ATPM

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Welcome

ATPM Summer Sizzle

Jingle bells, jingle bells, jingle all the waaay. Oh what fun it is to ride Apple's success todaaay! Wait a minute. This is August. You may think we're a bit premature, but we're calling it the best corporate turnaround this decade. And while we wait on the rest of the world to catch-up on our view there's enough hot new stuff from Apple and Power Computing to call this our "summer sizzle" issue. Unlike this year's partisan political conventions here in the States, we're inviting everyone to this party!

Our candidate for best all-around cool stuff comes from the Apple & Power Computing camp. They're running on the Mac OS platform. We like their new ideas for computer performance, technology advancements and all-around user satisfaction. They have our unqualified endorsement.

March On...

We don't know but it's been said Intel's chips are made of lead. We don't know but we've been told Apple's sales will soon be gold.

We'll just borrow a line from our Bavarian friends and call Apple's soon-to-be-released models "The Ultimate Computing Machines." Dual processors, break-neck speed from the line and it corners the market very well. We just wish they allowed trade-ins. Tired of the auto analogies? Prefer baseball? It was the bottom of the financial ninth, stock down, inventories loaded. We heard that the fly ball finally landed somewhere in Boston to the cheers of the MacWorld Expo crowd. The press was left to sweep the confetti and pick-up their comments that came out of "left field."

And So On...

Well, we're happy Rob's kids are back from vacation. It's nice to have something between the apples and his attitude again. He means well and this month he speaks well about what he means. As for the Personal Computer Paradigm, we never know for sure just what each month will bring except that it makes more sense than most of what we say. We've rescued Mac Man from behind his "huge" desk again this month and put him to work on your questions. Go ahead and take a peek...

Before You Go...

We want you to know, that the web page updates have been a bit slow. Nancy Ross , our webzinger from before, is on to grad school to learn a bit more. We wish her the best as she climbs to the crest of her soon to be started academic quest.

Jessica's books that are on our nook should be in Rob's car or a field quite a far. They aren't quite the reading that we should do before writing this stuff that's e-mailed to you. That is whether or not Horton really did hear a Who. Nancy's good-bye has opened the door to Evan's hard work that seemed hardly a chore. OK, back to syntax.

Evidence of our new webzinger's ATPM handiwork can be found at our new web site at:

http://www.museproductions.com/ATPM

We don't know what to make of Evan except that we really don't deserve him. We were kind of "bumfuzzled" when we saw the site. This simply means in computer parlance that we were so stunned we didn't know whether to rebuild the SCSI drive or turn on the desktop. We dedicate this fine effort as our ATPM cyber-station for you, our loyal readers and contributors.

We're also happy to introduce our new Shareware Reviews Editor, Lloyd W. Brown. This month he reviews Warcraft (that's the name of the stuff, not his approach to reviews). He's a long-time Mac enthusiast with cool credentials. He's also promised to be back without any slack for each of our issues with something new and especially for y-- (sorry, we just had to do it again).

Read on, stay cool and see what sizzles inside this month's issue.

The ATPM all-volunteer staff (plus Evan and Lloyd).

P.S. Evan and Lloyd are almost ready for their official ATPM staff initiation. We wouldn't even THINK of asking you, our fun-loving readers, to "spam" their e-mail boxes with your favorite "knock, knock" jokes, would we? Hee, hee, hee.

eMail

Printing Troubles Reply

I just finished reading the July issue of ATPM. It was GREAT!

I noticed the letter "Printing Troubles" in the eMail section. I too have had the same trouble trying to print ATPM on my Performa 575   (Norm!!!!) and Color StyleWriter 2400. The printing problem only seems to occur when I have back ground printing ON. Although I don't know the reason for the problem I have found a work around. Go to the chooser and make sure that back ground printing is OFF. Then go ahead and print ATPM. Everything should work fine.

Scott LeVan
LeVan@aol.com

If you are having problems with printing, another solution would be to print the online version at our web site. The content and graphics are all the same. In addition, if you want to print just the text, you can save pages as text from your web browser and use SimpleText, or your favorite word processor to print them. Our web site is located at: http://www.museproductions.com/ATPM.

Format Opinons

I know I've previously written that the art in ATPM is absolutely beeeeautiful (not a typo)--but can't resist saying so again. What talent   & creativity! And I certainly enjoy the articles as well, many of which I save.

I save assorted ATPM articles to refer to later by printing them & by saving them in the ATPM folder on my HD. Unlike the chap who isn't able to print ATPM ("eMail," July 20,

1996), I have no problem printing, although my vintage LaserWriter NTR does not print color graphics (only black &white) :-(. Perhaps those who have printing difficulties can resolve them by copying & pasting into a text editor (Tex-Edit Plus is great; $10 shareware; no, I'm not related to the developer ;-)) before printing. It is an extra step but takes just a minute or two--depending how fast one's fingers are with the copy/paste keys.

PLEASE don't switch to Adobe Acrobat Reader. In addition to all the reasons not to do so mentioned in the response (>>the files it generates are large "enormous" is a more accurate description <G>), PDF docs are a major nuisance to read on screen, especially smaller screens, & don't have the easy copy/paste features of DocMaker.

Toby Moore
MeowlC@aol.com

Thanks for your praise. After examining the options, we again concluded that DocMaker is the best solution around. We just wish that it handled layout a little better.

Passionate Apple

I think you have a good idea about the stock. Lets go a step further....Apple should declare each person who purchases an Apple (any kind) a shareholder & sell shares of stock through the company so you don't have to go to a stock broker.

Charles W. Coe
cwc@prysm.net

Not Afraid To Invest In A Fruit Company

You mentioned buying Apple stock....I'm worried I may put the company out of business.

Just over a week ago I bought 50 shares @ $24. Not enough to make a big difference to anyone but me. (I'm a teacher; it was a leap of faith!) But I believe in Macintosh! Five days later the stock had dropped $5 a share. Oh, no! But I optimistically bought another 20 shares....not thinking about the money I had lost (so to speak) but the additional profits I would make when it soars to new heights!

I can't wait for it to top the charts so I can be a millionaire. In the meantime, I'm afraid to look at the stock page.

If it drops to $10 a share, please let me know. I'll take all my soda cans to the recycle place so I can buy some more!

A Future Independently Wealthy Person

URL Matters

Enjoyed your e-zine. Was placed on the LA Mac group BBS, so lots of folks read it I'm sure.

You need to give URL's for your on line issue and links for shareware ie. SmoothMove. Also where the update for Norton 3.2.3 can be found for the hard to navigate, time save group.

Ben Fischer
bfischer@netvoyage.net

We always appreciate suggestions from our readers. From now on, we'll always endeavor to include URL's in articles when appropriate. To make them easier to spot, URL's will have be accompanied by a blue button the right margin. Clicking on the button will open the URL with Netscape Navigator. Updates for Norton Utilites can
be found at: ftp://ftp.symantec.com/public/Updates/mac/num/.

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We'd love to hear your thoughts about our publication. We always welcome your comments, criticisms, suggestions, and praise at ATPMEditor@aol.com.

Fellow Mac users,

Well, I finally put my money where my mouth is. Not much money, but nonetheless, I have decided to have a financial stake in Apple's future. Maybe now, I'll work that little bit harder to ensure Apple's success against the evils of misrepresentation in the press. If you're wondering what evils I speak of, consider for instance that big, bold article in the Wall Street Journal, that showed that Apple's sales were down compared to a year ago, when in fact they were **up** by 11%. Oh, and the correction they posted afterwards? It was in a teensy box on page 5 if I remember correctly.

Are you concerned whether Apple is a good investment? I can't answer that. Clearly, if every Mac user bought out the stock, this could be the catalyst for a turn-around. That's unlikely to happen, although a public effort for Mac users to buy into Apple could be seen as a strong voice to the media - "We stand behind our computers without exception!" At the end, I will give you some financial information about Apple that might help you in your decision.

As you may know, Apple has had some interesting times over the last year, with financial catastrophe setting in during the end of Spindler's reign. I hold no grudge with Spindler, but it was inevitable and unsurprising when he left Apple. This left room for Gil to step in, an excellent financial genius who was responsible for the turn-around of National Semiconductor Inc.. His knowledge of Macs is probably somewhat underwhelming, but more importantly, his knowledge of what it takes to succeed as a company is impressive. Just recently, he brought in Ellen Hancock as Chief Technical Officer (CTO). Ellen was a senior executive with IBM for 3 decades before moving to National Semiconductor to work closely with Gil during its turn-around. She knows her stuff. I personally feel that Ellen and Gil are the best choices for an aggressive, and successful turn-around - time will tell.

As you probably know, the PowerPC chip is an excellent architecture, and even in recent "Byte" magazine comparisons, the 132 MHz 604 trounced the 133 MHz Pentium for most benchmarks. The important point about the PowerPC chip is that its architecture is conducive to further speed improvements, and of course, is a RISC based chip, which has already led to such things as RISC-based UNIX for the Mac (courtesy of MkLinux). Already, the 604 has evolved into the 604e with a 180 MHz clock-speed. (should mention here the PowerTower 225Mhz Mac by Power Computing-.Ed) Shortly put - the PowerPC chip is not going to be outgrown any time soon.

Apple is also working hard on its visibility, strengthening internet presence and media publicity. For instance, you're probably well aware of Apple's tie-in with Mission Impossible and Independence Day for example. This is important - Apple needs to stay in the forefront as much as possible, in part to negate the bad publicity it receives from a largely ignorant and PC-biased media.

Apple needs to identify and prioritize its goals over the next year and a half - I can't argue that. For instance, the release date of Copland, continually looms far off in the distance, and

this can be discouraging even for the most faithful Mac user. The possible plan for a modular release of Copland components is an excellent strategy. Not only does it facilitate simpler beta-testing and debugging, but it keeps the 'natives' happy - if this is rumor, I hope it becomes fact; if this is fact, then I am a happy man.

Apple is playing a strong game in the Internet, and I think that's incredibly important. I won't even go so far to say that the Internet will be a huge cash-cow of the future, but it definitely is the epitomy of trend and hype, and Apple must ride this bandwagon, whether it likes it or not. Apple has recognized this in several ways, getting huge exposure in Web design and web servers. As well, Apple's recent licensing of Allegiant's Marionet toolkit for custom internet apps is an excellent step - as of now, it appears this licensing is solely for internal use to increase efficiency, but it again reiterates that Apple is staying current, and continually pushing the bounds of capability and new approaches. Software developers such as Adobe recognize this, often putting superior products first (and sometimes only) out for the Mac - Photoshop, SiteMill and PageMill to name a few.

And while we're on the topic of software - the media loves to reiterate over and over that IBMs have a vast amount of software compared to that available for the Mac. First off, I'd like to introduce a term called 'signal-to-noise ratio'. It is basically a measure of good-to-bad in laymen's terms. Is it unfair to say that there is a huge amount of junk available for the IBM that is in part responsible for this misleading measure of software available for the IBM? Is 110 so-so versions of Tetris for the IBM-compatibles better than 1 excellent tetris for the Mac? Not in my mind. Compilers? Well, I'll swear by Metrowerk's CodeWarrior until the day I die. Microsoft? If they want to give us ports of IBM software, then I say go for Nisus, WordPerfect, or any other better-written contenders with superior quality. Multimedia and desktop publishing? I don't think I have to say a thing about that. (My favorite line here is, "It's true. There are 50,000 pieces of software you'll never use for PC-compatibles, while there is only 10,000 pieces of software you'll never use for the Mac." - Ed.)

Frankly, the list goes on and on. Also, when I go to a shareware site, I rarely, if ever worry about what version of MacOS I have when determining compatibility. However, if I own an IBM compatible I have to decide if I want to run it under DOS, OS/2, Win3.1, WIN95, or WinNT (did I forget any?) How convenient. Lastly, people used to gloat that IBM had free and awesome UNIX. Well, funnilly enough, so do we - for our RISC machines I might add (although freebsd and netbsd were around long before for 68K machines). Oh, and in the Win95 vs. MacOS 7.5.3 comparisons - once you use both, you know which is better.

What does this mean? Well, I'm trying to emphasize that Apple puts out an excellent product, and has excellent support - this is not a recipe for success in itself, but it is a requirement for success. People who are saying that Apple has no new innovations, that no new software is coming out for the Mac, and/or current software is inadequate for their needs - are often ignorant about what is available, or biased to the point of blindness. We must be careful not to succumb to this ourselves, even though it is bashed at us repeatedly from the media.

Apple is also successfully fueling multimedia sites, known as Apple studio centers such as the new EC2 facility at USC, primarily for novel multimedia design for developers. Apple needs to stay close to, and nurture its developers - because developers are an integral

component of any GUI's success - something Apple may have taken a while to realize. The new Game sprockets SDK is not an exception to Apple's involvement with developers, nor is the collaboration with OSF to bring out MkLinux.

Apple was recently shown to have the highest repurchase loyalty compared to other computer manufacturers at 87%, with Dell in 2nd with 74%. This is not so astounding however, because Apple is not only a computer manufacturer but the sole source for Macs. Hence, if you clumped all the PC compatibles together, and looked at their net repurchasing rate, it would be high indeed. Then again, with the explosive group of Mac clones (Power Computing) the same could be said for Macs, and perhaps greater gains for Mac/Mac-clones will be seen in the near future, since PowerComputing is so highly lauded by its clients. However, more impressive was PC Computing's ranking of Macintosh computers as #1 in a recent survey (no details on this, sorry).

It's a shame that Apple lost Capps and Smith to Microsoft, and is a symbolic slap in the face, to say the least. Actions like this are often warped out of proportion by the media, and hurt Apple more than they should at times. It doesn't help when an embittered Steve Jobs joins on the Apple bashing, although frankly, I can sympathize with his motives. But, this is why the loyalty of individuals like you and I is so important. Vital perhaps to Apple's survival. Even I've been guilty of a bit of griping, when really I have no right to gripe. For instance how can I complain of the Geoport's CPU sapping when it has the best telephony and fax integration I have ever seen, and I knew full well, a priori, how it would affect my CPU?

Now, back to financial analysis - what kind of buy is Apple anyways? Well, first off, we should talk about book value. This is basically defined as common equity per share - or if they sold everything off including property, and pooled all cash reserves, how much money would Apple have per share outstanding? Well, as it turns out, it's about 16.5$ per share. It's not terribly common to see a share trade below its book value, for obvious reasons. Now, that's not say the book value doesn't change - sometimes a company must feed from its reserves during acquisitions, reduction of debt, quarterly losses, etc. But, for reference, IBM's shares are selling at 2.5 times book value, and ridiculously, Netscape is trading at 27 times its book value.

Apple is currently trading at 19.5 $US on the NASDAQ exchange. This equates to about 1.15 times its book value. Low. Why? The market has no faith in Apple. Do you? If so, you would be taking a risk, because as you know, Apple posted outrageous losses over the last year, and expects losses for this quarter as well. The share's price should already reflect the market's anticipation of losses for this quarter. If Apple has done worse than expected, then the price will drop - if Apple loses less money than expected, the shares will go up. Apple's forward earnings per share are - $5.25 per share. Negative. Ouch. The question now becomes - do you have faith in Gil's restructuring?

Well, before you answer that, Apple has had problems in the past that led people to believe that Apple's death was soon in sight. Consider the highs and lows that have occurred for Apple's shares over 52 week periods for the last 5 years (Thanks to Paul Durrant for research):

Year $ High $ Low
- - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -
1991 72.75   25

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1992   69.875   43.25
1993   65        24.25
1994   38.125   22.5
1995   50.125   32.5
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1996 looks like no exception. Admittedly, its probably worse, with the yearly average of the share value being much lower than in years past. The graph for the last 52 weeks has generally been linearly downward, with a high over the last 52 weeks being just over 40$ US. Can we turn it around? Can Gil? Can MacOS? My answer is yes to all of these, and I just recently stretched out my pennies to buy a half lot (50) shares of Apple from a deep discount broker. After looking into things, I can't see it going much lower than 19, although bad announcements for this quarter (coming out on July 20th I think) could send it lower. I would recommend a heavily discounted broker, with 25$ commissions per transaction plus perhaps a small (3c/shr) fee.
This means an investment of approximately 1000$ US for a half lot, or 2000$ US for 100 shares. I won't even mention Apple's dividends - hardly worth buying an ice cream cone with.

I should point out that I do not want you to take my financial advice - I am not a financial adviser, nor do I know much about finances. You could lose as much as everything, and you could gain as much as "a whole lot". That's not the point of this financial expenditure in my opinion. I know plenty about Apple and its products , and I wholeheartedly want to keep Apple around. To help with this, I am casting my vote concerning Apple's future. When someone asks me if I believe in Apple's future, I can resoundingly answer "yes," in the best way I know how - you see, I now own part of the company.

The Future is Hot...and Cool!

BY H.M. FOG, *HMFog@aol.com*

1984 - Apple Computer revolutionizes the computer industry with the Macintosh "Mac-like" is added to industry parlance as a term for graphic interface excellence.

1994 - Apple strikes again with the introduction of the Power Mac

1995 - Power Computing establishes a strong, vibrant Mac clone market.
  The Internet "explodes" as a broad-based, graphic-intensive communication m e d i u m

January 1996 Apple "senses" the fast-paced market change
February 1996 Apple realigns management and selects a new Chief Executive Officer
April 1996   Apple "cuts" with the past and "writes-down" existing inventory
May 1996   Apple announces its technology strategy and new corporate plan

Summer 1996 Apple Computer and Power Computing, in tandem, introduce the next generation of personal computers to the performance demanding, communication-hungry world
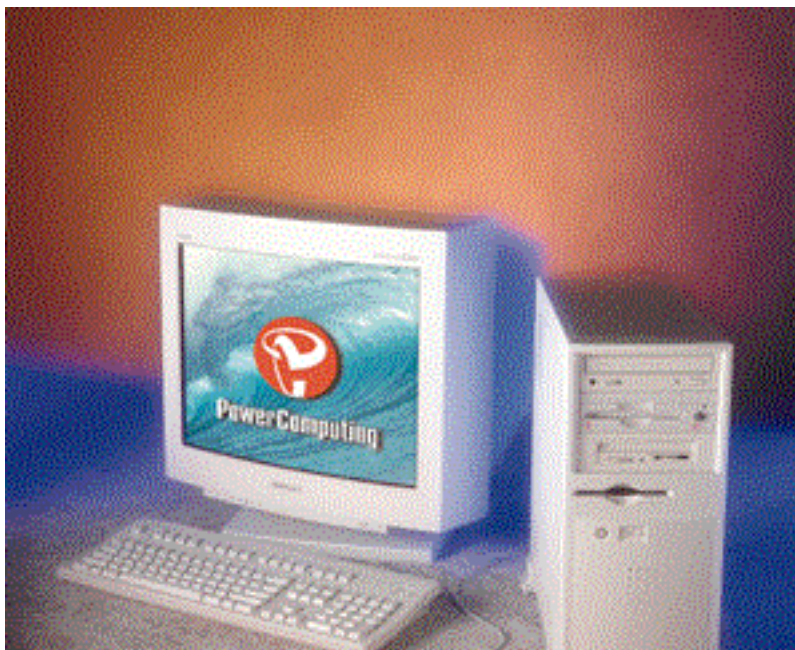
The influence of Apple Computer is often disputed, but its impact on the personal computer industry and its influence on the manner in which we now use graphics to communicate cannot be refuted. Make no mistake. Apple Computer is the personal computer technology leader. It has been since 1984, it remains so today.

This month, at MacWorld Expo, Apple Computer released the next generation of personal computers.   The performance leap of these machines is simply masked behind familiar model names. The "heart " of the top-of-the-line machines is the PPC 604e micro-processor. This chip represents a powerful advancement in chip technology from the strategic partnership of IBM, Motorola and Apple Computer. It is the potential of this chip and its future siblings which enticed IBM and Motorola to license the Mac OS for not only their own potential product offerings but to sub-license the OS to clients as well.

This month's product releases from Apple are significant for three reasons. First, as mentioned, the top-of-the-line models utilize the powerful 604e micro-processor. This means they are among the fastest and most technologically advanced personal computers available at this time to the general market. Second, they represent the initial offerings from Apple's current management team. Third, and perhaps most important for high-end users, the models include a mulit-processor (or MP) version which is called the Power Macintosh 9500/180MP.

Dr. Gil Amelio, as we all know, assumed the leadership at Apple Computer and promised to cut costs, realign the management structure and make the company more "responsive" to customers and software developers. Among the key components of this strategy is to reduce the number of motherboard designs, make products more uniform in terms of parts and to reduce the development time for new products and hardware enhancements. The effort to streamline a company's products, introduce new models which incorporate new technologies and significant hardware enhancements all at the same time is not an easy one. Therefore, this article focuses less on the in-depth particulars of the product changes and more on the momentum of the changes that are taking place.

There has been some murmuring that the new products being introduced seem more like incremental improvements rather than broad advancements in product development. More obvious hardware changes such as moving from Nubus to PCI and from SIMMs to DIMMs received a lot of media and industry attention because they also impacted the product life of previously installed machines (i.e. the computers you currently own and use). Apple's newest offerings blend well with the existing product line and allows users a seamless integration of the new advancements in technology while maintaining the user value of existing Macs. The fact that these products have been developed and are being released without an unnecessary disruption to the product life of previously installed machines and, with the exception of the 9500/180MP, without the immediate need for third-party developers of related hardware and software to reengineer products to accommodate the new offerings speaks very well of the company's management.

This indicates that the new management at Apple has a solid, workable business model and

product plan. The simple truth is that many of the new offerings are a broad advancement in product development that integrate so seamlessly into the product line that they seem more like incremental improvements.

Along with the 9500/180MP which will dramatically reduce the processing time required for high-end rendering such as CAD, 3D and computer animation, Apple is also offering a single-processor 9500/200 and 8500/180.   In addition, Apple announced that a180MHz PowerPC 604e microprocessor upgrade card will soon be available for selected previously installed Power Macintosh systems.

Apple has also released new Performas, including tower-style systems, built around the 603e micro-processor with clock speeds of 200 & 180 MHz.   These new Macintosh systems are on a performance par with their Intel Pentium counterparts.

Fast on Apple's heels is Power Computing. This reference is not to the processing speeds of the Power Computing's product line but in reference to this company's pace at establishing itself in the Mac OS market. The fact that Power Computing was able to beat Apple to market with a faster single processor computer utilizing the advanced 604e micro-processor technology should not only have been expected, it's a very good harbinger of things to come. In addition to the short development time required to bring the PowerTower 225 to market, Power Computing continues to innovate and to develop its product line. This means that the company will not be satisfied with simply offering lower-cost versions of older technology. This not only leaves room for other clone makers such as UMAX to develop a full product line, but it also indicates that Apple Computer and Power Computing can compete well with one another while also working in tandem to grow the over all market share of the Macintosh OS.

The PowerTower 225 (pictured below) represents an important milestone in the continuing development of the Mac clone market. Strangely, by being Apple's biggest competitor in the Macintosh OS market, Power Computing is also Apple's best friend.

Features

- 225MHz PowerPC 604e Processor
- 6 PCI Slots
- Upgradeable CPU
- 9 drive Bays
- Up to 1GB Memory
- Dual Processor Support
- Dual SCSI, Fast Internal 10MB/sec.
- Interleaved Memory
- 1MB Level 2 Cache included
- 8MB 128-bit Graphics Accelerator
- 8x CD-ROM Drive
- AV Capable Hard Drive
- Ultra SCSI/RAID options
- 100% Mac-compatible

PowerTower Pro 225

The presence of Power Computing and UMAX in the Macintosh OS market alleviate Apple's

burden of "carrying" more models than it can efficiently manufacture, distribute and sell in order to maintain overall market share for the OS. This will lead to a more efficient product line for Apple and will help reduce the number of different motherboard designs needed to support sales. With a stable clone market as an underpinning, Apple can also focus more effectively on developing and licensing the Macintosh OS and the manufacturing of premuim-priced, high-end hardware solutions.

One final note: The release of Power Computing's PowerBase product line and UMAX's Typhoon product line is an indication that the Macintosh OS will maintain a healthy position in the lower-end consumer market. This will mean the continued development of Mac OS consumer-related software. The more efficient product lines, with fewer overall motherboard designs, will make more enhancements and incremental upgrades available to the lower-end Mac OS machines, too.

Simply put, the new Macintosh OS machine bought today will probably last much longer than the Pentium and PentiumPro box bought tomorrow.

The Mac OS market is hot and the products are cool!

The Answer is Simple, The Ramifications are Not

"I want to play with my ---puter!" This was Matthew's proclamation as he walked over to the 7200 and ceremoniously pushed the "big button" on the keyboard. In his own determined style he pulled out the Childcraft chair from underneath the desk, sat down, patiently waited through start-up, then double-clicked the game icon that was in the folder on the CD-ROM and set to work playing his favorite educational game. Not bad for a 3 1/2 year-old, I thought.

In 1984 Apple computer introduced something that astounded the world. Today, in 1996, I see the same excitement about the Macintosh in Matthew and Jessica. It has literally opened a new electronic world of sight, sound, learning, and play for the two of them. Twelve years ago the introduction of the Macintosh brought about a whole new approach to personal computing and it was a revolutionary idea. The Macintosh was intended to help people do the best that they could do by providing an operating system that afforded everyone a sense of personal competence no matter what their level of computer experience. It also created an opportunity for millions of people to express their ideas, hopes, dreams, and to use their inherent skills without the need to understand or master arcane commands and file structures. The idea was simple. The ramifications to the computer industry were not.

The Macintosh is still the best personal computer available to the American consumer, and to people throughout the world. Anyone who tells you differently is at best ill informed, close-minded, or simply silly. At worst, someone who tells you differently is perpetrating a fraud and telling you a lie.

What happened to Apple Computer over the past few years is a series of unfortunate management missteps. It is my view that Apple Computer attempted to be an American Sony. The company's management lost its focus and allowed attention to be diverted to things other than providing the best personal computer possible and continuing to tell the Macintosh story.

It is a tribute to the Macintosh technology and the people who continue to develop it that more wasn't lost than a little bit of market share and time. Guess what? Things have begun to change. When you go through a difficult transition and things that you may have taken for granted are suddenly at risk, it can often bring about a very quick attitude adjustment. The Macintosh pays Apple's bills. The profits from Macintosh sales used to pay a dividend to shareholders. These above statements are simple. The ramifications from the management missteps are not.

When I first began this column I thought about how much of myself should be revealed and how much should be kept private. Every month, those of you who read this column are in so many ways invited into my life, my views and my home. For me to present only a segment or a part of me would require too much effort and a contrived, bifurcated approach to what I write, and how I think about this column. I hope nothing I do ever gets that complex. In a very short period of time segmenting myself would exhaust me.

For those of you who may have wondered why the mother of our children has not been mentioned in this column the answer is simple, the resulting ramifications are not. My wife and I are divorced. That's simple. For Matthew and Jessica the ramifications are not. I am also a devout Roman Catholic. Most often that's also simple, but sometimes, in my current circumstance, the ramifications of this are not.

The divorce was not my choice. But it is a situation to which I must adapt. When I found myself flat on my back it forced me to reevaluate everything in my life. Again, not by choice but from the ramifications of the divorce. There were many things I couldn't hold onto such as certain personal goals, ambitions, and even some long-held ideals and entrenched beliefs. Quite honestly it hurt, and in many ways it still hurts and always will hurt. In learning to adapt to my new life I've had to refocus on what's important, what helps me make it through the day, and even sometimes the night. For me, it's often prayer.

The changes at Apple, I'm sure, often hurt the people involved. They are letting go of many outdated beliefs, inefficient product lines and some very good technologies that just don't fit the current market reality. Many of these changes are not an easy choice, but a necessary response to the ramifications of past mistakes and the changes in the ever-evolving computer industry. Strangely, at a time of difficulty, some decisions become much more simple.

It used to be said about Los Angeles, where I now live, that it is seven suburbs in search of a city. Apple Computer, in my view, had become several ideas, concepts, technologies, and products in search of a consumer or end user. The problem is that much of what Apple has developed outside of Macintosh hardware and software has done very little to generate more sales.

Unlike a lot of people I don't quibble with Apple's decision to go slow with licensing the OS. Quality control is important. However, I do think that Apple tried to keep too much of the market for Macintosh hardware peripherals. The more companies that depend on your main product for their product sales means that more companies are directly and indirectly helping to sell your product, too.

I believe that Apple Computer will be for a short while a smaller company. It will also be a healthier company. At the same time, ironically, by reducing its size and scope it will become larger in its influence and the Macintosh OS market will once again grow, thanks in large part to the third-parties now involved.

Apple Computer is an industry leader. Whoever tells you otherwise is no different in their outlook than the persons referenced above. The influence of this industry giant is far greater than market share data would indicate. If this weren't the case the press wouldn't be so preoccupied with its performance and with every new product and new technology that the company brings out. There are very few companies that are scrutinized and

analyzed as much as Apple. Sometimes this is out of a fascination for what the company can do and sometimes out of an ingrained resentment that any company can be as consistently innovative and fun.

Apple Computer is also the only company I know that has so many end-users passionately committed to the company's continued survival and success. For many of us, the Macintosh is not just our computer, it's the resource and tool we use to work, to play, and to help transform our ideas into reality.

I know that many of our readers and fellow Mac users do not share my faith. That's not an issue. In the ten years I've owned a Mac, and although I've attended meetings, I've yet to join a user group. This may soon change (a reader reminded me that there is a very good Mac user group in my area). However, I have joined a prayer group. Over the past couple of years I've come to know that you can learn a lot about a person, their concerns and their outlook on life by what they pray for. I've spent a lot of time praying for Apple. I know that I'm not alone. There are people of many faiths and different denominations who have done so too. In my view, the reason for this is that many Mac users share in common a deep, abiding respect for human dignity, and an appreciation for personal expression. The Macintosh as a creative tool has unlocked many otherwise hidden talents and skills among its millions of users.

Ask anyone the following question: If you were given 24 hours to create a message in sight and sound that would effectively communicate to everyone in the world the one thing that's most important to you whether it be a relationship with God, family, friends, an idea or personal principle, etc., what computer would you use? The answer is simple. Anyone who doesn't choose a Macintosh may not have understood the awesome ramifications of the question.

There are people who claim that only little differences exist between the Mac OS and Windows '95. Sure. I could always use a paper and pencil to balance my checkbook. Better yet, I could also light charcoal in my fireplace to warm a pizza. Some people just don't get it.

I've gone through a lot of changes in the past couple of years. It's been an opportunity to realize what's most important to me and what in life I cherish most. As I write this, one is sleeping quite comfortably in my bed and the other, wanting to be just a little closer, is asleep on the loveseat with his favorite pillow and "blanky." In the morning, just before they go to their "other house" to spend a few days with their mother, Jessica may ask to use my color printer. She likes to draw pictures for her mother on the computer and give them to her. This is one way she expresses love.

I'm glad she has a Macintosh. Jessica's message is simple. The ramifications of being able to effectively communicate that message to the most important people in her little world are not.

THE PERSONAL COMPUTING PARADIGM, BY MICHAEL TSAI

Highlights of MacWorld Expo Boston

The Macintosh world has never been larger. Just take a look at this month's MacWorld Exposition in Boston for evidence of this. More than 62,000 people flocked to the World Trade Center and to the Bayside Exposition Center in Boston, leaving the conference halls continuously packed. And from the plethora of new products and the upgrades to old ones on display, one would never have guessed that Apple, the company that started it all, had lost three-quarters of a billion dollars only a few months ago. No, the days that the exposition lasted brought back memories of the way things used to be; and they gave some glimpses of what was to come. No doubt, you've already read news reports about the expo, so I'll just concentrate on some of its less-reported highlights.

AIMing For Cooperation

It's been several years since Apple, IBM, and Motorola announced that they would join together to develop the next generation of microprocessors. Of course, Apple likes to talk about it as a risk that paid off, neglecting to mention that the 680x0 series of processors would have been rendered obsolete by the folks at Intel even if the PowerPC hadn't come along.

Regardless of the motives or wisdom involved in creating the alliance, what matters is its existence today. And despite the fact that numerous joint ventures, mostly with IBM, have been cancelled or postponed, the triumvirate looks healthy.

Motorola demonstrated a prototype PowerPC Platform machine. This machine represents the future of Mac hardware. By 1998, Apple has said that all its machines will be based on the PowerPC Platform, and will therefore be able to run multiple operating systems such as the Mac OS, Windows NT, and others.

IBM's Microelectronics division gave away cardboard suitcases for attendees to carry their product literature in. They were a welcome improvement to the handled bags that most of the other companies were giving away, and the large, stripped logo didn't seem to phase Mac users in the slightest. I guess they've placed Microsoft in the enemy's role, and finally recognize IBM as a friend. We've come a long way since the "1984" commerical.

Power Leaves a Lasting Impression

If I had to choose the one company that made the largest impression at the show, it would have to be Power Computing Corp. Not only did they display and demonstrate the fastest

proceedings. Power's booth, containing an interesting 3D rendition of their logo, was the host of a Macintosh trivia contest. Gathered around a large screen, participants had their chance to show what they knew about the Mac's founding fathers, internal Apple codenames, and other interesting trivia. To experience these questions for yourself, download MacUser's "You Don't Know Mac" from http://www.zdnet.com/~macuser.

But the things that really made Power Computing stand out, were its "We're fighting back for Mac" T-shirts, and its 225 ft. bungee crane overlooking Boston harbour. Despite the fact that Power only ships a fraction of the machines that Apple does, it seemed that there were almost as many PowerTowers and PowerCenters as there were PowerMacs running the various booths.

MacWorld magazine had a display of the models they photographed for their recent "Mac Reborn" article. The display cases they were in were constantly surrounded, despite the fact that the models were empty of components. But Power Computing once again stole the show by announcing that it was talking with Frog Design to examine the feasibility of actually building them. They're certainly not resting on their laurels.

All Quiet on the Copland Front

Apple had several machines running early builds of MacOS 8, or Copland. And for some unknown reason, very few people seemed to be interested in them. The only apparent changes that I noticed were with the user interface. It seemed much snappier than system 7.5.3 running on the PowerTower Pro, even though the machine I saw it running on was a 9500/120. Three "themes" were installed: the Apple default theme (Aaron), the "k" theme, and the "p" theme. In the kids theme, menu items spin into the selected position. The effect was quite interesting, prompting me to pull down several other menus just to see it. The power users theme is every bit as hideous as in the pictures I'd seen, but it was nonetheless interesting to see the entire look of the machine change with a click of the mouse. And when I shut down the machine, a dialog box appeared asking if I wanted to log on as a different person (and therefore with a different desktop and set of preferences). All in all, the demo machine confirmed my belief that a properly executed MacOS 8 could look and feel like a completely different machine.

Mac + Unix + Ex Apple Exec. = Be

I had an opportunity to try out a PowerTower Pro 225, the fastest single processor personal compter — ever. And it was speedy. While I didn't have a chance to test it with any processor intensive tasks, it was possible to "feel the speed" by noticing how fast the menus pulled down, and the dialogs popped up. However, the real speed king of the show was the BeBox. As you may have already heard, the BeBox is a completely new computer with its own operating system. It's not a Mac at all, though it shares such technologies with the Mac world as the PowerPC chip, and QuickTime.

The machine I saw contained two 133Mhz PowerPC 603s. Everything about the machine, including the display code is threaded, so two processors really does mean twice as fast. And although the two processors combined are not as powerful as the 225Mhz 604e that the PowerTower Pro uses, the machine was much faster because it didn't have 12 years of

compatibility layers to deal with. It represents a fresh start for the computing industry, and whether or not it will become the next Mac, or fade from existence like the NeXT, has yet to be determined.

Regardless, I have yet to see a personal computer that can best it in speed. The demonstration I saw had it playing 4 320x240 QuickTime movies simultaneously without one of them skipping. However, as the Be spokesman was quick to point out, it wasn't really stressing the machine. This was easy to see because the processor gauges on the front of the tower were only reading about 3/4 processor usage. So, he added a rotating QuickDraw3D-like Be logo, an audio CD, and several tracks of MIDI. The processor gauges indicated that there wasn't much processor power left, but everything continued to play without a single bit of jerkiness.

When you drag or resize windows in the BeOS, the content is dragged and resized in real time. Thus, if you drag a (playing) QuickTime movie, the content continues to play, but follows the cursor. Likewise, if you resize a file-view window, new content appears before you even release the mouse button. This, and the fact that windows pop up wihtout any perceptible delay, combine to give the BeBox the most responsive user interface that I have ever seen. And it rekindles my hope that Apple can bring this sort of interactivity to the MacOS during its rewrite. I cannot adequately express what it's like to use a computer that responds instantly to just about everything.

Don't Worry, Be Mac

Be also demonstrated the BeOS running on a Power Computing PowerCenter machine. It has stated that it will ship official versions of BeOS that run on a variety of Apple and Power Computing Macs early next year. Unfortunately, owners of 601 based PowerMacs are out of luck as Be has no plans for supporting them. In addition, the BeOS will run on PowerPC Platform machines when they are finally released. This is probably where it will be most attractive to everyday users, as they'll be able to use BeOS for its strong multimedia capabilities, but switch to the MacOS or to Windows NT for productivity applications that are only available on those platforms. I don't think the BeOS will ever replace the MacOS or Windows, but it will likely develop a strong niche following.

Hardware

In addition to the ones I've mentioned, there were several other intriguing hardware introductions. Wacom introduced a new pen for its tablets, that has a "DuoSwitch" in addition to an eraser. I tried it out, and was very impressed, but was disappointed to learn that it would not work with my ArtPad. It does work with all Wacom tablets that came with Erasing UltraPens though, and is certainly worth a look.

Iomega's booth seemed to be very popular, and while they didn't introduce a new removable drive, they did demonstrate a clip on battery pack for the Zip drive. The battery pack is about one quarter the size of the drive, clips onto the top, and lasts for about 3 hours. In addition, VST showed a prototype for a Zip drive that will fit in a PowerBook's expansion bay. This drive, which uses an entirely different mechanism, will be available this fall.

Apple showed a Pippin running Netscape, which to my surprise included a pen input device in addition to the game controller and keyboard. The machine, while usable, seemed very slow, especially considering that it was not using a dialup internet connection. Unfortunately, the pointer was very difficult to control with the game controller, so much so, that I wonder why they didn't include a mouse.

Finally, I saw a booth selling framed Apple stock certificates. The price, $89.99 (a show special), was surprising considering that Apple stock was hovering around $20 per share.

Software

Connectix introduced RAM Doubler 2, which while popular, didn't seem to wow attendees as much as the original did several years ago. I guess even tripling RAM can't top the initial excitment of doubling it.

Fractal Design demonstrated a beta version of Detailer, an amazing program that lets users paint 3D models with natural media tools. With Detailer, it is possible to paint onto a 2D image, and have it map in real-time onto a 3D model, or to paint directly onto the 3D model. The tool set seems to be inherited from Painter.

NisusWriter, a powerful word processor, seemed to be much more popular this year than last, despite the fact that the core software remained the same. Perhaps this was due to the large whiteboard provided, where people could write down their gripes about Word 6. Version 5.0 is supposed to ship sometime this fall, and will be an OpenDoc container.

Casady and Greene demonstrated and sold its newly acquired universal spelling checker: SpellCatcher. Formerly called Thunder 7, and marketed by Baseline, this control panel can check the spelling of any text that can be copied to the clipboard. I find it indispensable, and most of our other editors do as well.

OpenDoc had a large presence at the show, especially in Apple's Component Software area. People there were handing out LiveObjects business cards, with little containers of Mexican jumping beans. Unfortunately, Cyberdog 1.1 was not ready to ship, though I'm pleased to report that my jumping beans are still jumping.

MetaTools demonstrated its consumer special effects package titled Kai's PowerGoo. This amazing software, which produces results similar to Flo and Morph, works in real time, and has an extremely simple user interface. Don't let that fool you though, this software can create effects and animations faster than any other of its kind, and for $49, it's an excellent value too.

The Future

More than anything else, this summer's MacWorld Expo demonstrated that despite rumors that "Apple is dying," the Mac software and hardware companies are just as busy as ever. They are continuing to innovate, improve, and refine their flagship products, while at the same time developing new and entirely original pieces that are both useful and fun to have on the desktop.

SEGMENTS
SLICES FROM THE MACINTOSH LIFE

BY CHAD G. POLAND, *proedge@netctrl.com*

I have a story, one that isn't a major victory. It's from a small, DOShead town near Daytona Beach, Florida. I honestly thought that I was one of maybe 10 Mac users. Our population is 18,000 and I really thought I was basically it. I've lived here for 22 years, and I have met only one local Mac user. That was until about a year and a half ago. I did a search on AOL for my town. It turned out that there was about 15 Mac users there. I remember being very pleased, I thought there was less than that. Just on a whim, I emailed one turned out being an Apple employee! He telecommuted most days, flew back and forth from Cupertino the rest.

I spoke to him for quite a while. We discussed a lot of different Mac-related topics. One day he asked why I didn't start a users group. He mentioned he was too busy to really often contribute, but would do what he could.

I called every computer-related business within 30 miles. They all told me the same thing. They said there wasn't a sufficient number of Macs here to provide enough for a group. Over and over again, I heard that. No one had worked on many Macs, so I assumed that I was originally right.

After speaking to my friend via email again, I didn't give up. I continued spreading the word. I started emailing everyone I could find on AOL and eWorld. I told them to call all the Mac people they knew. I found someone who put ads in all the local newspapers. I reserved a room at the library. I bought a couple of Mac shirts. Wanting something to give away, I called a few software companies and got some demos and the local Apple dealer gave me pamphlets to distribute. I did everything I could to pass the word to anyone who would listen.

I nervously waited until the date of the first meeting. When the day came, I went to the library and set up the chairs. I optimistically put 20 seats out. I opened the door and waited. The first person showed up 30 minutes early. Soon a second person walked in, followed by the third. They didn't stop showing up until 15 minutes into the meeting. A total of 36 people had come to my little meeting. I couldn't believe it. It turned out that Macs don't need repairs very often. No one had ever needed their hardware fixed, and when they have software problems, they call Apple.

We've been meeting for a year and a half now, and are constantly growing. We currently have about 20 regulars, with 15-20 people who occasionally visit. We aren't an official group, we don't want to go through all the paperwork. We just want to meet and talk. They have given me a renewed faith in the best OS, and hopefully, I've taught them a little bit about how to make their computers easier.

I later called back some of the businesses that had told me not to bother. I mentioned who we were, and when we meet. After inviting them to see what's happening at Apple, I

happened to remind them that there was no PC users group here. In a town where PC's outnumber Mac 500 to 1, we're the only one's who felt the need to exchange ideas.

Speed Racer now prefers to drive the Volkswagen GTI. So, if I wander, you'll know why.

It's a Man's Life, in the Network Operations Center

Or, NOC, for those that know. The NOC exists to make my life miserable. And, at the same time, they make my job at Huge easier. Back in November when I started, I came in from an ultra-small company that was wired only with Local Talk. I hadn't even heard of routers, or Apple-Talk zones, until I read a book, of course. But that's a review I may never do. Anyway, back to what we were talking about. What were we talking about? Oh, yes. The NOC. Not to be confused with the LAN group, which deals with servers, and PO Boxes, and wiring. The NOC deals with routers, concentrators, IP addresses, and phone jacks. Did I mention IP addresses?

It seems that they neglected to mention when their job function changed. In the beginning, ok, November, whenever I needed to check an IP address, the NOC was more than willing to be just a phone call away. I'd call up, give the room number, the jack number if necessary, and about 30 seconds later, they'd provide me with a valid IP address for the computer I was working on. They'd even ping me, if I've needed it. And if you've ever been pinged, you know just how pleasurable that can be. But I digress. After about five minutes on the phone with these people, I would know whether or not the problem I was currently working on was their's or mine. Usually, it was their's, because I'd already checked that the MacTCP, or lately, the TCP/IP, control panel had been properly set up. So, when they couldn't ping me, I'd simply give them the trouble ticket number, and they'd take care of it, after I called the admin desk, and had it transferred to them.

The NOC must die

This all changed about a month or two ago, as of this reading. Now I wouldn't have minded as much, if we'd been notified in our morning daily bore 'em to death meeting, as opposed to the weekly afternoon bore 'em to death meeting. The morning meeting consists of the queue manager telling us how great we are, by reading off numbers that significantly beat our service level agreements, or SLAs. I believe I spoke about Huge being in love with acronyms in a previous column. Anyway, the last part of the meeting, which is remotely relevant to what I do, is for issues that may have come up, or any new procedures. No issues, no new procedures, I proceed as normal. The first clue I should've had was when I went on what I thought was a routine network down call, which translates to, the Huser somehow switched his Network control panel to Local Talk, when it should be on Ethernet. So, knowing this, I checked the network control panel, and it was set to Ethernet, yet it indicated no zones were available. So, I call the NOC, and they tell me that they're doing some work in the area, and I should talk to the repairman on site. I ask the Huser where the phone closet is. For those of you that have never had to deal with such things, a phone closet is basically a place full of wires and circuit boards, that directs your phone/network traffic. In this specific case, it's where the concentrators for the floor are. I found the technician, and he told me that there was a network card that was bad, and asked me the IP address of the offending computer. I hadn't looked it up yet, so we went back to the Huser's computer and called up the MacTCP control panel. It opened up right away, which was the

first indication that something was really wrong, as normally it takes around 5 minutes to open. Why? I don't know. I've never had that process explained to me, I was just told that it does. The tech got the IP, and told the Huser that he was in the affected area, and probably the rest of the people in that quarter of the floor were having the same problem. The Huser confirmed this, to my surprise as this was the only trouble ticket we were dealing with on this floor at the moment. And the technician was no help, either. He said he had the part to fix it, even showed it to me. However, he was unable to make the repair, as the appropriate paper work had not made its way through a pile on someone's desk, awaiting a signature. All I can do at this point is reschedule the ticket, which I did. When I went back later, the Huser was cruising the network fine, he could see all his zones, and everything, so his problem at least, was solved. Mine were just beginning.

MacX

For those of you that don't know, MacX is a program that allows you to connect to various Unix machines. Another Huser was in need of accessing a program called PDM from her new office location that she was sharing, as she had just moved in. This ticket had been passed to me by another tech, who was unable to solve it. Now, MacX as you may or may not know, needs your TCP/IP connectivity running smoothly, therefore, I checked the appropriate control panel, which netted me the IP address, and I was able to ping, however, I was unable to run MacX. I made the mistake of calling the NOC. They were mildly helpful this time, or so I thought. This was to change later, but I'm getting ahead of myself. The end result of this conversation was, the concentrator was set to local, and the Huser needed to put in a TSR to resolve this problem. Now, TSR is not the company that brings you Dungeons and Dragons, in this case, it stands for Telephone Service Request. Also, the ticket was put into the NOC queue for observation purposes only. So, some free thinking individual at the NOC decided that they needed to send a tech out, and check the line for themselves. THEY decided that the Huser had the wrong IP address set, and I needed to go back out and resolve this problem. So, I went back, mildly annoyed at this point, because I don't like going back to the same machine twice for the same problem. I check the allegedly new IP address, and I can't ping. I call the NOC, and this is about the time their new attitude set in. The guy at the other end of the line tells me he doesn't have time to check the IP address, and I have to call another phone number, which he gives me, and then abruptly hangs up. Actually, I'd been given this number once before on a similar issue, and I called it and got the voice mail of the department I was calling, which didn't help too much. After all, the Huser wants to be helped now while I'm there, not 2 hours from now, when I'm not. Anyway, this time, a live person answered, and I was happy. For about 2 minutes. She gives me a list of the IP addresses that are in the office I'm working on, and one of them is the new one that NOC recommended, and another is the one that I'd been using from the first call. Thinking quickly, I asked her office mate if I could check his IP address. This was a big step for me, as it required touching a PC-compatible. Thankfully, I knew enough to check the NET.CFG file, to look up the IP. It turns out that the address the NOC had recommended for the Mac, was the one being used on the PC. No surprises here, the NOC had done yet another bang up job, when they were just told to do nothing until the TSR came down the pike.

The NOC Must Die, The Sequel

So, we fade the black and come up a coupla days ago, when I was afforded yet another opportunity to speak with my good friends at the NOC. I got a priority 2 call to check a printer that had dropped off the network. A Phaser 220 to be precise. They had just moved from another office, and had rewired for a cable to reach the printer. The bad news was, after they did this, the printer had gone away. So, I get there, and thinking quickly, I moved the cable to port 2, where the other printer was, and Bingo! the Phaser 220 shows up in the chooser like a good little printer. So, I call the NOC to get the IP address, and warn them that a ticket is being transferred to them. Or so I thought. I talk to Bill, whose name I've preserved to accuse the guilty. I give him the jack number, he gives me the IP address, after telling me that it's not his job, and I tell him that I'll be transferring the ticket to him, and he tells me that won't be necessary. I tersely replied, "That ain't gonna cut it!" Of course, it sounded like, "OK, whatever." I go back to base, after this character assassination, and let them know the humiliation I was just put through. I find out the next morning that we can't call the NOC anymore for IP addresses. They instead give me a number that's guaranteed to not have anyone at the other end with the information I want. And you thought you had problems...

MacMan to the Rescue

Well, it turns out, you do. A few questions this month I couldn't answer, to which I apologize, I'll try to do better next month. And I'm still working on the Open Transport issue, as another problem relating to that has come up here. Yes, Bill, I haven't forgotten about you. Some questions merely recapping what I'd talked about regarding Norton 3.2.3. It turns out, the masses don't have access to it yet. Yes, that's right, we've discovered my first perk here at Huge, I get software before some of you.

On To The Question

I have just seen my first copy of "About This Particular Macintosh" 2.06 and really enjoyed the articles .

I have just purchased a 7500/100 and use a Hewlett Packard Deskwriter (1st series/not AppleTalk). My last machine was a Quadra 660V, and with the same printer I was able to run QuickDraw GX just fine which gave a remarkable quality to all my printing.

Since changing machines I am now unable to run QuickDraw GX and have had to revert to "DW Series 6.0.3" which has lessened the quality of the printer dramaticly.

I have contacted H.P. Australia and the dont understand the problem quoting things like "Thats an old printer and we dont support it any more". The printer works a treat and I see it as a software problem but I don't know if it is Hewlett Packard's or Apples.

I have all the latest versions of software. (to my knowledge)

System 7.5.3   revision 2
DeskWriter GX 1.0f2 - Chooser extension
PrinterShare GX 1.1.1 - System extension
QuickDraw=81 GX 1.1.3 - System extension

QuickDraw=81 GX Helper - System extension

But when I print a job the Mac goes through its paces till it stalls with a
message:
"The document "XXXXX" (sub name) failed to print on the printer "DW GX"
because the requested printer could not be found." The job is then stalled in the print queue
of the desktop printer.

Any Ideas.........I miss the GX features .

Brian   Sprouster
bjs@dragon.net.au

Answer: Ok, it turns out that since 'speaking' to you via eMail, I've discovered what I think
might be a fix for this problem. It turns out that there is a new driver available from HP,
the HP QuickDraw Printer Driver vs. 8.x, available from the usual places. (AOL, keyword
HP; Compuserve, GO HP, and at HP's web site, http://www.hp.com:80) Good luck, Brian.

Well, that's it for this month, as I've exceeded my allotted word count. So, for next month,
maybe another all user question column, unless I get inspired, and talk about Open
Transport. Back to you in the Booth, Pat.
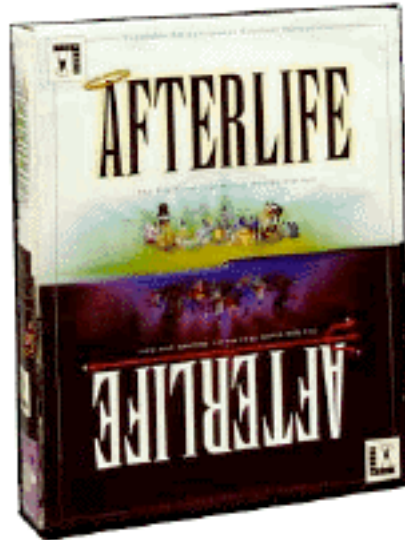
Mike Shields is a perspiring Screen Writer who needs $575,000 to produce his
recently finished screenplay. He can be reached at Mshields@ccgate.hac.com or
ATPMOPed@aol.com. Or, if you just have a Mac question, that's ok, too.

Afterlife

Requirements: MacOS version 7.1 or higher
  33Mhz 68040 or higher, PowerPC recommended
  Double Speed CD-ROM drive or faster
  8MB of RAM, 5 MB free; 16MB recommended
  256 color 13" or larger display required
  8MB hard disk space
Publisher: Lucas Arts

Hello, hello, hello! This time I'm getting straight to the review. I've decided not to babble on about meaningless things that you as a reader, really don't care about. Of course, this will make the review about a page and a half shorter, but if it means you can get to bed earlier tonight, and have a good nights sleep, then my job is done. Well, so much for saying that. I've already started. Anyway...

Do you all remember SimCity 2000? That was a stupid question. Who doesn't know about probably the most popular city simulator of the 90's? Anyway, 3 years later from SimCity 200, LucasArts (I can't help it if they make great games) came up with their sim counterpart, titled: Afterlife.

In Afterlife, you play the role of Demiruge, ruler of the land, controlling two planes, Heaven and Hell. To avoid religious conflicts, the game is set on an alien world, with some of the beliefs in the game like the ones here on Earth, but others radically different. Your job is to keep the inhabitants happy.

Before the intro, the game loads up. This process only takes a few seconds, but the progress bar not only list how much has loaded already, but it does this in a funny way, with phrases using the percent that has loaded. Confused? No longer--Here's an example:

The game starts out with an intro of an alien undergoing cardiac arrest, while the doctor is putting as many volts possible into him,trying to save him, but the patient is lost, and passes on, to the Afterlife. To help you in the game are two helpers, Jasper Wormsworth, a Demon, and Aria Goodhalo, an Angel.

They alert you of problems in your afterlife, such as not enough space for the souls, if your roads are not connected well, among many other problems. They are always available, and also provide an excellent online, spoken, and graphically aided tutorial of the games many features, many of which I could not even begin to explain. Another amusing part of the game is the funny things they say to each other.

The Powers That Be, are your superiors, and they control weather or not you should be rewarded or punished.

The game itself never ends, unless you aren't doing so well. When you have lost too many souls, or are not keeping a well managed afterlife, then the Four Surfers from Apocalypso pay a visit. Your game ends, and you start over after that. The first 1 or 2 thousand years are the roughest. build small and slow. I on the other hand, can't seem to do that for any game. I have to end up using some cheat code. Luckily this game has one. After that, the game was smooth cruising. (For those of you who don't know what the code is, type $@! for a lot of money). Along the line of codes, there is a rather pointless, yet humorous code. Type SAMNMAX three times. Make sure you're holding the shift key down when you're typing. Don't worry about it bring up the gift menu. If all goes correctly, you should have lots of little bunnies (Maxes) hopping around, destroying your afterlife.

To start the game, you need to place a gate in the two planes (Heaven and Hell). This should be followed by a road leading to the zoned fates, and other structures. They are zoned according color which in turn is according to the 7 fates or sins. In SimCity, this is like Industrial, Commercial, and Residential. You have to supply the work force of the afterlife, by training and housing Angels and Demons. Just about everything build able is accessible through the game's " Remote Control", which also tells you your account balance, the year, and your population.

There are about 250 artistically rendered structures throughout the game. They really are quite comical. Sound effects are played throughout the game, and are quite good. I wouldn't

exactly say the game has music in it, but rather short tunes played in parts of the game.

The disasters of the game are some of the funniest parts. There are 6 that you can control (meaning activate), and others that just randomly pop up, like a plague. The ones that you can control include: Birds of paradise and Bats of Hell, My Blue Heaven and Hell Freezes Over, Heaven Nose and Hell in a Hand basket, and finally paradise Pair of Dice, and Disco Inferno. All of them are incredible annoying, especially the Heaven Nose and Hell in a Hand basket, which go around picking up structured, and depositing them in the opposite plane. The Disco Inferno is just plain amusing. He'll brighten your day, and destroy your afterlife.
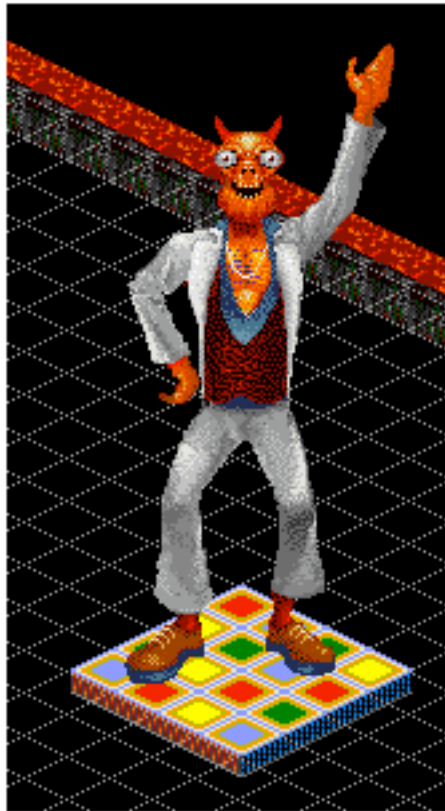
The window and menu design fit the "dead" motif. In other words, this isn't your typical Mac menu — graphically speaking. It is pretty much just a brow colored font changed Mac menu.

If you ever get bored of the game, there are some scenarios for you to try out, and in general, there are 3 difficulty options to choose from.

There are no waterfalls, or hills to work around. You don't need a power plant, or a fire station. Afterlife is a very complex sim, and I admit it does get boring at times. If I had to say something bad about it, it would be the fact that it is hard to get info on some structures (via a magnifying glass), because others are blocking it. This is quickly fixed be pressing the key that makes everything tiny, or to "flatten" it. You can also rotate the Afterlife 90 at a time, and zoom in and out.

There is one structure that is available only when you reach 1 billion, that's

right--billion inhabitants. It can be done, be most of us have lives. Anyway, I can't even to begin to describe many of the features in the sim. There are so many, and they all perform a special task. Listing them all would prove incredibly boring to you (And me! I don't have that kind of time!). Anyway, I can tell you this:

If you liked SimCity 2000, There is a pretty good chance you'll take a liking to Afterlife.

Afterlife sells for about $50 bucks from LucasArts. You can probably get it retail for about $45 though. There is also a book about Afterlife, titled Afterlife Official Players Guide. I didn't get it because I heard it wasn't worth it. If you want black and white pictures of all the structures, and the code mentioned here, feel free to lay down the $20 bucks for it.

Reviewing in ATPM is open to anyone. Write us at ATPMReview@aol.com for more information.

RAM Doubler 2

Publisher: Connectix Corporation
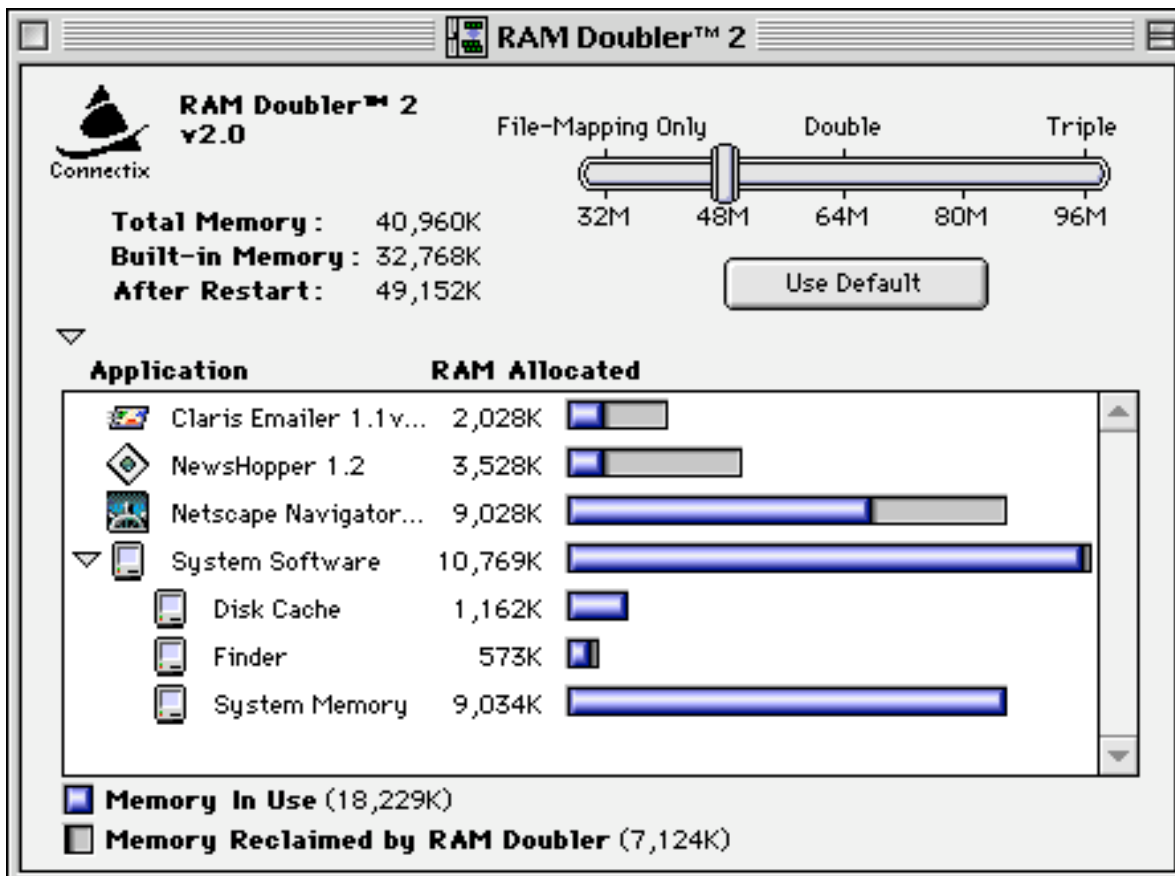Requirements: 68030 or better, or PowerPC
        8MB real RAM
Price: $49.95 (street)

The title of the new RAM Doubler is somewhat of a misnomer. It actually triples the amount of RAM that you can effectively use. It also improves on the speed and reliability of the original RAM Doubler, and allows you to set the exact amount of RAM you would like to have. There is a slider in the RAM Doubler 2 control panel which lets you select the desired amount of RAM in increments of half the amount of real RAM installed. However, holding down the option key allows the selection of an arbitrary amount of RAM. In general, the more RAM you choose to give yourself, the more performance penalty will be incurred. I haven't noticed slowdowns with any of the settings as long as I abide by Connectix's suggestion that no one application be allocated more RAM than the difference between the amount of built-in memory, and the amount used by the system software. Thus, while RAM Doubler will allow you to have more applications open at the same time, it won't let you allocate three times as much memory to Photoshop, or any other single application without a performance penalty.

Even with this limitation, RAM Doubler 2's work is amazing. It locates small chunks of RAM that applications aren't actively using, and makes that memory available to other applications. It finds RAM that isn't likely to be accessed again, and compresses it. Finally, if all else fails, RAM Doubler 2 will swap seldom accessed memory to disk. This may sound bad, but it happens only rarely, generally when you allocate one application more memory than recommended. In addition, RAM Doubler's disk swapping algorithm is based on the same technology as Connectix's old Virtual software. It is much faster than the virtual memory software built into the system software. Still, to avoid any potential performance

degradation, and the overhead of keeping track of extra memory, it is best to set the slider in the control panel to only the amount of memory that you actually plan to use.

If you have plenty of RAM already, RAM Doubler 2 is also worth a look because of its file-mapping option. This does not increase the actual amount of RAM, but reduces the memory requirements of PowerPC native programs. The built in virtual memory from Apple also has this feature, but it requires that you allocate megabytes of hard disk space equal to the amount of RAM you have in your computer. RAM Doubler doesn't require any disk space for its file-mapping option.

RAM Doubler™ 2
v2.0
Connectix

File-Mapping Only   Double   Triple

Total Memory :   40,960K
Built-in Memory : 32,768K
After Restart :   49,152K

32M   48M   64M   80M   96M

Use Default

Application	RAM Allocated	
Claris Emailer 1.1v...	2,028K	
NewsHopper 1.2	3,528K	
Netscape Navigator...	9,028K	
System Software	10,769K	
Disk Cache	1,162K	
Finder	573K	
System Memory	9,034K	

■ Memory In Use (18,229K)
□ Memory Reclaimed by RAM Doubler (7,124K)

Since RAM Doubler reallocates memory that applications aren't actively using, it possible to allocate applications more RAM than they will likely need without fear of wasting memory. In the above case, Netscape is given 9MB of RAM, even though it is using only about 7MB. If during the course of its operation, it decides that it needs more memory, it will be available. In the mean time, that memory can be used by other applications.

The prices of RAM have been greatly reduced in recent months. They have come down so much, that for many machines, RAM Doubler costs the same as 8MB of real RAM. If you have 8MB or less of RAM, and there is space in your Mac, it is probably better to buy more real RAM than to invest in RAM Doubler, as you most likely want to allocate more memory to one application. The same advice holds true for PowerPC Macs that have less than 16 MB of RAM. However, if you already have enough memory to allocate to a single RAM hungry application, RAM Doubler 2 is your best choice for increasing your memory. It will seamlessly allow you to run additional applications, and is much more cost effective than investing in real memory.

RAM Doubler 2 is clearly the next best thing to real RAM. It seems very stable — even more so than the previous version. In fact, I have not crashed since installing it two weeks ago. While in certain situations with a small amount of real RAM, it isn't as useful as real memory, it is an indispensable utility in most other situations. If you want to run more programs simultaneously, or to reduce the RAM requirements of native applications without using hard disk space, you won't find a better buy than RAM Doubler 2.

SHAREWARE REVIEW
BY LLOYD W. BROWN, *llbrown@infinop.com*

WarCraft
TIDES OF II DARKNESS

for the Macintosh

Publisher: Blizzard Entertainment
Email: macsupport@blizzard.com
Requirements: 68040 or PowerMac
        System 7.5 or higher
        256-color 13" display
        2x CD-ROM
Shareware Fee: Free(demo)
Full Retail: (est. $50)

The war has been over for years. Fleeing across the sea from
the evil Orcs, humans have made a new alliance, in a new land. Man has joined with the
elves in a magical land, with the Orcs in close pursuit. The battle is coming again, and it is
shaping up to be monumental in comparison to any other the human race has ever fought.

Warcraft II, the soon-to-be-released sequel to the strategy/role playing game Warcraft
by Blizzard Entertainment, is available online in a limited demo. The new version
promises to be chock-full of enhancements and bells and whistles aplenty for gamers
everywhere.

ay somewhat resembles that in the earlier
ou can now have up to eight players on a
including versus and team play, according to
Also available are two player modem and two
rect connect modes. In addition, you can play
Internet, and after a third-party program is
Mac users can compete head-to-head against
of the PC version.

face is similar to that of the original, allowing
ions for customizing the look and feel, including
to change the map size, up to four times bigger
original (this option must be forthcoming,
however, as I could not find it despite searching for some time).

Game play allows for more building to take place, and includes a nifty feature called "Fog of War" map masking, to make keeping track of enemy troops more of a chore than the original. Speaking of troops, there are quite a few more troops which you can train, including naval vessels-destroyers, battleships, oil tankers, and submarines. There are also flying machines and troop transports. And that is just on the human side. The orcs have dragons, giant turtles, death knights and such.

While adding the boats and flying machines, and all those nifty new constructions and troops, they also increased the workload of your peons. While allowing you to construct as many Town Halls as you like, you now have to not only mine gold and chop trees, but now you must drill for oil, and build refineries.
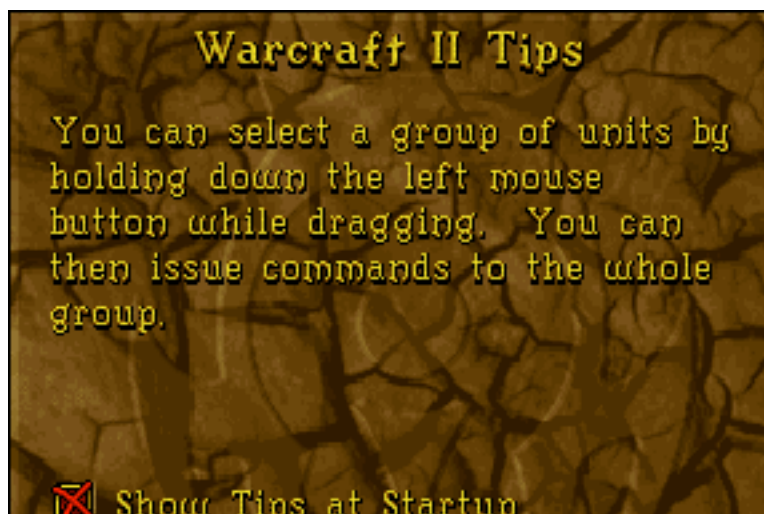
If you haven't experienced "Quick Tips" yet, that annoying feature of some recent applications that gives you hints and tricks when you open the application (a-la Claris Works, or the evil Windows 95), you will notice its presence here, but it comes as more of a help than a hindrance. Or at least it seemed helpful, since I didn't bother to read the read me until days after I'd wiped out the demo.

Warcraft II, the full version, is supposed to provide more unique scenarios, and, according to Blizzard, the scenarios will contain a greater amount of "personality," with more of a storyline and a wider variety of mission objectives.

The demo doesn't allow you to do everything that will be available in the full version, but it does outline some nifty features that will make the full version well worth waiting for. For example, users with Power Macs can enjoy 3D sound, and some limited voice recognition, for entering cheat codes. A scenario editor will allow you to create scenarios, and there is even a sound effects editor which allows you to modify the game's sounds.

The demo is good, and whets the appetite for the upcoming release, which is supposed to be later this summer.

Blizzard has a nice web site at http://www.blizzard.com.

America Online: keyword "BlizzardEnt", email BlizzrdEnt

Compuserve: GOGAMEDPUB, email 74777,1115

Guidelines

This chapter is the place to turn when you have a question about ATPM. Need to know where to write? Turn to the Guidelines. Need to know how to subscribe or unsubscribe? Turn to the Guidelines. You have this great story for ATPM, but you don't know where to send it? Turn to the Guidelines. If it's not here, you can always get in touch with us at ATPMEditor@aol.com and we'll do our best to help you.

A little bit about ATPM's Mission

Yeah, yeah, yeah. Sounds like we're a bit too big for our sneakers, no? What do we mean, our mission? Well, the way we envision ATPM, it's a place where you can find stories and tips and reviews and stuff that'll help you enjoy your Macintosh. Our tag line says, "About the **personal** computing experience." And that's what we believe the Macintosh is: the most personal of personal computers.

ATPM is about celebrating that, and about sharing just how cool your Mac is with the world of Macintosh users, 58 million strong, according to Apple.

ATPM doesn't make a profit. Yes, we're trying to get some sponsorship, but it's only to pay the bills. Maybe, at some point, we'll try to make some kind of profit, but for now, we're just a little operation out to show the world how cool our computers can be. And we want you to help us. We want you to write to us, with stories, anecdotes, jokes, horrific tales… anything to do with your particular Macintosh. You'll find our writer's guidelines below. Oh, and thanks for reading ATPM.

We want to hear from you!

We've said this before, but we'd like to say it again. ATPM is about your Macintosh, about our Macintoshes, and about the Macs of people who have never seen our magazine. We strive, every month, to give you a taste of what it's like to own a Mac. And for that, we need the stories, reviews, opinions, ideas, and anecdotes of Mac users just like you. We want you to write for ATPM. We'll take prose, poetry, pictures, questions, fanciful imaginings… pretty much anything you care to give. ATPM isn't much good without you, and even with a staff of editors and writers, we'll never represent the Mac user without your input. Please consider sending us your writing.

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Shareware Reviews: Is there a piece of shareware you absolutely love? Something you can't live without? Something you think everyone should have on their computer? Let us know! Write up a short review for our "What to Download" section, it doesn't have to be more than a paragraph, or two at most. This is probably the easiest way to help us out. Send your reviews to ATPMReview@aol.com

Hardware and Software Reviews: We also publish full-blown "reviews" of hardware and software products. But we don't want hard nuts & bolts reviews. We want to know what you think about your stuff. We want to know how you use it, if it's useful to you, and what your problems have been. Would you buy it again? Would you let your mother buy it? If you want to write a review, talk to our reviews editor at ATPMReview@aol.com, and he'll get you squared away.

Wishful Thinking: This section appeared in one issue this year, and has been silent since then. In Wishful Thinking we have a space for Mac enthusiasts who know exactly what Apple's advertising *should* be. Did you come up with a great advertising tag line? Have you had a Mac campaign stewing in the back of your mind for a year now? Send your ideas, or your art, to ATPMEditor@aol.com

Next Time

Next month, we'll bring you the next installments of About *This* Particular Macintosh, Apples, Kids & Attitude, The Personal Computing Paradigm, and Macman to the Rescue. You'll also find more commercial and shareware reviews, and our feature story on OpenDoc and LiveObjects.

While you're waiting for another issue of ATPM, you might just want to indulge in a little Mac evangelism. If you ask them nicely, Apple will send you a free copy of their Macintosh vs. Windows 95 video, and their Mac OS 8 Tour CD. Just call 1-800-825-2145. It also makes a great gift for your PC friends (or enemies).

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