutliner has rule-based paragraph but not character styles for headers—each level of header can have a style (which carries over to columns), but notes inexplicably cannot. Inspiration has similar capabilities and control over the font for notes. Schedule and NoteBook control similar header-specific paragraph styles.



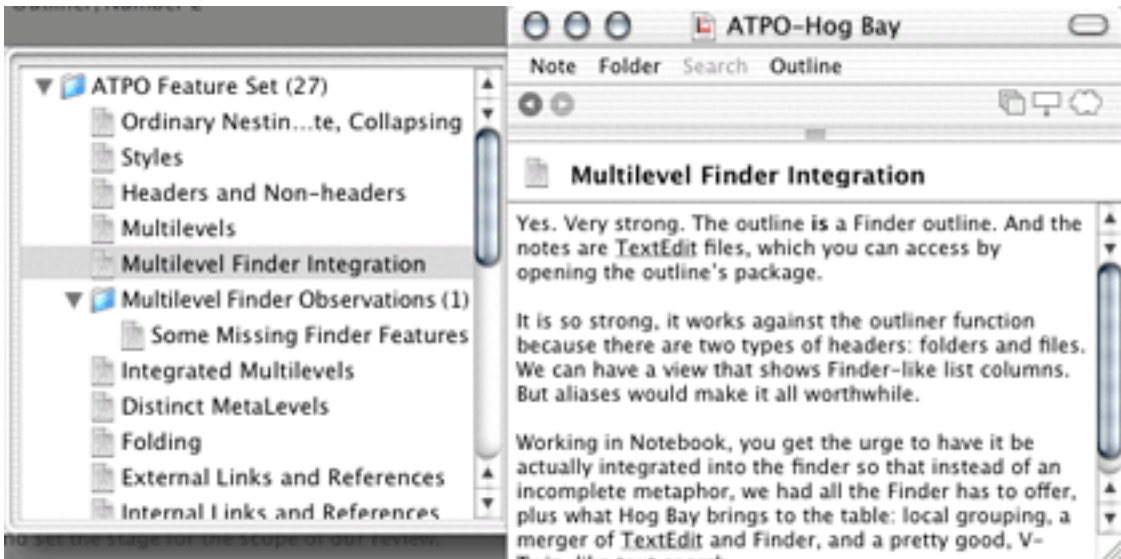
Word

Headers and Non-headers

Some outliners display every entry as one kind of entity, usually a “header,” but it is usually the case that two entities are supported. In the case of the Finder, you have folders and stuff that can be in folders (applications and files); but in the OS X Finder, this is

complicated by some applications being packages that can contain other elements. (Also, it is possible to have “disk image” files that contain applications—whew!) Generally, though, you have headers and something different: subservient text as notes or leaves.

Inspiration, jEdit, Word, and AppleWorks place the text (notes) under the headers in a one-pane layout. Inspiration’s is most like the traditional outliner. Tinderbox’s outline explorer, OmniOutliner, Hog Bay Notebook, SkinkHunt Notes all have two-pane layouts, with headers in one pane and text in another. The screenshot shows Hog Bay Notebook, with a typical two-page-side-by-side layout. (It has other panes but not relevant to this breakdown.) NoteBook and NoteTaker are special cases that divide the two panes on different “pages.” Many mail and news applications have three-pane layouts, distributing the headers in two panes.

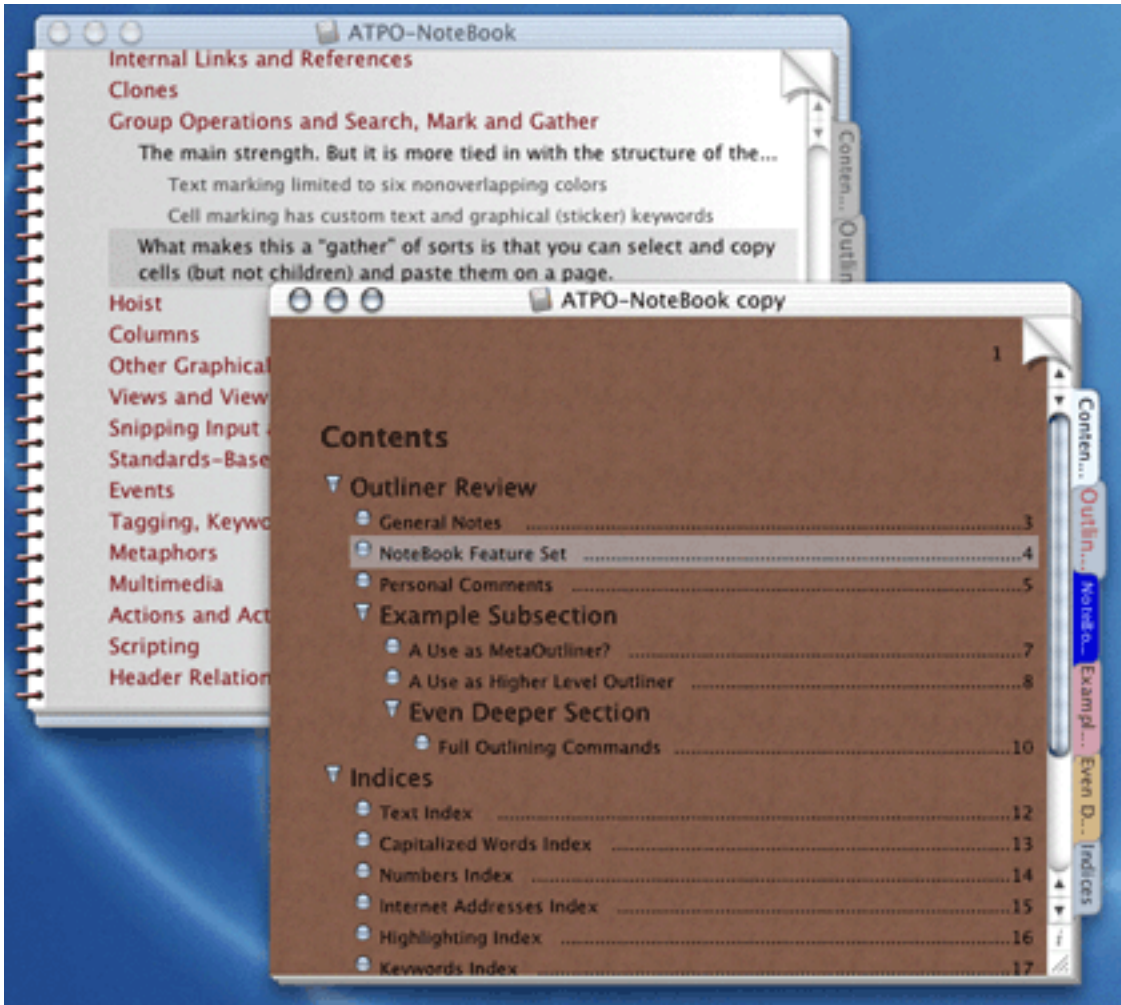


Hog Bay Notebook

Multilevels

The two-level distinction in some outliners is a hard boundary. Much handier is when you have two levels and each level supports outlines, one picking up where the other leaves off. The value is that outlines can be useful for organizing documents consisting of notes, but larger notes also often benefit from outlining within them, perhaps as bullets. This is an extremely useful evolution, basically outlines within outlines.

The screenshot shows two screens of NoteBook where you can see the outline of pages that each has its own outline. Nearly all full outliner operations are supported in the “table of contents” pages. Inspiration can jury-rig something like this because it can link from a note or header to another outline document.

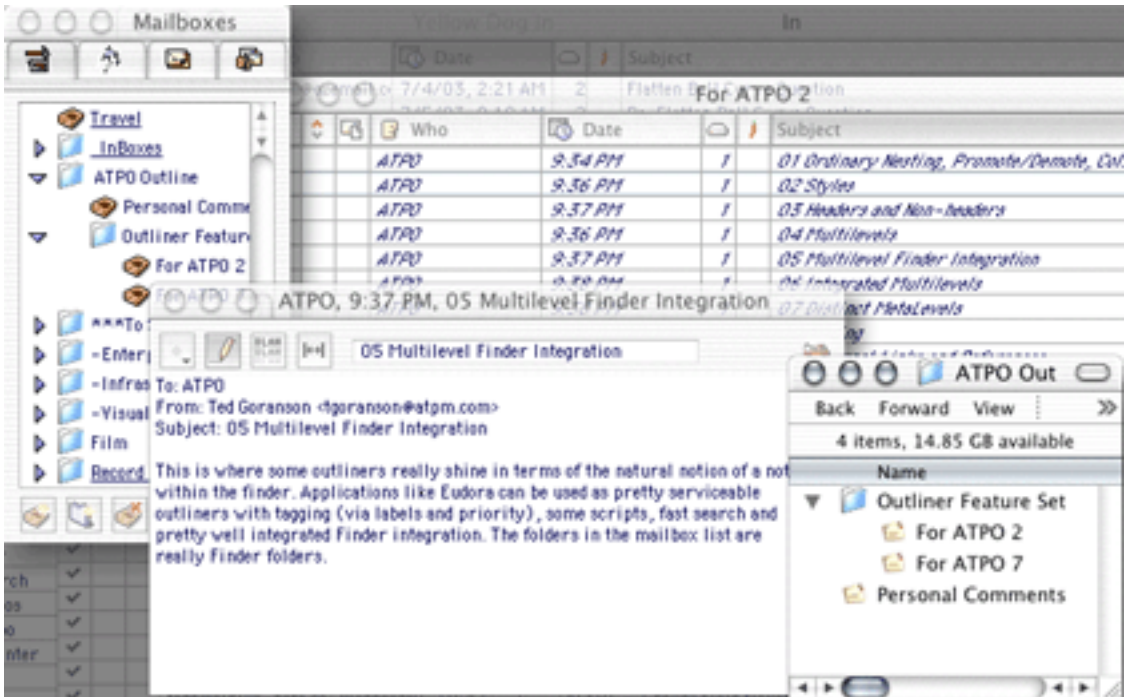


NoteBook

Multilevel Finder Integration

Even better is when you have the higher level outline integrated within the Finder. After all, at some level all outlines are Finder documents.

We don't have a strong collection of applications that support this, but NoteTaker comes pretty close. It has a "library" of outline files. These are not displayed hierarchically, but at least there is some direct connection between the outliner panes and the existence in the Finder. The screenshot shows Eudora, which can be seen as an outliner of e-mail notes. In this case, the top level headers are shown as mailboxes in folders. That's the way they really exist in the Finder.



Eudora

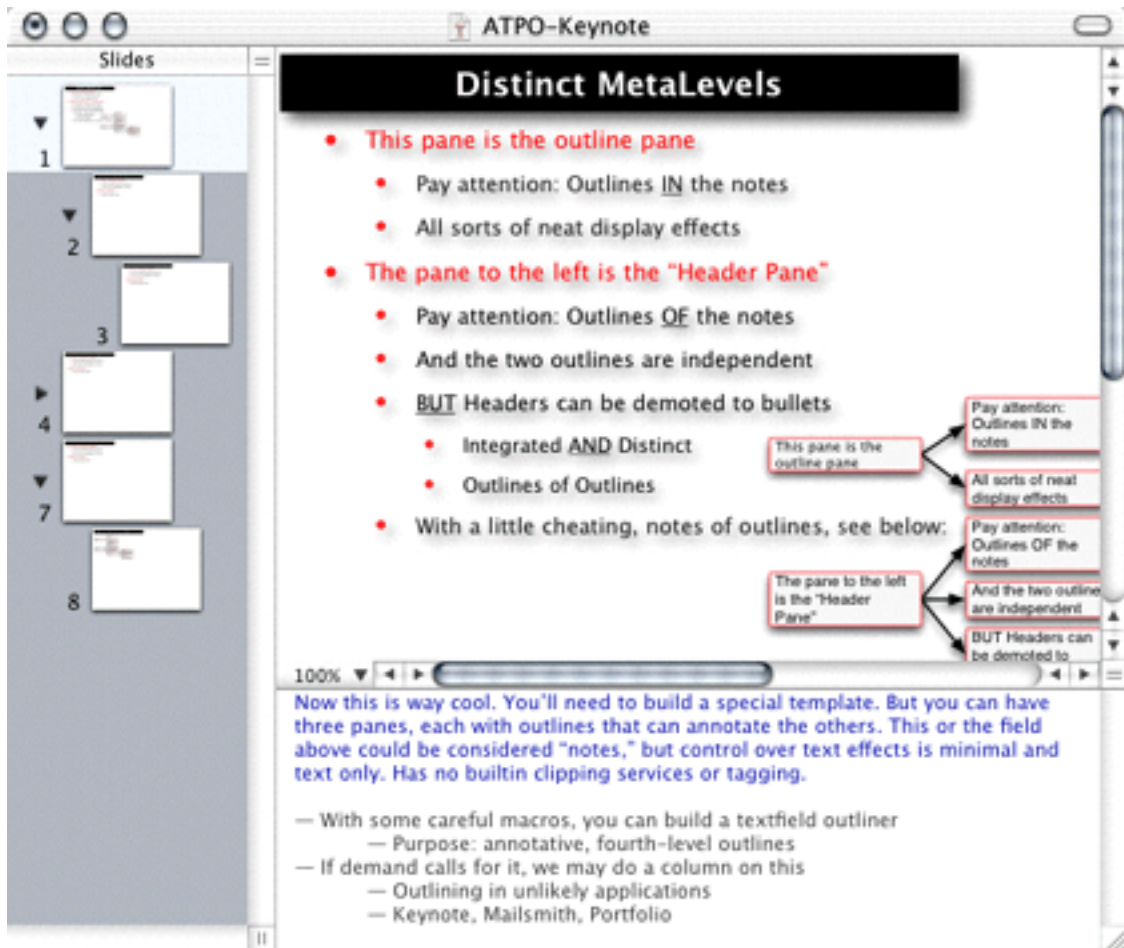
SkinkHunt Notes has true Finder integration in one sense: notes are really individual files, openable in any text editor. Notes serve as a Finder supplement for editing and simple searching. Hog Bay Notebook is similar, but it hides its files in a Finder package.

jEdit is an open-source Java outliner that runs out of the box on OS X, but has a non-Mac interface. It is a terrific example of Finder outline integration. One of its panes is the Finder outline, like in the shot below, but the "note" is an outline. A third pane is the text of the note.

Distinct MetaLevels

The multilevel idea can be taken a step further. Often, you need to have outlines *about* outlines instead of outlines *within* outlines, for example if you had a long document in outline form, you may also want to maintain a “to do” list outline that is connected in some way.

Apple’s Keynote has this ability, shown in the screenshot, which makes it in some ways the most powerful outliner on the Mac. To fully leverage it, you have to devise a special set of templates. You can also see some of that in the earlier NoteBook shot, but the extra higher level structure adds extra divider pages.



Keynote

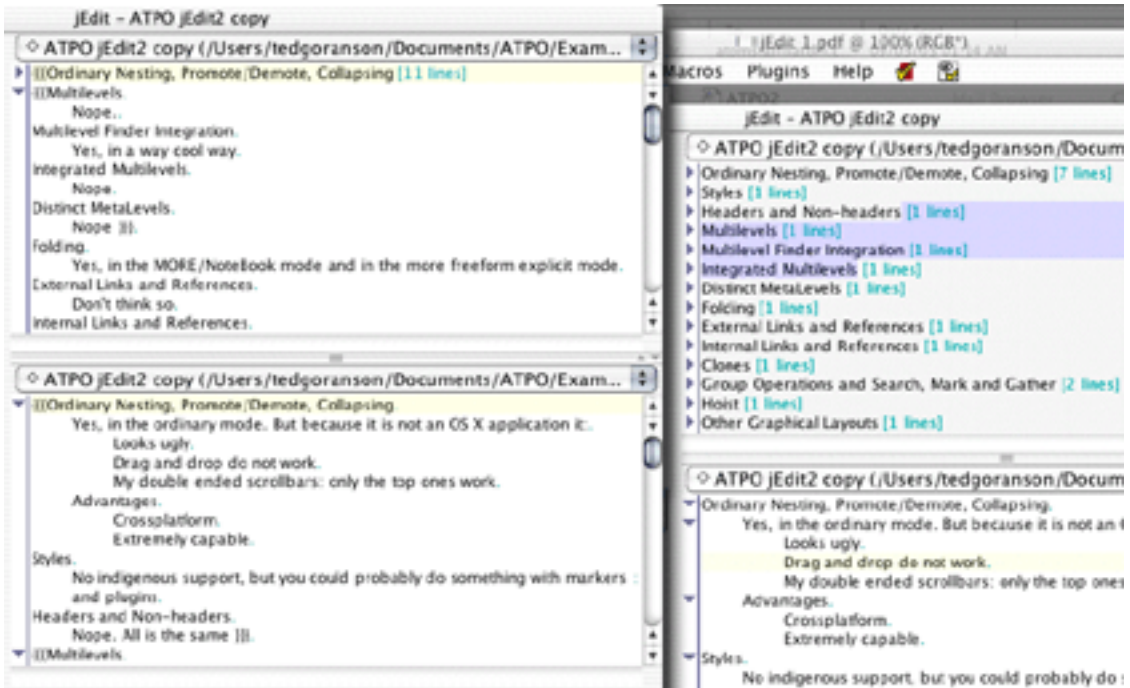
Folding

This is the one function whose name is confusing because many products use the term for what we called “collapsing” above. For this article, *collapsing* is the process of making whole headers and paragraphs invisible, tucking them up under a “parent.” *Folding* is a different kind of tucking under; it works on paragraphs and blocks to reduce them to a single line, hiding the rest. A simple case of folding might involve a long paragraph that is reduced to just the first line—plus some indication that it is folded; this shows that a paragraph is there and something about its content without showing the whole thing.

Folding is most common in single-pane outline displays, and a common use is to fold everything so that every header and paragraph is reduced to a single line. This can show the overall structure of a huge document, including paragraph leaves in a single view. You can use folding and collapsing independently. At one time, folding was one of the basics of text editors, but it has faded somewhat. Now only about half of the full-featured editors employ folding.

One of the most interesting of these is jEdit. It has a very strong implementation of folding, so strong in fact it subsumes outlining. Though intended as a full editor, it can easily be used as an outliner front end to TeX-based systems. jEdit is shown in the example screenshot in both modes. The view on the right shows an outline folded like MORE and NoteBook do it, where the folds correspond to the outline structure. But see on the left we have shifted to “explicit folding” mode where blocks are marked with triple brackets. Then these entire blocks can be folded independent of the outline.

Alas, folding is one area where the Mac is weak, but NoteBook has an implementation that is handy. It is like MORE's was, and is bound to the outline structure, meaning you can only fold headers, not arbitrary blocks. But it has a nice touch: just entering a folded header temporarily expands it.



jEdit

Other Graphical Layouts

Columns are great for many uses. But there is another two-dimensional display that is popular and useful: nested diagrams of different sorts. There are several different philosophies connected to such displays, some reaching religious fervor. What you will prefer is going to be a highly personal decision.

One category of these are diagrams that place headers at nodes, showing the child relationship as a line or arrow. Inspiration is the most flexible of these and is shown in the screenshot. It allows all sorts of graphical control over layout and the graphics assigned to headers. Outlines can be edited and browsed in the diagram view. These are tree diagrams

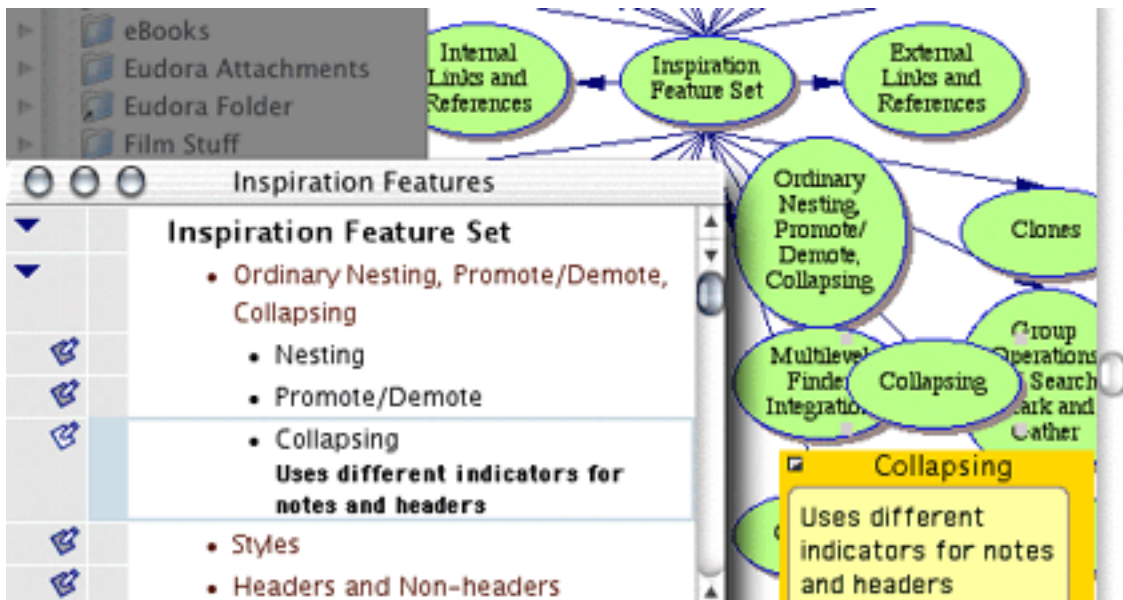
and often look like starbursts or trees or (if they go from top to bottom) like organizational charts. MyMIND does this in a rudimentary way. Some newsreaders show news item threads graphically in this way too, and you could consider them graphical outliners.

One style of tree diagram is the “mind map,” a rigid set of graphic conventions that is supposed to expedite brainstorming and has many adherents. If that’s what you need, NovaMind is your outliner.

Another approach to displaying trees is to consider them as containers. A parent might be a rectangle that contains another rectangle that is a child. This has a certain economy that then allows for the graphical display of links among elements. That’s what Tinderbox does, using tools developed over a decade. Pretty powerful.

OmniOutliner outlines can be imported into its sister product OmniGraffle, a charting application, but the transition is a bit lumpy and only one-way. Greater integration is planned.

Schedule has an amazing variety of views: chart, resource, and calendar views, all relating to its outline.



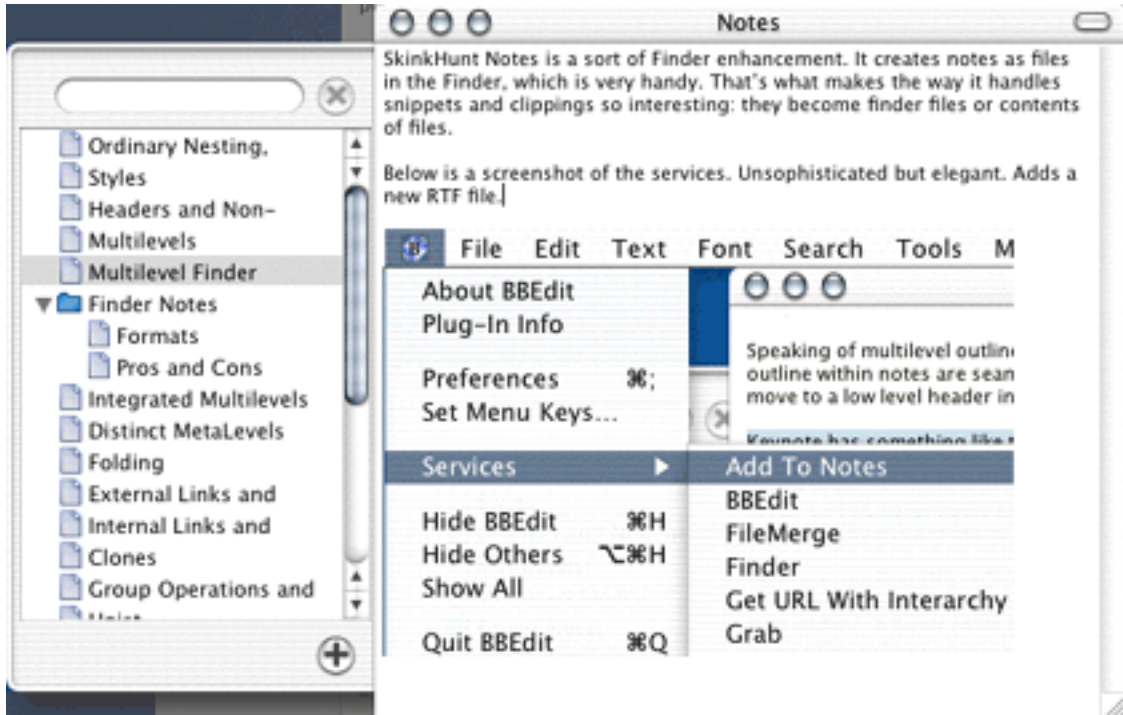
Inspiration

Snipping Input and Drag and Drop

Some outliners are designed to be friendly to capturing a thought by quickly typing and then going back and refining. But others are designed to capture information that pre-exists in digital form, like a snippet manager or scrapbook with organizing features. A key component to this is some sort of snippet or clipping input mechanism. It can be through the Services submenu, contextual menu (Control-click), a specific keystroke, or dragging to a target. It could be automatic, using guided RSS or Google-like search capabilities, which would search a specific area and automatically “snip” items. We’ll also include in this capability the ability to import, manually or automatically, information in structured formats, usually the OPML format.

The king of this group is DEVONthink, which is pretty amazing in what it can swallow. It can incorporate in its database pretty much anything directly or by reference. We have many outliners with lesser but still impressive capabilities. The screenshot shows SkinkHunt Notes, a solid example from this group.

Importing will be covered in depth on down the line: those with reasonable or better capabilities (in no particular order) are DEVONthink, Hog Bay Notebook, NoteBook, NoteTaker, and Skinkhunt Notes. The latter is shown in the screenshot. Also, Mailsmith and Portfolio are great if you stretch them into service as outliners—as we'll suggest in a future column.



SkinkHunt Notes

Products

OS X Outliners

- [AppleWorks](#)
- [BrainForest Deluxe](#)
- [Deep Notes](#)
- [DEVONthink](#)
- [Frontier/Radio](#)
- [Hog Bay Notebook](#)
- [IdeaKnot](#)

- [IdeaGraph \(Java\)](#)
- [Inspiration](#)
- [Keynote](#)
- [Mailsmith](#)
- [MyMIND](#)
- [Liner](#)
- [NoteBook](#)
- [NotePad Deluxe](#)
- [NotePod](#)
- [NoteTaker](#)
- [NovaMind](#)
- [OmniOutliner](#)
- [Outliner4X](#)
- [Portfolio](#)
- [PowerPoint](#)
- [Power Structure](#)
- [Schedule](#)
- [SkinkHunt Notes](#)
- [Slacker ToDo Lists](#)
- [Tasks \(PHP\)](#)
- [Tinderbox](#)
- [VooDooPad](#)
- [Word](#)

Outlining Editors that run on Mac OS X

- [Emacs](#)
- [Eclipse](#)
- [Hyperbole/Koutliner](#) (for Emacs)
- [jEdit](#)
- [Leo](#)
- [Vim](#)
- [VimOutliner](#) (for Vim)
- [TVO](#) (Gnu/for Vim)

Outliners that Run under Classic, Previous Mac OSes, or are Abandoned

- [Acta](#) (free, dropped by Portfolio Software)
- [Dylan Binder](#) (dropped by Apple)
- [IdeaKeeper](#)
- INcontrol (Attain Corp. out of business)
- InfoDepot (Chena Software out of business after OS 8)
- [MORE](#) (free, dropped by Symantec)
- [NisusOutliner](#) (abandoned)
- [Palimpsest](#) (dropped by Western Civilization)
- SK8 (dropped by Apple)

Outliners of Interest on Other Other Operating Systems

- [ADM](#) (Windows)
- [Agenda](#) (Windows, free, dropped by Lotus)
- [Brainstorm](#) (Windows)
- [Chandler](#) (GNU/Linux)
- Grandview (DOS) and ECCO (Windows, dropped by Symantec)
- [Info Select](#) (Windows)
- [Jot+](#) (Windows)
- [KeyNote](#) (Windows)
- [KOutline](#) (GNU/Linux)
- [Maple](#) (Windows)
- [NoteMap](#) (Windows)
- [Scintilla](#) (Windows, GNU/Linux)
- [TreePad](#) (Windows)

Ideas

- [Memex](#) (1945)
- [Augment](#) (1962)
- [Xanadu](#) (1967)
- [MORE](#) (1984)

Copyright © 2003 Ted Goranson, tgoranson@atpm.com. Ted Goranson has been thirty years in the visualization and model abstraction field, and has had careers in defense and intelligence spooky labs. He is now beginning a [new user interface project](#).



The Bottom Line

by Mary E. Tyler, mt Tyler@atpm.com

Are You Ready for a Disaster?

At 4:04 AM on November 4, 1997, I woke to a curious buzzing sound. I got out of bed, took one step, “what is that—” and somewhere between the first step and my foot hitting the floor the second time, I finished the thought, “*^)&%#@\$^&*, my house is on fire!” I opened the bedroom door and stared as a gout of flame engulfed my home office. Faulty wiring in the computer monitor had caught fire and filled the house with smoke, banishing the darkness with the eerie orange of flame.

What wasn't destroyed by the fire was soaked putting out the blaze. There was \$43,000 in damage. It was ten weeks before we could live in the house again. The fire, water, smoke, and ensuing chaos obliterated my fledgling Web design business. After an experience like that, you would think I'd have learned my lesson...

In the wake of Hurricane Isabel (I live near the Virginia coast), it became really clear to me just how unprepared I was for any sort of disruptive event, much less a natural disaster. As it was, we went without power for several days and I broke the cardinal rule of journalism. I missed a deadline. Fortunately, the editors here at ATPM are kind. At any rate, here are a few tips on preparing your [TOHO](#) (not just your Mac) for a disaster, natural or otherwise.

Prevent

Be a Switcher

That's right, switch off your monitor every night. Modern monitors are designed to go into standby mode when the connected computer turns off. My monitor was in standby when the switch shorted. Smoke, then flames, then disaster—all because I didn't turn the monitor off when I shut down. Now, I switch it off whenever I'm not at the computer.

Up, Up and Away

If you live in a flood-prone area, keep your tower on the desk top, not on the floor. Better yet, keep it on the second floor of your house if you have one—or move it there if you're expecting flooding.

If you can, don't keep the tower right next to the monitor since that is a likely spot for a fire to start. My hard drive escaped almost unscathed because I set the tower catty-corner to the monitor, almost two feet away, instead of side by side. Yes, a monitor catching fire spontaneously is unlikely, but it does happen.

Prepare

Insure, Insure, Insure...

Your home owner's (or renter's) insurance doesn't cover your business property. You need two kinds of insurance: business property and business interruption. Business property insurance will cover your business's physical assets, hardware, and software. Make sure to specify replacement cost, so that they don't depreciate the value of your computer before they pay. Business interruption insurance will cover lost income, and possibly even the loss of your business should you be completely unable to operate.

You can get these sorts of policies from your regular insurer, as a [rider](#) on your homeowner's policy and even from a stand-alone company like SafeWare. Your business policy may already include this coverage in addition to things like liability and errors and omissions. Check with your agent for details.

Beep Beep Beep Beep...

Backup your data regularly. Before the fire, it had been an age since I backed up my sensitive data. I was very, very lucky that the hard drive survived. Even worse, I kept ten years of data backed up to Zip disks on my desk because it was convenient. It's only by the grace of the computer gods that I was able to save the data. The cases were partially melted.

Lesson here: it's important not only to keep backups, but also to keep them somewhere that is *not* near your computer. Burn three copies. Keep one by your desk for convenience. Keep a second in another part of the house. Keep a third off site. A records storage company is a good choice. Don't place backups or other important papers in a safe deposit box at the bank. If you are killed it can take years to get into a safe deposit box, even if you have a will.

Yes, it is tedious and time consuming to backup and take the copies to various places. Do it anyway.

Keep Records

After the fire, it took weeks of sifting through sooty software boxes and old receipts to find the serial numbers for all the computer equipment I lost—\$25,000 worth of software and hardware. The list was six pages long. This goes double for professional books. I have shelves of programming books which cost \$50 a pop. The last thing I wanted to do after a fire was sit paging through sodden, disintegrating, smoky books, looking for ISBN numbers. That list was another three pages.

It would have been so much easier if I'd recorded titles, serial/ISBN numbers, and manufacturer's contact and tech support information every time I bought software, hardware, or a new book. Print out a hard copy when you add new items and put it in your fire safe box along with your insurance papers.

You Can Take It With You

Have an evacuation plan for your equipment as well as for your family. There is nothing that says that when you're running from a hurricane, you can't stick your Mac's tower in the corner of the car. You can certainly grab your laptop. Leave the cords and peripherals behind if you're in a hurry. This is a biggie in any disaster, as fire, flood, and even smoke can FUBAR your Mac.

You'll also want all your important papers in a fire safe box in a sealed plastic bag. Keep it by the door so that you can grab it on your way out. Remember to lock the box at all times. Dumb as it may sound and pain though it may be, the box can fall, and if it opens, everything inside it burns.

Prevail

Government Help

If there has been a *bone fide* nationally declared disaster, FEMA will open a local field office. If you are uninsured or under-insured, you may be able to make a claim for reimbursement of your losses and expenses. Usually the Small Business Administration sets up a table to help business owners. Also, don't forget that you can write off some losses on your taxes. It's a small comfort, I know.

Get a Charge Out of Your Car

Need to recharge your laptop when the power's out? Go for a car ride. You don't have to buy a \$179 car plug for your laptop. Hit the local "guy-toy" store and pick up a small DC inverter. Mine ran about \$25 at Northern Tools and provides two three-prong receptacles. It works great for charging my laptop and even powers the PlayStation when we're on a long car trip.

Fewer Than 12 Steps to Recovery

Whether or not to attempt to copy off the data yourself is a hard choice. You can save money if you're successful, but you can make major havoc if you're not. If you can start up the computer, copy your important data ASAP. Even if the drive appears sound, have it replaced. Smoke can damage the drive's seals over time. It could be two years down the line before it goes belly up. And of course, if the hardware is FUBAR, leave it to the professionals. To find a disk recovery service, look in the back of a Mac magazine. There are always ads.

A pro like DriveSavers (recovering Mac data since 1985) has all sorts of proprietary software to recovery data. They can literally take the drive apart if necessary. Often, they can recover a drive in 48 hours, so if you have something time sensitive, that's the way to go. Iomega also offers a recovery service for media from their drives.

Recovering a hard disk is pricey. John Christopher, a Data Recovery Engineer at the venerable DriveSavers said, "The average price of a drive recovery is about \$1000. The larger the physical capacity of the drive and the faster the turnaround, the more expensive the recovery is." There are other less expensive services, but I'd be very careful to choose one with extensive Mac experience. The good news is that your insurance should pay for the recovery. You may have to educate your adjuster, because he probably won't know that data recovery is even possible.

Do-It-Yourself Clean Up

If you can clean up your office somewhat without losing your mind or endangering your health, do it. Disaster cleaning companies have a job to do—as quickly as possible. They will wipe, wash, and pack your belongings efficiently. They will not pay any attention to what they put in which box. Things can go astray and get separated. For example, each of the five pieces of my kitchen stand mixer (OK, so it's not part of my Mac, use your imagination) ended up in a different box. It took me five years to find everything.

Don't Be Stupid

Despite the best laid plans of mice and men, disaster does sometimes strike. I don't need to tell you how high the stakes are in a TOHO. You could lose a lot more than your business. You could lose everything you own, but it's more important to evacuate yourself and your family from a burning building than it is to grab your laptop. *The Bottom Line* is that your business can survive a disaster, but not if you're dead. Getting out alive is number one.

Resources

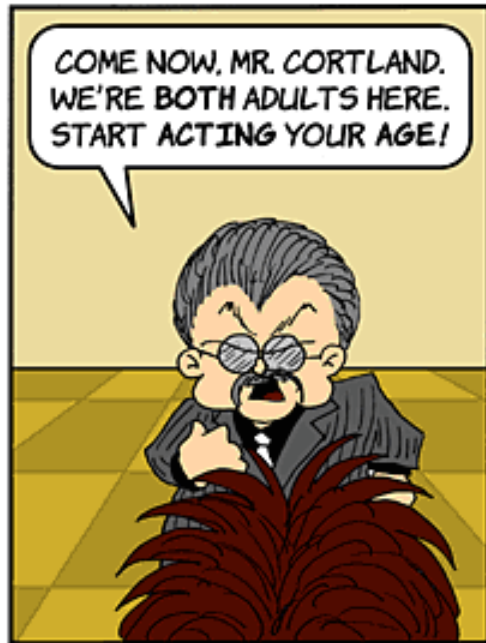
- [SafeWare](#)—Computer Insurance
- [DriveSavers](#)—Hard Drive recovery
- [lomega](#)—Media Recovery Service
- [Northern Tools](#)—70 W DC Inverter for Your Car

Copyright © 2003 Mary E. Tyler, mt Tyler@atpm.com. Mary doesn't practice what she preaches, but she sure as heck should know better by now. You can read her work in MacAddict and TidBITS, and at Skatefic.com.

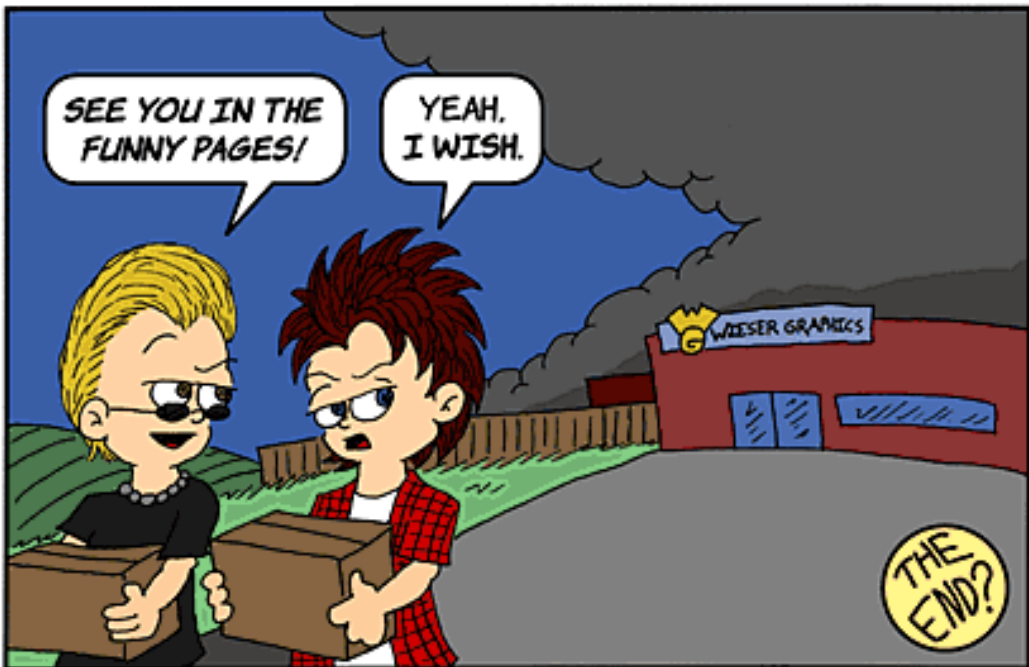
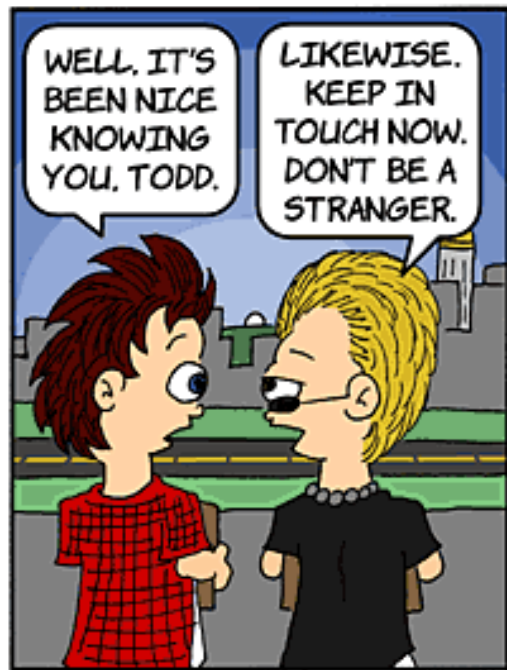


Cartoon: Cortland

by Matt Johnson, mjohnson@atpm.com

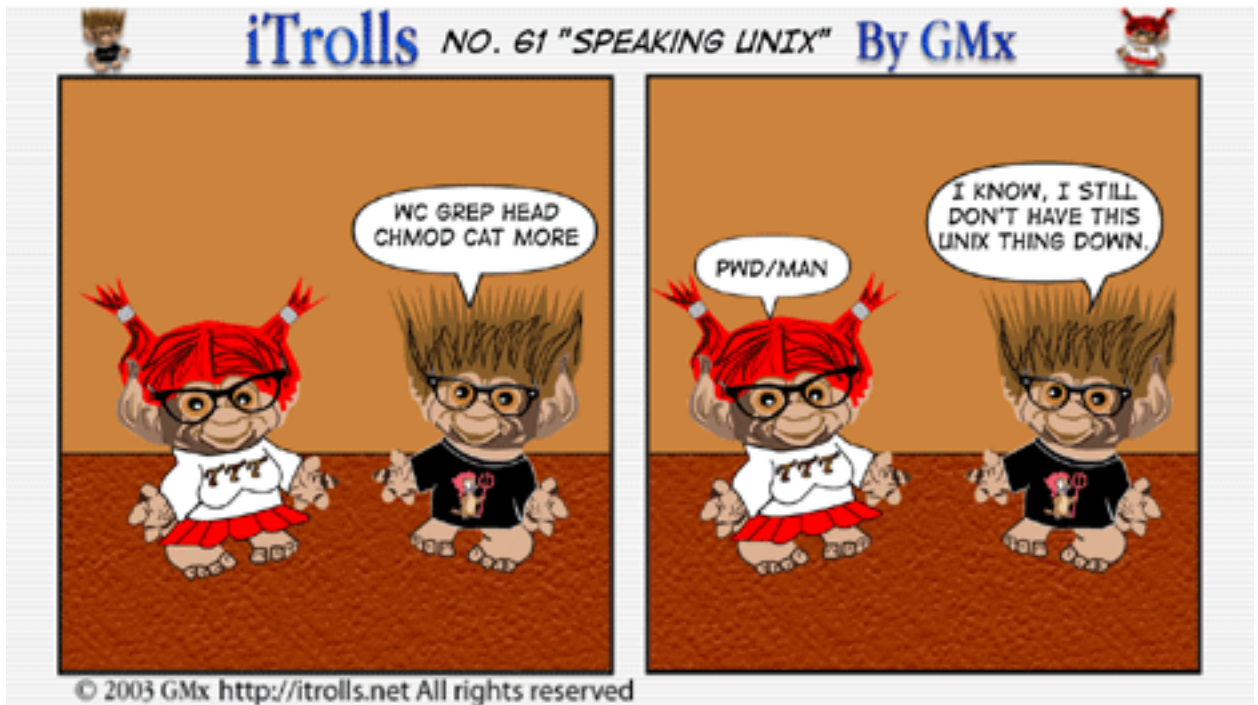


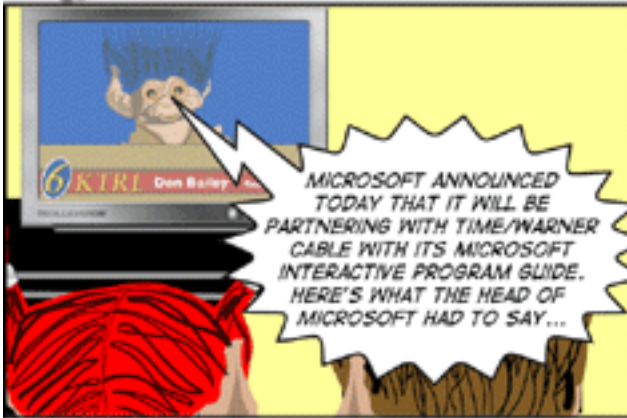




Cartoon: iTrolls

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





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CAPTAIN'S LOG STARDATE 3357.9—WHEN BEAMING UP FROM AN AWAY MISSION, THERE WAS A TRANSPORTER MALFUNCTION THAT SENT MISTER CHEKOV TO THE ALTERNATIVE UNIVERSE THAT WE HAD ENCOUNTERED BEFORE. THIS TIME THE EVIL MISTER SPOCK HAS ENSLAVED CHEKOV AND IS MAKING HIM WORK ON HIS WEBSITE. SINCE WE HAD ENCOUNTERED THIS PROBLEM BEFORE, SCOTTY HAS FOUND A WAY TO REVERSE THE POLARITY OF THE TRANSPORTER. TO ELUDE DETECTION A PHASER MIGHT TRIGGER, I HAVE ARMED MYSELF WITH A PRIMITIVE WEAPON.



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Extras: Desktop Pictures

Grand Canyon and Kona

Grand Canyon

These desktop pictures were submitted by ATPM reader [Philip A. DiMarzio](#):

These are seven pictures I took while hiking the South Rim of the Grand Canyon. There was a fire on the North Rim that day and the smoke can be seen in a few of the pictures. The image area is 1600 x 1200 with the picture being 1600 x 1000 and the bottom 1600 x 200 I made into a handy 2003 calendar. Hope some of your visitors enjoy.

Kona

ATPM reader [Marijke Wilhelmus](#) submitted these desktop pictures from Kona, Hawaii.

Previous Months' Desktop Pictures

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

Downloading all the Pictures at Once

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

Contributing Your Own Desktop Pictures

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

Placing Desktop Pictures

Mac OS X 10.1.x and 10.2.x

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

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

Mac OS X 10.0.x

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

Mac OS 8.5–9.x

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

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

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

Mac OS 8.0 and 8.1

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

Random Desktop Pictures

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

DeskPicture

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



Review: Amazon Hacks (book)

by Eric Blair, eblair@atpm.com

Author: Paul Bausch

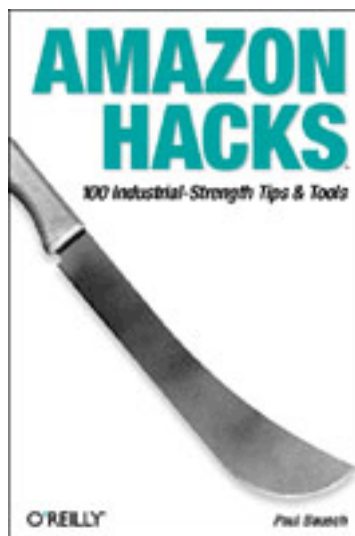
Publisher: [O'Reilly](#)

Price: \$25

Trial: [10 Sample Hacks](#)



Sometimes it seems that Amazon.com has been around since the birth of the Web. Now, I know this isn't true, but I've got invoices going back to 1998. Since then, Amazon.com has gone from a simple online bookseller to a full-fledged online community featuring new and used products, auctions, customer feedback, an associates program, a third-party developer program, and more.



Amazon Hacks tries to provide tips on every major portion of Amazon.com—it covers topics from easily finding the newest Orson Scott Card novel to letting people purchase that book directly from your Web site (while making you a little money in the process).

Though the 100 hacks in *Amazon Hacks* are split into six chapters, each with their own base topic, the hacks more generally split into two categories: using Amazon.com's Web site and using Amazon.com's information.

Using Amazon.com's Web Site

If you've ever shopped at Amazon.com, then the odds are pretty good that at least one of the hacks in the chapters Browsing and Searching, Controlling Your Information, Participating in the Amazon Community, and Selling Through Amazon will improve your shopping experience.

As the name suggests, the first chapter deals with finding what you want. It explains the different search options and tells you how to shorten Amazon.com links so they don't take up multiple lines when you try to type them in by hand or e-mail them to friends. This particular hint is referenced throughout the book, so it's definitely a good one to know.

The second chapter deals with many of the different options included with your Amazon.com account. Some of the information may seem old hat to Amazon veterans (how to create a Wish List or turn on 1-Click Buying), but other hints were new to me. For instance, I did not know I could use Amazon.com to get movie showtimes or remind me of people's birthdays. At the very least, it's nice to have this information all in one place instead of hunting around Amazon.com to find everything.

The third and fourth chapters are where *Amazon Hacks* starts to move beyond the basics of shopping and into what makes Amazon.com more than just a virtual shopping mall.

The third chapter deals with many of Amazon.com's community features. It discusses using and writing product reviews, finding your friends on Amazon.com, and the Listmania! and Guide features.

The fourth chapter extends into selling your own items on Amazon.com. It covers the Marketplace option, where your items are listed on the same page as the corresponding items sold by Amazon.com (in the More Buying Choices box), Amazon Auctions, and the Honor System. Topics in this section cover getting your items listed and various ways to try to maximize your profit.

Using Amazon.com's Information

Amazon Hacks' transition from a guide to using the Amazon.com Web site to using Amazon.com's information actually begins in chapters three and four, mixed in among the hints for user reviews and selling your items. Most of the non-Web site hints in these chapters deal with displaying information from Amazon.com on your own Web site and providing alternative interfaces for the various Amazon.com features.

For instance, there are hints for adding pop-up reviews from Amazon.com to your Web site, adding a "Currently Reading" list to your site, using the Honor System on your site, and listing the items you are selling on your site. As for alternative interfaces to Amazon.com, there are instructions for posting reviews and Guides remotely, as well as listing multiple items for sale at the same time. At first glance, these may not seem particularly useful, but they give you the ability to create highly-customized interfaces to Amazon.com. For instance, if you are selling something, you could provide the ability to leave comments on Amazon.com directly from your Web site. Another option would be to create a small, text-only page for posting when you are accessing the Internet from a slow connection.

Associates Program, the fifth chapter, is where *Amazon Hacks* really gets into using information from Amazon.com to your (financial) advantage. Through the Associates program, Amazon.com pays you if the people you direct to their Web site make a purchase. *Amazon Hacks* walks you through the various ways you can use the Associates program: linking to items, selling items on your Web site, letting users search Amazon.com, displaying banner ads, and a few others. This chapter also points you towards Web sites for creating your own online store and donating to charities. Also, if you run a [Weblog](#) using either [Movable Type](#) or [Blosxom](#), you are in luck, because *Amazon Hacks* includes tips specifically aimed at generating Associate links for use with these tools.

The final chapter deals with the Amazon Web Services (AWS) Program, which lets developers access information from Amazon.com in their applications. *Amazon Hacks* covers both the REST (REpresentational State Transfer) and SOAP (Simple Object Access Protocol) interfaces to Amazon.com, so the information contained in this chapter is useful for proponents of both protocols. Furthermore, it covers using AWS with scripting languages like Perl, Python, and PHP (as well as Visual Basic, but that's a Windows thing

and, as Mac users, we probably don't care about that). There are also practical applications of AWS, like generating Web pages, [RSS feeds](#), and Excel spreadsheets on the fly.

Conclusion

If you buy, sell, or develop software using Amazon.com, there is a good change you will find *Amazon Hacks* an invaluable reference for improving your experience. It covers many of Amazon.com's features both in impressive breadth and depth. Although a small handful of the hints are Windows-only (like the Visual Basic hints and the hints for searching Amazon.com from inside Internet Explorer), the vast majority are usable by anybody.

When I picked up *Amazon Hacks* for the first time, I intended to read through it quickly and note the hints that really interested me. I managed to make it through, from cover to cover, and I now own a very dog-eared copy *Amazon Hacks*. If you frequent Amazon.com, I would not be surprised if your experience with *Amazon Hacks* is similar to my own.

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Review: iSight

by Robert Paul Leitao and Clayton Spayer, rleitao@atpm.com

Developer: [Apple](#)

Price: \$150

Requirements: 600 MHz G3, Mac OS X 10.2.5, [iChat AV](#)

Recommended: fast Internet connection

Trial: None.



The Challenge

It suddenly became a dilemma. My Mac-using protégé, Clayton Spayer, and I finally had a chance to meet up after a year of online conversations. Clayton lives in the Central Illinois Valley, and I live in Southern California. Due to a wonderful happenstance, we needed a way to enhance the communication between our homes and we needed to do so quite quickly. The Apple iSight has proven to be an exciting solution to our sudden dilemma.



Clayton and I became acquainted in The Mac Observer forums. He's a high school student and I'm a former technology director at an LA-area prep school. We'd spend hours discussing Macs via Apple's iChat over AIM. This worked well because all we really needed were text and voice capabilities to talk about Macs. But this summer an extraordinary thing happened that challenges reason and still stuns the senses.

Call it fate, destiny, or even divine providence; Clayton and I met one another in person in an against-the-odds encounter that has changed both of our lives and the lives of our families. Clayton and his mother, Sue, were heading west this summer to spend time with family members in California. I had plans to take my kids to visit family in Connecticut. Unaware of each other's travel itineraries, we planned to meet up at the Apple Store at The Grove during the week I knew he'd be in the LA area. The rendezvous at the Apple Store didn't happen.

Instead I met him, he met me, I met her, and she met me as we all boarded the same Amtrak [train](#) from LA to Chicago. Unknown at first to all members of the traveling parties, Clayton and Sue and me and my kids were scheduled on the same train—a happenstance that defies the odds. Clayton and Sue were on their way home to Illinois while my kids and I were traveling east from Los Angeles through Chicago to New York.

I was bewildered when Clayton told me his travel itinerary and I checked his train reservations against my own. Why in Heaven and on Earth had events conspired to bring about this encounter? I soon discovered the answer. It was that moment when Sue and I first gazed at one another upon meeting at the train station in Los Angeles. Yes, we were riding on a train, but we both felt like we had just been run over by one too. It's that maybe once-in-a-lifetime encounter when one astonishingly meets a soul mate.

After two days together on Amtrak's Southwest Chief as it rambled across the desert, mountains, and plains, even the 10,000 cell phone and land-line minutes of conversation between us didn't seem like enough contact to comfortably close the 2,000-mile gap between Burbank and the Illinois Central Valley. We needed more and we wanted more. It's one thing to talk; it's another thing to be able to look at one another while we communicate.

The Solution

Enter the Apple iSight. I don't know who thought of it first. It might have been Clayton. After all, he wanted one and it might be a chance to get his mom off his cell phone. On weekends after Sue's cell phone battery is exhausted from our seemingly constant conversations, she grabs his cell phone until her phone's battery has a chance to recharge. No matter who had the idea first, we both trekked to our nearest Apple Store on the same Friday night. It took me all of 20 minutes to arrive at the Glendale Apple Store. I was all set up and waiting when they returned from their four-hour round trip to the Oak Brook Apple Store.

The iSight

The iSight took no more than ten minutes to set up. That includes time opening the box and staring curiously at the three stands included in the package. I use a 15" Titanium PowerBook so the choice of stands was an easy one. One of the stands is designed to fit on the TiBook's sleek display enclosure. The package also includes a plastic tube to store the iSight when it's not in use, and it comes with all the FireWire cables and adapters needed for easy setup and operation. There's no power adapter needed because the iSight is powered by the Mac's FireWire port. The diminutive video camera is only about 3 1/2 inches long and less than 1 1/2 inches wide, so it sits unobtrusively on any of the included mounts.

My First Impressions

OK, so it's not the same thing as being there. No way. No how. But at least with the iSight we can look at one another when we talk. I can dispose of one piece of geek paraphernalia during our conversations—my alien-style cell phone headset. Thanks to the iSight's video capabilities I'm no longer at a loss to keep myself visually occupied during conversations. The downside is that the other party can tell when they've lost your

attention if even for a moment. I can no longer surf over to a Mac Web site or read the editor's beta copy of ATPM while engaged in conversation without being nabbed. Not that I'd do that any way. Really, no I wouldn't! *Not ever!*



The \$149 price tag for the latest Mac gadget pays for itself quickly. No more watching the clock and worrying about long distance charges per minute or awkwardly arranging call times to be sure conversations start during the "unlimited" hours on the respective cell plans. Conversations are carried over the Internet via iChat AV. Considering the two-hour time difference between Burbank and the Illinois Central Valley, this has allowed us to converse before 11 PM Central Time without concern for cost.

iChat AV

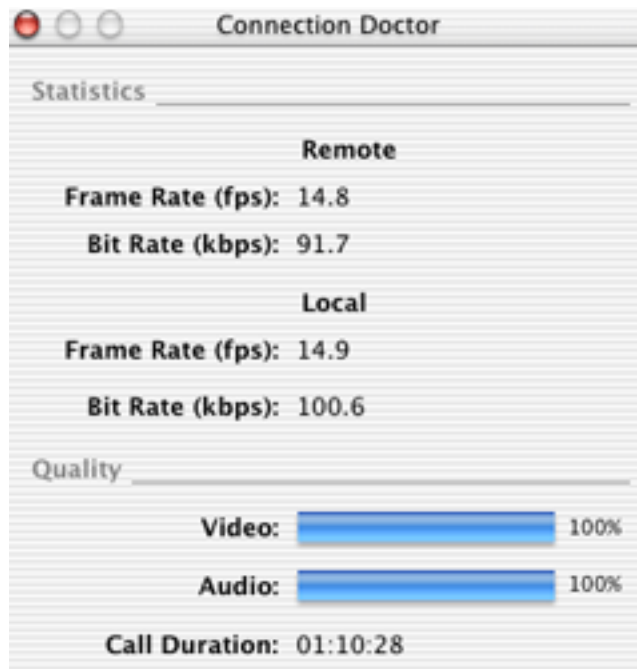
The iSight works in conjunction with Apple's iChat AV software currently in beta release. The first commercial version of the product will be included in the OS X Panther upgrade.

Curiously, iChat AV puts a small window of one's self inside the displayed window of your iSight partner. Though the self-view window can be sized and moved around inside the larger window, it still takes away from what can be seen of the other party. To my knowledge this small window can't be turned off. In my opinion users should be given the option to turn it off.

iChat AV can be used for one-way video. Hooking up a digital video cam or iSight to your Mac allows one to send digital video to other iChat AV users. But that's not nearly as much fun as a two-way video conversation.

Video Quality

Depending on processor and Internet connection speeds, video quality may demand that the iSight window remain small. There is an option to display the image full-screen, but one pays a price because there is a significant loss of quality when that option is selected. The user can resize the window from the default 352 x 288 pixels to just about any dimension on the screen. But in general, the smaller the window size the better the video image quality.



Again, performance will vary based on processor and Internet connection speeds. Dialup users are not able to use this product. However, with a powerful processor and fast Internet connection, iSight will deliver up to 30 frames per second (fps) of 24-bit color digital video. The lens auto-focuses to provide the sharpest picture possible.

I admit it. I'm enamored with the iSight for several different reasons. But how might a high-school-age Mac user describe the product?

Clayton's Impressions

"Hello, Mister Spayer!" someone says to me from behind as I am walking around Los Angeles Union Station. It's Robert Leitao. From that point on, life has changed drastically for my mom and me. As you can tell from Robert's elaborations on our meeting, things are happening quickly and have brought about many changes in our lives for the better.

We needed another form of communication along with the phone. After all, Robert lives 2,000 miles away. I suggested we purchase iSights for each of our homes. The iSight is known as the "eyes and ears of iChat AV." We both researched the product and determined that it made an ideal communications solution. In another strange twist, Robert had upgraded to DSL from dialup the week before we had the first iSight conversation. Because the iSight requires a high-speed Internet connection, this made video communication between our homes possible.

As Robert mentioned, we both made our way to an Apple Store on the same Friday night and we both came home happy. Almost immediately we were up and chatting. It took Robert only around ten minutes to set his iSight up, compared to my 20-minute setup time. I can explain, honestly!

First I had to stare with awe at the box and then delicately open it. After I "ooh-ed and ah-ed" for a while, I finally decided it was time to set it up. The actual installation was surprisingly simple—pick out the stand for your particular Mac (in my case an eMac), affix the stand with the provided adhesive, thread the FireWire cable through the stand, and plug it into the Mac's FireWire port. iChat AV automatically opens as soon as it senses the camera. I was video chatting with Robert within 30 seconds of plugging in the camera.

The quality of the iSight is amazing. It uses a 1/4-inch color CCD image sensor and has 640 x 480 VGA resolution. Focusing isn't a problem, because the iSight has a built-in auto-focus mechanism. It can even capture full motion video at up to 30 fps. Of course, such high fps requires a massive amount of bandwidth.

The iSight uses the FireWire cable to carry power, audio, and video—one cord for everything you need to video chat. The integrated, dual-element microphone touts noise suppression abilities, which proves useful with an eMac.

From the moment you open the box and see the iSight, the three enclosed stands, the plastic storage case, the FireWire cable, and the FireWire cable adapter, you know that you are getting nothing but the best. \$150 for a digital camera for the Internet may seem high, but the quality of the product and its unique design makes it worth the price. A 2,000 mile gap between families is difficult, but the iSight has proven to be a perfect solution to our long-distance communication dilemma.

A Couple of Points

In the tens of hours we've used the iSight and the iChat AV beta, we've had only a couple of minor issues usually resolved by restarting iChat. These include a couple cases of a loss of sound and occasionally jittery or slow-moving video. Internet connection speed will impact video quality and these issues may have had more to do with the Internet connections than the iSight or iChat AV.

Although the iSight can capture images at 640 x 480, at 15 fps over iChat AV the camera delivers images to the viewer at 176 x 144 and scales up to 352 x 288 at 30 fps on a very fast connection on a high-performance Mac. The iSight does not capture video for iMovie, although there is [third-party software](#) available. The iSight can be used as an external microphone for iChat AV or iMovie for audio-only conversations.

The camera does tend to get hot if it's left plugged in to the FireWire port for hours at a time. I've chosen to routinely remove the iSight during times I anticipate it will not be in use.

In Conclusion

Is the iSight the same as being there? Heck no! But for people who would like to communicate in sight and sound across great distances it's an extraordinary product. In this case, after a train trip we'll never forget, the iSight allows Sue and me to share moments we hope to always remember. In Clayton's case, he gets his cell phone back and all parties save big dollars on telephone and cell phone charges.

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Review: PagePro 1250E Laser Printer

by Sylvester Roque, sroque@atpm.com

Developer: [Minolta](#)

Price: \$300 (list); \$280 (street)

Requirements: Mac with USB

Trial: None.



After several years of hard use, and possible borderline abuse, our Xerox laser printer/copier began begging for a well-deserved retirement. With a scanner and color inkjet printer to make the occasional photocopy, we decided that a stand-alone laser printer might suit our needs better than another multifunction device.



As we began looking for a replacement, there were a few features high on our list of priorities. For better or worse, we are a two-platform household, so I wanted a printer that worked with both Macintosh and Windows. A tight budget also dictated the need for something with reasonable initial and operating costs. Network printing would be nice if the price was right. After researching the product offerings from several manufacturers, we settled upon the [Minolta PagePro 1250E](#) printer as a likely candidate.

The Initial Attraction: Speed and Connectivity

The Minolta PagePro 1250E is as fast as many other printers in its class, and faster than some. The manufacturer reports a first-page-out time of fifteen seconds. At 600 dpi, this printer is capable of print speeds as high as 17 letter-sized pages per minute. Resident PostScript Level 2 emulation supports printing at either 600 or 1200 dpi. PCL 6 and PCL 5e emulation is also possible.

The speed specifications for the PagePro 1250E were good, but we also needed cross-platform functionality. Once again, the specifications were promising. This printer supports printing under USB on the Mac or Windows 98 and higher. Windows users also have the option of using parallel printing under Windows 95 and higher. Printing over Ethernet and Bluetooth is also possible, but exercising either of these options requires the purchase of additional hardware.

The Second Look: Cost and Flexibility

Once we decided that the PagePro 1250E was worth a second look, the question of costs arose. A few trips to Pricewatch showed that the printer consistently sold for about \$300. Replacement toner currently costs about \$75—\$85 for the high capacity cartridge. The manufacturer rates the high capacity cartridge at 6,000 letter-sized copies at 5% coverage. This works out to toner costs of less than two cents per page.

The other cost to consider is the drum. The PagePro 1250E has a user-replaceable drum with a rated capacity of 20,000 letter-sized printouts. This drum currently sells for about \$105. Although additional hardware is required for network printing, we had recently purchased a router with a built-in print server that utilized the parallel port. Although it was not one of the models listed by Minolta, a quick look at the online documentation suggested ours should work. Things were looking up, so we made the purchase.

In exchange for our hard-earned money, we got a laser printer capable of 1200 dpi, Windows and Mac connectivity options, and 16 MB of onboard RAM. The RAM expansion slot will accept a single 64 or 128 MB memory module. Make sure to purchase 168-pin, PC100 compliant, unbuffered DIMMs. These chips cost less than \$50 right now for 128 MB, so splurge a little. Part numbers for both the 64 and 128 MB modules are included in the documentation on the CD.

Aside from the hardware flexibility, we gained some flexibility in the media used for printing. Plain paper, up to 24 lb. US Legal, can be placed in any paper tray. Thicker stock (24 to 90 lb.) must be placed in the standard paper tray or the manual feed tray. This is also true for glossy stock, envelopes, and laser labels; these types of paper should not be fed into the optional lower paper tray that installs underneath the printer. Normally your printout will come out of the output tray at the top of the printer with the print facing downward. The output tray has a bit of a curve to it; if you are concerned about the printout curling or need your printout to exit the printer face up, an optional tray is available. Although I have not yet tried lighter weight papers, I have not experienced curling on any printouts using 20 lb. paper.

Manual two-sided printing is possible. Be aware that the manufacturer recommends feeding printed pages through the manual feed paper tray. In fact, the manufacturer clearly states, "Damage can occur if printed pages are fed through the standard or optional paper input cassettes." If you do a lot of two-sided printing this could be a time-consuming process.

What's in the Box and What's Not

When you open the PagePro 1250E box you will find the printer, paper input tray, power cord, and registration card. The nice folks at Minolta have pre-installed the drum cartridge and a starter toner cartridge. This starter cartridge is good for roughly 1,500 pages of letter-sized printing at 5% coverage. The 250-sheet paper tray and manual feed/output tray are included but not installed

Our package also included a quick start setup and installation guide that is just over thirty pages long. How can something so long be called a quick start guide? The thirty or so pages devote two or three pages to each of about thirteen different languages. If you like detailed documentation do not fret, as the box includes a CD containing additional documentation and the necessary drivers. Under OS X I couldn't find the PDF file with this [documentation](#), but it is available online. Everything you need for basic setup is included except the cable. If you do not have a spare USB or parallel cable lying around your home or office, be sure to purchase one.

Initial Setup

Although the quick start guide devotes only two or three pages to initial setup, the process is easy. Installation of the 250-sheet paper tray and the output tray are straightforward. This is about as easy as putting together a printer gets.

When setting up the printer, keep in mind that the PagePro 1250E is 15.32" wide x 17.36" deep x 10.2" high. Minolta recommends just under eight inches of clearance to the left, right, and rear of the printer. A little less than twenty-two inches is recommended in front since the paper tray is in the front of the printer. The paper tray is solid once attached to the printer, but when fully loaded with paper be sure there is adequate desk space to support the weight of the tray.

Driver Installation

For Macintosh support, the manufacturer recommends a PowerPC 604 processor running OS 9 or OS X with 128 MB of RAM. A USB port and 15 MB of hard drive space are also recommended, although a self-powered hub should work.

As I inserted the included CD, I ran into a slight problem. The documentation that Minolta includes recommends that you install under Classic; there is no mention of any way to install the printer directly under OS X. Each time I tried this, Classic refused to cooperate. The good news is that the printer easily installs under OS X using Print Center. Do not rely on the quick guide for help with OS X installation; the information is not there. In fact, the Minolta Web site has [updated OS X installation directions for Jaguar](#) and for [earlier versions of OS X](#). The OS 9 directions included with the printer are easy to follow and work well. I set up this printer with a direct USB connection with no difficulty under OS 9.

Although I tested the printer for a day or two as a USB device, we have done most of our printing as using the 1250E as a network printer. The procedure for accomplishing this will depend upon the print server you are using on your network. Generally, this will involve setting up the PagePro for IP printing. This is accomplished in the Print Center under OS X and through the Desktop Printer Utility under OS 9. For my configuration, I had to set the IP number of the printer to be the same as my router. All that is left after that is to load the included PPD file.

The Payoff

So far, I have been very impressed with this printer. The print quality is equal to that of other printers in this price range. I find 600 dpi printing to be adequate for printing most drafts, while 1200 dpi produces some very sharp text and graphics. Print speed is good with the installed 16 MB of RAM, but if you are going to be printing longer documents, splurge for a little extra memory. Having options for printing under USB, parallel, and IP networking is great and setup is easy.

The user-replaceable drum was an unexpected bonus. After all, the cost of replacing a drum was part of the reason we abandoned our previous printer. The only complaint I have with this printer is with the printed documentation. The printer works well with Jaguar, and the Web-based directions are good, but the printed documentation does not adequately address OS X installation. Other than that, it is an excellent printer for the home office or small workgroup.

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Review: Sling Pack

by Lee Bennett, lbennett@atpm.com

Developer: [Incase](#)

Price: \$50

Requirements: does not fit 17" G4 PowerBook.

Trial: None



What Came Before

Chris Turner has the [right idea](#). A product like a computer bag should simply be judged on its own merits. Nevertheless, I would not be serving justice to why I chose to review the Sling Pack without stating that I nearly sprung for the TiBag. Something, however, told me to look around a little bit longer.

A Short Detour

You have to understand something about me, so I must share a little history before I start delving into the Sling Pack. My 15" 1 GHz G4 PowerBook is my sole machine. I'm one who is content with a laptop's capabilities and doesn't need a desktop tower. The bag I have used to date (and, admittedly, will continue using frequently) is like a portable office. Sure, it's rather large and heavy to someone not used to it, but it does fit under an airplane coach seat and even has wheels and a retractable handle.

Items living in this case include a spare battery, A/C adapter, a plethora of various cables and adapters, a few CD slip cases, blank CD-Rs, a [Podium CoolPad](#) (I can even leave the risers attached), my checkbook, my ever-present bottle of Advil, and (the real oddball item) a Netgear MR814 Wi-Fi router. Its slim design is the perfect size for my big bag. I frequently find myself wanting to borrow bandwidth from friends or family whom I visit—people who have broadband but only a single computer attached directly.

I *like* my big bag. I've learned to ignore a friend's razzing about always carrying such a burden. Yet, I increasingly find myself in situations where something smaller—even hands-free—would be smart.

I began considering backpack-style cases about a year ago, but my initial considerations were short-lived. One year ago this month, I was a passenger in a pretty nasty auto accident. I'm fine now, thanks for wondering, but I came out of it with an injury that prevents me from bearing much weight on my right shoulder for extended periods of time. Indeed, I've only even been able to sleep on my right side in the past couple months and, even then, only for an hour or two, tops. In any case, I'm no longer in the market for any product that puts weight on the right shoulder.

The Search Resumes

My desire for a backpack seemed pointless until I was reminded of the TiBag. I was interested, but some things bothered me. Never mind that it's designed to rest on the right shoulder when worn messenger style—I'd have been content to only use it single-strap backpack style. When I really started examining it, though, I felt its design appeared a little haphazard. Granted, I've not held or seen one except in pictures, but the polyester material and its shape seem little more than just an everyday tote bag with a flap. I was sure I could find something more streamlined that might hold just a few more items in exchange for just a slight bit of extra thickness. The ability to close up securely instead of relying only on a flap of fabric to cover my computer was also high on the wish list.

Enter the Sling Pack

Naturally, the left-shoulder design of Incase's creation was the first thing to catch my eye. Personally, I'm a fan of the sleek, angular design versus the tote bag-style TiBag.



Yes, it's designed to be worn slightly crooked. No worries—it still feels extremely comfortable. A sturdy clip keeps the straps together.

Closer examination revealed that the exterior has a very clean-lined look. It's made from a couple of types of nylon, which feel more sturdy to me than polyester—not to mention that they're probably a bit more moisture-resistant.



The strap is extremely well-padded all the way around—right up to the clip. I can wear this thing virtually all day.



The exterior zipper pocket provided an ideal location for my big bag's detachable pouch that contains most of my cords and adapters (you can see the long shape of it in the pocket).

Like the TiBag, there's a place for a small accessory device such as an iPod, cell phone, or PDA. Unlike the TiBag, I'm not worried about something falling off or out. The pouch's zipper is secure and doesn't use a velcro strap that could get knocked open. The pouch itself has padding, like the strap, in case of a bump.



Pod pocket.

The back of the Sling Pack also has a zipper pocket. My spare battery lives here. The case material is soft enough that I don't feel the battery against my back. I'd have preferred to put the battery inside...more on that, below.



The rear side is soft against your back.

The Sling Pack scores just as high marks for its interior features as it does for the exterior. The sleeve inside is a perfect snug fit for a 15" PowerBook. Sorry 17" owners, this bag is not for you.



Note the little clip snapped to the edge of the sleeve on the left. Extra touches like this are proof a lot of thought went into this bag's design. A small key ring, for example, can be clipped here and quickly snapped off for use.

Besides the sleeve for a laptop, there is a zipper pouch at the top and two adjacent stretchy pockets below. The zipper pouch is a perfect fit for my A/C adapter and cable. Yet another very nice touch is the slip of fabric that covers this pouch's zipper when closed, preventing the zipper from possibly scratching the computer.



Rather cavernous for such a compact bag.

Companion Products

Incase's product list includes a large variety of other bag types, and the company is reasonably well known for protective guitar cases. A musician friend of mine had previously heard good things of the company, though had never seen the products. As someone I know to be able to recognize a great guitar bag when he saw one, I was happy to witness his "I want one" reaction when he examined the catalog and my Sling Pack, thus helping confirm that these products are well-made.

Perfection Scrutinized

Make no mistake, this bag is wonderful and is attractively priced—especially to those looking at Christmas present ideas for PowerBook-loving acquaintances. Three items come to mind that would complete this bag's perfection for my use, yet I cannot justify any of them warranting a less-than-Excellent rating. None of them are actually problems with the bag—rather a perfectly acceptable design characteristic that I might have done differently.

The interior stretchy pockets will, technically, accommodate a PowerBook battery. Yes, a battery does physically fit, though it's pretty snug. I might feel differently about certain materials and I might be completely incorrect about these pouches' material, but I have a sensation that a G4 PowerBook battery's corners are liable to wear through after plenty of rubbing against the pocket.

Flat items such as a Podium CoolPad will fit in the space between the laptop sleeve and the interior pockets. The space at the very bottom is even spacious enough to hold a CoolPad's stackable risers. However, the Sling Pack's interior dimensions would have to be only a half inch wider to not require careful pressure to get the CoolPad all the way in.

Finally, taking the Sling Pack on and off your back might take a minute or two of practice. A help would be if a small, well-stitched handle strap were added to the top of the bag. These are seen on many traditional backpacks. Such a handle would also aid in transporting the bag shorter distances when putting it on my back isn't practical, i.e. getting it out of my car and carrying it the minute-or-less walk to my office.

Flight-approved

The best test was how the Sling Pack handled through the process of taking an airline flight. For the first time in a couple years, I was able to make my way through the terminal and onto the plane with both hands free. Upon reaching my seat, the bag slipped off and found a comfortable home under the seat in front of me. Once computers were allowed to be used in flight, it was virtually effortless to lift up the edge of the bag, unzip it, and slide my PowerBook straight out—especially when sitting in the slightly larger exit row, but not significantly harder in a standard row.

Thus, my big bag will remain in my arsenal for many situations, most of which involve riding in the rear floor of my car. Without a handle on the top, the Sling Pack may not be the perfect choice for everyday toting around, but for medium- to long-distance travel, when having both hands free is important, the Sling Pack is definitely one to check out.

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Review: Spring Cleaning 6.0

by Robert Paul Leitao, rleitao@atpm.com

Developer: [Aladdin Systems](#)

Price: \$50; \$20 (upgrade)

Requirements: PowerPC-based Mac with Mac OS 9.1 or Mac OS X 10.1.5.

Trial: None.



Similar to my home, my storage unit, and even my car's trunk, my computer collects junk. It's often loaded with outdated applications, old software installers, aged e-mail attachments, and other items that should have been thrown away a long time ago.

Like many Mac users, my computer is at the center of my digital life. It's essential to my work, my play, and the management of my household. My Mac needs to be kept as clean and efficient in its operations as possible. I could take the time to go through my folders one by one or choose to use a utility to save time and effort in my computer housekeeping tasks. This is where Aladdin's Spring Cleaning comes into the picture.

The maker of the ubiquitous StuffIt products offers Mac users a suite of utilities to clean and maintain their hard drives. There isn't much in this package that an advanced Mac user couldn't accomplish on his or her own, but in an era in which time really is money, Spring Cleaning may pay for itself many times over. Users new to the Mac platform or users new to Mac OS X may find Spring Cleaning helpful in their computer cleaning tasks.

Features

The package sports several utilities combined into two solution suites. The utilities include but are not limited to:

- Document Finder—Finds files created by applications already removed from your drive.
- Duplicates Finder—Locates duplicate files and folders to save storage space.
- File Checker—Searches for corrupted and damaged files.
- Font Finder—Finds errant fonts stored on your drive.
- iClean—Helps users manage their Web surfing files and associated debris.

- MacUninstaller—Uninstalls applications and identifies files associated with the soon-to-be-trashed application.
- MailCleaner—E-mail attachment management tool.
- Secure Delete—Securely and permanently deletes files.

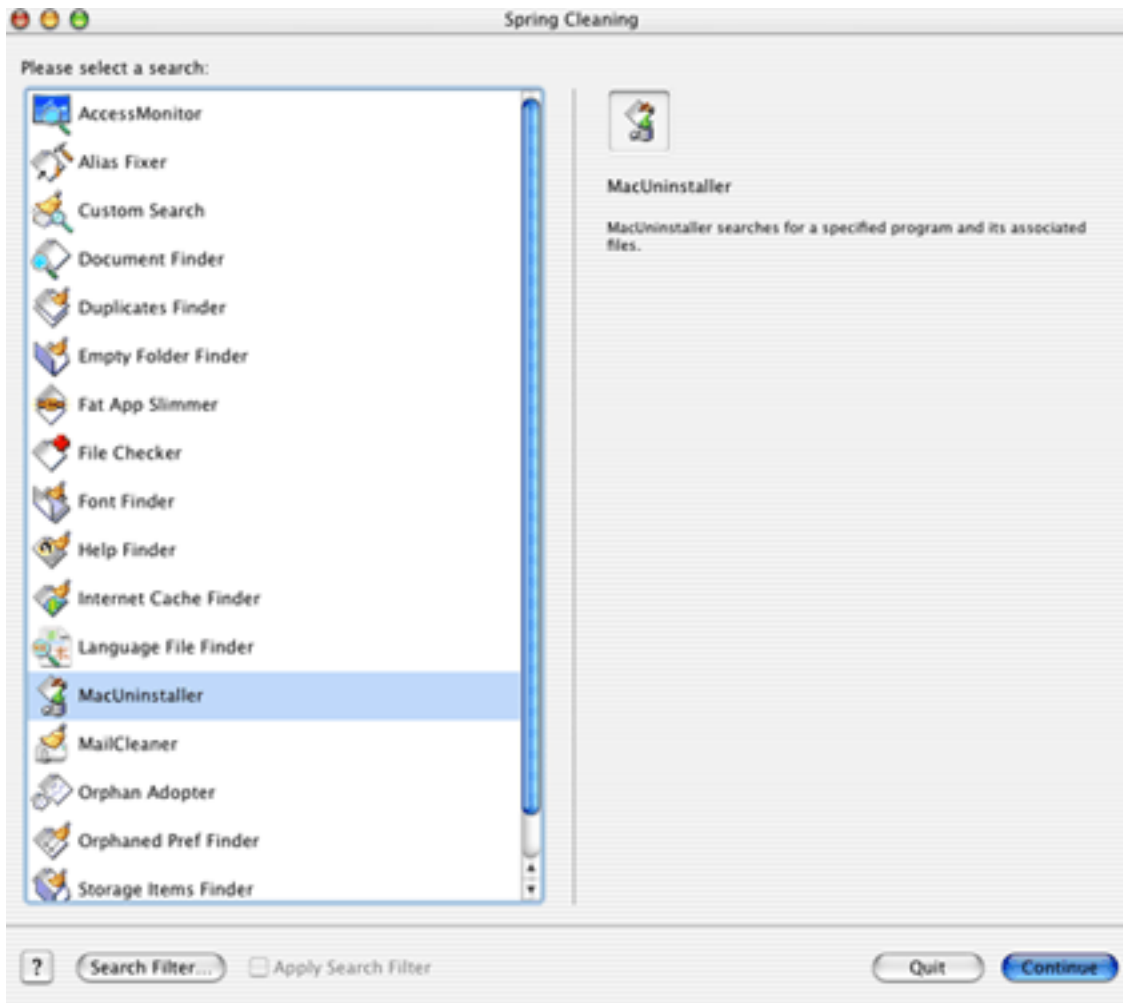
Although Spring Cleaning comes in versions for Mac OS X and Mac OS 9.1 and earlier, for the purpose of this review I used the OS X version of the product. The number of utilities in the package notwithstanding, Aladdin should include a disk optimizer to defragment hard drives in the Spring Cleaning utility suite.

Installation

I downloaded Spring Cleaning from Aladdin's convenient and easy-to-use software download site. I encountered a few issues with the MailCleaner utility and Microsoft Entourage. The tech support staff at Aladdin was very helpful with suggested remedies, but I chose a new installation of the package as the best solution.

Menus

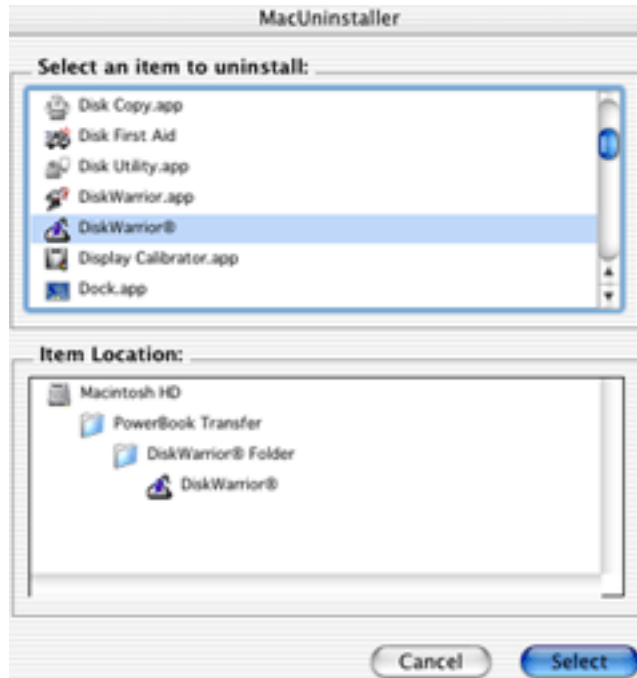
The picture below illustrates the number of utilities included in the Spring Cleaning and iClean suites. All of the utilities in the suites can be accessed from the main menu. Once a utility has been selected and activated, returning to the main menu requires the use of a back button. I would prefer the main menu window remain open and accessible in the background after a utility has been chosen to perform its tasks.



MacUninstaller

Of all the utilities in the Spring Cleaning suite, MacUninstaller is the one that I found to be the most helpful in terms of function and time savings. My Titanium PowerBook contains folders from my old G3 PowerBook, along with all of my OS X applications and utilities. This utility saved me a great deal of time searching through all of my old folders to find applications and related files to be removed.

The uninstaller searches the hard drive for all installed applications and their associated files. The picture above shows the installation of an older version of DiskWarrior I removed with the utility. As a precaution, two steps are involved in permanently removing an application from the drive. Spring Cleaning will move the selected application and other files to the trash, but not delete them from the drive.



Super Access

Both Spring Cleaning and the set of utilities called iClean have Super Access features that permit only users with admin authority in OS X to perform certain “deep cleaning” functions. This prevents unauthorized removal of applications and other files by users not authorized to administer the Mac and reduces the risk of a well-meaning but error-prone user from making a mess out of a Mac.

Secure Delete

One other utility worthy of mention is Secure Delete. This utility allows one to remove a file from the drive and know that it is gone for good and cannot be recovered. This is a useful utility for anyone with sensitive or confidential material on his or her computer.

Features for OS X

In addition to the Super Access features mentioned above, the OS X version of Spring Cleaning contains a few other enhancements including:

- AccessMonitor—Documents and reports the last time files were used in OS X.
- DockApp—Provides easy access to Spring Cleaning from the familiar Dock.
- Language File Finder—Locates unnecessary foreign language files that hog disk space.
- SystemMenu—Places Spring Cleaning and iClean icons in the menu bar for convenient cleaning.

Final Comments

Spring Cleaning provides a convenient way for Mac users to rid their drives of unnecessary clutter, aged applications, and dated personal files. I’ve been working with Spring Cleaning 6.0 on and off for a couple of months. It’s a useful suite of utilities that saves time and effort. I just wish my home were as easy to clean as my Mac!

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Review: TypePad

by Raena Armitage, rarmitage@atpm.com

Developer: [Six Apart](#)

Price: from \$5/month

Requirements: Internet connection.

Trial: Fully-featured (30 days)

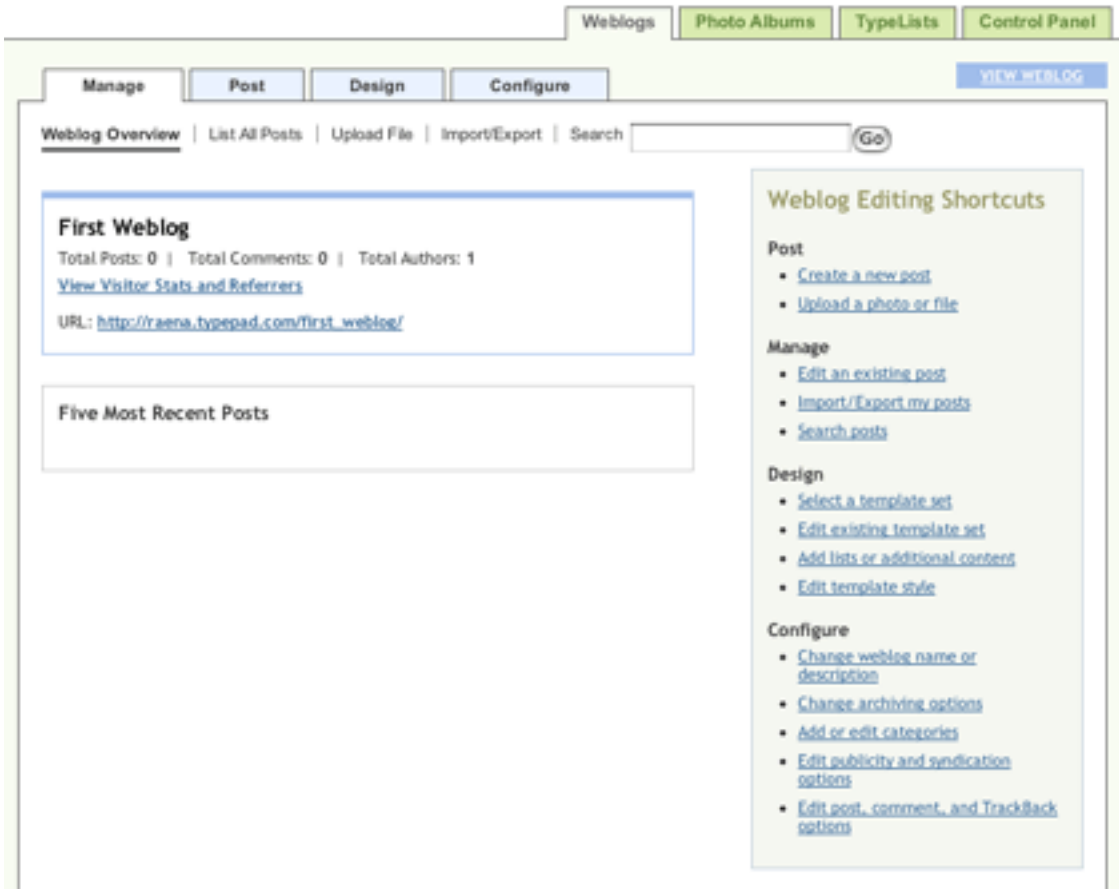


Weblogging, or [blogging](#) for short, is the practice of updating a Web site frequently—akin to a Web-based journal of sorts. Everyone's doing it: bloggers everywhere are posting news, opinions, thoughts, snippets of their life, photos and more. Best of all, you don't need to be a Web wizard to start a weblog; if you're not interested in hosting a weblog yourself, there are a plethora of services available that let you build and maintain your weblog with a minimum of fuss.

Currently in its preview release stage, Six Apart's TypePad promises to be the cream of the crop when it comes to hosted weblog services. Based on the [Movable Type](#) platform, TypePad adds a whole swag of features and versatility that Movable Type users normally only get after installing a bunch of plug-ins and hacks. What really sets TypePad apart, however, are the numerous small but very cool improvements on the standard offerings out there.

Getting Started

Starting out with TypePad is a piece of cake: just choose a user name, sub-domain name (such as yourname.typepad.com) and an appropriate pricing plan, and you're on your way. There's a 30-day free trial, which you can cancel at any time, and no charge until the 30 days are up. Once in the system, you'll start by creating your first weblog: it's as easy as filling in a form.



Posting, setup and maintenance are only a click away from TypePad's Weblog Overview screen.

TypePad's slick interface and easy controls make the process of designing your weblog's layout and content a quick and painless effort. The built-in templates offer a wide range of layouts, all written in attractive, quick-loading, standards-compliant HTML—no crusty JavaScript or broken hacks here. TypePad's Plus- and Pro-level accounts let you dig deeper

into the layout: you can alter styles and layout in Plus using a drag-and-drop interface, and Pro users can utilize special tags and custom templates for extremely fine control over every element of their weblog's design.

Edit First Weblog Templates: Order Your Weblog Content

Here is an inventory of the additional content that you've selected to appear on your weblog.

To arrange the sidebar elements into the order you prefer, click and drag each item into the appropriate position. The items in the blue boxes can be arranged and moved into any position in any column.



Drag and drop your weblog's contents around for control over the layout.

Weblogging

When you've tweaked everything to your heart's content, you'll undoubtedly spend most of your time posting updates. TypePad's posting screen is straightforward, but can be customized to show more fields and options for finer control. You can optionally file your post under a set of categories, use the TrackBack system to send messages to other

weblogs when you post about them, add keywords and an excerpt for syndication, or allow users to add comments. If you want to have posts appear later, they can be scheduled to do so: TypePad won't publish them until the date and time you set.

Compose a New Post

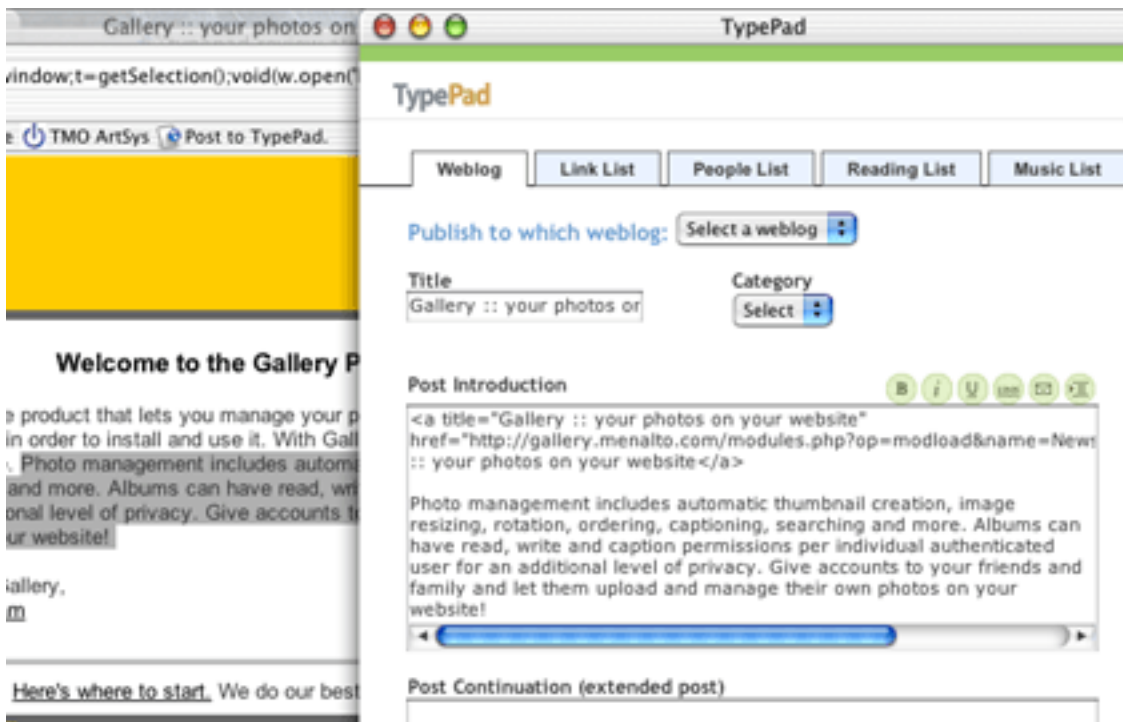
The screenshot shows the 'Compose a New Post' interface in TypePad. At the top, there is a 'Title' field containing 'My first weblog post!' and a 'Category' dropdown menu set to 'Fun'. Below these is the 'Post Body' area, which contains a rich text editor with a toolbar (Bold, Italic, Underline, Link, Unlink, and a list icon). The text in the editor reads: 'Here's my first TypePad weblog post! I've uploaded a photo, using the Upload File dialog, to include the picture without typing screeds of nasty HTML.' Below the text, the generated HTML code is visible: `<img alt="man_103.jpg" src="http://raena.ty`. At the bottom of the form, there are three sections: 'Posting Status' with a 'Publish Now' dropdown, 'Comments' with an 'Open' dropdown, and 'Accept TrackBacks' with an unchecked checkbox. At the very bottom, there are two buttons: 'PREVIEW' and 'SAVE'.

If you can write an e-mail, you can post to TypePad. The HTML to display an image is created for you as soon as you upload the image.

Uploading files is as easy as can be, with no more worries about whether you got the URL and HTML right: TypePad can generate the necessary HTML for you when you upload an image. Even cooler still, it recognizes whether your layout will permit an image of that size, and offers to create a thumbnail sized accordingly.

For road warriors, one of TypePad's neatest features is an easy way to set up mobile settings. Users of the Plus and Pro plans can post images and text from a mobile device using e-mail, with their choice of identity verification—using a “secret” random e-mail address at typepad.com, responding to a confirmation message, or using a PGP signature.

Bookmarklets live on the bookmarks bar of your browser, and offer a quick and easy way to post items to your TypeLists or weblogs. When you're at a Web site and you'd like to post a weblog entry about it, just highlight any text you want and click the Bookmarklet in your Favorites tab. It'll open up a new TypePad posting window for you, with the URL of the page already filled in and the text you highlighted.



Highlight and click—you're ready to post.

Meanwhile, more prolific bloggers will be pleased to know that you don't need to log into the TypePad Web site every time you want to post. The third-party tools that work with Movable Type work extremely well with TypePad. Users of the full version of [NetNewsWire](#) or the freeware [Kung-Log](#), among others, can use those applications to manage their weblog posts without ever having to touch a Web browser.

The aforementioned mobile posting settings are also a handy thing: naturally, you don't *have* to use a mobile device with these features, and you can use those settings to post to your weblog from your favorite e-mail application. (It's also a neat way to blog from work and appear as though you're writing some terribly important memo, but I didn't tell you that.)

Photo Albums

Who doesn't want to share their digital photos? TypePad allows its Plus and Pro users to create photo albums, again with a selection of very nice layouts and styles. Uploading images with the album tool offers a load of great features. It can extract any EXIF data from a photo you're uploading and automatically insert the date and time it was created, generate nice square thumbnails, and scale larger photographs to a more manageable size. Once you've created an album, you can display a thumbnail of your latest addition on your weblog's sidebar.

Doing something similar in TypePad's nearest relative, Movable Type, takes a fair amount of fiddling with templates and isn't anywhere near as simple as this. You could use a third party tool like [Gallery](#), but it doesn't offer the same level of integration with your weblog. There's nothing quite as slick as this.

raena.typepad.com > Shutterbuggery

Occasional snapshots.

 **Chris and Kael**
casa Fishwick September 21, 2003
Kael and his daddy.

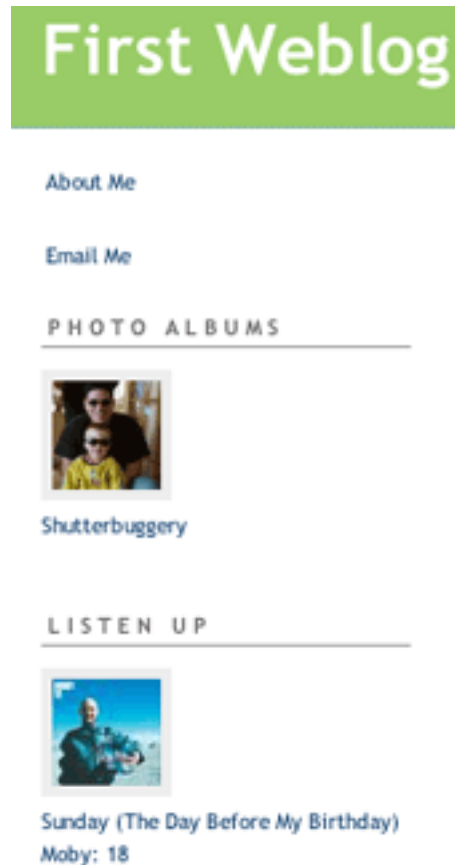
 **Gazing**
The Crosse shack, Central Highlands September 20, 2003
Kael likes the camera. He'll point to the AF lamp and say, "Light on!!" You're lucky to get a shot in before he reaches up and grabs the camera.

Photolog like the pros in five minutes flat.

TypeLists

This very cool feature of TypePad absolutely blew me away. There are four types of TypeLists you can create: People, Links, Music, and Reading. Adding a new item is simple. With the Music TypeLists, entering the album and artist grabs the album thumbnail from Amazon and places it in your sidebar along with a link to the product. If you use an ISBN number to add a book to a Reading TypeList, it does the same, and grabs the full title and author while it's at it. If you've entered an Amazon.com Affiliate ID in your TypePad profile,

it puts that ID in the link to Amazon. Adding a URL to a Link TypeList grabs the page's title right out of the HTML, and adding a URL to a People TypeList gets the information from metadata embedded in the page, if it's supplied.



A weblog sidebar, with a photo album and a TypeList.

You can display TypeLists in the sidebar of your weblog, so that everyone knows what you're reading or listening to, or who your Web buddies are. You also have quick access to your TypeLists in the TypePad Bookmarklet, so you can quickly add links to your Links or People TypeLists, or books and CDs to your Reading and Music lists.

What's the Damage?

TypePad's subscription [pricing](#) comes in three stages: the basic service at \$4.95 per month gets you one weblog; the Plus service at \$8.95 offers three weblogs and more bandwidth and Web space; and Pro at \$14.95 lets you create an unlimited number of weblogs, and gives you even more bandwidth and Web space, plus the ability to use the more advanced design and posting tools. You receive a 30-day trial plus the choice of paying monthly or yearly—yearly subscription gets you two months free—and you can change up or down a plan whenever you like. There's currently no free option at all, although TypePad's FAQ tells us that a free version may be on its way.

Compared to a "real" Web hosting account, this pricing isn't terribly competitive. On the other hand, you don't have to worry for a minute about setting up scripts, messing with FTP, or figuring out how to use a Web editor like Dreamweaver, so in effect you're paying for a very nice hosting package and having it all managed for you.

Cheaper or free services are definitely out there, but none comes anywhere near the experience you receive with TypePad. Users of free services in particular have to be prepared to spend time tweaking some very ugly templates, breaking things, swearing at the screen, and putting up with obtrusive banner ads and anaemic feature sets. With TypePad, you'll be blogging like the experts in no time flat.

Conclusion

This is a great service, and the best part is that it promises to get even better. Even though it's still only in a preview release, its ease of use, feature set and general smoothness blows its [nearest competitors](#) right out of the water. While TypePad's FAQ says that the Plus account is better if you're "comfortable with weblogs but not interested in managing technical details," it's certainly not beyond the reach of the blogging newbie and represents the best choice in terms of value for money.

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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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What Are Some Tips for Viewing PDFs?

- You can [download](#) Adobe Acrobat Reader for free. If you have a Power Macintosh, Acrobat Reader 5 has better quality and performance. ATPM is also compatible with Acrobat Reader 3, for those with 680x0 Macs.
- You can zoom the PDF to full window width and scroll through articles simply by single-clicking anywhere in the article text (except underlined links).
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- For best results on small screens, be sure to hide the bookmarks pane; that way you'll be able to see the entire page width at 100%.
- Try turning Font Smoothing on and off in Acrobat Reader's preferences to see which setting you prefer.
- All blue-underlined links are clickable.
- You can hold down option while hovering over a link to see where it will lead.
- For best results, turn off Acrobat's "Fit to Page" option before printing.

Why Are Some Links Double-Underlined?

In the PDF editions of ATPM, links that are double-underlined lead to other pages in the same PDF. Links that are single-underlined will open in your Web browser.

What If I Get Errors Decoding ATPM?

ATPM and MacFixIt readers have reported problems decoding MacBinary files using early versions of StuffIt Expander 5.x. If you encounter problems decoding ATPM, we recommend upgrading to [StuffIt Expander 5.1.4 or later](#).

How Can I Submit Cover Art?

We enjoy the opportunity to display new, original cover art every month. We're also very proud of the people who have come forward to offer us cover art for each issue. If you're a Macintosh artist and interested in preparing a cover for ATPM, please e-mail us. The way

the process works is pretty simple. As soon as we have a topic or theme for the upcoming issue we let you know about it. Then, it's up to you. We do not pay for cover art but we are an international publication with a broad readership and we give appropriate credit alongside your work. There's space for an e-mail address and a Web page URL, too. Write to editor@atpm.com for more information.

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How Can I Contribute to ATPM?

There are several sections of ATPM to which readers frequently contribute:

Segments: Slices from the Macintosh Life

This is one of our most successful spaces and one of our favorite places. We think of it as kind of the ATPM "guest room." This is where we will publish that sentimental Macintosh story that you promised yourself you would one day write. It's that special place in ATPM that's specifically designated for your stories. We'd really like to hear from you. Several Segments contributors have gone on to become ATPM columnists. Send your stuff to editor@atpm.com.

Hardware and Software Reviews

ATPM publishes hardware and software reviews. However, we do things in a rather unique way. Techno-jargon can be useful to engineers but is not always a help to most Mac users. We like reviews that inform our readers about how a particular piece of hardware or software will help their Macintosh lives. We want them to know what works, how it may help them in their work, and how enthusiastic they are about recommending it to others. If you have a new piece of hardware or software that you'd like to review, contact our reviews editor at reviews@atpm.com for more information.

Shareware Reviews

Most of us have been there; we find that special piece of shareware that significantly improves the quality our Macintosh life and we wonder why the entire world hasn't heard about it. Now here's the chance to tell them! Simply let us know by writing up a short review for our shareware section. Send your reviews to reviews@atpm.com.

Which Products Have You Reviewed?

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ATPM uses the following ratings (in order from best to worst): Excellent, Very Nice, Good, Okay, Rotten.

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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.

