



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

Subscriptions

Sign up for **free** subscriptions using the [Web form](#)¹ or [by email](#)².

Cover Art

Copyright © 2000 by [Charlie Anthony](#)³
<http://profile.guru.com/cdanthony>

We need new cover art each month. [Write to us!](#)⁴

1. <http://www.atpm.com/subscribe/>
2. subscriptions@atpm.com
3. CDAnthony@aol.com

Contributors

Lee Bennett
Eric Blair
Daniel Chvatik
Paul Fatula
Jamal Ghandour
Matthew Glidden
Edward Goss
Tom Iovino
Robert Paul Leitao
William Lovett
Jamie McCornack
Michael Morgan
Grant Osborne
David Ozab
Nick Pavlovic
David Spencer
Gregory Tetrault
Macintosh users like you

Where to Find ATPM

Online and downloadable issues are available at <http://www.atpm.com>.

ATPM is a product of ATPM, Inc.
© 1995–2000, All Rights Reserved
ISSN: 1093-2909

Editorial Staff

Publisher/Editor-in-Chief	Michael Tsai
Managing Editor	Daniel Chvatik
Associate Editor/Reviews	Paul Fatula
Associate Editor/Shareware Reviews	William Lovett
Copy Editors	Raena Armitage Johann Campbell Paul Fatula Ellyn Ritterskamp Brooke Smith Adam J. Zaner <i>Vacant</i>
Publicity Managers	Christopher Turner <i>Vacant</i>
Contributing Editor/Welcome	Robert Paul Leitao
Contributing Editors/Opinion	Tom Iovino Scott Feldstein
Contributing Editors/Reviews	Eric Blair Gregory Tetrault Evan Trent <i>Vacant</i>
Contributing Editor/How To's & Reviews	Jamie McCornack
Contributing Editor/Trivia	Edward Goss
Contributing Editor/Music	David Ozab
Contributing Editor/Networking	Matthew Glidden
Contributing Editor/Web	David Spencer
Contributing Editor/Games	<i>Vacant</i>
Help Jedi	Christopher Turner <i>Vacant</i>
Hollywood Guy	Mike Shields
Webmaster	Michael Tsai
Assistant Webmaster	A. Lee Bennett
Interviews Managers	<i>Vacant</i>
List Server Host	Evan Trent
List Mom	Michael Tsai
Beta Testers	The Staff

Artwork & Design

Graphics Director Grant Osborne
Graphic Design Consultant Jamal Ghandour
Layout and Design Michael Tsai
Cartoonist Michael Morgan
Blue Apple Icon Designs Jamal Ghandour
Other Art RD Novo

Editors Emeritus

RD Novo
Robert Madill
Belinda Wagner

The Tools

Acrobat
Anarchie
AppleScript
BBEdit
Cameraid
FileMaker Pro
FrameMaker+SGML
Frontier
ImageReady
LetterRip Pro
MacPerl
Mailsmith
Photoshop
Player
Snapz Pro
ShrinkWrap
StuffIt

The Fonts

Cheltenham
Frutiger
Isla Bella

Marydale
Minion

Reprints

Articles and original art cannot be reproduced without the express permission of ATPM, unless otherwise noted. You may, however, print copies of ATPM provided that it is not modified in any way. Authors may be contacted through ATPM's editorial staff, or at their email addresses, when provided.

Legal Stuff

About This Particular Macintosh may be uploaded to any online area or BBS, so long as the file remains intact and unaltered, but all other rights are reserved. All information contained in this issue is correct to the best of our knowledge. The opinions expressed in ATPM are not necessarily those of this particular Macintosh. Product and company names and logos may be registered trademarks of their respective companies. Thank you for reading this far, and we hope that the rest of the magazine is more interesting than this.

Thanks for reading ATPM.



Sponsors

About This Particular Macintosh is free, and we intend to keep it that way. Our editors and staff are volunteers with “real” jobs who believe in the Macintosh way of computing. We don’t make a profit, nor do we plan to. As such, we rely on advertisers to help us pay for our Web site and other expenses.

We would like to thank our exclusive sponsor, Small Dog Electronics, for its generous support of ATPM, the Macintosh, and all things cool. Sponsorship does not imply endorsement, and endorsement does not imply sponsorship. Thank you for your support.



<http://www.smalldog.com>

You can help support ATPM by:

- Buying books, music, or movies through [this link](#)¹ to Amazon.com.
- Buying Mac hardware or software through [this link](#)² to MacConnection.
- Buying Mac hardware or software through [this link](#)³ to Outpost.com.

Please consider advertising here to support ATPM. Contact advertise@atpm.com for more information.



1. <http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/redirect-home/aboutthisparticu>
2. <http://service.bfast.com/bfast/click/mid9452939?siteid=13311227&bfpage=machomepage>
3. <http://www.linksynergy.com/fs-bin/stat?id=N00D3BtDeo0&offerid=2161&type=3>

Welcome

Welcome to the July issue of ATPM! We're getting ready for the huge Mac summer block party about to take place in New York. We've left town and we're heading for the Big Apple! Holding down the fort is Ellyn Ritterskamp, our new copy editor. Ellyn hails from the Tar Heel state and volunteered to stay behind! Well, we promised her a really cool T-shirt and first option on a trip to the Seybold conference in August. We welcome Ellyn, a Mac devotee since the LC III, to our staff. We'll be back after the show!

Old Man Mini-Tower

One of the many benefits Apple has over its PC competitors is that no other vendor now makes a Mac OS-based PC. During the years that Mac OS clones were available, Apple struggled to keep pace with its competitors in terms of product features and prices. The length of time Apple was able to keep a computer in the marketplace before it was upstaged by a new offering from a clone company became unprofitably short.

Recently Apple has chosen to extend the shelf life of its hardware offerings to the point that consumers and professionals have begun to lose interest. The current iMac, iBook, and G4 mini-towers have been in the market for several months without a serious upgrade. While this means higher profits per unit for Apple, it does little to benefit market share. We had hoped that Apple's return to consistent profitability would have encouraged management to bring faster and better featured products to market more quickly. We hope the current pause in the product refresh cycle is little more than a breather, as the company digests several quarters of torrid growth and prepares for the release of Mac OS X, which may require faster and better equipped hardware in order to use its more modern features.

MS and the Supremes

No, it's not a new Motown recording group, just the next step in the long-awaited showdown between Microsoft and the law. Using a seldom mentioned provision in the nation's antitrust laws, Judge Jackson certified the MS case for direct appeal to the Supreme Court. At the same time that he certified the case, Jackson also suspended the tough interim remedies he ordered until such time as the Supreme Court renders a decision in the case or the remedies are reinstated by an appeals court. If five members of the Supreme Court vote against accepting the case directly from Judge Jackson, the case will be referred to an appeals court

as an intermediate step.

We believe Judge Jackson's decision to certify the case for direct appeal to the Supreme Court is a good one. Further, his decision to suspend the interim remedies will allow both sides in this action to prepare their cases in a calmer setting. We look forward to a final resolution of the government's antitrust action in the coming months.

Bye, Bye Bungie

In other news concerning the world's largest Windows based software maker (and one of Apple's largest shareholders), Microsoft has chosen to acquire Bungie, maker of popular computer games. We believe Microsoft's interest in Bungie relates directly to the company's plans to release a consumer entertainment console called the X-Box.

Characters such as Mario and Sonic have helped Nintendo and Sega to build successful game console businesses, and in order to compete with well financed and established competitors, Microsoft may look to Bungie's popular game titles to help it launch its new venture. We're hopeful the recent antitrust action by the government will change the way Microsoft chooses to build new businesses. Consumers (and especially Mac users) will be disappointed if the next versions of Microsoft's newly acquired game titles were restricted to Windows and MS console releases only.

Rumors and Reality

Recently Adobe Systems filed suit against MacNN for detailing the features of the forthcoming Photoshop 6.0 on its Apple Insider Web site. The information posted on the site was apparently sourced from classified Adobe documents not intended for public release. At this time the manner in which the offending party obtained Adobe's internal documents has not been made public. Adobe is suing MacNN for the tens of millions of dollars the software company claims will be lost due to a slow down in sales of Photoshop 5.5, while customers wait for the release of Photoshop 6.

Many experts believe that the First Amendment protection of free speech may shield MacNN from Adobe's wrath. However, Adobe's right to publicly express its outrage is protected by the same constitutional law. Further, Adobe does have a right to seek redress in the courts for damages inflicted by MacNN's apparent irresponsible behavior.

Adobe Systems was originally funded in part by an investment from Apple Computer. In

turn, Adobe's PostScript technology helped Apple gain its leadership in the desktop publishing market. Further, Adobe Systems stood by Mac users during a very difficult time in Apple's history. Mac users and Adobe Systems deserve better from the Apple Insider Web site and MacNN.

Many of us are entertained from time to time by the colorful rumors that abound on Mac affinity Web sites. But when a rumor site inappropriately posts classified corporate documents in order to build site traffic, it's time for a reality check. Is the battle for Web traffic so important that ethical behavior should become the first casualty? We don't think so.

Claris Organizer 3.0?

No. The popular Mac organizer has not received a recent update from Apple. As it turns out, Palm bought Claris Organizer from Apple. Offering a few bug fixes and Palm PDA compatibility, the Palm Desktop organizer is virtually identical to the old Claris product many Mac users have learned to depend on to keep themselves on track and on time. Don't believe us? Download a copy of [Palm Desktop](#)¹ for the Mac and see for yourself. Best of all, it's free!

An Unreal Deal?

Mid-June marked an important moment in QuickTime history. Apple and Real Networks inked a deal that included Real Networks licensing QuickTime for use on its servers. The deal means that QuickTime-formatted content can be downloaded from Real Networks's servers, allowing Web site owners to offer QuickTime content without the need for a separate server. In the past, a separate QuickTime server would be needed to distribute QuickTime streaming content. Under the terms of the deal, Apple's QuickTime software will no longer automatically change the default media player on a PC after playing a QuickTime-formatted video.

The deal between Apple and Real Networks is seen as a collaborative effort to compete with Microsoft's (you guessed it!) exclusionary Windows Media format. Politics and technology can make for strange bedfellows.

1. <http://www.palm.com/support/downloads/palmdtmacdl.html>

Sprechen Sie Français?

Each issue of ATPM is read by tens of thousands of people in different parts of the world. Although English is the predominant language for Web-based communication, many of our readers are trained in English only as a second language. For the benefit of our international readers we'd like to expand our Web resource pages to include foreign language sites. If you know of a foreign language Mac site that would be of interest to our readers, please email the URL to editor@atpm.com.

The Big Show!

Please enjoy our latest issue! We'll report on all the sights and sounds of Macworld Expo New York in our August issue.

The ATPM Staff



Shopping for a Mac

Back in March I was browsing around the Mac section of my local CompUSA when I overheard a salesperson's conversation with a customer. The customer had noticed the new PowerBook G3s on display and inquired as to when the PowerBook G4s would arrive at this particular store. The CompUSA salesperson replied, "Apple is currently putting the finishing touches on the G4 PowerBooks, and they are expecting to ship in about a month."

I just had to jump in on this one. I walked up to them and told them how Apple is working out problems with the G4's high power consumption, and how it will not be readily available for use in PowerBooks any time soon. The CompUSA salesperson gave me a smug look and explained to me how "Apple gives their retailers information that does not make it out into the public. Apple wants you to think that a G4 PowerBook is not possible now, but only Apple's retailers are told the truth."

I was in shock. This guy was obviously a complete idiot. Not only did he make up a nice little story, but he drove the customer away, telling him to wait for the G4 PowerBook to come next month! I didn't see any G4 PowerBooks in April, did you?

—Erik Lanigan, Tampa, FL

...

Thanks and eDOC

I had meant to write earlier to say **thank you!** for a truly wonderful addition to my monthly (and otherwise) Mac-info collection. I look forward with anticipation to your insightful opinions and edifying articles.

OK, 'nuff of the high-priced spread. Here's what I really wanted to say: I dearly miss the old eDOC option. But, I guess, *c'est la vie*. Progress is what it is, and we must take the bad with the good. So keep up the good work and if you ever decide to bring back the simple but elegant (for me!) option of eDOC then know that at least one faithful reader will be thrilled.

Sincerely, an American expatriate in Austria,

—*Richard N. Bright*

Until the author of eDOC resolves an incompatibility between it and Adobe FrameMaker (the software we use to produce ATPM), we *can't* bring back the eDOC format. We unfortunately don't know of any other software that can do what eDOC does, but we are planning some formatting improvements with eDOC fans in mind. —*Michael Tsai*

...

Epson Drivers

Hi, just spreading the word: you can now get network Epson [drivers](#)¹ for almost every Epson printer...very useful!

Keep up the good work.

—*Edward Cooper*

...

Sound Recording Program

I thought you might be able to offer some help. I am looking for a Mac program that I can program to record my favorite radio programs (through the sound-in port) while I am away from home. Even a program that records AIFF is fine; the files are easy to convert to MP3. The program would work best if I can specify a time range to record. Even better would be the ability to record multiple programs, but I will settle for anything at this point!

So far I have found a freeware program called ReCron, but it is not stable with OS 9.04, and is still somewhat under development.

Thanks in advance for any advice you might be able to offer!

—*Scott Newton*

This isn't exactly my area of expertise, but here is what I could find:

1. <http://www.geocities.com/stylusphoto750>

Coaster¹

This program, though it doesn't have a timing option, has an option to start recording once the sound level goes above a certain threshold. So if you can make your radio go on and off at the desired times, it may work.

It is also AppleScriptable, so you could write a short AppleScript that would start and stop recording at the desired time(s). In general, AppleScript might be one of the best ways to go for this.

Audiocorder²

This one also has a volume-based option like Coaster, but isn't AppleScriptable. *However*, it has a crude scheduling system that may be just what you are looking for!

Authentic Sound Recorder³

Offers volume-based start and stop, but not much else.

SndSampler⁴ and Sound Studio⁵

These are classics, but neither has the functions you need. But maybe if you contact the authors, they'll integrate scheduling in future versions. ;-)

I hope this helps, and let me know if I can be of any more assistance. —*Daniel Chvatik*

...

Playing DVDs on a Television

Greetings from Ireland,

Can I mirror my DVD movies on a standard television? If so, what hardware, software, or cables should I get?

Keep up the great magazine.

Many thanks,

—*Peter Collins*

Yes, you can mirror DVD to a TV with just some simple cables. I own a beige G3 300 Mac with Apple's DVD-ROM drive (one of the first ones sold). All you need to do is run a set of RCA audio/video cables between the A/V out ports on your Macintosh (with the Mac turned off) to the A/V in ports of either

1. <http://www.in.tum.de/%7Erothc/coaster.html>
2. <http://www.blackcatsystems.com/software/audiocorder.html>
3. http://www.innerloop-prod.com/AS_Recorder.html
4. <http://www.geocities.com/SiliconValley/Garage/9373/sndsampler.html>
5. <http://www.feltp.com/products/soundstudio/>

your television or a device connected to your TV (such as a VCR or cable box). I recommend using good quality A/V cables (with gold-plated plugs and thick insulation).

If you have a DVD iMac or G4, then your connection options are different. These Macs mirror via a standard VGA port with a 15-pin mini D-Sub connector. I don't know if you can use a simple adapter for VGA to TV and still display DVD movies.

Your Macintosh needs the TV Mirroring control strip module. So, obviously the Control Strip Extension and appropriate modules need to be installed and active. Now go to the TV Mirroring control strip and select "Turn TV Mirroring On." Below that, choose "Use NTSC Standard" and "Best for Video." I recommend deselecting "Leave Monitor On" because most Macs don't have enough horsepower to display DVDs on a monitor and a TV simultaneously. Leave the "Overscan" option deselected for now. You can experiment later to see if the DVD movie looks better on the TV with Overscan selected.

If all has gone well, your TV should now be displaying your Mac's desktop. Don't be dismayed if the edges are clipped and the corners are excessively rounded. That commonly occurs when mirroring. You can now insert your DVD and launch the Apple DVD Player. Go to the Video menu and select "Fill Screen." Make sure that the menu selection under the divider reads "Present Video on Screen" (rather than "...in Window"). Click Play and enjoy your movie.

This setup worked OK for me, but the DVD movies were not as crisp or clear as with a dedicated DVD player. However, I was sending the DVD signal to a 32" TV, which is a lot of pixel-pushing for my ATI Rage Pro-based DVD "personality card." If you have a DVD iMac or G4, I don't know how well the software-based DVD player will work with TV mirroring. You may not get a very good TV picture. —
Greg Tetrault

...

We'd love to hear your thoughts about our publication. We always welcome your comments, criticisms, suggestions, and praise. Or, if you have an opinion or announcement about the Macintosh platform in general, that's OK too. Send your email to editor@atpm.com. All mail becomes the property of AT[®]PM.



The True Spirit of the Holiday

Above all things I hope the education of the common people will be attended to; convinced that on their good sense we may rely with the most security for the preservation of a due degree of liberty.

—Thomas Jefferson to James Madison, 1787

The Fourth of July here in the US is one of the most misunderstood commemorations on the calendar. Poll 100 people you meet in the streets, and they'll tell you that the Fourth of July is the real name of the holiday. That's sort of like calling Christmas the 25th of December.

Ask people what we're celebrating on that date, and the answers get even more bizarre.

The actual holiday celebrated in the US on July 4th is Independence Day—the day when the Declaration of Independence was adopted. In this daring move, some seriously cheesed off colonists effectively told Great Britain that they weren't going to take any more abuses from across the Atlantic Ocean, thank you very much.

Thomas Jefferson, the author of the Declaration of Independence, spelled it out for all to see:

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness...

Sure, the US doesn't have the best track record when it comes to following up on its promises. There was the slavery issue, the internment of Japanese American citizens during World War II, and the proliferation of McDonald's around the world.

However, you do have to agree that the US provides a free venue for the exchange of thoughts and ideas. A shining example of this ideal can be found in our colleges and universities.

From the first quote I used in this article, you can see that Thomas Jefferson believed

education of all citizens was key in keeping the fledgling nation free and well governed. Our public schools, despite what you may read, actually do an adequate job in preparing a significant number of students for advanced education.

In these universities and colleges, freedom of ideas and the right to learn from the knowledge of others are cherished. While I typically never agreed with my classmates, I found that by respecting their ideas, at least I could see their thought process and how they arrived at their opinion. This skill of being able to read people has served me well in my career as a public information officer.

So, if this free expression of ideas and beliefs is a cornerstone of the advanced education system in the US, why is Intel trying to squelch it?

Shira Fischer, a columnist for the *Harvard Crimson*, [reported](#)¹ the following on June 5th:

Faculty of Arts and Sciences Computer Services (FASCS) reluctantly covered and turned off the Science Center's iMac computer kiosks last week in response to a request from Intel, which sponsored an exhibit in the Science Center as part of the Internet and Health conference.

Okay, I can understand Intel preventing, say, the display of iMacs in their corporate headquarter lobby, but asking a university to turn off their iMacs—which students use to access information for papers and projects they're writing—just so people who attended this Internet and Health conference wouldn't have to see Intel's competition? What were they thinking?

First, there's the matter of simple courtesy. When the computer labs at my *alma mater* were closed for renovations, it was a real hardship on me. However, I understood that these were improvements that were being made, and knowing that, I could deal with it. But asking university officials to deny students access to the tools they need just because Harvard invested in Macintosh computers, well, that's just plain dumb.

Even better, the fine folks at Intel were prepared to take matters into their own hands.



1. <http://www.thecrimson.com/news/article.asp?ref=8210>

“We like to maintain the facilities for students...[but we were] asked in a way that we couldn’t say no,” said Franklin M. Steen, director of FASCS. Steen said he allowed the computers to be covered “only after multiple requests and great reluctance.”

“Usually if we say no we’re done, but this just didn’t stop,” Steen said.

Steen said Intel had brought their own covers for the kiosks, which trapped the heat the computers generated making it impossible to keep them running.

Were they intentionally trying to damage Harvard’s computers? You’ve got to be kidding if these folks at Intel, the largest manufacturer of computer chips in the world, didn’t understand how much heat a computer can throw out and how that affects the operation of those systems.

Just what the heck was Intel afraid of? I mean, I’ve been to events sponsored by Pepsi with a Coke in my hands, and no goons have ever asked me to dump my drink out. Were they afraid that the students were going to use the iMacs, and that was going to make their products look inferior?

Besides, since this was a conference about Health and the Internet, why shouldn’t the students have been able to use any computer which could connect to the Internet? After all, isn’t the Internet a level playing field for any computer platform?

The student responses to Ms. Fischer’s article were quick in coming.

- What’s Intel so scared of?
- You have to be kidding, right?! Don’t artists share galleries? Museums have more than one artist on display, right? Is Michelangelo’s ceiling art covered up because another artist, rightly or wrongly, might feel inferior, or intimidated by such a masterpiece? Do we kowtow to such whims? Is it okay to drive my BMW onto a Toyota car sales lot?
- Hey, Intel’s move was not just childish and stupid as many have said. It is monopolistic, and a restraint on free trade. In Harvard’s courses on management, don’t they teach that the best business experience is a win/win situation? Microsoft and Intel never learned that lesson.

This last point raises an interesting question. Wasn't Microsoft recently found by a federal judge to be using illegal tactics to control sales in the computer market? Intel is really guilty by association, since its processors were the ones that primarily powered the Windows OS. You figure Intel would get the message by now that using these tactics is wrong.

Unfortunately, some folks are slower to learn than we'd hoped.

According to Fischer, things at Harvard returned to normal earlier than expected.

The covers were removed about halfway through the conference. By 5 PM on Tuesday, some students, and many more conference participants, were standing in lines to check their email at the uncovered kiosks.

The original plan had been to cover the computers until noon on Wednesday, when the Internet and Health conference ended.

“They were immediately full of people,” Steen said.

Fortunately, cooler heads prevailed at Harvard, but we should all be vigilant. History has proven that a free exchange of ideas and active competition within an industry can only be good. It keeps the decision makers fresh and the product developers coming up with great ideas.

As we celebrate Independence Day here in the US, I hope that my fellow citizens, and those of other countries who cherish liberty and free thought, can understand just how lucky we really are. Also, if you ever find yourself in a situation where some organization is trying to force you to believe its way is the only way, remember these words:

Enlighten the people generally, and tyranny and oppressions of body and mind will vanish like evil spirits at the dawn of day.

—Thomas Jefferson to Pierre Samuel Dupont de Nemours, 1816

Copyright © 2000 Tom Iovino, tiovino@atpm.com. Illustration © Jamal Ghandour.



Christmas in July

July 1st is a special day at the University of Oregon. It's the day that the money budgeted for the fiscal year is released to the respective departments (in other words, it's when we get to spend it). There is no more joyous day in the year—and this year is particularly joyous, for a certain bearded fellow from up north has bestowed upon us an act of great generosity. Is it Santa Claus? No. This particular benefactor is a billionaire shoe baron and U.O. alum from Beaverton, Oregon. Luckily for us, the University was still on his “nice” list last year when he endowed several chairs (tenured faculty positions), one of which was awarded to Jeffrey Stolet, the Director of Future Music Oregon.

Phil's Last Act of Generosity

Since then, of course, there was a major falling out between Phil Knight and the University of Oregon over the University's decision to join the Workers Rights Consortium, a group highly critical of Nike's labor practices overseas. While I respect Knight's right to choose the recipients of his donations, I also think it's inexcusable to withdraw money already promised (specifically for the Auzen Stadium expansion). Not to mention how much he still owes the University for making him who he is today. If Knight hadn't gone to U.O., he never would have met Bill Bowerman (his track coach), with whom he later founded Nike. But enough of my ranting. Fortunately for us, the money pledged to the endowed chairs had already been spent.

The Way It Was

Electronic music at the University had always been a struggle. Jeff had split his time between Music and Dance (where he was the Music Director) since he was hired in 1988. I was his lone GTF (Graduate Teaching Fellow), and between us we were responsible for an entire department at the Music School. Demand was high and kept growing every year, though we were unable to accommodate any more students. We hadn't had a major upgrade since 1997, and our newest computer was a Power Center 180 still running System 7.6. We had lots of professional audio and MIDI gear, but none of that had been updated in years, either. We did what we could when the money was available, but it was always a compromise. The equipment in the smaller studios (used by beginners) was even more outdated. It's hard to

defend the Mac platform when students compare a IICI or a Quadra to the Pentium II or Celeron boxes they run at home. I had a G3 at home that smoked, but the students' first exposure was to a Mac eight to ten years out of date. I was frustrated.

A New Paradigm

With the major budget increase we received as part of the Knight Chair endowment, we're installing a major upgrade this year. Due to compatibility issues, we're passing on G4s and OS 9 for now. Instead, we're purchasing four G3s (two blue, two beige) running OS 8.6. The Blue and Whites will include serial ports and SCSI cards to keep them compatible with our other hardware. We're also purchasing three new Kyma systems (I'll be reviewing Kyma 5.0 next month) to add to the one we already own, a Zeta violin system (essentially a MIDI violin controller), and new Pro Tools systems. We'll have a total of four setups, one each for the beginning, intermediate, and advanced studios, along with a fourth setup for concerts.

Teach Them to Adapt

With upgraded hardware and software comes the chance to revise the curriculum. In the past, we had always maintained an uneasy balance between an academic and a vocational model—i.e., focusing on concepts versus teaching specific hardware and software. As part of a university, we had always leaned toward the academic model, but the limited quantity of specialized software available forced us in the vocational direction. Now that we can finally purchase enough software and hardware to upgrade all three studios and make them largely compatible, we can teach fewer software packages, more consistently. We can also focus on concepts, so students will be able to adapt to the constantly changing specifics of hardware and software. Here's a broad outline of the new curriculum:

Start with Kyma

The ideal environment for teaching concepts is the most flexible environment available. However, most commercial keyboards and software packages are highly specialized. This limits what one can teach with them. The exception is the Kyma system (review coming next month), which combines software and hardware into a completely open environment. It can be a synthesizer, a sampler, a sequencer, an effects processor, or a weird contraption combining all of these. It's cross platform (though we always run it on a Mac, of course), and at \$3200 for the base system, it's comparable in price to a professional keyboard workstation. The only catch is that there is no keyboard, but if you already own one or more keyboards or other controllers (we have several), the extra set of keys is unnecessary. That said, I don't delude myself into thinking that every student who graduates with a music technology

degree will buy one. But that's not why we chose it. We chose it because it provides a clear way to teach all aspects of digital audio within a single environment.

Drop Sequencing

Hold on. How can I suggest dropping sequencing from our curriculum? Well, I'm not suggesting that at all. For years, though, another course at the School of Music has taught the basics of MIDI and sequencing. There was always an overlap between this class and the MIDI portion of the introductory electronic music class, but as facilities became more interchangeable that overlap grew. Finally, we decided to drop sequencing from the introductory course, and thus eliminate the overlap.

Then Add Max

MIDI is still important, though, and so is programming. MAX is the one application that combines both in a user-friendly environment. Its layout resembles a flowchart, thus emphasizing the conceptual aspects of programming over the specifics of code. Once learned, however, MAX provides an excellent foundation for a more advanced study of programming. MAX also introduces students to the specifics of the [MIDI implementation](#)¹. Different status bytes and their associated data bytes are handled by separate objects. This reinforces the conceptual understanding of MIDI that I teach in the classroom. MAX also allows easy integration of Kyma (which sends and receives MIDI) with other samplers and synthesizers in the studio.

A New Degree Program

With more resources we can admit more students and expand our selection of degree programs. We began in 1995 with an undergraduate degree in Music Technology, then added a doctoral supporting area in Computer Music (I was the first to sign up) a year later. Now we have the opportunity to add a Masters degree program. This program (pending final approval) will emphasize the role electronic music plays in combination with other arts, such as visual design, theater, and video.

More Guest Artists

We can also bring in more guest artists and guest lecturers. In the past, we've welcomed Carla Scalletti, the founder of [Symbolic Sound](#)² and co-designer of the Kyma System (did I

1. <http://www.atpm.com/5.10/music.shtml>

2. <http://www.symbolicsound.com>

mention I'm reviewing Kyma 5.0 next month? :-)); Dave Porter of Music Annex in San Francisco; Todd Barton, the composer-in-residence of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival; Dennis Miller, composer and columnist for *Electronic Musician*; and several noted composers, including Allen Strange, Brain Bellet, and Peter Terry. With a bigger budget, we can bring more guests and pay them more to come. So far this year we've lined up Joel Chadabe, composer, writer, and founder of [EMF](#)¹; and Chris Chaffe, composer and researcher at Stanford University. We're also hoping to invite Miller Puckette, the father of MAX. Bringing our students in contact with prominent people in the field will help them to establish connections they might maintain throughout their careers.

I Get Some Help

The extra money will also provide for a new GTF position in addition to my own. My new colleague, John Villec (who turned me on to MP3.com—look for his [music](#)² there), brings an extensive background in electronic music, traditional acoustic composition, jazz, multimedia, and computer geekery. His only fault: he owns a PC. Well, nobody's perfect. He still has to use a Mac in the studio, though. Heh, heh.

Dust Off My Web Design Chops

What's a new paradigm without a new Web site? The current [FMO site](#)³ is clean and well organized, but I'm just bored with it after four years. I coded those pages directly into HTML in Pine on a Unix terminal. It was worth plentiful geek points when most pages were "here's my site, here are some links, have a nice day," but it looks a little rickety today. Snazzing it up with JavaScript wasn't enough, either. I need a whole new design concept. The new site is in progress as I write this, and I'll probably post it in September. I'll drop a mention in this column when it's time for the Grand Unveiling.

Anagrams

One of the toughest tasks in any musician's life is coming up with the name for your band. Honestly, I didn't like the names of any of the bands I played in during my rock and roll days. So when the suggestion was made that we put together an ensemble from the members of Future Music Oregon, I knew we had to take a different approach or we'd end up with another stupid name.

1. <http://www.emf.org>

2. http://artists.mp3s.com/artists/16/john_villec.html

3. <http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/%7Efmo>

As any of you who are new music aficionados know, the names of new music groups are both lame and pretentious. Jeff made a suggestion worthy of a room of computer geeks: “How about an anagram of Future Music Oregon?” I set to work, and after rejecting several names that were far more offensive if not downright obscene, settled upon Tumour of Urgencies (okay, I’ll wait for you to check that it’s actually an anagram...there).

The plan is to assemble a group of, say, four or five, and use our various unorthodox MIDI controllers to make a set of interactive semi-improvisatory pieces. Once we play for a while and appear on one or two FMO concerts, we can book gigs around town, and maybe even go to Portland. Seriously, I hope the group will help publicize the studio. I also miss being in a band.

Copyright © 2000 David Ozab, dozab@atpm.com. [David Ozab](#)¹ is a Ph.D student at the University of Oregon, where he teaches electronic music courses and assists in the day-to-day operation of The Future Music Oregon Studios.



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

Mac 3D News and Views

by Nick Pavlovic, nick@vidi.com

A Perspective of 3D on the Mac

The *Mac 3D News and Views* column presents my views of the news that's shaping the perception of 3D on the Macintosh and the selected views and responses to these articles. This first column will provide a perspective of 3D on the Macintosh and what Apple and the Mac 3D Team are doing to upgrade the credibility and use of 3D on the Mac. I hope the news and views presented here stimulate your interest in 3D and encourage you to expand your use of 3D on the Mac. Send your comments, suggestions, and news items to me at nick@vidi.com and indicate whether or not they can be published with your name included.

Best regards,

—Nick Pavlovic

3D on the Macintosh

With the greatly expanded use of 3D special effects in science fiction movies like *The Matrix*, in animated features like *Toy Story*, and on the Web, where does the Macintosh stand in regards to mainstream 3D development and use? Once the dominant 3D platform among personal computers, the Macintosh has sadly sunk to near invisibility in the media and in public opinion.

In the 90s, the PC saw a big gain in computing power and reliability, and with Windows, it gained a GUI comparable to that of the Macintosh. Companies like SGI, with its dominance in 3D visualization on high-end workstations; and Autodesk, with its dominance in 3D CAD on workstation and personal computers, came out with Windows NT versions of 3D visualization products. They used their marketing and financial clout to dominate the media to the near exclusion of Mac 3D products from the much smaller Macintosh vendors.

During the same period, Apple was encountering severe financial, technical, and marketing problems. This resulted in a major loss of market share and customer confidence. Faced with a shrinking market, many Mac 3D developers either went out of business or chose to compete on the Windows NT platforms, only to find limited success.

Starting in 2000, a 3D resurgence was fueled by two separate forces. One force was Apple's successes in development and promotion of powerful G3 and G4 Macs, its support of OpenGL, and its success in getting a 3D powerhouse like SGI to port Maya, the industry leading 3D visualization product, to the Macintosh. The second force was grassroots efforts like the Mac 3D Team, which is putting forth a major effort into enhancing the prestige and ease of use of 3D on the Mac through word-of-mouth promotion and the ready availability of a powerful 3D tool, 3DJoy. What follows is a more detailed look at the effect that the Maya port and the Mac 3D Team can have in revitalizing 3D on the Macintosh.

Maya For The Mac

As [reported](#)¹ on Apple's Web site, Steve Jobs announced at the recent Apple Worldwide Developers Conference that the SGI decision to port Maya to Mac OS X is "a dream come true for us." This is very welcome and important news because it shows that Apple recognizes the importance of 3D to the Macintosh and that a 3D powerhouse like SGI considers the Macintosh to be a worthy 3D platform on which to run Maya.

However, based on my Mac instincts and background, the fact that the Mac OS X version will be high-priced and identical to the Windows NT and IRIX versions of Maya causes me some concern about the acceptance it will have with a majority of existing and future Macintosh graphics and 3D designers.

As an example, VersaCAD in the 80s chose to follow Macintosh guidelines and make a strategic marketing and software development alliance with VIDDI for Presenter 3D's visualization and animation capabilities. Autodesk chose to do a direct port in order to provide a consistent user interface across all platforms without regard to any strategic alliances. The result was that VersaCAD was immensely successful on the Macintosh, while Autodesk languished there.

I am thus inclined to think that the direct port of a dominant 3D graphics software product from another platform to the Macintosh "may be *déjà vu* all over again." However, I am without a doubt sure that Maya will both be readily accepted by many in the professional 3D community that use the Macintosh and that the SGI move will greatly enhance the reputation of 3D on the Macintosh.

An added benefit of the Maya port is that the benefits provided by professional 3D products

1. <http://www.apple.com/hotnews/articles/2000/05/wwdc>

that support the Macintosh look and feel (such as 3DJoy, Electric Image and Form•Z) will be more fully recognized and appreciated by the rest of the Macintosh 3D, graphics, education, and Web design communities. Through Apple's and SGI's support of 3D on the Macintosh, we may even see Pixar (headed by Steve Jobs) bringing RenderMan back to the Mac.

Grassroots Support For 3D On The Mac

The Mac 3D Team's grassroots efforts for making 3D on the Macintosh more popular have touched many in the Mac graphics, education, and Web design communities who have longed for professional 3D modeling, rendering, and animation capabilities that complement the great 2D design and video capabilities available on the Macintosh. The Mac 3D Team makes this possible by:

- Mobilizing 3D neophytes, educators, and professionals to contribute to the promotion of Macintosh 3D strengths and user accomplishments.
- Providing professional 3D tools and materials to schools, students, 3D amateurs, and 3D professionals.
- Supporting the Macintosh community in their learning and use of 3D.
- Developing 3D models, animations, and tutorials to make it easier to learn and use the 3D tools.
- Expanding the capabilities of the 3D tools through the development of special motion and object effects plug-ins.

To see what the Team is up to, download the 3D software, and check out the Beginner and Expert tutorials, visit the [Mac 3D Team Web site](http://www.vidi.com)¹. To join the effort of bringing the Macintosh into the forefront of 3D use and credibility and getting 3DJoy, go to the [3DJoy CD page](http://www.vidi.com/cd.html)².

Copyright © 2000 Nick Pavlovic, nick@vidi.com.



1. <http://www.vidi.com>
2. <http://www.vidi.com/cd.html>

About This Particular Web Site

by David Spencer, dspencer@atpm.com

The Apple Collection

Web: <http://www.theapplecollection.com>

All Kinds of Cool Apple Paraphernalia

From desktop images to an iStore to all kinds of pro-Mac links, the Apple Collection is sure to boost your love of the Macintosh and make your PC friends wonder how anybody could ever love a computer so much.

There's a plethora of desktop pictures, all categorized with the links to the artists' Web sites. And there's an iStore, where you can find all kinds of goodies to make your world more Mac-like.



Drink Different

The Apple Collection

Terraserver

Web: <http://terraserver.microsoft.com>

Are Satellites Watching Overhead?

Part of the Microsoft Network, Terraserver is a free service that allows you to easily view satellite images on your home computer. The images are part of a US geological survey

program to compile a complete photographic library of the world. Almost all of the US is available for searching. Other areas of the globe are spottier—but there are a number of areas in Europe available, as well as areas in Asia and Australia. Each area was photographed at a different time—some were taken last year, while others were taken ten years ago, so some areas may appear outdated.



Terraserver

To find a place, all you have to do is pick an area of interest and zoom in. You can zoom in as close as one square mile. While you can't zoom in close enough to see what your neighbor is doing, you can clearly identify homes, buildings, streets, etc. I was able to zoom in and locate my own home! The image shown here is of Apple Computer. The site doesn't let you zoom in on a location by address. It does, however, let you find locations by longitude/latitude or major point of interest. To find Apple, I used MapQuest to locate it. I then brought up Cupertino, California on Terraserver. From there it was a matter of comparing the map with the photo and voila!

UpsideToday (The Dotcom Graveyard)

Web: <http://www.upsidetoday.com/Ebiz/392ec4c10.html>

An Online Burial Ground

UpsideToday is a technologies information Web site where you can keep up with the latest in Silicon Valley. One particular section, entitled “The Dotcom Graveyard” is sure to pique your interests. We’ve all heard about how the vast majority of dotcom companies have or will be going out of business very soon. This is a virtual graveyard for all of those sites going belly up.

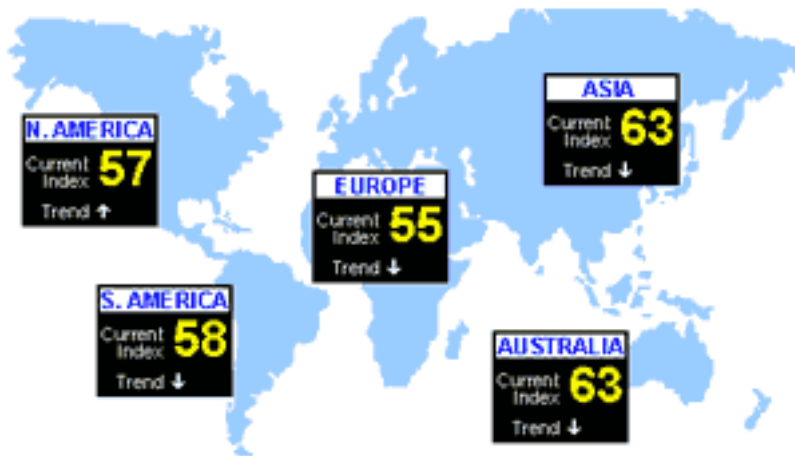
Once a dotcom passes into the great beyond, it is remembered with a virtual tombstone, complete with birthdate and the day it died. Each dotcom tombstone contains a memorable blurb from a company representative.

But before you enter, please remember to take off your hats out of respect for the dead.

Internet Traffic Report

Web: <http://www.Internettrafficreport.com>
How Fast is the Internet Moving?

Does it seem that the Internet is moving slower and slower? The Internet Traffic Report monitors the flow of data around the world. It then displays a value between zero and 100. Higher values indicate faster and more reliable connections.



The Internet Traffic Report

There are also graphs showing various traffic indices, response times, etc. and it’s updated every 15 minutes. Various servers around the world test via ping simultaneously. Each test server then compares the current response time to past responses from the same test to

determine if the response was bad or good. The scores from all test servers are averaged together into a single index.

Space Imaging

Web: <http://www.spaceimaging.com>
More Satellite Images

For years military agencies have used satellites to keep tabs on, well, all sorts of things. Commercial agencies are now in on this business, launching their own satellites into space. Space Imaging was one of the very first companies to do this. It provides superior images of many places on the earth.

Just by browsing the site, you can see the incredible detail which these cameras capture. If you purchase an image, you'll get an even more detailed view. Prices for these images vary widely depending on the area and size of the image. But even if you're not interested in buying a photo, it's interesting to browse what's available.

eHow

Web: <http://www.ehow.com>
How Things Get Done

If ever there was something that you didn't know how to do, but wanted to learn, check out eHow.com. Directions to many (non-classified!) tasks are laid out for you step-by-step. Learn how to cook eggs like a pro or fix a broken water pipe!

I was just curious, so I asked how to milk a cow. What I got was a step-by-step instructional and a list of things I'd need to purchase before trying to milk ol' Elsie. The introduction says: "A pail, short stool, two hands, and a very gentle milk cow are all you need to enjoy fresh milk every day. Once you start milking your cow, she will have to be milked twice a day every day until you let her dry up." Now, I don't plan to try my hand at milking a cow, but the mere fact that this was available amazes me. You can even download the instructions into your personal digital assistant, which is very convenient!

Just for kicks, I asked how to build a nuclear bomb. I received an error page, which contained some computer jargon and the following text: "Failed_Searches_Naughty." I hope the FBI doesn't pay me a visit!

ShowBizJobs

Web: <http://www.showbizjobs.com>

Film, TV, Recording, Multimedia, and Attractions Jobs

Everyone seems to be making movies these days, especially now with the new iMacs and iMovie. If you feel like joining up with one of the big name television or movie houses, check out ShowBizJobs.com. It's a great resource for finding a job in show business. You can search out job openings from clerical to studio production. Searches can be narrowed by state and type of job. All the major television and movie houses are represented here. It's a lot easier to search here than it is to visit each company's site and dig around until you find the job posting board!



"The one source for access to Film, Television, Recording,
Multimedia and Attractions job markets."

ShowBizJobs.com

...

The Web sites mentioned here are not endorsed by ATPM, they are simply suggestions for your own browsing endeavors.

Copyright © 2000 David Spencer, dspencer@atpm.com. David Spencer has been a Mac advocate since 1991, when he traded in his IBM PC Jr. for a Mac Classic.



Part IV: Banner Advertisements

Banner advertisements. Think about them for a moment. When was the last time *you* clicked on one? Yesterday? Last Week? Last Month? Last Year? Never? It's becoming more and more likely that you won't have clicked on a banner ad for some time.

So if you want potential visitors to your Web site to click on your banner, what should you do? It's getting harder and harder to get responses. 18 months ago a 'good' banner would entice 5% of its viewers to click on it, and a 'poorly' designed banner would receive around 1%. Today even good banners will get only a 1% click through.

Why is this? Personally, I think we are all bored with them. I've trained my eyes to just ignore them. I'm sure you've all done something similar. I've been asked hundreds of times to click on the monkey, and I've decided hundreds of times not to click on the monkey. I don't like banner ads that pretend to be interactive but really just stick on a fake menu button (Windows, I must add) in the hope that I'll click on it.

Generally, I dislike the things. They take up too much room in my browser window; they distract me with poor animation; they pretend to be part of the Web page; they are hardly ever relevant to the Web page I'm viewing. Sometimes they're not content just to stay on the Web page. They'll pop up in a new window and say "Click me NOW!"

So why, you may ask, am I writing this article? Well, love 'em or loathe 'em, banners are here to stay. If you have your own Web site, the chances are good that you will be displaying a banner on one of your pages.

Banners You Have on Your Web Site

If you are using free Web space such as [Geocities](http://www.geocities.com)¹ or [Tripod](http://www.tripod.com)², they will require that you display their banner ads on your Web site. If you are using some sort of free stats tracking program like [Superstats](http://www.superstats.com)³ or [Hitbox](http://www.hitbox.com)⁴, these will also require a banner on your pages.

1. <http://www.geocities.com>

2. <http://www.tripod.com>

Sometimes if you use free clip art, you may well have to display another banner. That's a possible three banners on your Web pages before you even have any content on them.

If you sign up for any free services that require the use of a banner, make sure you read the terms and conditions. Some may require that you place the banner at the top of the page, or that their banner be the only one you display. If possible, try to use services that will let you place the banner at the base of the page. This means the banner is loaded last. You don't want people to click away from your Web site before the page has even loaded, do you? Of course, you may be earning money each time someone clicks on the banner, in which case you may wish to place it nearer the top.

Your Very Own Banner

Banners are a way of promoting your Web site, but how do you get your banners onto other Web sites? There are a few methods.

1. Pay.
2. Don't Pay:
 - a. Join a banner exchange.
 - b. Send your banner out to other Web sites and ask them *really* nicely if they want to show it.

Lets go into more detail...

1. Pay...With Money

Yes we know everything is supposed to be free on the Internet, but money gets you everywhere in this life. Why not take advantage of that fact?

It pays to think about where you are sticking your ads. If you sell new and second-hand Macs from your Web site, advertising on AT^{PM} would be ideal, as your target audience is the same as our readership. If, on the other hand, you sell PC software or have a site about collecting Pokémon, then AT^{PM} probably isn't the best place to put your ad.

This works the same in traditional print media. The ads you find in a magazine reflect the content of that magazine. For example, in a magazine about popular music, like [NME](#)¹, you

3. <http://www.superstats.com>

4. <http://www.hitbox.com>

will find ads for new CDs, live concerts, and stereo equipment, as well as ads for films, TV, beer, software and other products that will interest the magazine's audience. You probably won't find an ad for fly-killer; you'd need to buy "Killing Insect Monthly Magazine (incorporating Monthly Maggot Masher)" for that kind of thing.

So who is your target audience? Well, you need to look at it logically and not quite so logically. For instance, if we have a Web site that sells perfume, what would be the best Web sites to advertise on? If we think about this logically, we could advertise on:

- Fashion sites: The fashion and the fragrance industry are very closely linked. Any fashion house worth its salt has its own fragrance nowadays. (Examples: [Hugo Boss](http://www.hugoboss.com)¹, [Chanel](http://www.chanel.com)², [Christian Dior](http://www.dior.com)³, [Ted Baker](http://www.tedbaker.co.uk)⁴). Surfers looking at fashion and clothing sites are likely to be the same people who would be interested in fragrance.
- Beauty and cosmetic sites: Again, the fragrance industry is tied in with the beauty industry. The whole idea is looking good, feeling good, and smelling good.
- Women's interest sites: 50% of men's fragrance is bought by their partners. Go figure.

OK, that gets the obvious sites out of the way. Let's look at the not so obvious.

Perfumes and fragrances make ideal gifts. The busiest times of the year for this industry are Christmas, Valentine's Day, Mother's Day, and Father's Day. Some Web sites offer you a reminder service for special days. You give them a list of special days, like birthdays and anniversaries. The Web site then notifies you in advance of these special days via email, giving you ample opportunity to buy a card (and some perfume, given that you've seen the ad on their site).

Wedding sites. There are lots of Web sites giving advice on preparing your wedding day; many brides and grooms will want to choose a special fragrance for their big day.

Obviously, there will be Web sites on which you won't want to advertise—like a Web site

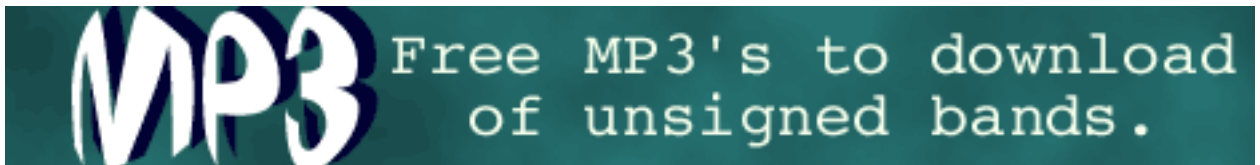
1. <http://www.nme.com>
1. <http://www.hugo.com>
2. <http://www.chanel.com>
3. <http://www.dior.com>
4. <http://www.tedbaker.co.uk>

called “We hate perfume.” Joking aside, avoid any Web site that is completely unrelated to your product. Although many AT^PM readers may have purchased perfume at some point, while they are reading AT^PM, buying a bottle of [Tommy Cologne](#)¹ is probably the last thing on their minds. Well, at least until Steve Jobs announces a new range of fragranced iMacs.

To put it plainly, we don’t tend to click on banners at the best of times. If you were reading an AT^PM article about MP3’s, on which of the following would you be more likely to click?



Banner A



Banner B

Want to know a way to ensure that the viewers of your banner will be your exact target audience? Try this: go to [Yahoo!](#)² and type in “weddings” in the search box. When you receive the list of results, check out the banner. Unless they’ve changed it by the time you read this article, you should see a banner advertising some sort of Web-based wedding service. Believe me, this is not a coincidence! If you want your perfume Web site’s banner to feature in this prominent position, hand over a large amount of cash to Yahoo! for a keyword of perfume or fragrance, and presto! Lots and lots of targeted banner views.

If you want to know more details of advertising on Yahoo!, visit their [Advertising Page](#)³

1. <http://www.tommy.com>

2. <http://www.yahoo.com>

3. <http://docs.yahoo.com/info/advertising/>

2. Don't Pay

(a) Join a banner exchange.

Part 2(a) of getting your banners onto other Web sites is by joining a banner exchange. These programs display your banners on other Web sites in return for your displaying their banner on yours.

They usually work on a ratio system: if you show a banner from the exchange twice, you get yours shown once on another site. Some ratios are better than others, so it's worth checking out a few of the different programs.

Most of the exchanges require your graphic to be of a certain size, in GIF format, and under 10K. Most accept animated GIFs, as long as they are under the 10K limit.

One of the most popular exchanges is [Link Exchange](http://www.linkexchange.com)¹, but you can find a whole list of banner exchanges, as well as some banner creation tools, at TheFreeSite.com².

Something to look out for when choosing an exchange is whether you can choose what sort of banners are shown on your site. If you own a kid-themed site, you don't want to be showing 'adult' banners. Here's a useful tip: If you can choose on what sort of Web sites your banner is shown, then choose sites with a content similar to your own. For example, if you have an entertainment site, choose to show your banner on other entertainment sites. If you can choose what banners are displayed on your site, then don't choose 'entertainment' banners; otherwise you'll be more likely to lure visitors away from your site to another, similar site.

(b) Send your banner out to other Web sites and ask them really nicely if they want to show it.

Well the title explains it all. If you find any Web sites with content similar to your own, email the Webmaster and ask if he is willing to display one of your banners on his site. He may ask for his banner to be shown in return, but hey, fair's fair!

One thing to mention: Please ask the Web site owners if you can send your banner to them first. Not everyone appreciates unsolicited attachments.

1. <http://www.linkexchange.com>

2. http://TheFreeSite.com/Webmaster_Freebies/Banner_Freebies/index.html

We've Found Where to Put it, But What Now?

Remember when I said that hardly anyone clicks on banners anymore? You may be forgiven for thinking there's no point in bothering with them. Just because no one's clicked on your banner doesn't mean it's been wasted. Imagine if every time you go on the Net you see this banner:



You may never click it, but that URL will be ingrained in your brain. The next time you want to order a spare part online, where do you think you're going to go? This is the way traditional advertising works. You can't click on a newspaper ad, can you? (Not yet anyway!)

So don't worry about click throughs; just think about the exposure your site is getting.

I spoke to self-proclaimed banner freak Paul McIntyre, who has a *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* Web site called [The Watchers Council](http://www.watcherscouncil.co.uk)¹. (Regular readers may know that I have to mention Sarah Michelle Gellar at least once a month!)

Banner making is quite addictive when you get into it; there are an infinite number of possibilities to the eventual look and style of a banner, and in many ways, it is an art.

When designing a banner, I always try to go for a simple look that will make people interested in what you have to offer. Of course this is true for almost all advertising, but with banners, you have a very small amount of space, and people can often fall into the trap of putting too much information on them.

Remember that people won't actually be looking at your banner for very long, if at all. So the more information you have on your banner, the less likely anyone is going to want to look at it. The banner is more likely to be remembered if it holds less information, but important information.

1. <http://www.watcherscouncil.co.uk>

So what should you actually put on your banner? Research suggests that the banners with the most click throughs tend to contain one or more of the following:

- Banners that look like they are interactive. They may appear to be menus but when you click to activate the menu, they take you to the advertised site.
- Ladies with not many clothes. Yes, sex is still the big seller on the Internet.
- The word 'free'. People still want things for free.
- The words 'Click here' or 'Click me.' Banners with these words generate more click throughs than those without.
- Secret Stuff: banners that offer secret information, like game hints.

Let's have a quick look at some of these techniques.

- Banners that use fake interactive methods to lure people to their Web sites will find that the people they tricked onto their sites don't look at many pages.
- You can use sex to entice people to your stereo Web site, but sex-surfers are going to be pretty annoyed when they find no pictures of Pamela Anderson. Besides, how much cash does the average adolescent schoolboy have to spend on your stereos, anyway?
- "Free." If you have something for free, then advertise it. Free downloads, free desktop images, free software, free whatever.

Paul McIntyre gives this advice:

Use only a few colours, and no more than four; this gives a more eye-catching look to the banner. Try not to go overboard on the number of colours; eyes will generally be drawn to a picture with very few colours that stand out, instead of a huge mixture.

Be original; people will remember your banner if you have a stunning design, or an interesting slogan/quote. If you have an easy-to-remember URL, then use it to your advantage and put it on the banner; if you don't, then put the name of the site on instead.

That last point is a good one. If your site is hosted on free Web space, the chances are that you won't have the catchiest URL around. If you put it on the banner, no one is going to remember it.

I'll leave you with one last comment from Paul: "Choose the right places to advertise; it would make sense to send out your Buffy banners to other Buffy sites, but of course, this is

I'm watching. . .
<http://www.watcherscouncil.co.uk>



true with all advertising; the trick is to know your audience.”

You can see Paul’s range of [Buffy banners](#)¹ at his Web site.

...

Okay, that’s it for another month. Next time we’ll be checking out GIFs and PNGs. Email me at gosborne@atpm.com if you have questions on this or any other aspect of Web graphics.

Copyright © 2000 Grant Osborne, gosborne@atpm.com.



1. http://www.watcherscouncil.co.uk/my_banners.htm

Become a Network Guru in 10 Easy Steps

by Matthew Glidden, mglidden@atpm.com

Step IX: TCP/IP Gaming in a Mixed Network

For many people, the main reason for connecting more than one computer together at home is for playing games. Whether playing with or against your friends and family, there are many games that come network-ready, for instance Quake 3 and Unreal Tournament. To add even more competitive zest to the stew, there are also several that network across platforms, allowing Mac and PC users to try to get the virtual best of one another.

The good news is you don't need much hardware to set up a network. One Ethernet hub or switch and a length of Ethernet cable for each computer is sufficient, which should cost you less than \$50 in total if you don't already have them. For one Mac and one PC, it's also possible to use a single Ethernet crossover cable (as opposed to normal straight-through cable) and avoid the cost of the hub.

Chances are, your Mac is already Ethernet-ready. If not, you should be able to find a 10BaseT NuBus or PCI Ethernet card for under \$20. Dealmac.com, Smalldog.com, and MacResQ.com are all good sources. They're also good places to look for a hub and cables. Most new hubs are 10/100BaseT and will work at either Ethernet speed. Older hubs may be 10BaseT or 100BaseT only, limiting them to networks of that speed. Make sure your hub matches the speed of your Ethernet adapter (for example, all iMacs have 10/100BaseT Ethernet built-in, and will work with either).

To set up the hardware side of your network, connect each computer to one of the ports on your hub, as shown in Figure 1. If you're using an Ethernet crossover cable to connect a single Mac and PC, it'll look like Figure 2.

Many network games use and/or require TCP/IP as their connection method. Configure your Mac's TCP/IP information in the TCP/IP control panel. If you use this Mac for Internet access, you'll first need to create a new configuration for your home network so you don't lose your Internet information. Choose "Configurations" under the File menu to create a new one, and call it something like "Home Network." Set "Configure:" to manually, then enter the IP address and subnet mask. The IP address can be any four-part number from 0 to 255, separated by periods. 100.100.100.1, for example. If you want to avoid conflicting

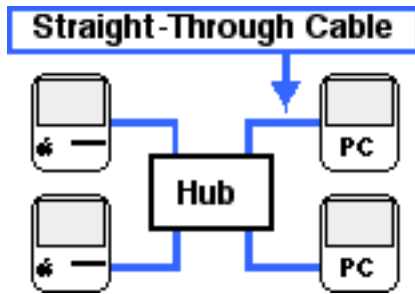


Figure 1

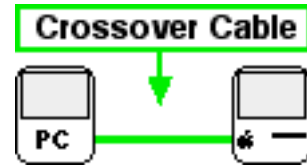


Figure 2

with any Internet addresses, you can make the first two numbers 192.168, the network addresses reserved for private networks. 192.168.0.1 or 0.2 is common. The subnet mask will be 255.255.255.0.

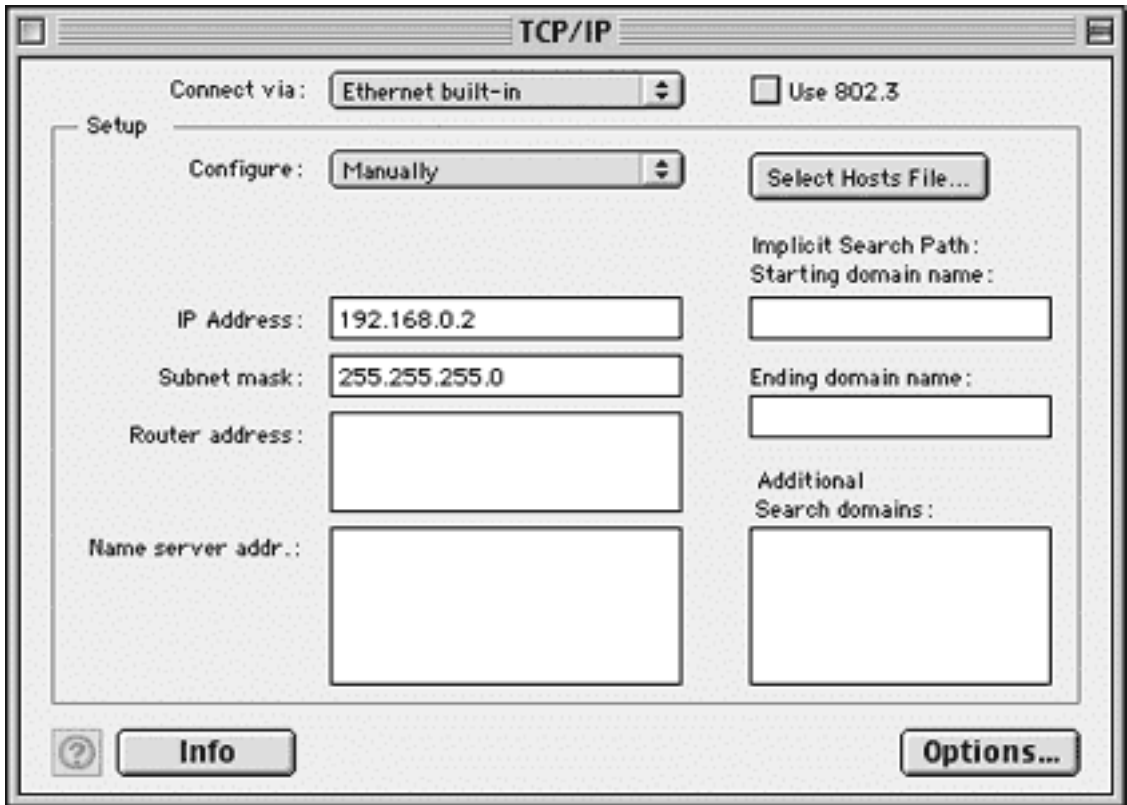


Figure 3

To set up the same information on a Windows-based PC, open the “Control Panel” under

“Settings” from the Start menu. Open the “Network” icon, highlight TCP/IP and select Properties. Under the “IP Address” tab, you basically repeat the above steps: set an IP manually, enter the address (it must be unique, so add one to the last number of what you set above), enter the same subnet mask, then select OK. You’ll probably have to restart the PC to complete the change, but that’s it.

To test your connection, you can try “pinging” the other computer’s IP address. Windows PCs can use ping from MSDOS or the “Run...” command line, and Macs can ping with the freeware program WhatRoute (available at file archives like Tucows.com). Pinging sends a packet of information to a given IP address and checks to see how quickly it returns. From one of the computers, ping the other’s IP address to confirm your network is connected properly.

If your connection isn’t working, here are some things to check:

1. Did the computers’ Ethernet ports work properly previously?
2. Is the Ethernet driver software installed on each computer? If your Mac’s Ethernet adapter was installed by someone, rather than built-in, you’ll need to install the adapter’s software before it will work correctly.
3. Are the Ethernet adapters and hub all of a compatible speed?
4. Are the cables connected securely?
5. If you’re using a hub, you *must* use straight-through cables. If you’re not using a hub you *must* use a crossover cable. Crossover cables are labeled as such, although straight-through cables may not be (since they’re “normal”).

Once the connection is up and running, you should be able to select TCP/IP as a connection method in your network games and use the other computer’s IP address for playing. For game-specific network configuration information, make sure to check the game’s instruction manual first.

Copyright © 2000 Matthew Glidden, mglidden@atpm.com.



Extras: Cartoon

by Michael Morgan, mrspiffy@earthlink.net



Copyright © 2000 Michael Morgan, mrspiffy@earthlink.net.



Extras: Interview

by Daniel Chvatik, dchvatik@atpm.com

An Interview with Gerry Beggs

ATPM's Managing Editor, Daniel Chvatik, had the pleasure of interviewing Gerry Beggs by email last month. Gerry is the creator of [Gerry's ICQ](http://www.gerryicq.com/)¹, an alternative ICQ client with more advanced features than [ICQ Inc.'s](http://www.icq.com/)² own ICQ client for the Macintosh. ICQ Inc., formerly known as Mirabilis, created the instant messaging (or “chat”) application that came to be known simply as “ICQ” (I seek U).

...

Tell us a bit about yourself. Where are you from? What do you do when you don't work on Gerry's ICQ? How did you get started programming on the Mac?



I'm from Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, just about as far from any ocean as you can get. I work at the Real Canadian StupidStore—uh, I mean SuperStore. <sarcasm>It's *loads* of fun.</sarcasm> I need a new job. I am an avid cyclist. I enjoy long distance riding, not the kind where you smash your bike up off-road. I plan on taking a couple weeks off this summer to spend camping and travelling on my bike.

I've been programming since I was in grade five, on a Commodore 64, but I started programming on the Mac in my first year of university, majoring in Computer Science. About eight years ago. (No, I still haven't graduated. It's too expensive for my pocketbook right now.) I fell in love with the Mac very quickly. Before university, I only knew the world of the PC; using the Mac was a big eye-opener.

What made you write Gerry's ICQ?

-
1. <http://www.gerryicq.com/>
 2. <http://www.icq.com>

It's a long story...just by chance, I was browsing around ICQ's Web site. I found a message board for Mac users, where about 90% of the messages were complaints about the poor support ICQ Inc., then called Mirabilis, offered for their Mac client. I saw one post of someone who said he was sick of it and was going to create an open source ICQ clone. I emailed him saying that I'd like to help out, even though I'd never done any type of network programming before.

To make a long story short, an open source project was [started](#)¹. Originally called Mac MICQ, its name changed to TrueICQ and is now called CQ2.

Over a period of a few months, I read up on how to program for Open Transport, slowly created a library for this open source client, and submitted it to the project. I created a sample ICQ client using my library to show that it worked. They were impressed and decided to use my library for their client also. However, they have progressed very slowly since then and they still don't really have a usable client, although I would really like to see another ICQ clone. I know of another one in the works, but I'm not sure if the author has the time to dedicate toward it right now.

My client was *never* intended to be used on a regular basis. It was just to show that my library code worked. For fun, I began adding features to it to make it more usable. People who had heard about the client through the Web site started using it, and the user base grew slowly purely by word-of-mouth.

One day, I began receiving many, many emails about the client. I was wondering, why the sudden surge of users? It turned out VersionTracker had started listing it on their site. I have no idea who posted it to VersionTracker.

And the rest is history, I guess. The user base has continued to grow.

Using your best estimate, how many users do you think currently chat with your client? Do you track user activity in any way, such as sending messages to a server of yours when they go on-line?

No, I don't track users in any way. The current download page counts the number of downloads of each language Gerry's ICQ is translated into. However, there are several sites

1. <http://blizzard.dragonfire.net/micq/>

(VersionTracker, especially) which link directly to the download files, so this reduces the accuracy of the counter. The counter alone shows over 10,000 downloads of the English version (Japanese comes a close second) after each version I post, so I'm fairly certain the number is more than 10,000. I was once told it could possibly be as much as 100,000, but I seriously doubt that. That's the best estimation I can come up with for now.

<rant mode=on>I think the number of people who like Gerry's ICQ is a good reflection of how much they dislike the alternative. It would be nice if ICQ Inc. would listen to their users instead of cramming every feature (useful or not) into their Windows client, then have those features slowly trickle down into their Mac client. There's more to a good program besides features. It has to be useful, well-organized, consistent, and intuitive. I may not have achieved these goals perfectly, but the difference is that I'm trying.</rant>

Currently you sell some banner space on your Web site, but that probably doesn't cover your costs very much. Have you been considering making Gerry's ICQ shareware or integrating banner ads, like GameRanger or Eudora? Do you have plans to make money off your work?

No. Absolutely not. In fact, I don't even like the banner ads on my site. My main motivation in making Gerry's ICQ is for a better ICQ client for *myself*. I just happen to post it on a server for anyone who comes along so that, if they like it, they can use it also.

[**Note:** The Gerry's ICQ Web site has undergone a major make-over since this interview, which completely removes the banner ads.]

Do you find Apple's developer support sufficient?

Apple provides very good reference material, but *very* little in the way of tutorials. However, an excellent [electronic book](#)¹ exists which fills this niche for the Mac Toolbox, called Macintosh C.

I haven't looked very much into Cocoa. From what I've read it seems that there is sufficient reference material, but again, tutorials are lacking. I also read however that Apple is working to improve this.

1. <http://www.mactech.com/macintosh-c/>

What's the biggest problem you've encountered during the development process so far?

My biggest problem so far has been figuring out how to program for Open Transport. It is one of the least documented parts of the OS, and for someone new to network programming like myself, it is very hard to get started. It took me one or two hundred pages of straight reading before I figured out how to send anything over the network.

I'm still not very comfortable with Open Transport, but Apple does provide one thing which is invaluable—mailing lists. People on these lists have been very helpful whenever I've had a question.

What programming tools and language did you use to create Gerry's ICQ, and why?

I use CodeWarrior (whatever the current version is), Resourcerer and sometimes ResEdit.

The only other real alternative to CodeWarrior is MPW (Macintosh Programmer's Workshop), which I've never really tried, but looks a little too intimidating to me. Also, I think support for it is non-existent nowadays; even Apple themselves are using CodeWarrior now.

REALbasic looks great for making quick and simple applications, and I'm sure an ICQ client could be written in REALbasic, but I prefer to have a bit more control over my project. Also, REALbasic programs are known for having large file sizes and sometimes being a bit slow.

I program in a sort of hybrid C/C++ style. It's not pure OOP (Object Oriented Programming), but I use objects where I think they're convenient. For instance, 95% of the GUI is done with objects, but the ICQ networking library is purely procedural.

I am not using a framework such as PowerPlant simply because I am not familiar with it. Gerry's ICQ is written completely in plain Mac OS Toolbox code.

Do you plan to make the transition to Mac OS X? If yes, are you planning to carbonize Gerry's ICQ or rewrite it for Cocoa?

This has been a very common question lately. Yes, I will be making a Carbon version relatively soon. Rewriting it for Cocoa would seem like too much work when Carbon is available, but I certainly do plan on learning it for future projects.

Do you think Apple is making the move to Mac OS X as smooth for developers as possible?

I think Apple is doing the best they can for such a huge difference between OS versions. Mac OS X is a whole new operating system. It isn't simply an upgrade to Mac OS 9.x. Overall, I am quite impressed, but there are some things I think should be different in it, mostly minor things though. There will always be some things people will complain about. Mac OS X 1.0 will not be perfect. I'm sure any big problems will be fixed in subsequent revisions.

Did ICQ Inc. ever contact you regarding your ICQ client?

I've never been contacted by ICQ Inc. I don't know what their official position is with respect to clones, however I've talked to someone who has been in contact with their Mac programmers and they've said that they are very impressed with what I've done!

Do you know what ICQ Inc.'s position is with respect to "clones"? Do they encourage them, discourage them, or are they neutral?

They do not encourage them. If they did, they would have released the specs for their protocol. Instead, several people have dedicated lots of time to decoding the protocol simply by looking at the network traffic produced by ICQ's client. These people are making other ICQ clones for Linux and Unix in general, BeOS, and the Amiga. If ICQ Inc. discouraged clones, I'm sure Gerry's ICQ wouldn't be around right now. I'm not sure if they're neutral either. Perhaps they're waiting for the right moment to cut us all out. I hope that answers your question! :))

Where do you see as the greatest strength of your ICQ client, compared to ICQ's own Mac client?

I think the majority of users prefer the general interface of the client. It is much more Mac-like and more organized than ICQ's client. Their Mac client is looking more and more like a Windows program with each new version. Also, there's the fact that I (sometimes) listen to people's suggestions, and implement them. This is one thing ICQ is *not* known for.

The Windows Character Translation feature is very popular with non-English speaking users because the codes for the characters with the various accents are different on Windows. So speaking to a Windows user is very difficult without this feature. If you notice,

the latest version of ICQ's client has this feature also. I wonder where they got that idea from...that's fine by me though. If I somehow helped to make their client better, then that's a good thing.

What are your future plans for Gerry's ICQ? Which is your highest priority; do you want to concentrate more on catching up with features found in the Windows version, or do you plan to implement more "Mac-only" features?

That's a question I'm often asked. I take a casual attitude towards this project. It is not my career, and I'm not going to get stressed out over it. I usually implement features which I am in the mood for doing at the time. It's not a very satisfying answer to most people, but it's the truth. I do keep a "To Do" list posted on the Web site which is far from complete. I keep another list, written on a white board, of smaller features which I try to get done for the next version. Usually they are requests from other users.

How often do you use Gerry's ICQ yourself? How much time do you spend chatting?

More time than I'd like to admit! ;) When ever I'm online, Gerry's ICQ is running. I don't actively seek out people I don't know to chat with (although I have met several people whom I now consider friends, even though I've never met them in person). I usually use it to keep in contact with people I already know, so any time I spend chatting is usually just casual.

Thank you very much for the interview. Good luck!

Copyright © 2000 Daniel Chvatik, dchvatik@atpm.com.



Extras: Desktop Pictures

by Lee Bennett, lbennett@atpm.com

National Parks

ATPM's assistant Webmaster, Lee Bennett, offers his third batch of new desktop pictures. The images are of various terrain Lee photographed during his autumn 1999 vacation through the northwest states and British Columbia, Canada. Additional images at 1024 x 768 resolution will be made available in future months. All the photos from the trip can now be viewed in his [online photo album](#)¹. More desktop pictures from his trip are available in prior issues of ATPM—[Northwest](#)² and [Animals](#)³.

[This month's pictures](#)⁴ feature various terrain within Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks, including geysers, rivers, waterfalls, and mountain ranges.

All photos were taken with a Canon AE-1 using a 35–200mm zoom lens and Kodak Gold 200ASA 35mm film. Digitizing was performed on Kodak Picture CDs at the time of film processing. Resampling and retouching were performed with Adobe Photoshop 4.01 for Macintosh.

Previous Months' Desktop Pictures

If you haven't seen the rest of the series, it includes: [Yellowstone National Park](#)⁵, [Drops](#)⁶, [Toronto](#)⁷, [Niagara Falls](#)⁸, [Monaco](#)⁹, [Montréal](#)¹⁰, [Bahamas](#)¹¹, [Clouds](#)¹², [Aerial](#)¹³, [Made with Macs](#)¹⁴, [Landscapes](#)¹⁵, [Northwest](#)¹⁶, [Animals](#)¹⁷, and [Spring Flora](#)¹⁸.

-
1. <http://www.dtpbylee.com/vacation/>
 2. <http://www.atpm.com/6.04/northwest/>
 3. <http://www.atpm.com/6.05/animals/>
 4. <http://www.atpm.com/6.07/national-parks/>
 5. <http://www.atpm.com/5.03/yellowstone.shtml>
 6. <http://www.atpm.com/5.05/drops/>
 7. <http://www.atpm.com/5.07/toronto/>
 8. <http://www.atpm.com/5.08/niagara/>
 9. <http://www.atpm.com/5.09/monaco/>
 10. <http://www.atpm.com/5.10/montreal/>
 11. <http://www.atpm.com/5.11/bahamas/>
 12. <http://www.atpm.com/5.12/clouds/>
 13. <http://www.atpm.com/6.01/aerial/>
 14. <http://www.atpm.com/6.02/madewithmacs/>

Placing Desktop Pictures

Mac OS 8.5 and Newer

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.

If 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,

15. <http://www.atpm.com/6.03/landscapes/>

16. <http://www.atpm.com/6.04/northwest/>

17. <http://www.atpm.com/6.05/animals/>

18. <http://www.atpm.com/6.06/spring-flora/>

[reviewed](#)¹ in issue 5.10 and available for [download](#)².

Copyright © 2000 Lee Bennett, lbennett@atpm.com.



-
1. <http://www.atpm.com/5.10/roundup.shtml>
 2. <http://www.peircesw.com/DeskPicture.html>

Review: Updates

by the ATPM Staff, updates@atpm.com

Adobe Photoshop 5.5



Some people strive for excellence; others make excellence a habit. A good example of a company that makes excellence a habit is [Adobe](#)¹. Playing major roles in the computer industry, Adobe has set many computer standards that nowadays we just take for granted. One such *de facto* standard for designers is Photoshop, which has become not only a standard, but a Holy grail.

In fact, [Adobe Photoshop](#)² has surpassed competition so much that we depend on Adobe for new innovations in this particular field. This can be either a blessing or a curse depending on the way you look at it. The point is that when a program gets into the Photoshop league, it can just get away with just about anything.

For instance, Adobe added some minor new features to Photoshop, a few fine-tunings, and bundled it with another piece of Adobe software (ImageReady). Then it sold the bundle as a new version of Photoshop, one that is supposed to make Photoshop more Web savvy. Can someone explain to me how including ImageReady makes Photoshop more Web savvy? (I am not talking minor tweakings here; I'm just saying that the way it is advertised can be very misleading.) If in a grocery store they start giving away tomatoes with lettuce does that make the lettuce greener or the tomatoes redder?

Mind you, I am not undervaluing either the new Photoshop or ImageReady. However, I still found that previous versions were more substantial than this 5.0–5.5 upgrade. We didn't get the innovative follow-up to layers, masks, or even the debated history palette. The features we did get are not so great, either. Some of them might be fun, but nothing really serious. Below I will discuss some of the new features of this version of Photoshop.

“Preparing images for the Web”

Basically, you can use ImageReady for your Web imaging needs. Since ImageReady is a real gem in this area, you've got most of your Web image needs covered. (Just remember

1. <http://www.adobe.com/products/photoshop/main.html>

2. <http://www.atpm.com/4.08/page18.shtml>

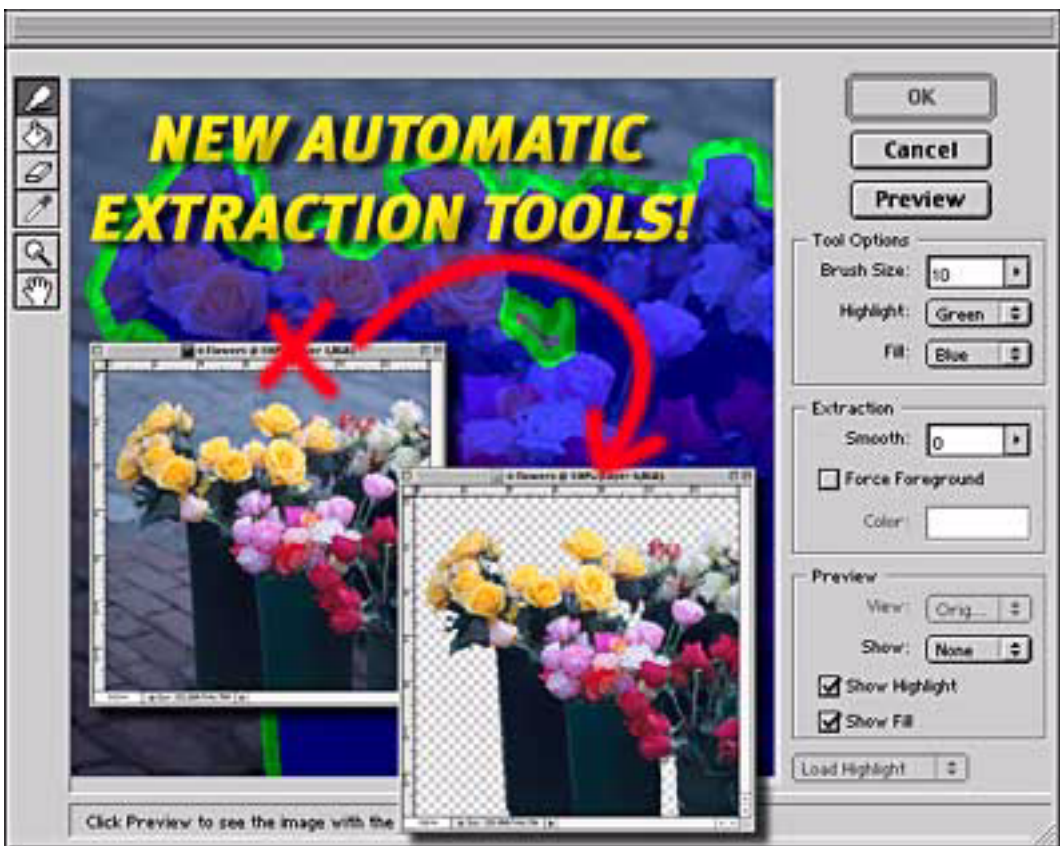
that ImageReady is a separate program, so you'll have to spare additional disk space and memory for it.)

“Erasing areas of a layer to transparency”

Excuse me? Wasn't this introduced when layers first appeared back in Photoshop version 3.0? That's what I call really innovative!

“Extracting objects from their background”

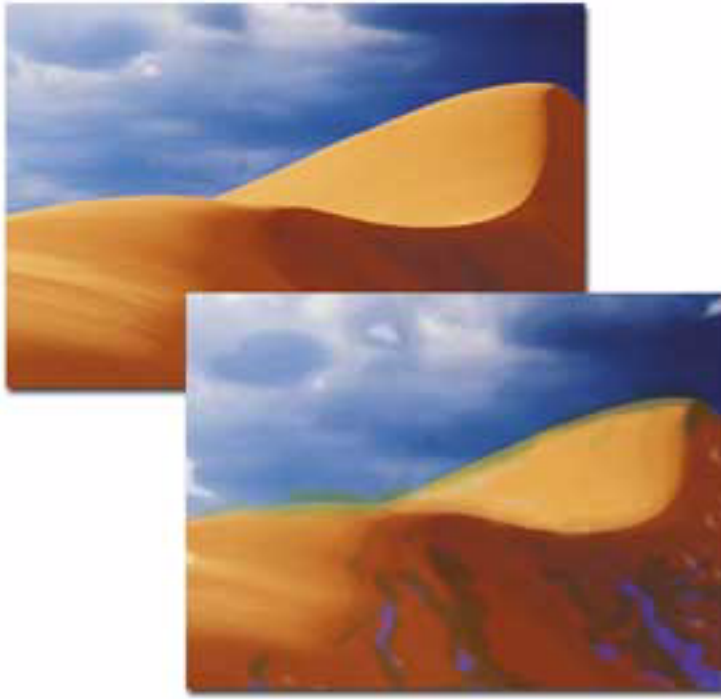
Now this is a feature I like. It sort of masks out the complex edges in images (like hair, fur, etc.). The interface is a bit clumsy, but to give credit where it is due, it is rather cool.



Photoshop 5.5: Extracting objects from their background.

“Using the art history brush tool”

Again a very nice Painter-like experimental brush effect that uses history instances as its source. Nice gadget.



Photoshop 5.5: Brush Effects

“Creating multiple-image layouts”

This is a feature that will be useful in production houses. What it basically does is layout the same image on the same document according to user needs—ideal for making packages, Web galleries, etc.

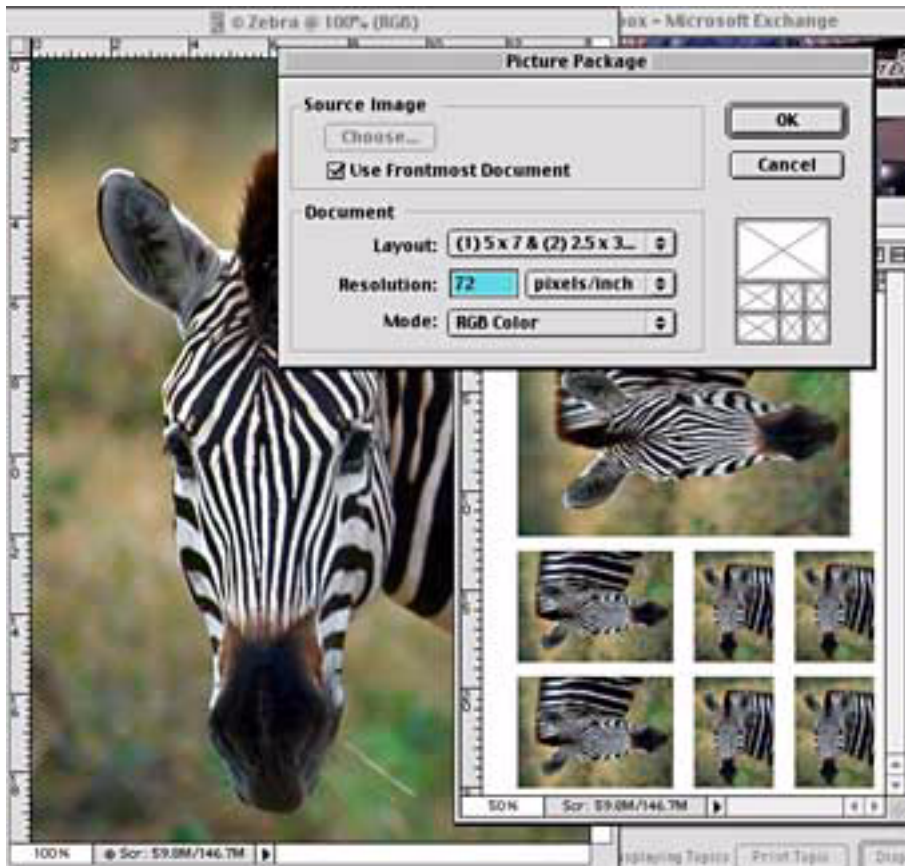
“Adjusting contrast automatically”

Wow! You don’t have to open the levels or curves window anymore! Adobe has especially innovated with this “feature.” Now you “Choose Image > Adjust > Auto Contrast.” This is not a joke. Adobe somehow is so proud of this breakthrough that it’s acknowledging it as a feature. Maybe next they will include a shortcut for an menu item that does not have an assigned shortcut and call that a feature worth including in version 6.0.

“Using enhanced tools and commands”

Basically fine-tuning here and there. Nothing really major.

Yes, this is it. That’s what 5.5 is all about! I know that three out of the seven “features” are cool, but can they justify spending \$200? Oh, I forgot to mention, as you are reading this,



Photoshop 5.5: Creating multiple-image layouts

Adobe has stopped selling ImageReady separately. Strange, huh? The way I see it, this is a great strategy for distributing ImageReady.

Verdict: Version 5.5 feels more like a bundle than an upgrade. If you are new to the image enhancement scene or you need a program to fulfill all your image needs, then Adobe Photoshop is the best and only way to go. If, however, you are considering an upgrade, then unless you are a Webmaster I'd advice you to save the money for something better. The new features just are not worth the upgrade for most users.

DiskWarrior 2.0 (Correction)



In ATPM 6.03, the [review](#)¹ of Alsoft DiskWarrior 2.0 states that DiskWarrior's DiskShield technology failed to generate any warning messages, even when ResEdit was used to modify portions of the system.

There is a reason that editing with ResEdit failed to generate a warning: DiskShield, and DiskWarrior as a whole, protect against damage to the disk directory, not the system file. The disk directory keeps track of file information on all disks, as well as what portions of the disk are currently available for new files and what portions of the disk are already assigned to existing files. Every formatted partition has its own directory. In contrast, only partitions with system folders contain system files.

DiskShield works in three ways. First, it writes all changes to the disk directory immediately. When DiskShield is not installed, the Mac OS writes this information to a temporary cache first, then to the permanent directory when the disk is idle. In the event of a crash, the cached information is lost if it has not been written to the directory. By immediately writing to the cache, DiskShield prevents errors created by lost disk directory information.

Second, DiskShield monitors information written to the disk directory. If it determines a program is trying to overwrite the disk directory with non-directory data, DiskShield will prevent this from happening and alert the user. Often when this happens, the number of files lost due to invalid directory data could be in the thousands. Instead of warning the user about each occurrence, DiskShield will present one warning per hour under most circumstances.

Finally, DiskShield reads the disk directory data as it is accessed to determine if there is any pre-existing damage. If there is, DiskShield will alert the user and recommend that the directory be repaired.

Personally, my system has always been fairly stable. I can't say how much DiskShield has contributed to this stability, though it certainly has not hurt to have it installed.

DragThing 2.9



The wildly popular application and file management utility [DragThing](#)¹ has just been updated to version 2.9. All sorts of good fixin's have been added since our original review back in April's [Shareware Roundup](#)². These include German language support, an easier way to switch between different languages (not to mention a scriptable method too), and better communication between DragThing and the Finder.

-
1. <http://www.atpm.com/6.03/diskwarrior.shtml>
 1. <http://www.dragthing.com/english/download.html>
 2. <http://www.atpm.com/5.04/roundup.shtml>

Now, DragThing will draw its dock tabs and backgrounds in the style of the current Appearance Manager Theme, use Appearance sound effects, and keep itself hidden when you tell it to hide. In addition to these improvements and a fistful of other smaller ones, DragThing still provides what some might call the slickest application-switching this side of the Mississippi, putting it leaps and bounds ahead of the Mac OS's native Application Switcher.

Extension Overload 5.1



The Mac OS is constantly moving along, and so is [Extension Overload](#)¹. Since our [last update](#)², the database was expanded to contain the descriptions of 3100 extensions and control panels. New in this version is the ability to manage fonts! Many details have been added and support for non-English versions of the Mac OS was improved once again.

iControl 1.1



The IconFactory's iControl, [reviewed](#)³ in issue 6.04, has been updated to version 1.1. This update includes the ability to import icons from a Kaleidoscope scheme, an Appearance theme, or a resource file. These imported icons can then be saved as an iPack. [This version](#)⁴ also includes a new iPack, called ePack. There are now a contextual menu plug-in for clearing icons from individual files, and basic AppleScript support for replacing system-wide icons. Also, there is a Web menu featuring links to technical support sites and other sites featuring iPacks. Finally, there are several bug fixes concerning proper screen redrawing, the updating of icons in the Apple menu, the At Ease and Multiple Users panels, and compatibility with Kaleidoscope 2.2.3.

iView Multimedia 3.8.1



Since our last [review](#)⁵ of version 3.6 of iView Multimedia, many new features and formats have been added. Among them: new language extensions for several languages (Chinese, Danish, Dutch, German, and Spanish, in addition to the already existing languages), an AppleScript menu and new scripting enhancements, improved slide show, and many smaller fixes and improvements. Among the new formats

-
1. <http://www.ExtensionOverload.com/>
 2. <http://www.atpm.com/5.11/update.shtml>
 3. <http://www.atpm.com/6.04/iconcontrol.shtml>
 4. <http://www.iconfactory.com/>
 5. <http://www.atpm.com/5.07/iview.shtml>

supported are: SFW from DOS disks, QuickTake Image format, Alias Pix format, Freehand 8, Canvas 7, CorelDraw 5–8 (preview only), DICOM, and Expn/JacqCAD.

...

There are far too many Mac products these days for us to review each one, or even keep up with all the ones we have reviewed. Indeed, many shareware authors are revving their products more than once a month! The Updates section is where we acknowledge significant new versions of products that we have previously reviewed. If new features, bug fixes, or other revisions are substantial enough to change our assessment of a piece of software, we will generally publish a full review of the new version.

Copyright © 2000 the ATPM Staff, updates@atpm.com.



Review: FILTERiT 3.0

by Jamal Ghandour, jghandour@atpm.com

Developer: CValley, Inc.

Web: <http://www.CValley.com/>

Price: \$129

Requirements: Adobe Illustrator.



I admit it, when it comes to plug-in software, I'm a complete sucker. I just love those little widgets that enhance or add additional features to my favorite programs. So just imagine my reaction when I saw that FILTERiT 3.0 was up for grabs on the ATPM mailing list. The only weird thing was that I'd never heard of FILTERiT 3.0 before (I hardly miss any plug-ins especially the ones for Photoshop or Illustrator). Nonetheless, I couldn't wait to try it.

A week or two later, it finally arrived. The package was not exactly "wow" material, but it served its purpose. Unfortunately, there was no "proper" manual except for some color printouts which had basic information about the filters' operations. I also found several documents to help me review the product—a nice gesture indeed.



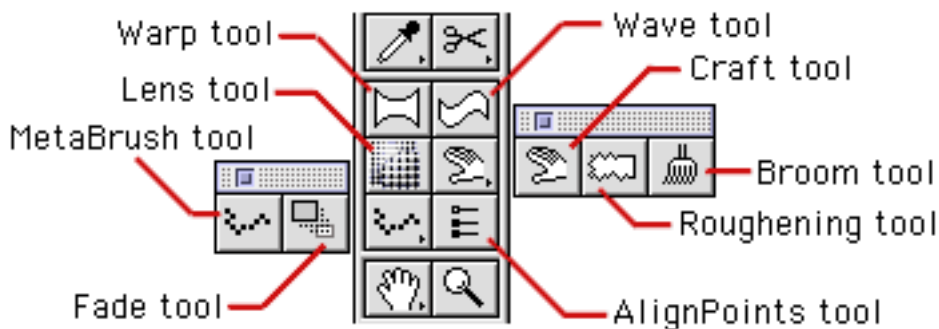
FILTERiT Sampler

In one of the documents was the answer to my initial surprise—FILTERiT 3.0 was a big hit in Japan and had just recently hit the US market. CValley Inc. was behind this commendable feat. There were also reviews of FILTERiT 3.0 in Japanese, which the publisher did not

expect me to read (as if I could read them even if I wanted to). To be honest, by that time, my high hopes were almost shattered; I just imagined it to be a Japanese “KPT vector effects” wannabe.

I installed the software reluctantly. Installation was a breeze (actually it was as easy as dragging a folder). I then opened Adobe Illustrator and started to try out the various effects. The speed was excellent, the integration was seamless, and the results were amazing. The fact that the interface was clean, plain, and very Illustratorish (can I get away with saying that?) was most welcome in my book.

I fell in love with this new toy. Japanese reviews or not, FILTERiT 3.0 is great to work with. Most of the 82 effects are pretty useful, and the best part is that the effects work on text that is not outlined—something that really used to bother me in Vector effects. This means you don’t have to redo effects in case of any spelling changes—instead, changes are done automatically and live!

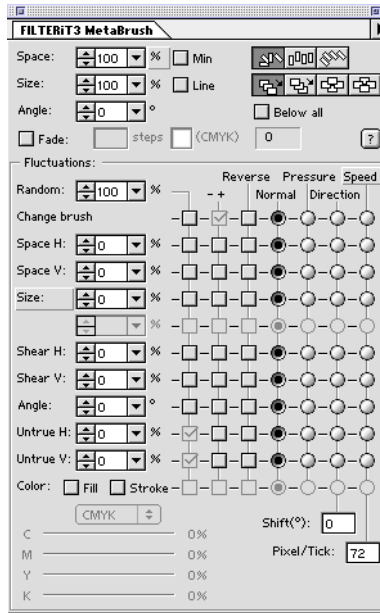


The Tools

The above diagram shows the different tools that integrate with the Illustrator native toolbar. They consist of: Wrap tool, Lens tool, Metabrush tool, Fade tool, Wave tool, Craft tool, Broom tool, Roughening tool, AlignPoints tool.

Worthy mentions here are the Wrap and Wave tools, which “envelope” illustrations in certain manners. The Metabrush tool is the same concept as Painter’s Metabrush, where an element of your choice can be used for strokes. And, although I admire the level of control you get over it, there are so many options available that it can get confusing. See for yourself!

Finally, the rest of the filters, which can just about simulate anything from neon to



Confusing Options for the MetaBrush

intergalactic stellar explosions, are found in the menu!

Overall, I think FILTERiT 3.0 is pretty much worth every penny. It's a joy to work with and actually comes in very handy. These are effects you will use day after day. If it were not for the nearly non-existent manual and the complexity of control of some of the filters, FILTERiT 3.0 would have taken a definite Excellent rating.

Copyright © 2000 Jamal Ghandour, jghandour@atpm.com. Reviewing in ATPM is open to anyone. If you're interested, write to us at reviews@atpm.com.



Review: LinuxPPC 2000

by William Lovett, wlovet@atpm.com

Developer: LinuxPPC

Web: <http://www.linuxppc.com>

Price: \$20 (also available as a free download)

Requirements: See below.



The [last time](#)¹ ATPM visited the LinuxPPC world, we brought back beautiful screen shots and tantalizing descriptions of life on the open-source command prompt. Or rather, the increasingly Mac-like interface that legions of programmers had built on top of that prompt. A lot of rough edges have been smoothed over since then, and the latest version of LinuxPPC is now easier to install than ever. Join me now as I take a second trip over to the wild side, leaving behind virtually all the comforts and assurances of the Mac OS for a system that offers pure power—but only once you know how to use it.

Before we begin, allow me to come clean: I am not a Linux guru. When disaster strikes, as it frequently does whenever I start tinkering around, I inevitably break something critical and end up re-installing the whole OS. I've probably spent more time staring at LinuxPPC's installation windows than I have doing "real work" inside the system. The following is one part cautionary tale, one part informed sightseeing tour. Its moral is simple: Look before you leap, or you'll blow up your computer. :-)

Let the Installation Begin

LinuxPPC's current installation procedure is the best it's been so far. First, choose your method. You can either download all the files you need via FTP for free—although that will take many hours over a modem—or you can bite the bullet, plunk down \$20, and order up a CD-ROM from the LinuxPPC folks. This latter approach makes re-installation a breeze. Trust me, at some point you will need to reinstall. As for the installation, if you can install the Mac OS, you can install LinuxPPC. Just boot off the CD, and the installer will walk you through the rest.

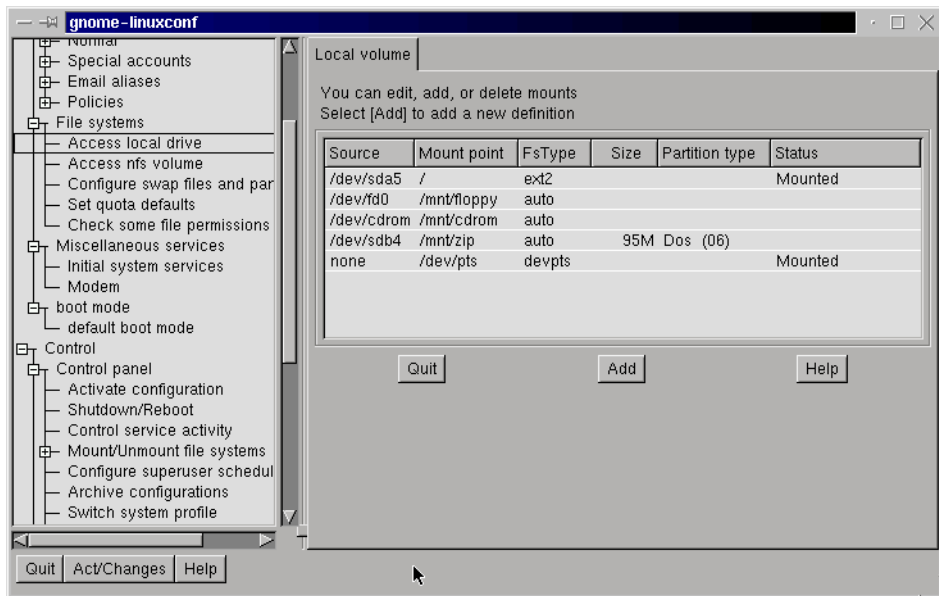
You'll get your first taste of Linux trickiness when you pick which software packages you want to install. Here's one thing that hasn't changed since the previous version, commonly

1. <http://www.atpm.com/4.11/page13.shtml>

known as R4: there isn't much description of what the various packages are. Instead, rely on your instincts. If you're not quite sure what you're getting yourself into, choose the default installation. If you're like me, though, pure greed will take over and you'll want to install every single thing, just to say that you did.

This is a bad, bad idea. Here's what happened when I did a full install. Roughly 1.5 GB worth of stuff was installed; everything from arcade games to development libraries to networking utilities. One package I'd never heard of failed to install (darn that error 256), and when I re-booted and logged in all the menus were in Chinese. Whoops. Two more installations later, I had solved that problem by omitting the "Language" group of packages. But then I encountered a new problem—KDE, one of the two primary user interfaces provided by LinuxPPC and most other Linux distributions, wasn't working. After much anguish and another installation, I now have a fully functioning Linux system. Minus Mac on Linux (MOL), which requires me to recompile the Linux kernel. More on that in a bit.

Incremental Progress



Expect to spend some time with Linuxconf, an all-in-one administration program that lets you access all your system's settings.

Solve one Linux problem, and another one will probably pop up a few minutes later. That's the bottom line with LinuxPPC, and with Linux in general. Efforts to make Linux work on all different kinds of hardware and all different configurations is very much a work in

progress, and LinuxPPC is no exception. If anything, bringing Linux onto the Mac in the first place is an extra challenge all its own, and while LinuxPPC 2000 is in leaps and bounds easier to use than its predecessor, there's still plenty more room for improvement.

For now, your experience with Linux depends largely on the hardware you start out with. The best option, unfortunately, would be to start with an Intel system. This way, you'll be able to use that special class of Linux software that is freely available but not open source (therefore LinuxPPC programmers can't make it work on Apple hardware). StarOffice falls into this category. It's a word processing suite like Microsoft Office or AppleWorks, but it doesn't work on Apple-based Linux systems. Ditto for many other programs (exception: ApplixWare, a direct competitor of StarOffice, available for LinuxPPC at a \$99 cost).



The Gimp (show here under the Gnome desktop environment), a Linux equivalent of Photoshop, is one of the many free programs that come with LinuxPPC.

Many, but not all. While support for Apple-based Linux systems like those running

LinuxPPC may not always be a top priority for programmers, plenty of programs will work just fine. The deciding factor is whether you can get your hands on source code, the files that contain raw code which you can compile yourself to run on your particular machine. But even then, it helps to know what you're doing.

Is My Hardware Supported?

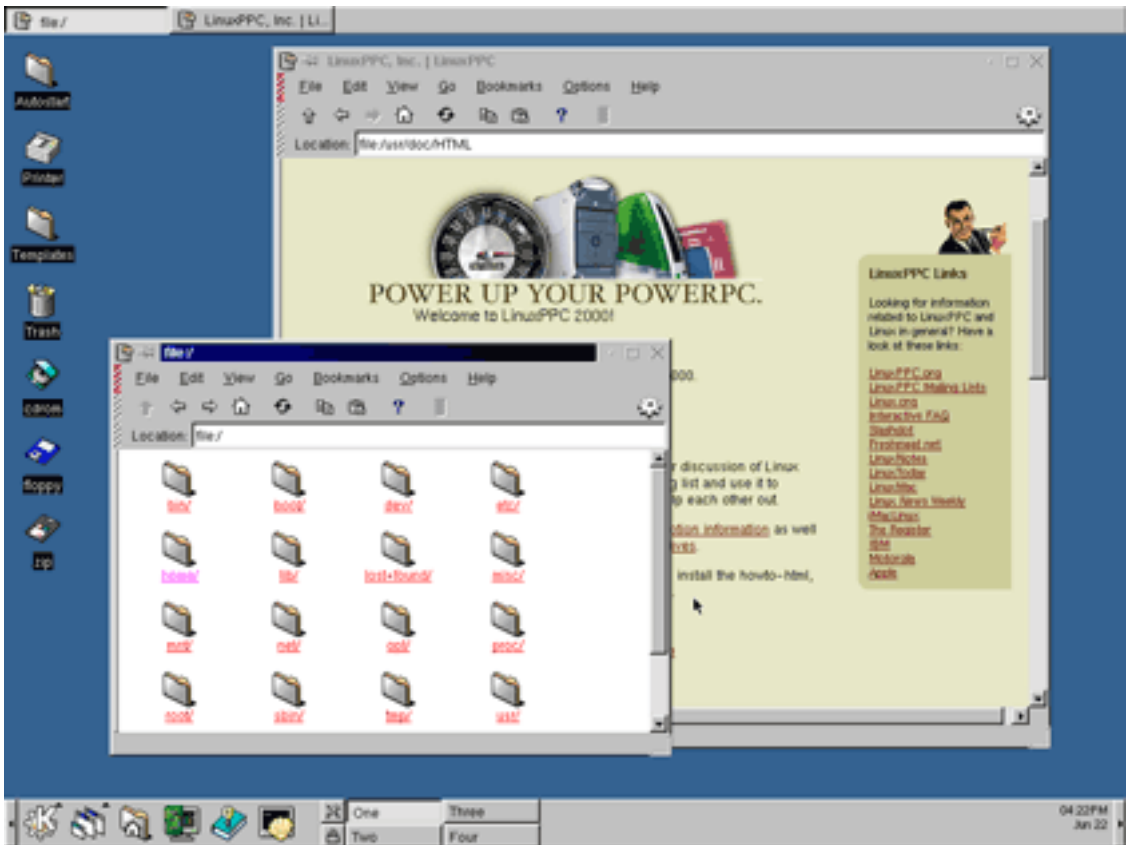
As Linux is under constant and rapid development, and because the needs of Apple hardware are different from Intel hardware, your LinuxPPC mileage will vary depending on what you start with. Brand-spanking new hardware like the iBook and G4 may bring more problems and bugs than older Power Macs, simply because older machines have been around longer. As with all things Linux, things get better over time. When I first installed Linux on my machine (a Power Mac 6500) last fall, support was just coming out for ATI's Rage 128 chipset. As a result, support for my upgraded video card was initially a slight problem (or, more optimistically, an opportunity to do some heavy research on video drivers). By now, Rage support has become part of the LinuxPPC kernel, and the issue is moot. If you're thinking of trying LinuxPPC for the first time, do your homework ahead of time. Spend some time over at LinuxPPC.com, and make an inventory of your system. If you're using all your original hardware, expect fewer compatibility problems.

Welcome to Your Desktop

Once you make it onto the desktop and work through any configuration/compatibility/weird voodoo problems that pop up, you can get down to business—actually using Linux. As mentioned above, LinuxPPC comes with several desktop environments, the two heavyweights being KDE and Gnome.

A desktop environment, for all intents and purposes, defines your interface. Gnome and KDE do the same things, just in different ways; both give you access to the files on your Linux system through a file browser application similar to Windows Explorer, and both use something called a panel to “dock” all the stuff you require fast access to. Coolest of all, your Linux desktop can extend beyond the visible area of your monitor through the use of so-called virtual desktops. Switching between desktops is like switching between active applications.

LinuxPPC defaults to the Gnome desktop environment, but I prefer KDE because it runs slightly faster on my machine. Aside from creating user accounts for yourself (it's bad practice to continually log into the system as the “root” user, for security reasons), one of the



Welcome to KDE. At bottom is the Panel, providing access to all your Linux files. The two windows belong to KDE's file browser—which can also display web pages.

first things you'll want to do is tell LinuxPPC where to access your stuff. Here, “stuff” can mean a Zip drive, a modem, another hard drive, or the partition you keep your Mac files on (as long as it's not HFS+). LinuxPPC comes preconfigured to recognize your floppy drive and your CD-ROM drive. For anything else, you need to edit a text file called `fstab` (the file system table). There are several ways to do this, but we'll take the direct approach and open the file in KDE's equivalent of SimpleText, called Text Editor. Here's what `fstab` looks like:

```

/dev/sda5      /                ext2      defaults      1 1
/dev/sda4      swap             swap      defaults      0 0
/dev/fd0       /mnt/floppy     auto      noauto        0 0
/dev/cdrom     /mnt/cdrom      auto      noauto,users,ro 0 0
/dev/sdb4     /mnt/zip        auto      noauto,users  0 0
  
```

Column one tells Linux where each device is located, and column two tells it how to attach the accompanying files onto the main file system. The point here is simply to give you a taste

of what you're in for when you start using Linux. Something that a Mac user might normally consider insignificant under the Mac OS operates under an entirely different set of rules under Linux. By now, we're dealing with Linux itself rather than specific quirks of LinuxPPC. At this point, once everything is up and running and functional, a good 1000-page Linux manual will get you started on the path to guru-dom. LinuxPPC does an admirable job of making Linux possible on a Mac, but doing something with it once you have it is an entirely different story.

MOL: Mac on Linux

There's one last feature of LinuxPPC that deserves special attention. MOL is a special fringe benefit that Mac-based Linux users get to work and play with. It's a special program that allow you to access the Mac OS from a window inside Linux. This is not emulation per se, since the Mac OS is simply being tricked into thinking it's running normally rather than inside Linux. As a result, performance doesn't suffer the way it does when you use Virtual PC to emulate Windows from the Mac OS. If you can get it to work, MOL allows you to get the both of best worlds without the annoying tedium of continually rebooting from one OS into the other every time you want to do something new. But that If is a rather big If. In my case, it means re-compiling the kernel with a special patch. Newer processors should be able to use MOL without this extra step, but some amount of creative configuration will have to take place.

Is Now The Time?

Most definitely. If you haven't tried Linux yet, or have been waiting for the right moment, LinuxPPC 2000 can give you a functioning Linux system on your Mac in one shot, provided you do enough research up front. Even if it takes two or three installs—or more, as in my case—the reward is a fundamentally different approach to using your Mac, whether old or new.

Copyright © 2000 William Lovett, wlovett@atpm.com. Reviewing in ATPM is open to anyone. If you're interested, write to us at reviews@atpm.com.



Review: NetBarrier 1.5.1

by Paul Fatula, pfatula@atpm.com

Developer: Intego Software

Web: <http://www.intego.com/netbarrier/>

Price: \$74.95

Requirements: Power Mac with System 7.5.5 or higher, monitor with 800 x 600 or higher resolution.



Let's face it: it's downright rare, if ever, that you hear about someone's Mac being hacked into. Macs are just less prone to invasion over the Internet than Windows machines. That, at least, was my first thought when I heard about NetBarrier: why do I need this? Macs are safe.

Thing is, though, Macs aren't immune to attacks over a network. Over a month or so of using NetBarrier, I have been alerted to someone trying repeatedly to log in to my Mac with the wrong password, a few ping floods, and quite a few port scans. What would have happened if none of these had been detected? Admittedly, probably not much. Whoever was trying to log on to my Mac would get bored after discovering I didn't use an obvious password, port scans themselves aren't necessarily hostile, and a ping flood doesn't have any long-term effects to worry about. On the other hand, who knows? For me, that's a big part of what NetBarrier is all about: not just being, but feeling, more secure.

How it Works

NetBarrier's configuration panel offers you three types of computer security: Firewall protection, which protects against data moving to or from your computer through various protocols; Anti-Vandal protection, which guards against things like ping attacks and intrusion attempts; and a data Filter, which prevents certain specific bits of text (like credit card numbers) from leaving your computer in raw form. Each of these can be configured to work as you want, or can be turned off entirely. Each, however, is also capable of causing problems if configured incorrectly.

Fortunately, NetBarrier doesn't assume all its users are networking experts. Its manual, on the contrary, is written with the networking novice in mind. It gives a brief, non-technical description of each of its pre-programmed options—just enough information for you to decide which option is best for you. On the other hand, if you have a question that requires a somewhat technical answer, you're left in the dark. For example, one of the Firewall options

is “Client, Local Server,” which allows your computer to act as a server only to local machines. It’s not unreasonable to wonder just what Local means. The glossary, somewhat redundantly, defines a Local Network as, “A network of computers linked together in a local area.” Gee, thanks for clearing that up. It adds, “This may be a single building, site or campus.” Unfortunately, there’s a big difference between a building and an entire campus! While it’s generally a good thing to keep the manual easy to understand for someone who’s not a networking professional, sometimes a somewhat more technical explanation is required, and NetBarrier’s manual is unfortunately silent.

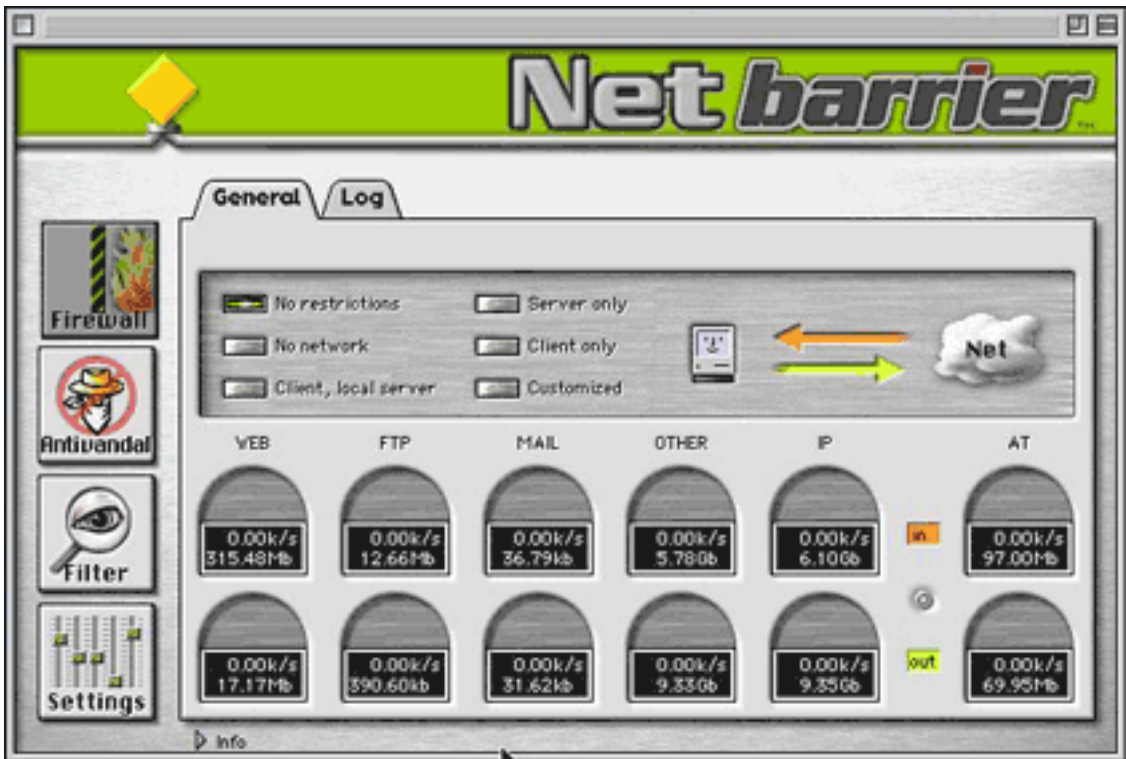
Once you have NetBarrier configured, it functions invisibly, in the background. If it detects an intrusion attempt of some sort, it can play a sound of your choice (the default is a positively shocking sound that still makes me jump), send you an email, automatically block the intruder for a standard length of time, or prompt you for action. I like to have it prompt me, just to keep me informed of what’s going on; I’m just curious about who’s doing what to my machine over the network.

Firewall

The Firewall function protects data travelling to and from your computer through various protocols. The preprogrammed Firewall options you can choose from revolve around client/server options. Each is given a few lines of basic explanation in the manual to help you decide which best suits your needs, but they’re named well enough on the Firewall pane that you probably won’t need the manual here.

Those options by no means exhaust the possibilities of the Firewall. If you know what you’re doing, you can build custom rules for your Firewall. You can use your Firewall as an IP filter, allowing only specified IP addresses (or a range of IP addresses) access to your computer. You can allow other computers to access only certain services on your computer (such as HTTP if you are serving Web pages), blocking them from otherwise accessing your Mac. Or, of course, you can combine IP filtering and services, giving you extremely versatile control over access to your machine. (Yes, you can also control access from your machine in the same way.)

You can also accidentally cripple your network access, if you don’t know what you’re doing. It can be difficult to walk the line between easy-to-use and extreme versatility, but NetBarrier handles this very well, offering advanced options and making it clear you should be careful if you use them.



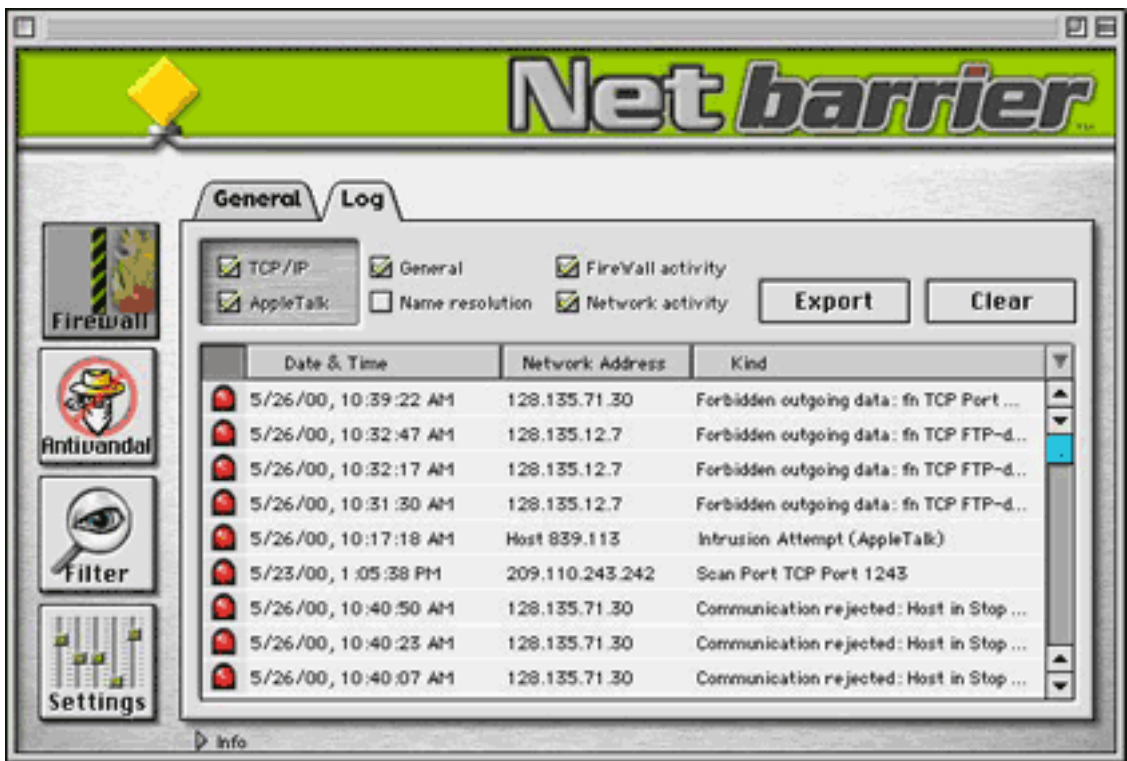
The Firewall Options

Log

The Firewall section is also where the activity log is found, although the log shows all activity, not just that of the Firewall. (Ideally, the Log should be accessible from all panes of NetBarrier.) It categorizes each logged item visually, with a colored dot: red for alerts, yellow for acceptable network activity, and green for starting and closing the NetBarrier control panel. Guess which of those is the only one you're likely to care about (not that I mind the other stuff being logged)?

The problem is that the log gives you options of which logged items to display in the log, but those options don't correspond to the colored dots. There's no way I have found, for example, to manipulate the options so that I will only be shown "red-dot" items. The closest to this I can come is to show everything and sort the list by dot color; thankfully, the red comes out on top. Unfortunately, however, there is no secondary sort order; I get all my alert items listed together, but not in order of time, network address, or type of alert.

Worse still, the log seems to lose alert items. While I've had NetBarrier installed for over a

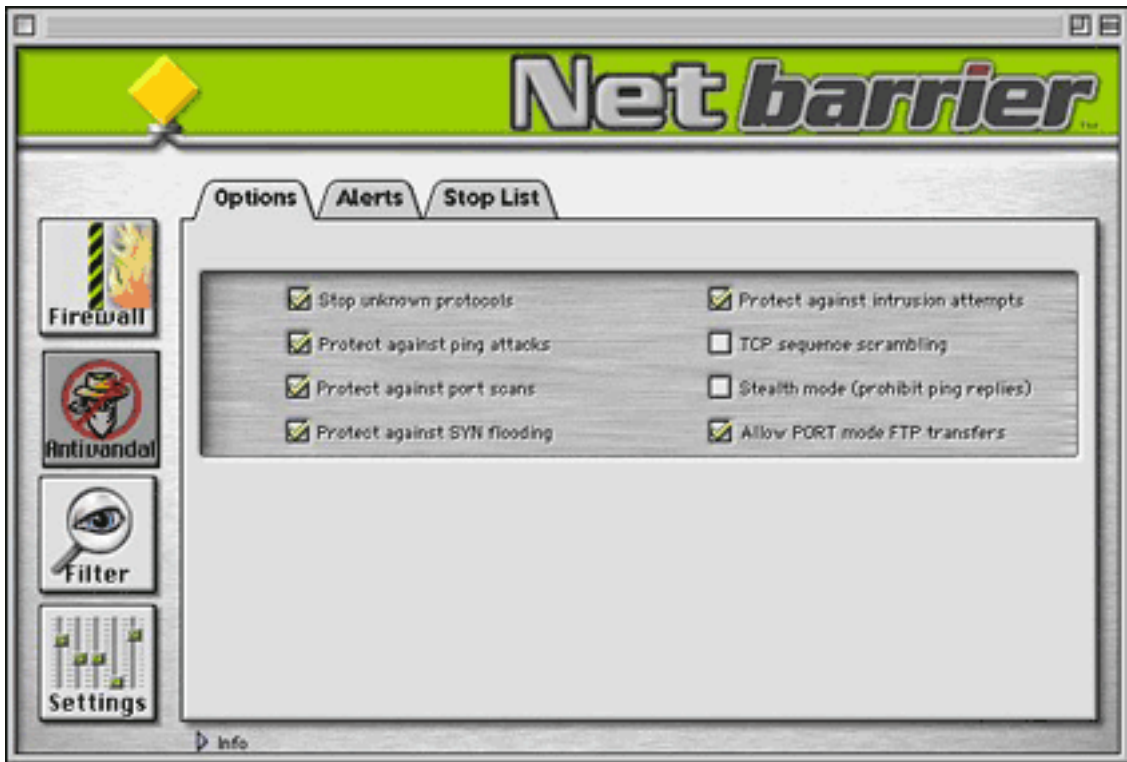


Activity Log

month (and not once cleared the log), the oldest alert item in the log is from merely a few days ago. I have lots of yellow-dot items in the log going all the way back to when I first installed NetBarrier, but the first green-dot item in the log is from just yesterday. I have had many alerts in the last month, and have often opened up NetBarrier's Configuration screens, but those actions don't show up in the log. Okay, I can't pretend to care that there's no record of my having opened the control panel early in the month. I am very bothered, however, that "red-dot" items have vanished from the log. That's exactly the kind of thing I want to analyze: if I get port scanned, and can determine that I was scanned from the same domain a week ago, and 2 weeks before that...well, at the very least, I'd want to permanently add that IP to my "Stop List" (see below). Since this information is lost from the log, however, I have no way to know this is the case.

Anti-Vandal

This is the part of NetBarrier that I've found the most useful. With Anti-Vandal protections, you can be protected against people trying to break into or crash your computer. I could tell you what the protections offered are, but a picture is worth a thousand words (see Figure 3).



Anti-Vandal

The manual explains each of these options briefly, giving you just enough information to decide which options to enable and which to leave off.

When someone violates an Anti-Vandal rule, NetBarrier gives you the opportunity to add the would-be intruder to the Stop List for a specified period of time, or forever. (It can also automatically add the intruder to the Stop List, if you don't want to be bothered.) Once someone's IP address is on the Stop List, all communications to and from that machine will be rejected. For example, if someone does a port scan on your computer, you put him on your Stop List, and then he tries to read a Web page you're hosting, he'll be locked out. Of course, you can always remove someone from the Stop List manually, if the need arises.

A useful additional feature here, I think, would be to link up the Stop List with a (not so forgetful) Log of intrusion attempts. It would be quite useful if I could be informed not just of an attempted port scan, but that someone from the same domain ping-flooded me last week. Also, it would be great if, when clicking on a particular entry on the Stop List, you could see other intrusion attempts, if any, from that domain.

Filter

The Filter's job is to prevent specific strings of text from leaving your computer. The manual suggests credit card numbers be filtered; I know a few people who keep all their passwords in one simple unencrypted document; that would also be a great choice for Filter.

Essentially, you give Filter a string of text that you don't want to be able to leave your computer. Once the Filter is active, if you try to send a file with that string in it to another machine, or if someone else with access to your computer tries to make a copy of that file, the Filter will alert you, and you can stop the file from transferring by adding the receiving machine to your Stop List. (Since the Stop List applies to the Filter function as well as the Anti-Vandal function, it should also be available from the Filter pane, but it's not.) A really neat idea, at least in theory (read on), that protects your data not just from others but from your own error as well.

What happens, though, if you try to send a file with a protected word to another computer? The result, unfortunately, sucks. You get a warning from NetBarrier, as you should, and press Stop List to prevent the transfer from taking place. Here comes the bad news: the File Copy dialog in the Finder freezes, and after a moment, so does your computer. After a few minutes, you find that you've been disconnected from the server you were sending the file to, and you can't reconnect! Now, you can't reconnect because that host is on your Stop List. This makes it painfully obvious that the Stop List is the wrong way to prevent me from accidentally sending off secret data; I should be warned of my action and given the options of not sending the data, or sending it anyway. Since Stop List is my only option for not sending the data, and an IP on the Stop List can't communicate in any way with my computer, I lose my connection with the machine when all I wanted to do was cancel the sending of a file. I also can't open Web pages hosted on that machine, or interact with it in any other way, until I remove it from the Stop List. This is just not well thought out.

It gets worse. When I try to copy a file whose name contains the secret word onto another computer over the network, my cursor turns to a timer, and stays that way awhile. Finally, I get a message that the server closed down, I hear the NetBarrier alarm, and instead of the window asking me to add the machine to which I was sending to the Stop List, the NetBarrier configuration panel opens up! I never get the option to transfer the file, even though it contains a filtered word, and I lose use of my computer for several minutes while I wait for NetBarrier to open up.

Yep, there's more. The Filter can get hopelessly confused in certain circumstances, blocking you from sending any text at all to a particular host. Here's a specific example: I set up a secret word for the Filter, and logged on to IRC. If I sent that word to someone (myself, on another computer), the Filter alerted me, with the options "Ignore" and "Stop List," just as it should. Clicking "Stop List" prevented the secret data from getting out, but then in order to continue my conversation with myself (heh), I had to take my alternate off the Stop List. (Again, Stop List is overkill.) However, even with my alternate removed from the Stop List, I couldn't send him any messages whatsoever. Any time I sent something, a few seconds would pass, and I would be alerted that I'm sending out protected data, even though I wasn't. Even if I used the "Ignore" option, which should allow the (so-called) protected data to be sent, the message wouldn't be received on the other side. I had to turn filtering off (and then back on) in order to continue my conversation.

All things considered, the Filter is a great idea that just isn't ready for Prime Time.

Conclusion: Do I Recommend it?

There's no easy answer here. If you're concerned about the security of your computer, I recommend it: it offers great protection, and will set your mind at ease. If you use IRC, I recommend it: that's where the overwhelming majority of my port scans came from, usually on joining more popular chat rooms. While it hasn't happened to me, there is a good bit of ping-flooding going on in there as well. On the other hand, if you connect to the Internet over a modem just long enough to check your email, you probably don't need NetBarrier.

Even if you give up on the Filter and disable it, as I ultimately did, NetBarrier is an impressive product that fills a real need on the Mac networking scene. While I'm by no means an expert hacker, NetBarrier caught every attack I threw at it. Because of the troubles I had with Filter and the Log, however, the best rating I'm comfortable giving NetBarrier is Good, even though it's an otherwise excellent program.

Copyright © 2000 Paul Fatula, pfatula@atpm.com. Reviewing in ATPM is open to anyone. If you're interested, write to us at reviews@atpm.com.



Review: USB Overdrive 1.3

by Daniel Chvatik, dchvatik@atpm.com

Developer: Alessandro Levi Montalcini

Web: <http://www.usboverdrive.com>

Price: \$20 (shareware)

Requirements: USB Mac with Mac OS 8.5 or higher

Recommended: Mac OS 8.6 or higher, Input Sprockets 1.7.3 or higher.



The introduction of the [iMac](#)¹ brought a new era to the Macintosh platform, the era of the Universal Serial Bus, or [USB](#)² for short. USB replaced the aging ADB and serial technologies that had been with us for so long. Besides USB's promises of faster speeds and plug-and-play, one of its major attractions is that it is also commonly used on other platforms. Mac users jealous of Wintel-compatible peripherals could finally connect them to their own beloved fruity computers.

However, they soon discovered that having a compatible connector was not enough. To take full advantage of the devices, they needed the right drivers, and many PC manufacturers didn't—and still don't—bother to write Mac drivers for their gadgets. Apple ameliorated the situation by providing generic USB drivers for commonly used devices, such as USB mice and keyboards, and InputSprockets allowed games to access USB peripherals such as joysticks and game pads.

Yet this didn't solve the basic problem. Apple's implementation of the generic mouse drivers, for example, did not support much beyond a simple mouse click, rendering any extra buttons virtually useless. InputSprockets, in turn, did not support every device, so games that didn't use InputSprockets were entirely out of luck. But, as it so often happens in these cases, a clever third-party programmer, Alessandro Levi Montalcini, came out with a work-around.

What It Is

USB Overdrive extends Apple's USB support by providing better control over the features of USB mice, trackballs, joysticks and game pads. This means you can get any USB device of

1. <http://www.apple.com/imac>

2. <http://www.usb.org/>

the listed types, even if it is PC-only, and it will work reasonably well on your Mac. You won't be able to use any functions that are particular to the driver software (like chording) or any extra-special features, like force-feedback; but you will be able to use extra buttons, wheels, etc. the way you want. USB Overdrive can either use Apple's mouse driver, or if you have problems with Apple drivers or can't install them for some reason, it can use its own custom driver.

Installation

The installation is simple; you put one file in the control panels folder and two USB files (one for mice and the other for joysticks) in the extensions folder. Restart your Mac and plug in your new USB mouse, trackball, joystick, or game pad, and you're all set. To take full advantage, though, you need to properly configure the USB Overdrive control panel.

Configuration

The USB Overdrive control panel is divided into three panes (see). On the left, you can specify what device you are configuring, i.e. mouse or joystick. Technically, trackballs count as mice and game pads as joysticks. You can also specify which application the settings are for. The Global settings affect all other applications. For example, I have the left button set to click and the right set to double-click, except for in Internet Explorer, where my right button means command-click. The command-click causes IE to open a link in a new window, a feature that I use a lot.

The middle pane lets you specify the commands for each button and control on your device. USB Overdrive has a nice active help feature that shows a description of each item when the mouse is over it. A particular favorite of mine is the Auto Move, which moves the mouse pointer over the default button (e.g. OK) in a dialog box. This saves a lot of mouse travelling on large screens. You can also set the speed and sensitivity to be different for each application.

On the right, you tell the program what the selected button should do. The selections are very extensive, for example: Do Nothing, Click, Double Click, Triple Click, Click Lock (for dragging), keystrokes, opening items or URLs, and various scrolling controls and more.

If you have a scrolling wheel, you can use it to scroll, but you can (if you wish) assign other functions to it, like launching your email program.



The USB Overdrive Control Panel

Don't have a wheel but still want to scroll? Try the auto scroll function. When you press the button assigned to Auto Scroll and move the mouse down, the page scrolls down accordingly.

The selections for joysticks are similar.

Does It Work?

Yes. I tried it with a [Kensington MouseWorks](http://www.kensington.com/products/pro_mic_d1019.html)¹, a [Kärna Razer Boomslang 2000 mouse](http://www.razerzone.com/products/)² and a [Saitek Cyborg 3D joystick](http://www.saitek.com/pcpindex.htm)³. The problems many people have with USB are instability and crashes. Using the Kensington MouseWorks with its Mac software was a nightmare for me. I had constant crashes, and the mouse would stop working until I unplugged and replugged it. That was one of the reasons I tried USB Overdrive. The first day it wasn't much better. Amazingly enough, though, after two restarts using USB Overdrive the problems went away. I am not quite sure why there was such a lag, but currently I am enjoying the MouseWorks

1. http://www.kensington.com/products/pro_mic_d1019.html

2. <http://www.razerzone.com/products/>

3. <http://www.saitek.com/pcpindex.htm>

without any problem. The MouseWorks has a Mac driver, though, so to give it a real test I bought a Razer Boomslang, one of the hottest mice right now, and one which is PC only. We will review the mouse in the next issue, but I can already tell you that it worked flawlessly. Both mice have four regular buttons and one scroll wheel (which also acts as a fifth button), so I had a lot of buttons to program. ;-)

The joystick, which lacks Mac support except for an InputSprocket module, also worked without a hitch.

How to Use It

With five buttons to program, you can quickly run out of ideas on how to use them. It may even be hard to figure out what exactly the fourth button is (USB Overdrive doesn't know what exact device it is dealing with, so it can't tell you more). To help with this, USB Overdrive highlights a button's name in the control panel when you press it.

To give you some ideas on how to program yours, here is how I use mine:

I have four buttons, two to the left of the wheel and two to the right. The leftmost one I can't reach without getting repetitive stress injuries, so I don't do anything with it. The second one is programmed to a single click. The third is programmed for a double-click, to allow me to open files or folders faster. I overrode this for my Web browsers with command-click to open links in new windows. The fourth (rightmost) button is set to perform the keystroke command-w, which closes the frontmost window in most Mac programs. The wheel button is set to control-click, which opens contextual menus when I need them without the use of a keyboard. With these settings I can quickly navigate the Finder or the Web without using my keyboard or moving the mouse around too much to find the close box.

Not creative enough? You can combine USB Overdrive with [KeyQuencer](#)¹ to do things like type your name when you press a button. Or let your Web browser take you to your favorite Web site when you move the scroll wheel up. There are few limits, and soon you'll wish your mouse had more buttons. :-)

What's Missing?

As much as I like USB Overdrive, a few things are missing, such as support for chording, i.e.

1. <http://www.atpm.com/3.07/page15.shtml>

pressing multiple buttons at once to achieve a new action. According to some ATPM reports, chording is in the works for a future version.

When experimenting with different mice, it was always trying to figure out which button was the fourth. As I said, the button name is highlighted when you press it. However I also had the fourth button set to type command-w, so it closed the USB Overdrive control panel as soon as I pressed it. I wish that all commands but clicking were suspended while the user is in the USB Overdrive control panel, or at least that it would ask before quitting.

I also wish USB Overdrive had the ability to save multiple sets for people who use different mice on the same computer. I always had to change my settings when I switched mice because on the Razer the fourth mouse is the rightmost, but on the MouseWorks it is not. But overall it's a very nice and useful program. I just wish that some PC mice came bundled with it. \$20 seems like a lot to spend just to make your new mouse work on your Mac.

Copyright © 2000 Daniel Chvatik, dchvatik@atpm.com. Reviewing in ATPM is open to anyone. If you're interested, write to us at reviews@atpm.com.



Review: ViaVoice Millennium Edition

by Jamie McCornack, jmccornack@atpm.com

Developer: IBM Corporation

Web: <http://www-4.ibm.com/software/speech/mac/>

Price: \$79.95 (street)

Requirements: G3- or G4-based Mac, 48 MB of RAM, 200 MB available disk space, audio input jack compatible with Andrea NC-71 microphone.



“When Did Retesting...”

Hi folks, don't pay the ransom, I escaped.

I know, you've not heard from me since [ATPM 6.04](#)¹ (which I said the old fashioned way, “six point zero four,” rather than the modern/trendy “dot” term, which leads to ViaVoice misquotes such as “six not 04” and “six dots 04,” and the literally correct but not what I wanted “6 dot 04”), but life is what happens when you're making other plans. For seven weeks I was traveling so light I was (shudder) UNABLE TO TAKE MY iMAC, hence this two month late conclusion to this review.

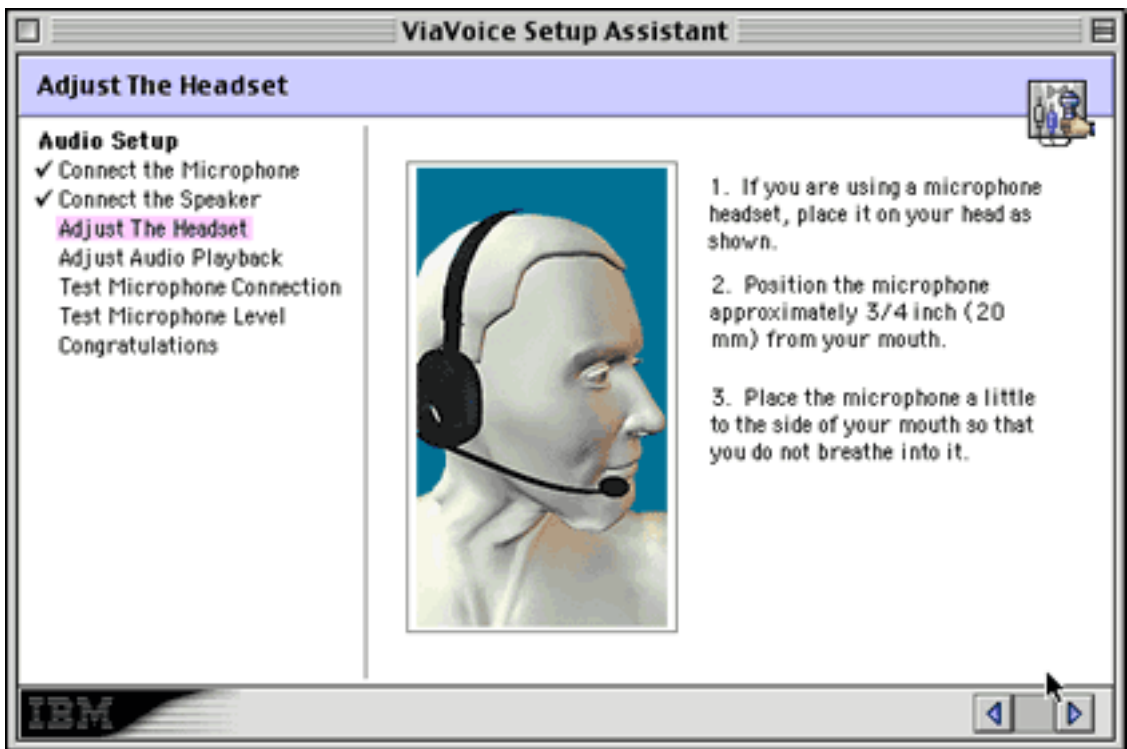
So...I've given ViaVoice a mo.nth of regular use, and become a moderately competent user thereof, and now it's time to tell you if you should spend your time and money to do the same.

And the answer is (may I have the envelope, please? riiip)...it depends a lot on your needs.

ViaVoice is a speech recognition program that takes your spoken word and puts it on the screen for you, all typed out and ready for cut-and-paste into the text program of your choice. It works well. In fact, I'd say it works well enough. It does not work great, at least not for a speaker of my skills on an early (333 Mhz) iMac, but I've seen a professional do a ViaVoice demo on some G4 hot rod, and his output was as fast and accurate as my keyboard work.

I'm still faster with keyboard and fingers than I am with ViaVoice and my mouth. Still, it is a remarkable product and worthy of attention, and it's possible we'll look back on it as the

1. <http://www.atpm.com/6.04/viavoiced.shtml>



As you'd expect from IBM, all the bases are covered. For example, the ViaVoice Setup Assistant uses 3D animation to show you how to put the headphone on your head.

herald to a new paradigm. Because ViaVoice does bring speech recognition to a useful level—it's inexpensive, it can be mastered by people lacking computer science degrees, and it works—every step forward from here is icing on the cake. Once a technology is made possible, and available to the masses, the reverse of the “dancing dog” effect comes into play—no longer impressed by the fact that the dog dances at all, we want to know why this poodle's Argentine Tango lacks feeling, and why that collie is still doing the Macarena (“Honestly, it's almost the 21st Century—did you see that ridiculous collie?”).

Once again, it's your chance to get in on the ground floor of a computer revolution. Like text editors twenty years ago, desktop publishers fifteen years ago, 3D animators ten years ago, and video editors five years ago, you can get into a new technology while it's still young and quirky. Using ViaVoice, you'll get the same sort of amazement from the crowd that you got in '84 when you changed a whole page from Chicago to Helvetica with a swoop of the mouse.

So despite my modest Good rating from a practical standpoint, ViaVoice has some fringe benefits that put it in a Virtual Very Nice category. It isn't really Very Nice, but it provides an

interesting simulation of Very Nice.

What's Good Today

Hey, I'm a writer. When stuff happens in my brain (hey, I *told* you I was a writer, I can turn eloquent phrases like that 'til the cows come home), I plonk away at the keyboard, and the stuff in my brain goes into my Mac's RAM, where it can go up on the screen, or into the printer, or across the phone line, and perhaps eventually go to a printing press and eventually to the Out Of Print section of Powell's Book Store. Tah-dah!

But the plonk-away-at-the-keyboard part is a means, not an end. I've never thought of myself as a typist, I think of myself as a writer. If all my fingers fell off, I'd keep writing, thanks to ViaVoice. I'd be as good a writer as ever, just a little slower. Actually, as far as output per day goes, I might even be a bit faster, since nobody would expect me to do the dishes any more.

Okay, I'm not as qualified as Callihan to make jokes like that, so seriously, folks, there are a whole bunch of physical challenges in this world. Many of them—from arthritis to quadriplegia, with nine letters left to go—interfere with keyboard use. If there's some reason you can't operate a keyboard efficiently, and you have a consistent speaking voice, ViaVoice can do an adequate job of getting your thoughts on the screen.

One such reason you can't operate a keyboard might be...well, maybe you don't know how to type. ViaVoice can have you plugging away at an accurate 20 words a minute in a day or two, as opposed to a semester of Typing I (mind you, they didn't have *delete* keys when I was in high school), which doesn't sound like much, but even today there are college kids hunting and pecking their way through term papers who would love to see 20 wpm.

I started typing in '84 because there was No Other Way. For half the price of a 1984 Macintosh you can now get a blueberry iMac with 1000 times more RAM (I'm including the free 64 MB upgrade available currently from catalog houses) and 15,000 times the storage (a 6 GB hard drive instead of a 400k floppy), and while the clock speed has merely gone from 8 MHz to 350 MHz, there are clocks and there are clocks and there's far more difference between a 68000 chip and a G3 than clock speed alone would indicate. It barely makes sense to compare the processing speed between the first Mac and the current iMac, because what are you going to compare? How fast Photoshop will perform an Unsharp Mask operation to a full page print quality color photo? Uh, no you're not. If the software had been written

back in '84, (it hadn't been) it would have taken hours and hours and over 100 disk swaps.

Yet MacWrite 1.0, running on an original '84 Macintosh, could process my words as fast as I could type them in. Big deal, right? It was only 30 words per minute (yeah, but highly creative words!), so what's my point?

What's Good Coming Up?

Glad you asked. My point is, it's about time we had a new way of entering text in our machines, because the technology has outrun the human ability to press keys, by a factor of...what? Hundreds at least, maybe thousands. For every moment that my little old iMac is noting I pressed a key, logging my entry, and processing its display on the monitor, it's probably spending thousands of moments muttering, "Dum de dum, wonder when that guy's going to press another key so we can get some work done, dum de deedle de dum..." Even if 20 wpm had been the maximum the Mac could have accepted from the keyboard in '84, it would be good for at least 900 words a minute by now.

So how long before ViaVoice for Macintosh version x.x can process my speech as fast as I can speak it? According to my calculations, not long, and that's only an estimate.

The Quirks

There's one big difference between keystroke recognition and voice recognition—keystrokes are not open to interpretation. Did you type A-L-L, or did you type O-I-L? That's no great challenge to the software. But did you *say* "all" or did you say "oil"? That depends on where you spent your formative years. I know a Florida gal, and I swear the only reason nobody's put laundry detergent in her Buick is because of context.

Apparently, ViaVoice also uses context to deal with ambiguities. Unlike the voice recognizers of yore, ViaVoice analysis whole clumps of words at a time. I am sure it takes a lot of Deep Thought, and all this thinking noticeably slows the output, but the results are quite astounding. For example, ViaVoice successfully interpreted "an early show was held from 1 to 3 for 5 participants who could not attend the evening show," where a less sophisticated program would have ignored the beginning and the end, and printed "12345" in the middle.

Why is this quirky? Because ViaVoice tries to make sense of everything it hears—even slurred words, even random background noises—so its typos range from wondrous to bizarre. Your spell checker won't be much good here, because every word, no matter how

inappropriate, will be properly spelled. For example, the title of this piece was a genuine attempt at speaking, “One two three testing.” It didn’t come out exactly as I’d intended.

Typos on a keyboard create nonsense words. Typos with primitive voice recognition programs put real words in nonsensical places. Typos with ViaVoice put the ghost of James Joyce in your computer. You can’t trust your spell checker, you can’t trust the grammar checker, you can’t even trust a copy editor. You need to go carefully over your own work or your readers will say, “Jamie’s been writing some strange stuff lately.”

This is important. When your friends come back from their honeymoon, they won’t believe your “typo” excuse if “...united in holy matrimony” gets in the papers as “...one night of unholy matrimony.”

To see just how hard ViaVoice tries to make intelligible prose from a sow’s ear, place the headset by a speaker and put on a favorite music CD. Here’s ViaVoice’s take on Mussorgsky’s “Pictures From an Exhibition”, exactly as transcribed:

The of aha and and and and and a of a harem level and again assume athletic if her hundred home and and and and long her her away if inhale and ratified a if Hanoi-1/5 if handoff with halfway if this oaths one will if but one which punishes fishhook hours all of law

And here’s a snippet from Carmina Burana, one of Orff’s greatest hits, in my humble opinion:

Is it is all the eight B or an bourbon long though a bunny or five House knows of Roger Gardner of a great man takes so in late in I saw somebody what I need to be doing is assuredness it could not get the yen a result of the interesting other walking legs the euro plastic glove was released to put up a possibly happen if if current write looking until your best academic year when the people run wild bird that done a share and its next here at if the king and a technique so it’s so do care

I don’t fully grasp what’s going on, but clearly it is making some complex assumptions about context. Even simple pairs like “walking legs” and “wild bird” go beyond the words-in-a-dice-cup you’d expect from random sound input, and a lot of monkeys could pound a lot of typewriters before “until your best academic year” popped up on the screen. And did you see how it capitalized “Gardner,” presuming it to be Roger’s last name?. I expect future versions will get real good at figuring out what you mean to say, particularly if you give it a

fair chance and spend some time training it to your own set of quirks.

The Works

You load the software off the CD, clicking the usual I Agree and Continue buttons on installer alerts. You plug in the headphone. Are you ready to go? Not quite; this is one program where you have to (shudder, gasp) *read the manual*. It tells you how to set a software reference for background noise and measure your voice levels, and then the training begins. No, not your training, ViaVoice's training. You read it a couple of stories in a normal voice, and it follows you along like a preschooler on your lap. When you're done, it has a pretty good idea of how you talk.

Pretty good, but not perfect. To improve its understanding, you need to correct its mistakes. Highlight the incorrect word (which you can do through voice commands), open the Correction window (with mouse or voice command) and correct the misunderstanding. Next time you say what you said, ViaVoice will get it right.

This provides splendid opportunities for *Stupid Mac Tricks*, since ViaVoice will respond however you train it. For example, I put on my finest Inspector Clouseau accent and taught my copy of ViaVoice that the sound zee-voo-play is written "if you please," and if I say karkee-zroo-frax in a thick Boris Badenov accent, instead of reading "car keys roof racks" it prints, "get moose and squirrel."

Thus if my Intel Inside friends aren't sufficiently impressed by ViaVoice's legitimate features, or say, "Yeah, what can it do that Dragon Dictate won't do?" I say, "It has a five language translation module. Watch this!

"Translate French to English, zee-voo-play," I say, and ViaVoice dutifully write "Translate French to English if you please."

And the spectators say, "Whoa, how does it do that? My PC can't do that!"

So I shrug and say, "Yeah, well, it's the Mac version. IBM had to dumb it down for the PC version so it would run okay on a Pentium. I've got mine set up for English, French, Twee, Russian and Farsi. I don't know any Twee or Farsi, but I've picked up a little Russian from some old television shows..."

ViaVoice is good already. It's more fun than a Furby, plus it's a practical data entry device if you'll accept a few limitations. But I can see the writing on the wall. Soon ViaVoice will be earning a Very Nice rating, and computer writers will find their keyboards gathering dust, like all the computer artists who find their watercolor boxes are getting all dried out. And around the time ViaVoice earns an Excellent, keyboards can go the way of hot lead and movable type printing presses. You can wait for ViaVoice to mature, or get it while it's Good and get cheap upgrades later.

Copyright © 2000 Jamie McCornack, jmccornack@atpm.com. Reviewing in ATPM is open to anyone. If you're interested, write to us at reviews@atpm.com.



Review: Web Devil 4.9.4

by Eric Blair, eblair@atpm.com

Developer: Chaotic Software

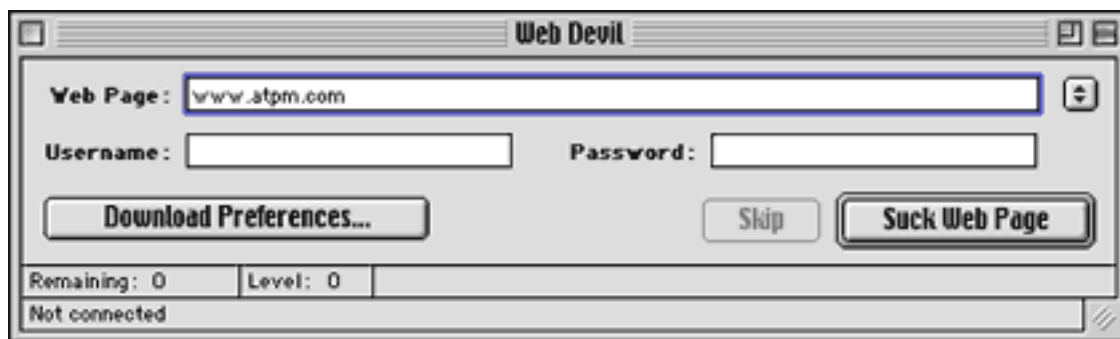
Web: <http://www.chaoticsoftware.com>

Price: \$34.95 (shareware); \$20 upgrade for Web Buddy and Web Whacker owners

Requirements: Power Mac with Mac OS 8 or higher.



Sometimes you don't have access to the Internet, but you want to access your favorite Web sites nonetheless. Maybe you take the train to work in the morning and you want to check out the online edition of *The New York Times*. The simplest solution is to download everything to your computer ahead of time. If you were to try to follow every link by hand, though, you'd probably miss your train—the number of links on a Web site can be significant. The solution to this problem is an offline Web client, like Web Devil.

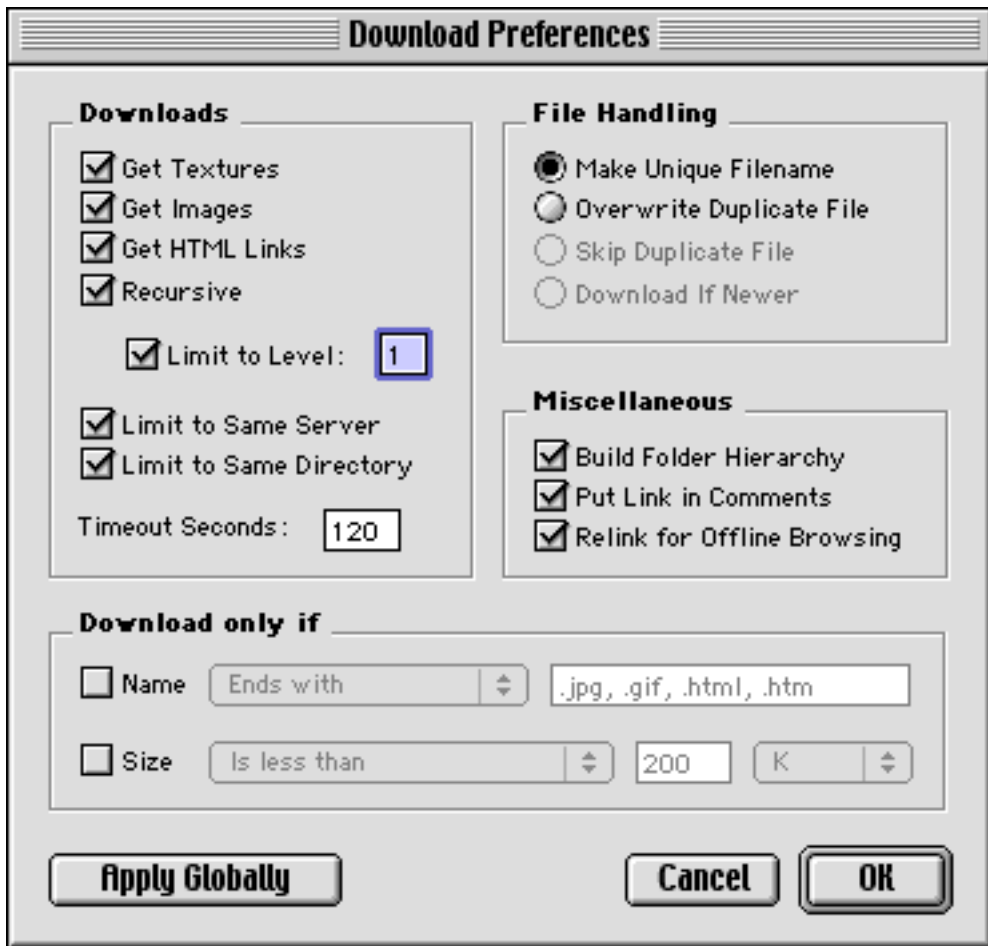


Sucking a Web Page With Web Devil

Web Devil has a fairly simple interface. You're presented with a window with space for a URL, a user name, and a password. For most Web sites, only the first field is necessary. Click the 'Suck Web Page' button and the desired Web site is downloaded to your computer. Unfortunately, the user name and password fields only work with Web sites that display an authorization window. The vast majority of sites requiring you to log in, like Amazon.com or CDNow, use Web forms, which Web Devil is unable to handle. This caveat is mentioned in the Read Me, but the presence of the user name and password fields could confuse some users.

For more control over what gets downloaded to your computer, you can modify the

download preferences for the sites. Web Devil gives users a tremendous amount of control over what to download. If you're only interested in the text, for example, you can choose not to download the page backgrounds or the images. To download more pages, you can choose to download the links on the Web page. For even more pages, you can follow the links several levels deep. To reduce the number of pages downloaded, you can limit the search to the same server and to files enclosed in the initial directory on the server.



Web Devil's Download Preferences

If you prefer to control the types of files download, Web Devil can filter them by name. The most common use for this feature is to search for file extensions to either download or ignore. You can also base your filter on some other aspect of the naming scheme. Finally, Web Devil can filter files by size.

The rest of the download options deal with maintenance of the downloaded files. The File Handling section deals with what Web Devil should do with files that have the same name. If Web Devil is set up to preserve the folder hierarchy from the server, then the most obvious choice is keep the newer of the two files. Depending on your setup, you might choose one of the other options.

Probably the most interesting download options are the Miscellaneous options. One of these options is to Relink for Offline Browsing. According to the Read Me file included with Web Devil, the program does not change any of the files it downloads, so if a Web site uses absolute URLs, you're out of luck. The Relink for Offline Browsing option seems to do just this, though. I was able to download pages that originally used absolute URLs and follow the links without needing to go online.

Another option is Build Folder Hierarchy. This creates folders on your computer to match the layout of the Web server. Turning off this option doesn't make a whole lot of sense. You would think that disabling it would, when used in conjunction with the Relink option, create a single folder full of files. Furthermore, you'd think that these files would have their links altered to point to the proper file locations. This is not the case. When I tried this combination of options, the absolute links were changed to relative links, but they were broken because the links were based on the server folder hierarchy.

The final option is to place the document's original URL in the Comments field of the Get Info window. This is similar to what many other Internet applications do with downloaded files.

Like any Web client, Web Devil lets you bookmark commonly visited sites. To create a bookmark, just select New Bookmark from the Bookmarks menu. You are then presented with a dialog box that contains any information that's currently in the Web Devil window. All you need to provide is the title for the bookmark. The default text is "untitled bookmark." It would be nice if this could default to the address from the URL field, since this might be all you want to enter in the field anyway.

Web Devil also includes three utilities. The first lets you extract the email addresses from a given HTML file. To simplify the use of these addresses, you can choose to have the <mailto:> tag stripped from them. The second extracts any URLs from a given file. This extracts the contents of the `<A HREF>` tag, so if the page contains all relative links, that's what the resulting text file will contain. The final utility lets you do a batch download of URLs stored

in a file.

There are two things I wish Web Devil handled better. The first is HTML file types. My main Web browser is iCab, and that's what I have selected in the Internet Control Panel. However, the HTML files created by Web Devil come out as either Netscape Communicator files or BBEdit files, neither of which are what I want. The second thing I wish Web Devil handled better is automation. It would be great if I could schedule Web Devil to download several sites at a given time, so that when I want to take my laptop away from its network connection, my favorite Web sites will be ready to go. Unfortunately, the extent of Web Devil's automation ability is the GetURL AppleScript command. To automate Web Devil, I would need to write a script that called GetURL for each site I wanted to download because the batch download utility is not scriptable. Then, I would need to run the AppleScript at the desired time. If Web Devil had the built-in ability to download a list of Web sites at a given time, it would be great.

Web Devil has the makings of a truly useful tool for people who want to view Web sites while not connected to the Internet. Unlike most Web clients, Web Devil is extremely small and takes up very little RAM. The lack of a download scheduler is something that limits its usefulness, since it basically requires the user to be at the computer to start the download. Also, some of the download options are a bit confusing since one contradicts the Read Me and another does not behave as expected. Web Devil works as advertised but lacks the additional usefulness to warrant a Very Nice or Excellent rating.

Copyright © 2000 Eric Blair, eblair@atpm.com. Reviewing in ATPM is open to anyone. If you're interested, write to us at reviews@atpm.com.



Review: Z-Write 1.0

by Gregory Tetrault, gtetrault@atpm.com

Developer: Stone Table Software

Web: <http://www.designwrite.com/sts/>

Price: \$20 (shareware)

Requirements: Power Mac with Mac OS 7.5 or later, QuickTime, 5.6 MB of application RAM.

Recommended: 9 MB of application RAM or more.



Overview

Stone Table Software calls Z-Write a “non-linear word processor.” Z-Write, currently in version 1.1, is a \$20 shareware application written in REALbasic. Z-Write was specifically designed for creative writers who need to keep track of chapters or scenes, characters, plot lines, locations, research notes, etc. It allows writers to organize all information within a single document.

Z-Write uses a split-window design (Figure 1), displaying a list of document sections on the left and a contents window on the right. You can resize the main window and adjust the width of the section list area. The section list cannot be hidden, and its minimum width is that of the row of button icons at the bottom. The top of the main window is a “Buttonbar” comprised of buttons and pull-down menus. The Buttonbar can be hidden using the Hide Buttonbar command in the Edit menu. The bottom of the main window has a Hot Help section and a date and time display. Hot Help displays information about buttons, pull-down menus, and sections as your cursor moves into their active areas. Z-Write wisely uses Hot Help instead of Balloon Help. Clicking on the date or time pastes them at the insertion point in the document.

Z-Write preferences are accessed from the File menu or by typing Command-K. A movable modal window appears (Figure 2) with tabs for General, Printing, Document, and HTML. The various options will be discussed below.

Sections

Z-Write organizes a document into sections. A section can contain any textual content you wish: a book chapter, table of contents, notes, random ideas, etc. You add, rename, copy, merge, rearrange, or delete sections by clicking on the icons below the section list area,

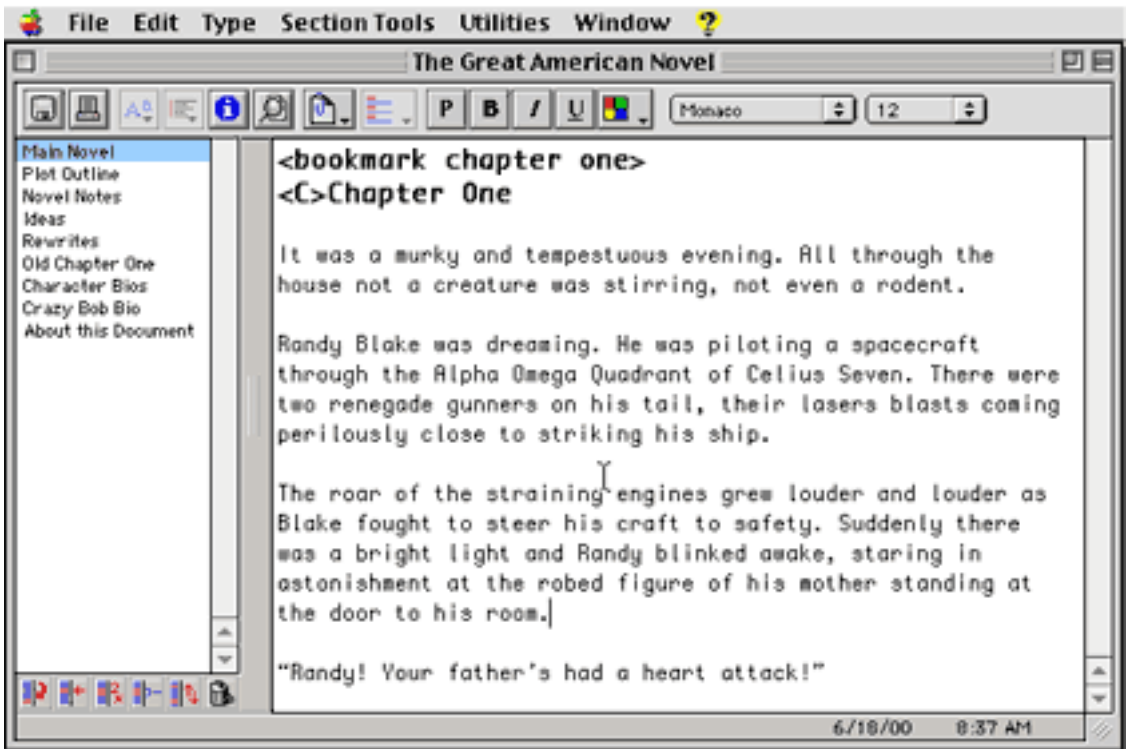


Figure 1

activating contextual menus within the section list area (control-click-hold), or using the Section Tools menu. You can also choose to display a section in a View Window. The resizable View Window (Figure 3) will display your contents in a plain window. No editing can be done in this window.

A section can be as long or as short as you wish. You navigate within a section by using the vertical scroll bar. You navigate between sections clicking on a section name in the section list area to the left.

Z-Write remembers cursor position and selected text (if any) within each section. It also remembers the window size and the position of each saved document.

Buttonbar

I like the utility of the slightly misnamed Buttonbar (it includes pull-down menus) but I don't like its layout (Figure 4). The Save button saves the active document. The Print button displays a dialog window for printing the current section or (with an option-click) multiple

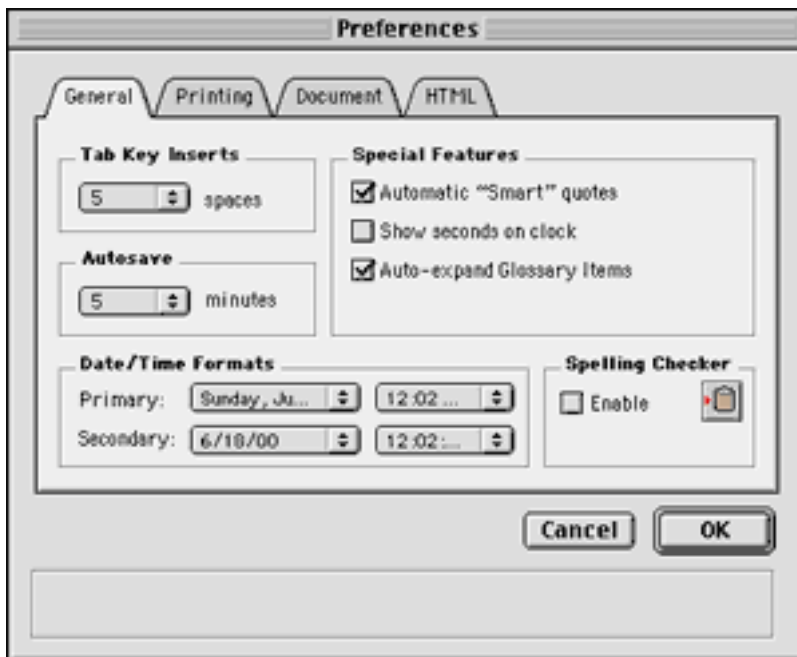


Figure 2

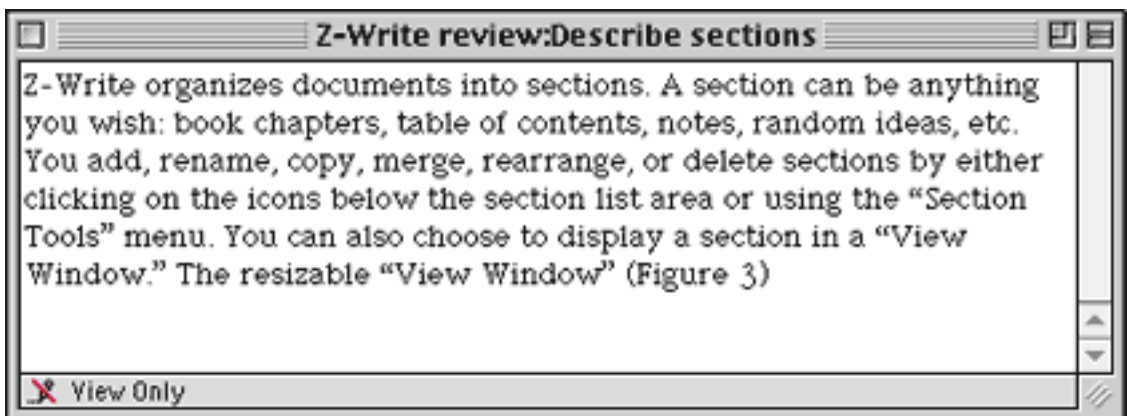


Figure 3

sections. The Case and Bullets buttons are for changing case and adding bullets or numbers. These text-formatting features should be adjacent to the font-formatting buttons and menus on the right.

The Info button displays document statistics (Figure 5). The Find button pops up a find-and-replace window that works within the current section or across all sections. The

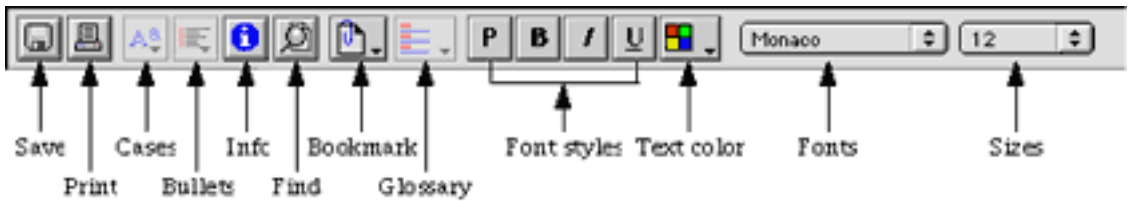


Figure 4

Bookmark pull-down menu lists the document’s bookmarks. Selecting a bookmark jumps to that section and position. The Glossary pull-down menu lists glossary items (see below). The remaining buttons and pull-down menus apply formatting to text selections and work as expected.

"Z-Write review" Statistics			
Info	Selection	Section	All Sections
Characters	-	1,157	2,800
Words	-	200	447
Paragraphs	-	5	33
Sentences	-	11	19

Figure 5

Formatting and Type

Z-Write lets you use any installed font. Formatting choices include text style (plain, bold, italic, and underlined), text color, and font size. You can use multiple fonts, styles, colors, and sizes within a section, paragraph, or word. You can also copy and paste formatting attributes. Unfortunately, Z-Write does not support style sheets. One workaround is to create a “styles” section that includes samples of the formats you wish to use. You can then use the Edit menu to copy formats and apply them to other sections.

The default font for Z-Write is 12-point Monaco. You can change the default font and size by bringing up the Preferences window and clicking the Document tab.

Z-Write can change the case of selected text by using the pull-down menu on the button bar or the cascading Utilities: Case: Case List menu. Choices include lowercase, uppercase,

“Wordcase” (first letter of each word capitalized), and “Sentencecase” (first letter of each sentence capitalized).

Z-Write can also insert bullets or numbers before selected paragraphs via the pull-down menu. This feature has problems. All paragraphs selected for bullets or numbering acquire the formatting of the first paragraph (you can repair this later). If you apply numbering or bullets to a selection that already includes these features, you get duplicate numbers as shown below:

1 1 First line and

2 2 Second line get numbered.

3 Third line is added later, then all three lines get numbered. Oops!

Z-Write can generate headers and footers for printing. The default header is: “A Z-Write Document Section: Help 6/18/00 at 11:53 AM.” The default footer is “Page 1 of 5” with right justification. Header and footer options are chosen by selecting Preferences in the Edit menu, clicking on the Printing tab, then clicking on the Edit Header/Footer button (see Figure 6).

You can enter header and footer contents, select font attributes for the entire header or footer, include codes for positioning header or footer elements, and use special codes to insert print date, print time, page number, total pages, and section name (Figure 7). I dislike this method of creating and editing headers and footers (it reminds me of Excel) and would prefer a WYSIWYG method.

Bookmarks

The bookmarks feature makes it easy to jump from one place to another. Since you can jump to a section by clicking its name, bookmarks are most useful for navigating lengthy sections. Z-Write doesn’t support footnotes, so bookmarks can be used as a substitute. A bookmark can be inserted anywhere by typing Command-B or using the Insert Bookmark command from the Utilities menu. You can jump to a specific bookmark via the cascading Utilities: Bookmarks: Bookmark List menu or by using contextual menus (control-click-hold) within the main window. Other bookmark-related menu commands include Jump to Next Bookmark (command-J), a Clear Bookmarks cascading menu, and Rescan for

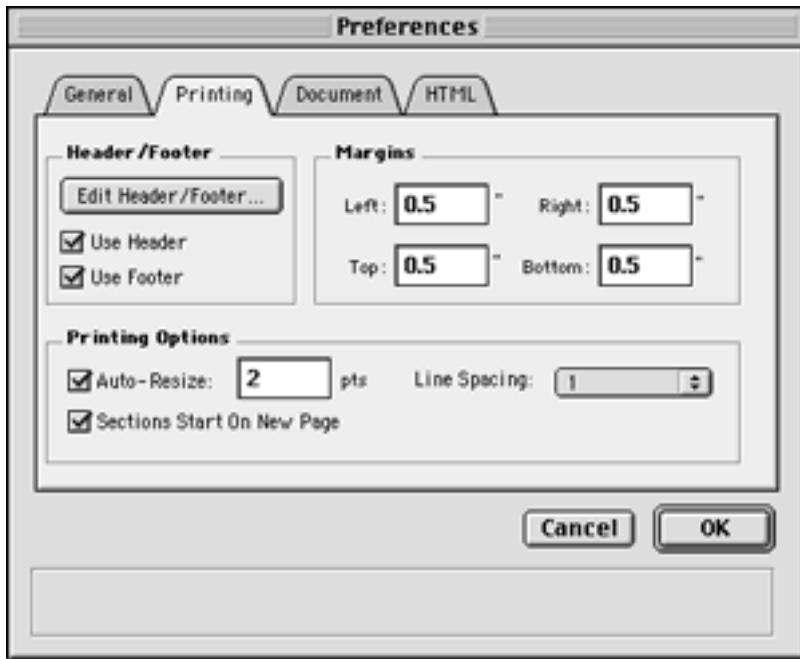


Figure 6

Bookmarks (for putting newly created bookmarks into the cascading menu lists).

Glossary

Z-Write supports glossary entries, which expand automatically as you type them. (Note: This feature is new to version 1.1 and is not described in the online help file). For this review, I used “zw” for “Z-Write” and “sts” for “Stone Table Software.” You can also insert glossary entries using contextual menus or the cascading Utilities: Glossary Items: Glossary Listing menu. My only quibble with the glossary feature is that glossary items are not unique to a specific document. I would like to see global and document-based glossary items.

Importing, Exporting, and Printing

Z-Write can import text and HTML files using the cascading File: Import: Folder/File menu. You can import individual files or an entire folder of files. Each file becomes a separate section in your active document, and the name of the file becomes the section title. Surprisingly, no information appears in the online help file about importing. Although Z-Write supports RTF (Rich Text Format) for export, it will not import RTF files.

You can export Z-Write files in text, RTF, or HTML formats. When you select a format from

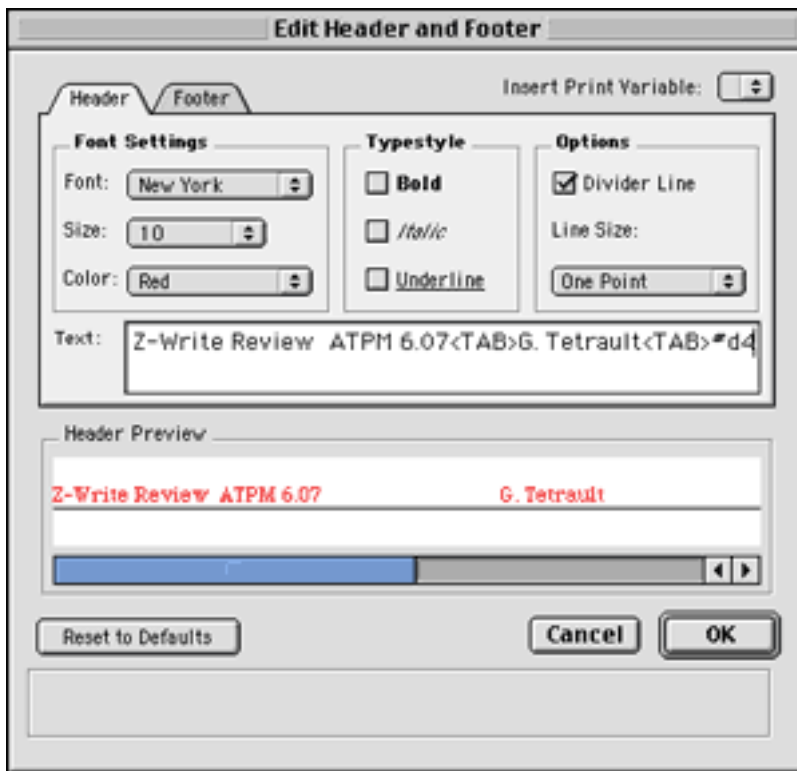


Figure 7

the cascading menu, a window pops up for selecting sections for export (Figure 8). You choose which sections will be exported, then click the misnamed Done button. (You aren't done yet.) A Save dialog appears that lets you name the exported file and designate where it will be placed. All chosen sections are exported in a single file. In the exported file, each section is preceded by the label Section: Section Name.

Printing choices in the File menu include Print Section (command-P), Print All Sections (command-shift-P), and Print Preview (command-option-P). Typing command-P immediately displays the printing dialog box for your printer. Print All Sections brings up a dialog box identical to that in Figure 8. You select which sections you wish to print, then click the Done button to go to the print dialog box. The document's layout depends on the choices you make in the Printing section of the Preferences window. You can adjust margins, choose whether headers and footers will print, resize the fonts for printing, choose whether a page break will precede each section, and select line spacing (single, 1.5, double, or triple).

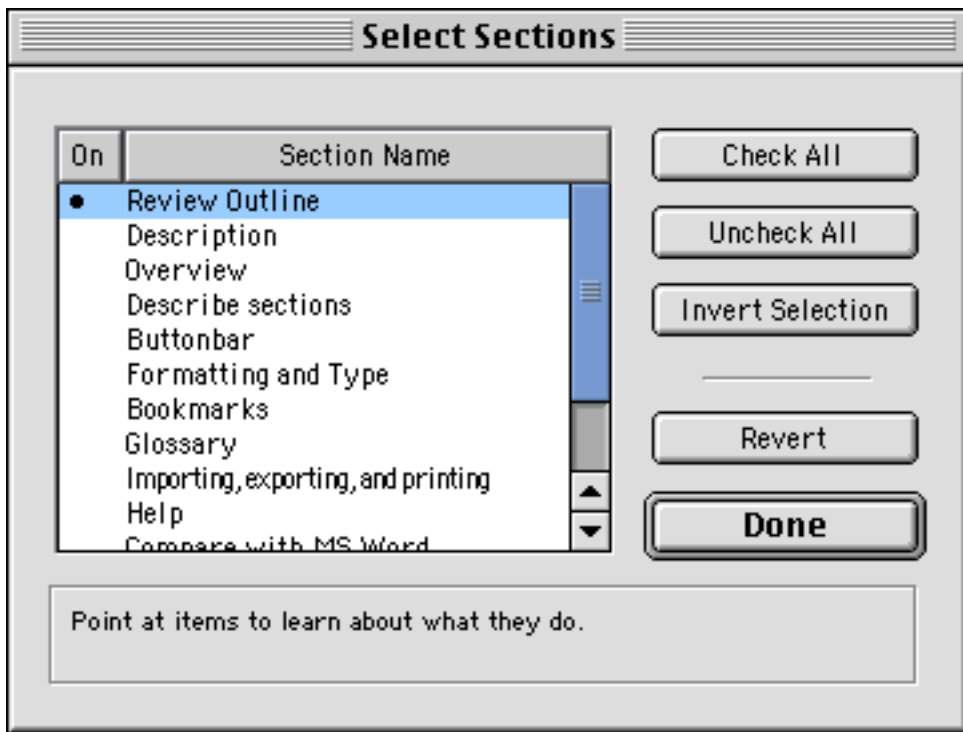


Figure 8

Help

Online help appears when you press the Help key, option-click on the Hot Help bar, or choose Instructions from the Apple menu. The help window (Figure 9) design parallels that of the main window; a list of help sections appears in a scrollable list on the left, and help information appears in the main window to the right. The help window can be resized, repositioned, and left in the background. Online help uses the Monaco monospaced font. You can change the font size in 2-point increments using the buttons on the lower left, but you cannot change fonts.

Online help cannot be searched and does not have an index. These limitations do not significantly detract from the usefulness of online help.

Comparison to Microsoft Word

I wrote this review with Z-Write. I then launched Microsoft Word 98 and tried to make it perform like Z-Write. This required the use of Word's outlining features and its Online view (which creates a split window with outline headings on the left and the body of the

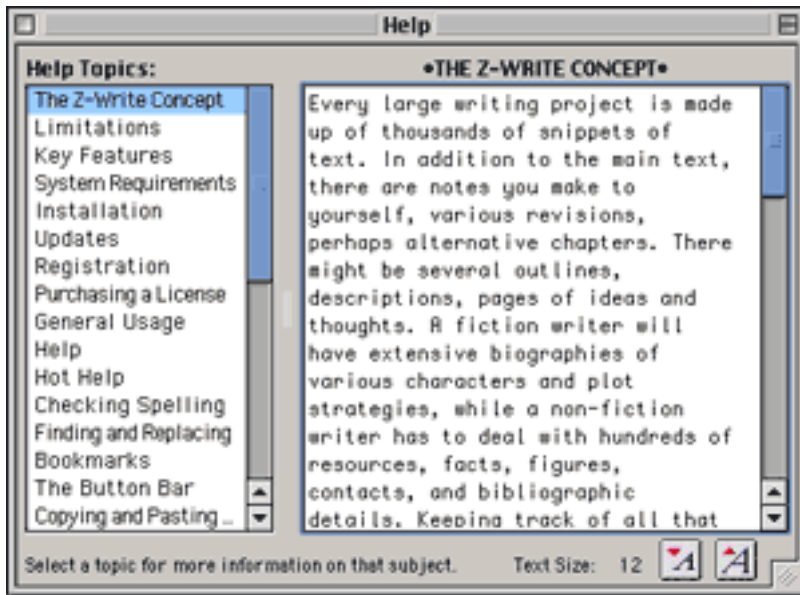


Figure 9

document on the right). I found that it is possible to replicate most of Z-Write's functionality within Word (including bookmarks and glossary items), but this required significant time, experience, and constant switching between outline and online views.

Microsoft Word has numerous advantages over Z-Write: style sheets, collapsible outline sections, table of contents and index creation, HTML coding, support for graphics and movies, sound and text annotations, built-in spelling and grammar checking, better numbering and bullet options, full text formatting, and document comparisons.

Z-Write's advantages include ease of use (by a huge margin), very low cost, functionality and design tailored for creative writing, and the ability to print or export specified sections in one batch.

Z-Write's closest direct competition is [Final Draft 5](http://www.atpm.com/6.06/finaldraft.shtml)¹ from Final Draft, Inc. At a street price of \$210, Final Draft is "professional screenwriting software" (according to its packaging). It is not designed for other creative writing tasks. I did not find other commercial or shareware Macintosh applications designed for creative writing. The closest program I know of is an old outlining application, MORE 3.1, from Symantec. It isn't quite as easy to use as Z-Write,

1. <http://www.atpm.com/6.06/finaldraft.shtml>

but you can get similar functionality. (MORE is [available](#)¹ at no cost.)

Z-Write's Pluses and Minuses

Pluses

- Low cost
- Quick and responsive
- Easy to add and rearrange document sections
- Good online help
- Can create templates or use included templates
- Good use of contextual menus
- Supports Navigation Services
- Glossary with automatic expansion
- Bookmarks for long sections
- Works with freeware spelling checker Excalibur (but formatting may be lost)
- Works with Spell Checker and Grammarian from Casady and Greene, Inc.

Minuses

- No style sheets
- Awkward bullet and number feature
- Awkward header and footer feature
- Glossary terms are always global
- Unable to link to other files or applications
- Uses relatively large amount of application RAM (9 MB)
- No recent files menu
- No indexing of sections
- Online help file not fully updated for version 1.1

Summary

Z-Write exceeded my expectations for a shareware writing tool. Its important features work well and are easy to use. Z-Write gains simplicity by omitting features not absolutely necessary to creative writers. Since documents can be exported for further editing in a word

1. <http://www.outliners.com/more31.html>

processor or page layout program, the omitted features are not a major concern.

Copyright © 2000 Gregory Tetrault, gtetrault@atpm.com. Reviewing in ATPM is open to anyone. If you're interested, write to us at reviews@atpm.com.



FAQ: Frequently Asked Questions

What Is ATPM?

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

Are You Looking for New Staff Members?

We currently need several **Contributing Editors**, an **Interviews Manager**, a **Copy Editor**, and a **Publicity Manager**. Please [contact us](#)¹ if you’re interested.

How Can I Subscribe to ATPM?

Visit the [subscriptions page](#)² or send an email to subscriptions@atpm.com with the word help in the subject line.

Should you wish to discontinue receiving ATPM, you can unsubscribe at any time at the [subscriptions page](#)³ or by sending a message to subscriptions@atpm.com with **unsubscribe list_name** in the body of the message (where **list_name** is the name of the list you’re subscribed to). But who would want to unsubscribe from ATPM? Actually, if you wouldn’t mind doing us a favor—should you, for any reason, desire to no longer be subscribed to ATPM, please [let us know why](#)⁴. We learn a lot from our readers.

-
1. editor@atpm.com
 2. <http://www.atpm.com/subscribe>
 3. <http://www.atpm.com/subscribe>
 4. editor@atpm.com

Which Format Is Best for Me?



The **Online Webzine** edition is for people who want to view ATPM in their Web browser, while connected to the Internet. It provides sharp text, lots of navigation options, and live links to ATPM back issues and other Web pages. You can use Sherlock to [search](#)¹ all of the online issues at once.



The **Acrobat PDF** edition is optimized for printing, but it can also be viewed on-screen, and we've increased the font sizes to make this easier. It may be viewed online in a browser, or downloaded and viewed in Adobe's free Acrobat Reader on Macintosh or Windows. PDFs may be magnified to any size and searched with ease.



The **Offline Webzine** is a HTML version of ATPM that is formatted for viewing offline and made available in a Stuffit archive to reduce file size. The graphics, content, and navigation elements are the same as with the Online Webzine, but you can view it without being connected to the Internet. It requires a Web browser.

What Are Some Tips for Viewing PDFs?

- You can [download](#)² Adobe Acrobat Reader for free. If you have a Power Macintosh, Acrobat Reader 4 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).
- You can quickly navigate between articles using the bookmarks pane at the left of the main viewing window.
- 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. Links to external Web sites are reproduced in footnotes at the bottoms of pages, in case you are reading from a printed copy.
- You can hold down option while hovering over a link to see where it will lead.

1. <http://www.atpm.com/search>

2. <http://www.adobe.com/prodindex/acrobat/readstep.html>

What Are Some Tips for Printing the PDF?

The PDF edition uses large fonts for on-screen readability. The side effect is that they then print larger than desired. We think that if you print AT^{PM} at two pages per sheet, the fonts will come out perfectly sized for reading from paper. Go to the Layout page of the Acrobat's Print... dialog box and choose "2" from the popup menu.

Why Are Some Links Double-Underlined?

In the PDF edition of AT^{PM}, 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?

AT^{PM} and MacFixIt readers have reported problems decoding MacBinary files using early versions of StuffIt Expander 5.x. If you encounter problems decoding AT^{PM}, we recommend upgrading to [StuffIt Expander 5.1.4 or later](#)¹.

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 AT^{PM}, please email 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 email address and a Web page URL, too. Write to editor@atpm.com for more information.

How Can I Send a Letter to the Editor?

Got a comment about an article that you read in AT^{PM}? Is there something you'd like us to write about in a future issue? We'd love to hear from you. Send your email to editor@atpm.com. We often publish the email that comes our way.

Do You Answer Technical Support Questions?

Of course. Email our Help Department at help@atpm.com.

1. <http://www.aladdinsys.com/expander/index.html>

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.

Wishful Thinking

Is the space for Mac enthusiasts who know exactly (if you do say so yourself) what Apple should do with its advertising campaigns and product introductions. Have you come up with a great advertising tag line? What about that Mac campaign that has been stewing in the back of your mind? Send your big ideas (or your art) to editor@atpm.com.

Which Products Have You Reviewed?

Check our [reviews index](#)¹ for the complete list.

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

Will You Review My Product?

If you or your company has a product that you'd like to see reviewed, send a copy our way. We're always looking for interesting pieces of software to try out. Contact reviews@atpm.com for shipping information.

Can I Sponsor ATPM?

About This Particular Macintosh is free, and we intend to keep it this way. Our editors and staff are volunteers with "real" jobs who believe in the Macintosh way of computing. We don't make a profit, nor do we plan to. As such, we rely on advertisers to help us pay for our Web site and other expenses. Please consider supporting ATPM by advertising in our issues and on our web site. Contact advertise@atpm.com for more information.

Where Can I Find Back Issues of ATPM?

[Back issues](#)¹ of ATPM, dating since April 1995, are available in DOCMaker stand-alone format. In addition, all issues since ATPM 2.05 (May 1996) are available in HTML format. You can [search](#)² all of our back issues.

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 email us at (You guessed it.) editor@atpm.com.



1. <http://www.atpm.com/Back/>

2. <http://www.atpm.com/search>

Trivia Challenge

by Edward Goss, egoss@atpm.com

Sports Shorts

This is the latest in AT^PM's series of *Trivia Challenges*. Answers to this month's *Trivia Challenge* will be found in the next issue of AT^PM. If you have any suggestions for future *Trivia Challenges*, or would like to contribute a *Trivia Challenge*, please email me at egoss@atpm.com.

I'm afraid there were no winners in last month's *Trivia Challenge*, "Didn't I Know You When?" Try again! This month's prize of a dynamite AT^PM T-shirt goes to the first two correct entries I receive at egoss@atpm.com. Individual readers are eligible to win only once every twelve months.

This month's *Trivia Challenge* is a potpourri of sports questions. So, fire up the remote, tune into SportsCenter, and see if you can answer the questions in:

Trivia Challenge 6.07—Sports Shorts

1. Who was the last Major League Baseball player to hit .400?

- A. Luke Appling B. Ted Williams C. Honus Wagner D. Rod Carew

2. How many no-hitters did Nolan Ryan pitch in his career?

- A. 5 B. 6 C. 7 D. 8

3. In 1964, Sandy Koufax, Elston Howard, Jim Brown, Oscar Robertson, and Cookie Gilchrist all were voted Most Valuable Players in their respective leagues. Amazingly, they all wore the same uniform number! What was that number?

- A. 6 B. 12 C. 23 D. 32

4. Who is the only NBA player to average a triple-double for an entire NBA season?

- A. Oscar Robertson B. Jerry West C. Julius Erving D. Magic Johnson

5. Which of these sports requires the largest playing field?

- A. Soccer (Football) B. Polo C. Baseball D. US Football

Trivia Challenge 6.07—Sports Shorts

6. What major pro sports team holds the modern day record of going 35 games without a loss?

- A. Utah Jazz B. NY Yankees C. Chicago Bulls D. Philadelphia Flyers

7. Who is the oldest Major League pitcher to win the Cy Young Award?

- A. Gaylord Perry B. Roger Clemens C. Lefty Grove D. Sandy Koufax

8. What player's silhouette is on the official Major League Baseball logo?

- A. Pete Rose B. Ted Williams C. Harmon Killebrew D. Reggie Jackson

9. What player's silhouette is on the official NBA logo?

- A. Jerry West B. Michael Jordan C. Bob Cousy D. Ted Williams

10. What Major League pitcher won the most games (26) in one season without winning the Cy Young Award?

- A. Don Larsen B. Juan Marichal C. Luis Tiant D. Bob Gibson

11. The score in a forfeited baseball game is recorded as 9–0. What score is recorded in a forfeited football game?

- A. 7–0 B. 6–0 C. 3–0 D. 2–0

12. Who was the first NHL player to score 50 goals in a season?

- A. Bobby Hull B. Wayne Gretzky C. Gordie Howe D. Maurice Richard

Last Month's Answers: TC 6.06—Didn't I Know You When?

1. Father Guido Sarducci

C. Don Novello

2. Sinbad

M. David Adkins

3. Meatloaf

H. Marvin Lee Aday

4. Akebono

R. Chad George Rowan

5. Brigitte Bardot

I. Camille Javal

6. Blondie

N. Deborah Harry

7. The Edge

S. David Evans

8. Darth Vader

D. Anakin Skywalker

9. Jesse Ventura

O. James George Janos

10. Dr. John

T. Mac Rebennack

Last Month's Answers: TC 6.06—Didn't I Know You When?

11. Ringo Starr	E. Richard Starkey
12. Sting	K. Gordon Sumner
13. Keb' Mo'	G. Kevin Moore
14. Roy Rogers	A. Leonard Slye
15. John Denver	Q. Henry Deutchendorf, Jr.
16. Marilyn Monroe	B. Norma Jean Mortenson
17. Mickey Rooney	J. Joe Yule, Jr.
18. Ayn Rand	P. Alisa Rosenbaum
19. Dr. Demento	L. Barrett Hansen
20. Bob Dylan	F. Robert Zimmerman

The Rules

Each question has only *one* correct answer. The answers are stored in a hermetically sealed envelope guarded by a playful Siamese cat named “Bonnet” who lives in our house.

This Month's CD Recommendation

“[Redux](#)¹” by The Reducers. Formed in the Summer of 1978 in New London, Connecticut, The Reducers have proven over the last 22 years that they are one of the best hard-driving rock 'n' roll bands around. “Redux” is an anthology of 29 tracks covering the first ten years of their career, featuring music from their first three LPs, rarities, and previously unreleased tracks. As Lou Reed put it, “You can't beat two guitars, bass, and drum.” The Reducers prove him right with every tune. “Redux” is especially for those of you who think Green Day invented this kind of music.

Parting Pointer

The “Parting Pointer” is AT^{PM}'s “Tips and Tricks” section. If you have a pointer you'd like to share with other readers to make their Mac experience easier or more enjoyable, please send it to me at egoss@atpm.com. Here's this month's “Parting Pointer”:

1. <http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/B00000G2GA/aboutthisparticu>

Elementary, My Dear Watson

Users of Mac OS 8.5 and above have one of the most powerful tools Apple has ever provided: the Sherlock search program. You can easily create customized, individual searches and save search parameters for later use. You can find out a lot about Sherlock at [Apple's Sherlock Web site](#)¹. Hint Hint Hint: You might even be able use Sherlock to find the answers to some of the *Trivia Challenge* questions!

Copyright © 2000 Edward Goss, egoss@atpm.com.



1. <http://www.apple.com/sherlock/overview.html>