ATPM

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

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Layout and Design	Michael Tsai

Cartoonist	Matt Johnson
Blue Apple Icon Designs	Mark Robinson
Other Art	RD Novo

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Contributors

Lee Bennett, Eric Blair, Tom Bridge, Johann Campbell, Paul Fatula, Ted Goranson, Matt Johnson, Andrew Kator, Robert Paul Leitao, Ellyn Ritterskamp, Sylvester Roque, Christopher Turner, *Macintosh users like you*.

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Welcome

by Robert Paul Leitao, rleitao@atpm.com

Welcome to the eleventh holiday issue of ATPM! As we escalate our second decade of publication, we bring you this special holiday release of your favorite monthly Internet magazine. In this column, we will visit ATPM holidays past, present, and future. No Jacob Marley to keep us up late, but a splendid holiday spirit of hope to visit us as we begin our December issue.

Holidays Past

This month, we begin in years gone by. Filtered through the passing of time, we look back fondly on holidays of yore, the mystery and magic of the Macintosh, and the early days of your favorite Internet monthly magazine.

December 1996

Dr. Gil Amelio, Apple's CEO and Ellen Hancock, an IBM veteran and Apple's Chief Technology Officer, were in search of a new foundation for the next generation Mac OS, then called OS 8. It was the era of the first Power Macs, modems, eWorld, and Claris software. The Macintosh was hemorrhaging market share, and the company faced financial loses in the hundreds of millions of dollars.

Wall Street was expecting a takeover of the company at a garage sale price, and the word "beleaguered" prefixed almost every press mention of the corporate name. No matter the challenges faced by the Cupertino-based company, Dr. Amelio remained steadfast in his conviction Apple would remain an independent company. Seven months later, Steve Jobs replaced him as (i)CEO of the company. Our December 1996 issue looked at the state of the Mac as a new era in Macintosh computing was about to dawn.

December 1999

Apple's share price was trading at near-record highs. The previous year's release of the Bondi blue iMac had reshaped not only Apple Computer, but the PC industry as well. Becoming the most successful personal computer of its time, the Bondi blue all-in-one iMac and its candy-colored successor brought about a revolution in PC design. The beige box began to disappear from most PC lines and USB, a technology developed by Intel and brought to popularity by the iMac, had become the industry standard for peripheral connectivity.

Within a year, Apple's share price would plummet overnight when the company's overly optimistic sales forecasts were not matched by reality. But in December 1999, the Mac world had a renewed confidence, and many Mac users celebrated a return to normalcy. Apple Computer was no longer in danger, and the term "beleaguered" had finally been divorced by the press from the company's name.

December 2002

Apple had recently released its [first PowerBook](#) with a slot-loading DVD-R drive, the iBook was offered with a new entry-level model priced at $999, and the iPod was quickly becoming a sales phenomenon within the Macintosh community. Apple was positioning itself for one of the greatest periods of change and growth in the company's history and had recently opened its 50th retail store.

Holidays Present

December 2005

Apple's share price is again trading at near-record highs following two very strong years of sales and earnings growth. Revenue and earnings are at all-time highs for the Mac and iPod maker. The company has no long-term debt and more than $8 billion in cash on hand. The company has defied the dire prognostications of Wall Street analysts and industry pundits, who for years suggested Apple Computer would fade into oblivion and live on only in the pages of history.

Turning conventional wisdom upside down, Apple Computer has returned to a place of glory as one of the most successful PC companies in the world and is again respected as an innovative force and technology leader in the New Economy.

Throughout the years, ATPM has continued to chronicle the "personal computing experience." Our efforts [began](#) at a very challenging time for Apple and the Macintosh community, and we have been with you through all of the travails and triumphs. We remain one of the longest-running Macintosh-based publications still in active circulation, and we look forward to being with you in the years to come.

Holidays Future

December 2008

The Mac's once moribund market share has reached ten percent in the US and close to four percent worldwide. Apple has completed its product transition to the Intel architecture, and the company is revamping and updating its retail stores.

Despite increasing competition, the popular iPod in its many forms and varieties maintains its market dominance and has become not only the best known consumer product in the world, but it has also transformed the manner in which entertainment content is distributed to consumers around the globe. Our December 2008 issue focuses on Apple's award-winning digital hub and wireless home solutions.

Our December Issue

Before we end our visit to the past, the present, and the future, we invite you to enjoy the eleventh holiday release of *About This Particular Macintosh*. We'd like to also include *you* among our writers and editors. If you're a Mac enthusiast with a desire to share your skills

and insights with the greater Macintosh community, please [contact](#) our managing editor. Our December issue includes:

The Candy Apple: *Star Trek* Gadgets Have Arrived
The future is here—do we know what to do with it?

About This Particular Web Site
ATPW is back, with a wide selection of tractors, toilets, Web browsers, sudoku, and home improvement projects for you to explore.

About This Particular Outliner
This month's outliner column wraps up TAO and OmniOutliner and proposes a couple new projects for the outliner community.

Segments: Living The Wireless Life
Six years ago, it was all just a bunch of hype. In this month's *Segments*, Johann Campbell investigates how much progress the technology companies have made since.

How To: PhotoBooth: A Quick How-To
With the new iMac G5 bearing Apple's first embedded camera, Apple also issued the new PhotoBooth software to take advantage of it. Tom Bridge test drove it and has a few tips for those who get to play with this little gem.

How To: Serving Up Some Tunes, Part 2
What's the point of setting up a music server if it's inconvenient to use? Here's Sylvester Roque's first attempt at solving some common problems.

Desktop Pictures: Wyoming
Christopher Turner shares some stunning views of the Grand Tetons and Yellowstone National Park, as well as what an American bison looks like up close and personal. These photos were shot in June 2005.

Cortland
Cortland and Angie visit the shop's storeroom to check out the iMaximum, where Angie learns of a surprise, then gives Cortland a surprise! Meanwhile, the Evil Geniuses' creation turns on them, and Cortland and Angie are busted for overhearing Silvio's sinister plan.

Frisky Freeware: VLC Media Player
Frisky the Freeware Guinea Pig checks out VLC Media Player.

Review: Docktopus 1.0.1
Part neat hack, part cool portal application, Docktopus is an enhancement for your Dock.

Review: iFM

Griffin Technology's iFM is absolutely fabulous at its primary purpose—receiving radio broadcasts. This redeeming factor only barely makes up for its other shortcomings.

Review: Serious Editing in iPhoto 5 (eBook)

Eric Blair samples a collection of recipes for creative tasks and effects using iPhoto.

Review: The TCP/IP Guide (book)

In our demanding and fast-paced world of immediate information gratification, there's no substitute yet for a well-designed printed resource such as Charles M. Kozierok's *TCP/IP Guide* offered by No Starch Press.

Review: X-Arcade Trackball Mouse

The X-Arcade Trackball's sturdy construction, solid trackball movement, and large arcade buttons bring new life to arcade classics and even make mouse-compatible Mac games more fun.

Review: Logitech TrackMan Wheel

Logitech's TrackMan Wheel mouse is a good alternative to a traditional mouse, particularly for people affected by repetitive stress injuries.

E-Mail

iPod Batteries

I recently replaced the battery in my granddaughter's G3 iPod, and it was a simple process. (I'm not a computer or electronics tech by any imagination.) The hardest part was separating the case, but even that wasn't difficult if you follow the instructions and use the tool that comes with most replacement batteries. If the original battery goes dead on you and you're going to trash the iPod, why not give changing the battery a go?

—William Chenault

OmniGraffle Pro 4

I prefer version 2.1. It's not as bloated with a bazillion floating windows, and it doesn't put a lame outline around every export. JPEG export crashes under Tiger, so the simple workaround is export as PDF, then use Preview to convert to JPEG. Version 2.1 of OmniGraffle was the best they ever did.

—Matt S.

• • •

A very good review Eric. I've used OmniGraffle for some time now, and it just keeps getting better and better. I love the ease of use compared to programs such as Visio on the PC. I look forward to producing diagrams with it because it actually makes it fun.

The Omni Group always seem to turn out slick applications, and for me OmniGraffle is their best. I must admit that I'd tend to stick with Chartsmith for charting, but for diagrams I haven't found any other software that comes close.

—Karen H.

• • •

If using PowerPoint is someone's idea of "hard work" then I suspect breathing becomes an almost unbearable chore. . .

—Brent

> I never said using PowerPoint was hard work. I said making PowerPoint look *good* was hard work. Heck, I can make a bad PowerPoint presentation in my sleep. Making something look good is a different case, entirely.
> *—Eric Blair*

FileMaking: Welcome to FileMaker 8!

Excellent continuation on the previous article. I especially liked the clear discussion of the Portal function. I'm looking forward to the discussion on Summary Fields. I'm trying to figure out how to get FileMaker to tell me how often a specific number is entered into a field in a database.

—John Endahl

• • •

In spite of the fact that the addition of $ and $$ variables is a good advance, you can't use them on a layout or as keys to get related records from a table—or at least I didn't find how to do that.

—Carlos Menem

> Variables are only available in scripts, so you can't use them in those fashions. However, I don't see that one would need to. Script variables are simply script objects that carry a calculated value, and calculation fields can have the exact same value as a script variable, and any field can be placed on a layout and can be used as the key in a relationship.
> —Charles Ross

• • •

FileMaker Pro is all you need if you wish to create databases.

Dopey. I wish to create databases, and I need something much more powerful than File-Maker Pro. 4th Dimension and I are doing thousands of things that FileMaker Pro cannot.

> a debugger, which allows the developer to step through a script line-by-line to check for the location of a problem

I am sure you will find that useful. I have used the 4D debugger for the last 11 years and love it.

> you declare a variable, give it either local (within a script) or global (throughout the solution) scope, and can later refer to that variable

Ditto my comment above, plus we have process variables—but I forgot, FileMaker does not support multiple processes, does it?

—Frank Martin

No one has ever claimed that FileMaker is the most powerful database development environment available. And honestly, I'm not looking for the most powerful database. FileMaker's claim to fame is its combination of power and ease of use. I think that FileMaker 8 is a good step forward in this regard. It includes new tools to enhance ease of use for the casual user as well as new tools to make it easier for developers to create solutions for it. In my experience, although FileMaker won't be the most powerful database environment available, it is so far the best for rapid solutions.

Having said that, FileMaker, for me, is not the Macintosh of the database world. I could never picture me moving away from the Mac, but I could picture me moving away from FileMaker if I found the right tool for it, which is why I'm looking into REALbasic as an option. Perhaps I'll find it works well and perhaps not, and perhaps I'll take another look at 4D in the near future. Some FileMaker developers have also been fans of Savoy and Valentina. But a development environment has inertia. I've been using FileMaker for 12 years, and know the software inside out. A different environment would have to be much better to convince me to switch, allowing me to build databases as quickly as I do with FileMaker but also offering some significant advantage.

—*Charles Ross*

9 Ladybugs at the X Picnic

As a long-time Mac user, I despise OS X for many, many reasons—not the least of which is the much publicized "stability," which for me, has been demonstrably awful on several different machines, from G3 to G5, from 10.1 to 10.4. (BTW, most of these machines were set up by vendors) I have literally lost weekends because of this.

I have found that OS 9 still kicks goals in terms of speed and intuitive interface features, and, frankly, all I have to worry about is getting on with my work. I'm a broadcast editor who has used Final Cut Pro from v1.2 to 5.0.2. with DV, Cinewave, Igniter, and Decklink. I still use v3.0.2 on OS 9 very productively and earlier this year I bought a Windows machine (something I thought I would *never* do) and found it to be quite stable and powerful. And usable.

I don't get why we are forced to have such a radical change in interface from OS 9 to OS X (no Apple menu, the Dock, window buttons all together, Command-*Shift*-N for new folder, etc.) when many of these are clearly not an improvement. At least in Windows XP, you can go back to a previous Windows interface (if that is what you prefer), and switch off all of those "eye-candy" animations that look good in the store, but are annoying when you just want to work quickly.

Widgets? Oh please. I just want to have an uncluttered interface, and OS X breaks many of the foundational interface guidelines that made Macs great in the past. OS X is, for me, just another version of Windows. If something breaks in OS X, I have little chance of fixing it, which is just the same in Windows. At least in OS 9, I had a few things I could try, (trashing preferences, using just base level extensions that I can easily browse, reinstalling program, clean system installs, etc.) not the least of which was to have a backup boot partition that was literally just a two-minute drag and drop operation when I set the

system up initially. But things have never been that bad that in four years I have had to use that last resort more than twice. Ghost? Don't make me laugh.

I know plenty of other users with similar feelings.

—Mark Rabich

Axio Swift Backpack

I'm looking at buying a Swift early next month to put a 17" PowerBook in. I saw you said a sleeve was an absolute necessity.

Do you have any recommendation with regard to sleeves which will still fit inside the laptop compartment?

Thanks for your help,

—Marcel

> I recommend either the MaxSleeve from MaxUpgrades or the Brain Cell from Tom Bihn. I've tested both and found both to be quite nice. The Brain Cell is substantially more expensive, but can stand on its own as a bag in a pinch. The MaxSleeve is pretty much a dedicated sleeve, and I wouldn't want to use it on its own without putting it inside another bag (which, of course, is sort of the point here).
> Take a look at those two reviews and see what you think. If you have any further questions, feel free to ask.
> —Chris Lawson

Disk Catalogers

Aloha from Hawaii! Thank you, Michael! This is the first time I have run across ATPM, and I am very impressed by your excellent writing, supporting images, and thoughts comparing these two cataloging apps. Thank you for spending your time to bring us such a good unbiased review as this. It has been most helpful.

Now off to download CDFinder!. . .and check out more of ATPM!

—Kaliko Trapp

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 e-mail to editor@atpm.com. All mail becomes the property of ATPM.

Star Trek Gadgets Have Arrived

In the back of my head, I have been adding up gadgets from *Star Trek* that are in use today. The *Star Trek* universe was created in the late 1960s, and since then there has always been a television series or movie in production, or book in publication, based on its ideas. In the original television series, which ran for three seasons from 1966–1969, we were introduced to all sorts of electronic gadgets that were futuristic at the time. Science fiction has always projected gadgets and doodads, some of which exist now. It's hard to say whether such things are invented because they were dreamed up in fiction, or whether most of them would have been invented anyway. In either case, it has been fun watching the ones from this particular show come into being.

The Universal Translator

The device that pushed me over the edge is a thing that translates your unspoken words into another language, allowing you to talk to someone who does not speak your own language. Yes, I said unspoken words. The device, introduced in October, uses electrodes in your mouth and throat to figure out what you want to say by measuring your mouth movements. Machine translation into other languages follows.

On one level, I hope this device will be helpful for folks with disabilities, and those who wish to speak in their native language. No need for translation, necessarily. I don't know if it was originally designed for this purpose, with the translation element added later, but the idea of machine translation has been around for a while. It is evolving, while linguists deal with homonyms and regional accents. But it is far better than what we used to have, which was (and often still is) a paperback book to help us find the right phrase.

A co-worker says his PlayStation Portable has a translation thing on it that makes it a game, correcting your pronunciation, or laughing at it, I'm not sure which. Maybe both. Those of you with PSPs will know. It can translate among half a dozen languages, among them English, Korean, and what he says is Chinese, which I assume is Mandarin. I am unable to find this software on the PlayStation Web site, but maybe it is a third-party application that they do not acknowledge. In any case, it sounds like we are making progress toward something we saw on TV nearly 40 years ago: you speak into a machine, and I hear what you said in my language. It is not the universal translator of television, but who really thought that was going to happen?

The Communicator

I finally bought a flip phone. The one I'd been using, for five minutes a month, on a plan so old it is not listed anywhere, is antique. I decided I would join this century—but still

only rarely. The new phone, as do most of them now, has a feature where you can say to it the name of the person you want to call. Assuming you have put that person's name in your directory, it will make the connection without you having to punch the numbers, or use the screen directory. I have not tried it yet, as I do not want anyone watching me speak to an inanimate object. I do so several times a day at home, but the cat ignores me. I am intrigued by the idea of a thing that will do something if I ask it to, unlike the cat.

So. You say something to a metal thing in your hand, and a minute later, your friend talks to you on the metal thing. How is that not a communicator?

Hypospray

On *Star Trek*, the doctors and nurses would give you your meds not with a big needle, but something they called a hypospray. We were to believe the liquid just entered your bloodstream by magic, as if introduced to your arm by a syringe without a needle.

I'm told that now we have needle-less shots. The PowerMed vaccine gun, called the PMED, uses pressurized helium to get the stuff under your skin—in this case, DNA particles—so maybe this will only work with certain kinds of medicine. But we also have nicotine and other time-release patches, and lots of folks use nasal inhalers instead of getting a flu shot, so we are on the way toward getting away from needles.

Tricorders

On the show, tricorders had two main functions: to scan the environment to determine its chemical makeup and to scan the body to assess its condition. It is obvious that we have achieved much of the second function with MRI and CAT scans, and the like. We cannot diagnose intestinal disease this way, or a myriad of other things, but that stuff is on the way. It is already the case that we scan a drop of blood for certain conditions.

The notion of scanning the environment for its chemical composition, I am not so current on. An air quality engineer friend tells me he has used such devices for years, and that they are becoming more accurate every day. He calls them quadcorders, since they measure four gases in the air. I will leave the discussion of devices to those who understand them, but I bet my hat we can do a lot of stuff in this area. I would say a barometer is such a measuring device, but we had those before *Star Trek*.

Phasers

I am just as happy that we do not have handheld phasers right now, or we would all go around stunning each other or worse. I hear we are not far off from this concept, but right now the closest thing that is commercially available is a Tazer. These are used by police in many areas, are designed to stun someone resisting arrest or worse, and can indeed be fatal if used excessively. The device shoots wires from the gun into the target, and then an electrical charge travels along the wires into the target.

I have not figured out how we get the wires out of the person being Tazed. It is too icky to think about for long.

Holodecks

When I was preparing this column, I asked some friends to remind me of gadgets from the *Star Trek* world we do and don't have. The holodeck was suggested as a thing we don't have, but I argued that virtual reality simulations are on nearly the same level. If you have not seen the shows (the holodeck was introduced in a 1980s series, not the original), the holodeck is just a room with a grid in it. The computer creates sensory information to match whatever environment you have programmed: a beach, battle, or Sherlock Holmes mystery. Anything. When the writers ran short on story ideas, they put a crew member in danger on a holodeck episode.

The modern equivalent is virtual reality systems, in which you are hooked up to a set of goggles or some other kind of eyepiece, and one or both hands are attached to a glove with sensors. You play along with the software, learning to drive, popping bubbles, or whatever the software is set up to do. I have read reports of folks who have undergone therapy for September 11 trauma, by using such programs to gradually acclimate themselves to the idea of planes flying into buildings. I have not done it justice with such a short summary, but the therapy is benign, and it works. By now this kind of immersion therapy is becoming more accessible, I would think for firefighters or police officers who experience trauma, or just for trainees. I like the idea of pilots and astronauts training in such environments before having to do it in the real world. Virtual reality software can also be used to help learn biofeedback techniques to control pain.

I was seeing the holodeck as a machine feeding us sensory information a la Descartes' brain in the vat, but I have come to understand that the holodeck created actual solid matter. In that sense, today's virtual reality set-ups are not comparable. I still think as far as our experiences go, it is on the same path, but it is less analogous than our earlier examples.

Transporters

We do not have transporters. These devices I guess would compress your DNA and atoms into bits, and then fling them electronically to another location, where they would be reformed. The TV show also used this device as a plot launcher: it was cool to have someone get stuck in the transporter beam, and then get mixed with someone else's DNA, or stuck for 80 years, or whatever. Made some great stories.

This is the device I think we need to get cracking on. If we want to solve the fossil fuel and energy problems, we could save a ton of gas by transporting our atoms this way. I realize we would need to burn some kind of energy to accomplish the transport, but the Law of Conservation of Energy is outdated and needs to be replaced.

Onward.

About This Particular Web Site

by Paul Fatula, pfatula@atpm.com

Tractor Data

Last week, I saw a Lotus in a nearby parking lot, and a friend of mine saw a Spanish farmer driving a Lamborghini. Tractor, that is; I had no idea. Indexed by manufacturer, this Web site has information about all sorts of tractors, from high-end sporty Italian models to those you must Fix Or Repair Daily.

Macintosh Web Browsers

OmniWeb, Safari, Internet Explorer, Firefox, Opera, iCab, Lynx…how many Web browsers are there for the Macintosh anyway? According to this Web site, there are no fewer than *87*. On this one long page you can read about each one of them, and follow links to download the latest versions. (Note that the most recent releases are on top, so if you're hoping to relive your NCSA Mosaic days, you've got some scrolling to do.)

Web Sudoku

When I walked past my local Borders and saw the windows crowded with signs bearing an unfamiliar word, I didn't pay it much attention. When I saw fellow public transit passengers working something that looked like a numerical crossword-puzzle, I shrugged my shoulders and went back to my book. But when I started seeing SUDOKU written in large print on the front page of local newspapers, I started feeling stupid: was I the only one who didn't know what the word meant? Wikipedia led me to this Web site, which advertises *billions* of puzzles. I found five to be enough.

Terry Love's Consumer Toilet Reports

Everybody who rides a tractor, surfs the Web, or solves a sudoku is eventually going to have to take a brief pause for nature's call. So in the words of the great Axl Rose, where do we go now? Terry Love's Web page has basic information and owner comments for dozens of toilet models, ranging in price from a few hundred to several thousand dollars. (Though if you're looking for something more decorative, you should check with Clark Sorensen instead.)

Lowe's How To Library

Once you've picked out your toilet, you're going to need to install it. I don't usually like promoting big-name commercial sites on here, but I've really got to hand it to Lowe's. The home improvement instructions hosted on their Web site are top-notch. They're clear, illustrated where necessary, and helpfully cross-referenced. Best of all, they strike just the right balance between encouraging you to do it yourself and warning you when it's time to call in a pro.

About This Particular Outliner

by Ted Goranson, tgoranson@atpm.com

Styles Revisited, Video Features, and a Proposal

This month's *About This Particular Outliner* (*ATPO*) contains three unrelated pieces. The first wraps up our comparison of TAO and OmniOutliner Pro regarding how they handle named styles.

The second piece sketches a new area for outlining, one that I presume allows outlining of video features.

The final section is a request for help and a proposal to establish an active community.

Named Styles in OmniOutliner and TAO

We ran out of time last column before we finished the TAO and OmniOutliner comparison. We'll quickly wrap up here with the one style-related feature that we left out of the last column: support for named styles and their assembly into stylesheets.

OmniOutliner

Last column, we noted that the Omni Group uses a design approach which leverages the user interface. In their case, the focus is on the most up-to-date ideas, and that means collapsible, docking inspectors.
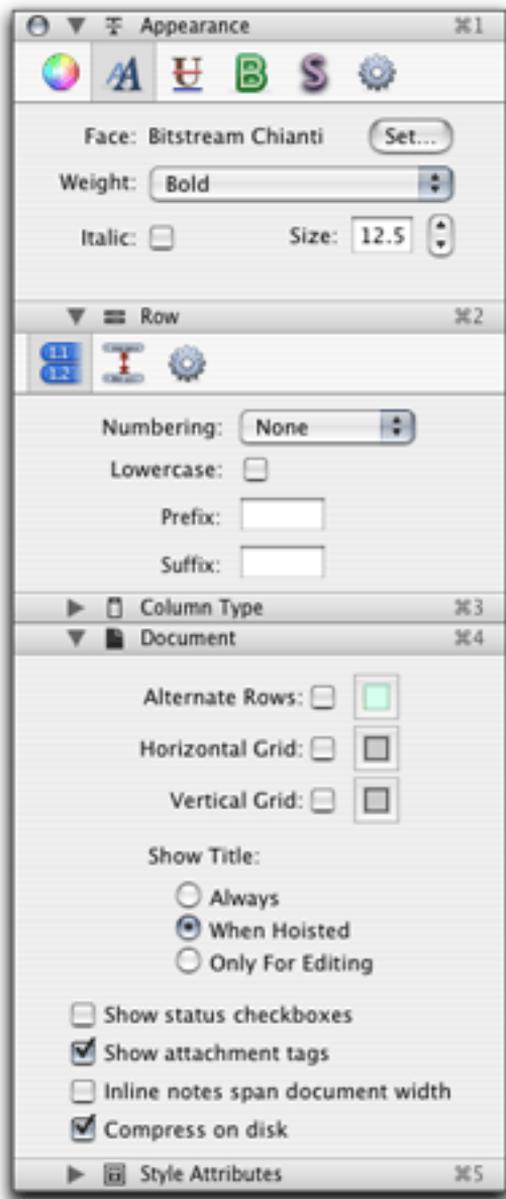
OmniOutliner Inspectors

The screenshot shows the inspector assembly with some of the inspector panes open. Some of the panes have toolbar-like affairs at the top. Clicking on them shifts the pane to another view. That top pane, the "Appearance" pane, is the main interface for setting style attributes of selected text. And that's how you control all styles here, starting with selected text.

The controls are spread out in four areas. "Appearance" is the first.

The second is the inspector titled "Style Attributes." This is where the attributes are *displayed* rather than set. It is a bit confusing, because it isn't an inspector in the traditional

sense, where you can both see *and change* properties. In this inspector you can only see them and, if you wish, delete them.
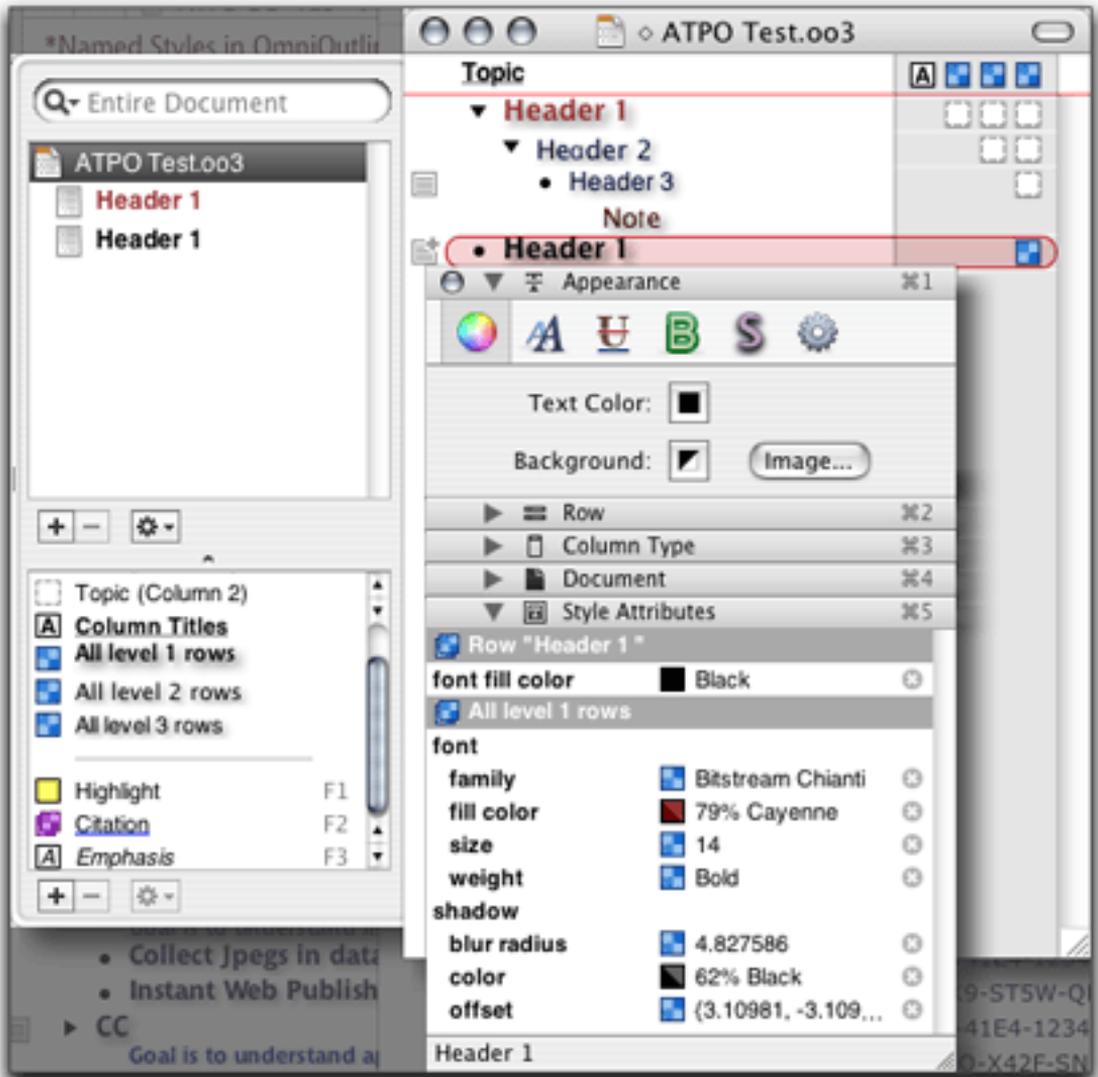
All OmniOutliner Style Controls

This screenshot shows all four display areas. You see the two inspectors, with the "Style At-tribute" one below. That pane shows the attributes or the selected text. In the screenshot's case, it is a first level header with the text "Header 1."

The pane tells you what the default for all first level headers (called level one rows) would be: the font, the color (which in this case is "cayenne") and so on, with the shadow attributes listed separately. Right above that area is the name of the selected row and any style attributes unique to that selection. In this case, we have turned the default cayenne

to black, which is obvious in the outline behind. The higher on the list, the higher the "priority," meaning in this case that the black overrides the cayenne.

I have to admit that is it confusing to me still, and I've been with this since the betas. See those little boxes? Some of them contain information; when a color is involved, it displays that color. But otherwise you get those blue checked boxes. What do they mean? Nothing here. Nothing at all.

On the right of the outline, we have those boxes shown. That's because we toggled "Style View" from the menu and got those boxes. Here, they have some meaning, at least when they appear. Want to know what they mean? You'll get no help from the documentation on that. In fact, the PDF manual sucks when it comes to explaining the style controls.

Here's the deal. Clicking one of those boxes tells you what it denotes. See the screenshot below.
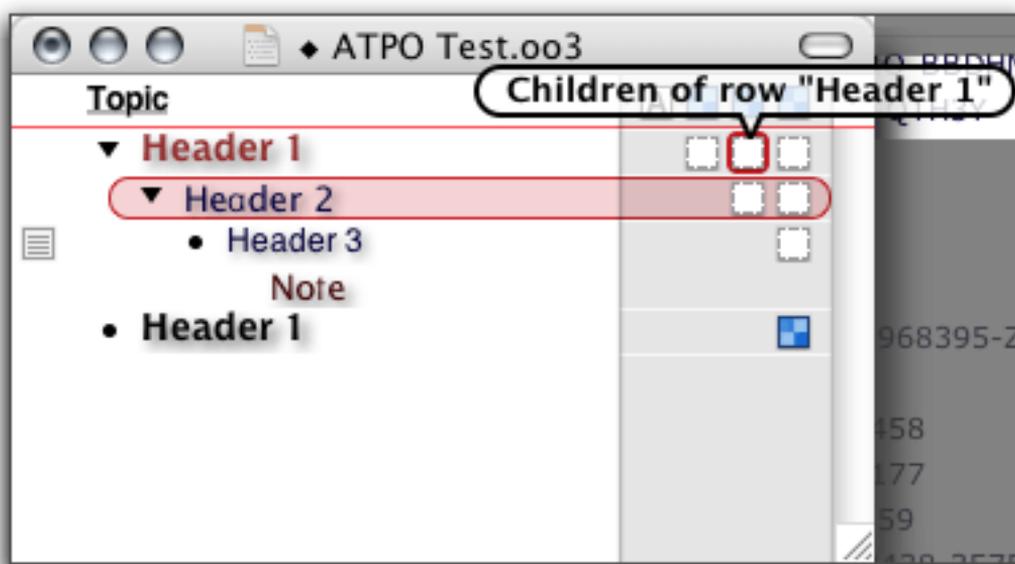
Style Indicators

If the box is filled with a blue checker, you've changed the style. The first header has three boxes because it has children and grandchildren, and their styles can be affected by cascading attributes from a higher level.

OK, we went through all of that (some of which is covered in earlier columns) as preliminary to getting to what OmniOutliner call the "Styles Palette," which is that pane in the lower left of the drawer. This is where you set the default styles for the headers, notes, and columns. You simply select one and use that Appearance inspector to modify it appropriately. Here is also where you invent named styles apart from levels. New ones can be created by clicking the plus sign at the bottom.

Spreading the controls out in four places like this, with four different user interface conventions, is very confusing at first. You can learn it, but heck. It all makes sense, except for breaking the inspector convention of having one inspector for setting and a different one for—well—inspecting.

Now the payoff. After getting your default and named styles the way you like, you can save the document as a template. (You can also set up the default template the same way.) This is what serves as a style sheet. You can specify any of your saved templates as the template—the style sheet—for your new outlines using New From Template command in the File menu.

Nice. But there is no way to take an existing outline and apply a different template to it, like we could in InfoDepot ten years ago. Maybe in version 4 if we suggest it strongly enough.

TAO

What prevented me from finishing this little bit on style sheets in the previous column was because I simply didn't understand TAO's. And I use the thing frequently! As mentioned earlier, TAO features just sort of appear without much explanation. You'll recall my confusion about "tags."

Well, a serious TAO user forwarded to me an e-mail from the developer explaining the really cool style and stylesheet management system that uses tags! Wow, I thought. I can finally finish my stylesheet comparison. Unfortunately, the tags menu items have disappeared in the recent betas. So alas, the final word on the TAO/OmniOutliner comparison will wait until later.

Outlining and Video Features

Among all my other projects (which I will spare you from reading about), I have started a new one. Quite interesting, it is. Since I will be inventing and discovering some things, and since I expect to be leveraging what the *ATPO* community has taught me about outlining (thanks, folks), I may mention it from time to time here.

It involves starting with a huge number of videos. Somewhere in the middle, stuff happens and an indexed library is created. At the end what you have is something like what you might have seen in the childishly named movie S1m0ne, the ability of an unsophisticated user to recall specific elements from a movie or to synthesize elements across movies.

- "I am a film theorist. Get for me all the shots that involve focus that shifts from anything in the foreground to a woman's face that in the fifteen minutes before or after is shown in the same degree of closeup moving from sideshot to near front."

- "I am a filmmaker. Extract all the fireball shots from the library, decompose their features for dependencies, rate them according to IMDB user ratings, then match them against my shooting script to tell me what the best (that is, blockbuster) effect would be, possibly with an explicit reference to a film that uses it."

- "I am a platoon leader. Look at all the surveillance videos of this area of Iraq and at my mission plan and tell me everything important about what to look out for."

- "I am a studio. I want to sell components for Final Cut Pro usage. Index things in my film vault in a way that FCP 7.0 users can license elements from me, obtain them online, and insert them into their scenes."

In all these cases, we're not talking about film segments, meaning short excerpts. We're talking about recognizing features within the video images using a variety of techniques, and maintaining a knowledge base that agents and humans can use to assemble more complex things. Edges with certain characteristics can be reasoned to belong to tanks. Softness and angles in photographing faces can be associated with certain dramatic effects or emotions.

Before you scoff, realize that the better compression schemes (like H.264) already identify the key primitive features of what our minds use to build these more recognizable features.

I think outlining will be key to this. I know it will. It is a funded effort so I know it will result in something. *ATPO* will keep you posted on the progress as it applies to outliners.

An Outliner Community Proposal

Friends, I get a lot of feedback mail from my various public projects. The first year of *ATPO* was an astonishing experience for me. I knew there was a need for something like *ATPO*, but the upswell of feedback was more than I expected.

This past month, my *ATPO* mail has crossed over. Now, most of my e-mails are from outline users wanting more *ATPO* just as the column is delivering less. I also believe we need more, and just cannot find the time these days to give what it takes. To do these right takes extraordinary effort. Some of the earliest ones took 60–80 hours!

I'd like to propose two things. The first is a request for help. I think we should have a meaty *ATPO* every month. I can see various ways this can work. I can write jointly with someone, overviews like those in the past. Even I found them useful! I can edit and include small pieces. This will be particularly appropriate for the *ATPO* Tracker section. If you are new to *ATPO*, that section reports on news, updates, and the occasional small essay on something of interest.

For an example of such an essay, see the *ATPO* Tracker notice about DEVONthink Pro's [announcement](), which commented on the limited utility of words as metadata.

So that is the first proposal. Help me produce *ATPO* and keep it useful. While you think about it, I'll give you some of the values I have had so far:

- Users are intelligent by nature. They want to understand their tools and themselves. The target *ATPO* readers are those that use their Macs to do real, clever, useful things; and when they do, they want as much of a mindmeld as possible. The oars

have to be frictionless. So between creative or productive bursts they will think about who they are, how they work and why, who they could be, and how they *could* work, and what sort of tool would empower that. In those periods of introspection, *ATPO* should be one place they turn.

- Outlining is a technique, not a product. I had some difficulty with a couple of the ATPM staff on this at first, if you can believe it. We aren't dealing with a product type here, nor even a category. We do have some clustered uses (writing, task, and to-do list management, information bases, personal information). But what defines us is a focus on a technique and not an application category. Outlining is one of those rare things that truly spans user interface and the way information is structured internally.

- *ATPO* doesn't review products. ATPM has a [section](#) for that, a good one. It is open to anyone. Reviews are useful things, but I like to think of us providing focused essays on tools and on conventions that tools use.

- The community deserves honest journalism. You won't find that in blogs, at least I haven't. Opinion we don't need, because each reader can be counted to have her own. Feeding her yours is patronizing. Feature lists we don't need. Those are easy to get from other sources. This *ATPO* kind of journalism should be at least halfway in the distance between the screen and the user's mind. (You won't find it in the Mac print press either, alas.)

I believe that we have had a long dry period in software development. No new use patterns have emerged in the longest time. We have the same product uses we have had for decades: word processing, databases, e-mail, PIMs, and so on. Yes, I blame Microsoft for that, and have some small credentials for that view, having been involved in managing national research in this area for a few decades.

It is not a new observation that what we do with our technology is mostly what we did without it: take and manage pictures and movies, write stuff, send letters, publish and read, buy and watch or listen to consumer entertainment, and so on. The Web has been stuck in limbo for forever. But I get off topic.

The point is that when the next great breakthrough comes, it will likely involve outlining (and probably the Internet and multimedia). I believe there are technical reasons for this, but even without them there is the fact that outliners are simply the smartest users on machines. They are to other Mac users as the Mac community is to the rest of the personal computing world.

So in addition to covering the last war—the way people used to work and still do—*ATPO* will cover what could be, and perhaps should be. I think these columns have had some influence among developers. They tell me so, and I see it.

That was quite a ramble. But if those tenets strike you as true, Uncle Ted needs your help. Whew, that's the first proposal. The second one will be more brief. I think we are ready

for a community; an e-mail list, or forum, or Web site of some sort. Someone needs to offer to set one up and manage it. I have purchased the domain of outliners.org that I can contribute. My only requirement is that it be a non-commercial site and have the same respect for users that the column reaches for.

Living The Wireless Life

Remember the year 2000? The disputes over when the new millennium *really* started had just about subsided, IT techs around the world relaxed after spending all that effort preventing the infamous Y2K bug from unleashing hell upon us all, and babies born that year will thank their parents a few years from now for having a darn good method to find out how old they are. I don't know whether you remember, but in the midst of all this, technology companies started to ramp up the hype surrounding a wireless technology named after a Danish king.

It all started back in 1998, when big names such as IBM, Nokia, and Intel formed a consortium to develop an open wireless specification invented in Sweden, called Bluetooth. As with all emerging technologies, Bluetooth chips were prohibitively expensive to produce, and after years of promoting the technology the media became a little tired of hearing such bold claims, like how shipments of Bluetooth-enabled devices would reach 1.4 billion by the year 2005. One article I vividly remember reading had *The Register* suggesting that it was "beginning to look like a universal con job."

Of course, it wasn't. It took another couple of years, but March 2002 saw Steve Jobs demonstrate Bluetooth on the Mac for the first time at the Macworld Expo in Tokyo. At the time, the functionality relied on an external D-Link adapter, but it wasn't long before new Macs came with Bluetooth support built-in. Eighteen months later, at the Paris Expo keynote, Jobs introduced Apple's Wireless Keyboard & Mouse, as well as the long-awaited 15″ Aluminum PowerBook G4; I ordered my new PowerBook with built-in Bluetooth hours later, bundling a wireless mouse, and both survive to this day.

Until Bluetooth came along, peripherals had to make do with infrared connectivity if they wanted to be free of data wires. Anyone who's dealt with infrared devices will know how much fun it is to try and maintain a constant, uninterrupted connection: for example, I have fond memories of keeping my old cell phone pointed at the back of my PowerBook G3 to maintain a fifteen-minute Internet connection in the back of a car traveling at 60mph. (Don't ask.) Compared with that, people's first experiences with Bluetooth devices were truly liberating. Today, Bluetooth is used in millions of homes and businesses around the world. Last week, five years after the technology pundits scorned Bluetooth, I finally bought into the hype wholesale with the purchase of my latest cell phone, the Sony Ericsson W800i.

The W800i replaces my five-year-old Nokia 7110. When I bought the 7110, it didn't even occur to me to check for Bluetooth compatibility because my PowerBook G3 wasn't compatible, and I didn't see it becoming compatible any time soon. My 7110 did feature an

infrared port, which came in handy as I've already mentioned, but it stopped being useful when I bought my PowerBook G4, which omitted infrared in favor of Bluetooth. Confused?

Long story short, Bluetooth was top of my list when it came to shop for a new cell phone. I wanted to at least be able to synchronize my contacts and keep a backup on my computer, but as I soon found, the technology has come a long way since its beginnings. I won't attempt to review my new phone in this article, as there are many in-depth reviews available elsewhere, notably at Mobique.com. There are, however, many reasons why the W800i is the perfect Bluetooth-enabled phone, so I'll focus on those. First, I had to pair the phone with my PowerBook.

Address Book, Setup, iSync, and iCal

I did a bit of prep work even before I received my new phone. With Bluetooth, I finally had a reason to use Address Book, so I manually filled it with all of the names on my old phone's contact list, and fleshed out the contact information with additional details and custom fields as necessary. When the phone arrived, pairing it was as simple as launching Bluetooth Setup Assistant on my Mac, selecting "mobile phone," and following the instructions. Unexpectedly, the Assistant went as far as launching iSync, adding the phone as a device, and setting the sync preferences. One click and a minute or two later, and all of my Address Book contacts appeared on the phone.

Well, most of them. If you tick the relevant box in iSync, the phone won't carry across contacts that don't have a phone number associated with them. Nor will it carry across any relationships you have defined, or any custom fields. If the information doesn't fit into one of the phone's pre-defined fields, or more than one number of the same type or more than one address is entered in Address Book, the additional information is deemed redundant and discarded in transit. On the plus side, the numbers it does carry across use the correct icon according to type (mobile, home, work, or fax), anything you stick in the "Note:" section appears on the phone, and any data the phone discards remains intact within Address Book.

If you use iCal, iSync will also synchronize a few weeks' worth of future (not past) calendar events along with any associated alarms, according to your settings. Although I don't use iCal, I tried it with some test data. It raised one limitation, in that although the phone can associate an event with a location it won't inherit this information from iCal. This is probably to be expected, as iCal calendars don't necessarily reflect the location where events occur (Home, Work, etc.).

File Exchange

Exchanging files between the phone and computer over Bluetooth couldn't be simpler. As long as the two devices can "see" each other, the Mac will automatically launch Bluetooth File Exchange when it detects an incoming file, and the same utility can be used to send files to the phone. You can send pictures taken using your phone's camera to the Mac, you can upload Java applications or games to your phone, you can even transfer music and

video files back and forth: in true Macintosh style, It Just Works, at a speed of roughly 60K/sec depending on file type.

While you can send almost anything to your phone, be aware of your phone's limitations regarding which file types it can access. For example, while I can send this article as a text file to my phone, and even send it on as an e-mail attachment, I can't actually read it on my phone without the use of a third-party Java application. That said, I found out a few days ago that I can use my W800i to record the phone conversation in progress, save it as an audio file in the phone's memory, and send it to my computer over Bluetooth. Now *that's* cool.

Music

One primary reason the iPod succeeded as well as it did was that the competition was (and some would say still is) just not up to scratch. This affected Sony in particular, which after the success of its original Walkman thought that in the digital age it could simply ignore the prevailing MP3 file format entirely and force people to re-encode their digital music into a proprietary, protected ATRAC format if they wanted to listen to it on their NetMD or other such device. This plan, not helped by Sony's shoddy encoding software, backfired seriously when consumers decided on alternative brands entirely, such as, er…Apple.

Sony seems to have learned its lesson in recent years, finally introducing music-playing devices that directly support MP3 files unencumbered by Digital Rights Management (DRM) restrictions, and Sony Ericsson's Walkman range of cell phones seems no different. While the W800i does support DRM-protected content ranging from music to ringtones and even pictures, it doesn't attempt by any means to force these restrictions on your own, existing content. As far as your content goes, the phone supports not just your MP3s but also your AAC, MP4, and M4A audio files. Hardcore iTunes Music Store fans will be disappointed to hear that the W800i won't play their protected music purchases, but with the disappointment of Motorola's ROKR phone and an iTunes-enabled V3 RAZR still some way off, there's not a lot of choice in the protected-music-on-cell-phone market.

Happily, the joy of synchronizing your music with iTunes is not limited to your iPods and your FairPlay-compatible devices. A deciding factor in my purchase of the W800i was a set of AppleScripts that let me do just that. Dubbed iTuneMyWalkman, the AppleScripts synchronize those playlists whose names begin with either "iTuneMyWalkman" or "iTMW," up to the maximum capacity of your phone's memory. Coupled with iTunes's Smart Playlists and Playlist Folders, covered elsewhere in this issue, the possibilities are endless.

Unfortunately, in order for iTuneMyWalkman to work, your phone's memory stick will need to be made accessible to Mac OS X over a USB connection. This sort of defeats the point of my article, but I can at least hope that Bluetooth will feature in a future release, and I remain content in the knowledge that I didn't have to buy a ROKR to play with iTunes. I owe Ilari Scheinin a pint.

Control, Or Be Controlled

While the Sony Ericsson W800i phone features an infrared port as well as Bluetooth connectivity, the infrared signal it generates is not nearly powerful enough to act as, say, a TV remote. That doesn't mean the W800i is useless as a remote control, because third parties have taken Bluetooth on board and developed remote control applications that surpass the humble TV remote and focus on your computer.

The leading example, and undoubtedly one of the best mobile applications in existence, is Salling Software's Salling Clicker for Mac. Provided that you have the client preference pane installed on your computer, and the included Java applet installed and running on your phone, you can use your phone as a remote control for any one of a number of applications on your Mac. Although Clicker is best experienced when interacting with iTunes, where you're presented with a very iPod-like interface that even displays album covers, it supports control of such diverse applications as PowerPoint, Keynote, EyeTV, DVD Player, and the venerable VLC Media Player. Depending on your mobile device, Clicker can respond to events, and for example pause iTunes from when the phone rings until you hang up. If your favorite application is not supported, you can use AppleScript to make it work with your phone.

The W800i does come with its own media remote control software, but it's not nearly as useful. The computer doesn't seem to respond to any of the mapped keys, and while in some instances the phone manages to launch Keyboard Setup Assistant, the Assistant is unable to identify the phone or do anything useful with it.

Of course, you can also use your Mac to control your cell phone and, if supported, use it as a Bluetooth modem for when you're on the move. This is barely worth mentioning beyond the fact that the functionality may be supported by your phone, because if it is, it'll Just Work—with a little help from Bluetooth Setup Assistant.

Oh, and before people ask—I should add that while the W800i does feature a 2-megapixel camera modeled on Sony's CyberShot range, you can't use it as a webcam. Sorry.

In Summary

I'm sure that somebody in some think tank foresaw this level of interactivity between cell phone and computer five years ago, when the Bluetooth consortium promised the booming industry we find ourselves in today. I certainly didn't, and despite being the technophile that I am, I still find myself in awe of what the technology companies have been able to produce in such a short space of time. With almost all forms of communication freed from its wires, I would no longer be surprised to see the humble power cable transformed into wireless energy within my lifetime. Now there's a thought. . .

PhotoBooth: A Quick How-To

I grew up in an era before digital cameras, when film was king and ruled the earth with a waxy fist at all the little mall kiosks and drug store photo counters. It made for a real hard existence, I suppose, having to pay for each individual print, not knowing which were any good before they were developed. But the best part of the film era was the cheap photobooth, in which you crammed yourself, and four of your friends, into this tiny little cabinet with a lens. The flash went off a few times, and shortly thereafter you had goofy, low-quality images of your friend Tony sticking his fingers in his nose, and Melissa holding her pigtails out like Pippi Longstocking. As the digital era approached, the photobooths became fewer and further between, and now they are a truly endangered species.
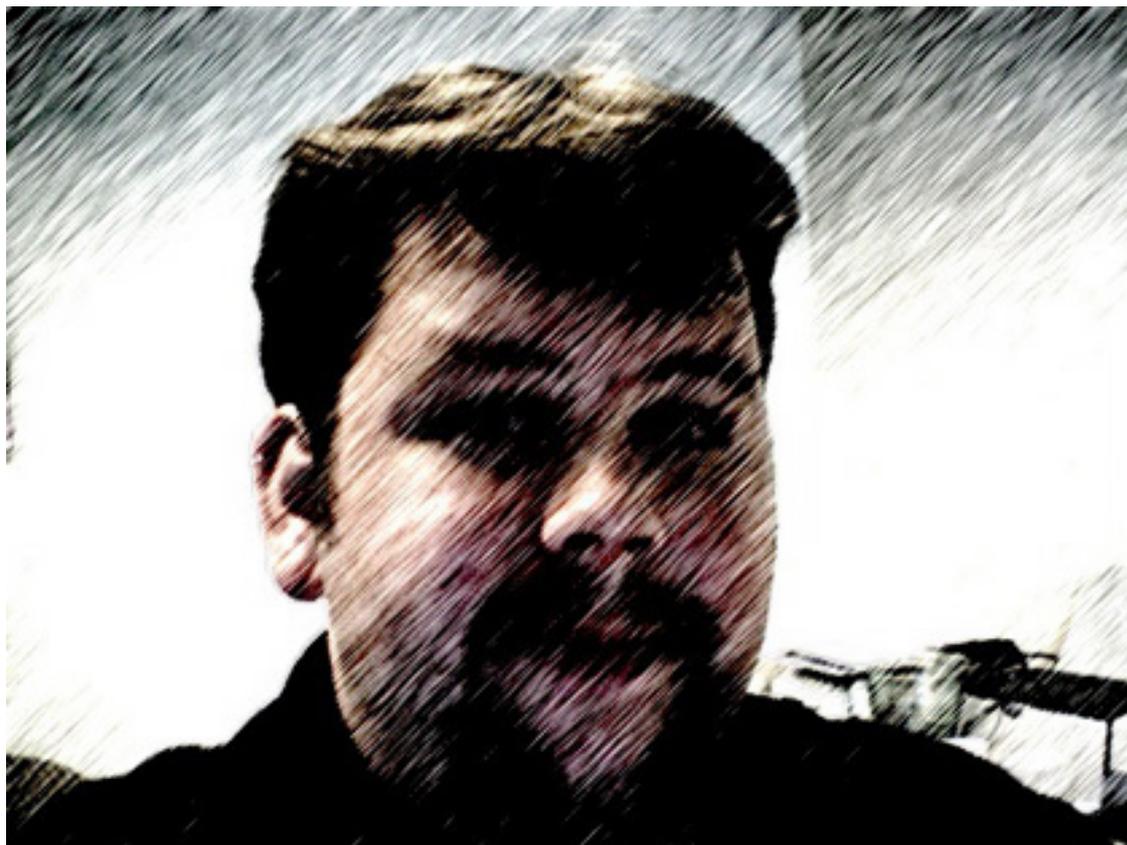
When Steve Jobs sauntered on stage recently and announced an iMac with a built-in camera and showed off his new PhotoBooth application, I was enthralled! The application itself will work with any iSight camera, if you happen to have a copy of it, and so this is a quick

guide to using PhotoBooth to make some really fun images. Don't expect anything you can hang on your wall; the iSight's image quality isn't high enough to produce commercial grade prints.

The application is fairly straightforward, to its credit. Fire up PhotoBooth, and you'll see the only window the application will spawn. It contains a view from your camera, a trigger button, and the two panes of special effects that the application can generate. Strike a pose and click the Camera button that's dead center in the interface. Your computer will count down from three, flash the screen bright white (acting as a flash), and snap your picture. Don't blink!

Once the computer has snapped your picture, it will show up in the tray below the window, ready to be e-mailed, set as your user account picture, imported into iPhoto, or turned into your iChat or AIM account picture. You can store a nearly unlimited number of photos in the tray, or delete them at your leisure.

Making good photos with an iSight camera is no small feat, as they tend not to have a good white balance under certain types of light (fluorescent light being the worst offender), but generally the same rules of good photography apply: Get close to your subject (in this case, yourself), make the composition interesting, and don't forget that it doesn't cost a bright shiny nickel to take a second shot.

The filters that Apple provides as an amusement can actually create some spectacular effects, especially the comic book effect, which has you looking sort of like you're straight out of a third rate Lichtenstein knock-off. My favorite is the "Thermal" Image, though it's not truly a thermal camera, merely just a change of color based upon the gradation of the light. Overall, PhotoBooth is a lot of fun to use, and better yet, a lot of fun to play with, until you get the image you want to keep. Now, if someone would just make me an Automator workflow to turn them into the old style photostrips. . .

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Serving Up Some Tunes, Part 2

Last month we talked about setting up a music server. Connecting your Mac to your stereo was really just the beginning. This month, I thought it might be interesting to look at some ideas that might make your music server a little more convenient to use. I might not have come up with the best solutions, but so far they are working reasonably well for me.

If you've read this far you've either made the connections I described last month or you have a similar setup that works. With that chore behind, us we can move on to more interesting tasks.

Getting Off to a Good Start

As with any computer project on any platform, remember to back up your music regularly. We're not going to do anything today that will harm your music, but ripping tunes from your CD collection to your iTunes library takes time. One hard drive failure or other disaster could wipe out all of that work in no time.

My own backup strategy is actually a two-step process. Music purchased from the iTunes Music Store gets burned to data DVDs shortly after purchase. The second part of my backup strategy involves copying the music in my iTunes folder to another hard drive. I often use Carbon Copy Cloner, but any utility that can make good copies of OS X files should work fine.

Another part of getting off to a good start involves knowing what iTunes can already do. I don't expect you to read the entire help file, but at least take a look at the part listing the available keyboard shortcuts.

Locate Your Music

When setting up a music server, it's important to choose the right location for your music files. My music is currently housed on an external hard drive. I did this because the hard drive in my iBook has been making interesting—and possibly soon to be fatal—noises for some time now. It's also too small to house my entire music collection.

When I set this up the first time I made a mistake. I put my music on an external hard drive and then made an alias to that folder inside my home folder, in the same place where iTunes expects to find its music folder. This worked fine as long as the drive with my music was available. One day I forgot to turn on the external drive before launching iTunes, which refused to launch properly thereafter. The only fix was to delete the aliases and recreate the original folders inside my home folder.

Fortunately, Apple has provided a much more elegant solution to this problem. Launch iTunes and open its Preferences. In the Advanced section you can click Change and find your music library. If need be, you can always use the Reset button to restore the default location.

With this arrangement in place, iTunes will launch if the volume with your music is not available, this time merely complaining that it cannot locate the original file. Although you are given the option to locate the song file, it's best to choose Cancel. Attempting to locate the file at this point will only fix the problem for that one song. It's much easier to cancel the process, turn on the external drive, and wait for it to mount. Now it's safe to click on the song you want to play. This workaround seems counterintuitive to me, but it has worked every time I've tried it.

Getting Things Organized

I currently have over 1,200 songs in my library. This isn't my entire collection; it's just what I have managed to rip thus far. As the collection grows larger, organization will be increasingly important.

One of my favorite organizational tools is built into iTunes. Its playlists feature is a good starting point for organizing music files. The downside to standard playlists is that you must update them manually. There are many times when it's more convenient to use a Smart Playlist. The biggest difference between the two types is that Smart Playlists can be based on criteria that you specify in advance. Smart Playlists organize your iTunes library in much the same way that mail rules organize your e-mail. With Live Updating enabled, Smart Playlists will change automatically whenever songs meeting the search criteria are added to the library. One of my Smart Playlists, for example, automatically adds any new B.B. King tracks in my library into a separate playlist.

If none of the standard identification categories meets your needs, use the Comment field to add information that meets your organizational style or temporary need. For example, I have several songs in my library that need to be deleted and re-encoded. Rather than try to remember all of the songs or write them down I included the phrase "rip this again" in the comment field. If this field is visible in the iTunes window I can use the iTunes search function to locate songs that failed to encode properly the first time. If the Comment column is not visible in the iTunes window, choose View Options from the Edit menu and tick the Comment checkbox. Anything in the Comment field could also be the subject of a Smart Playlist.

A Few Nice Touches

One of the things that I am thinking about adding to my music server is remote control capability. A Web search will show you several remote control peripherals that not only control iTunes but other media applications as well. I haven't bought one yet because I am looking for a remote that will allow me to enter a search string. In the meantime I'll probably add a wireless keyboard, which I can use to search my library from the couch.

When I finally get around to purchasing a new cell phone or PDA, I'm going to take a serious look at Salling Clicker.

Interesting Sites and Software

Since beginning this project, I have found a few interesting sites and some software that you might find useful, and I've only scratched the surface of iTunes-related Web sites. At the moment, I am finding VersionTracker, Mac OS X Hints, and Doug's AppleScripts for iTunes very helpful. The first two sites are not specifically devoted to iTunes but do offer their fair share of iTunes-related tips and content.

In addition to these interesting sites, I've run across some software that's proving helpful.

- Sizzling Keys solves one of my problems with using iTunes as a music server. If I am working in another program, I have to stop what I'm doing and bring iTunes to the front or go to the Dock any time I want to change anything. This program and preference pane combination lets you set global hot keys to control your tunes without having to bring iTunes to the front. The latest version requires Mac OS X 10.3 or later, but a version is also available for 10.2.

- If you want to control music from one Mac while sitting at a different Mac, check out netTunes 2.2. There are other programs that can control iTunes remotely from another computer, but netTunes actually lets you use iTunes itself on the client Mac. netTunes must be installed on each Mac that you plan to use, and at least one of them must be designated as a server.

  The free trial allows the server to run for 30 minutes. At the end of that time, you must shut down the server and restart it. Although this is a simple matter of a few mouse clicks, I think I'll just pay the $19.95 to license the program. You should have one license for each Mac that you intend to use as a server.

- My final candidate for useful iTunes utility of the moment is iTunes Publisher. This program lets you export your library or playlists into a number of file formats: text, HTML, M3U playlists, and QuickTime Streaming Server playlists. Although it's not currently under active development, so far the program has worked well. It offers much more control over what information gets exported than the iTunes Export Song List or Export Library commands provide. I'm hoping to store a tab-delimited list of my music library on a PDA, so the next time I go to a brick and mortar music store I won't have to wonder if I already own the CD I'm thinking about purchasing.

- My pick of the possibly-useful-possibly-just-fun music utilities is Clutter. This little utility will locate the artwork for the track that is currently playing in iTunes. You can then drag the artwork out of Clutter's window and onto your desktop. Now, here's the really cool part. The next time you click on the picture of that album, iTunes will launch and begin playing that album. This might be great for someone like me who picks music by reaching from a pile of CDs on the desk. Any Finder windows that you open will cover your music icons.

Closing Thoughts

I hope you find a few of these ideas helpful. There are tons of other alternatives available, but these are the ones that are working for me at the moment. That's it for now: If I could afford to turn my music collection over to one of those music ripping services that are available, I would, but as that's not in the budget at the moment I've got a lot of music ripping to do.

Desktop Pictures

Wyoming

Wyoming

Christopher Turner shares some stunning views of the Grand Tetons and Yellowstone National Park, as well as what an American Bison looks like up close and personal. These photos were shot in June 2005.

Previous Months' Desktop Pictures

Pictures from previous months are listed in the desktop pictures archives.

Downloading All the Pictures at Once

iCab and Interarchy can download an entire set of desktop pictures at once. Use the "Web ▷ Download Entire Site" command in the File menu, giving it the URL to the pictures page above. In iCab, use the Download command to download "Get all files in same path."

Contributing Your Own Desktop Pictures

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

Placing Desktop Pictures

Mac OS X 10.3.x and 10.4.x

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

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

Mac OS X 10.1.x and 10.2.x

Choose "System Preferences..." from the Apple menu and click the Desktop button. With the pop-up menu, select the desktop pictures folder you want to use.

You can also use the pictures with Mac OS X's built-in screen saver. Choose "System Preferences..." from the Apple menu. Click the Screen Saver (10.1.x) or Screen Effects

(10.2.x) button. Then click on Custom Slide Show in the list of screen savers. If you put the ATPM pictures in your Pictures folder, you're all set. Otherwise, click Configure to tell the screen saver which pictures to use.

Mac OS X 10.0.x

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

Cortland

by Matt Johnson, mjohnson@atpm.com

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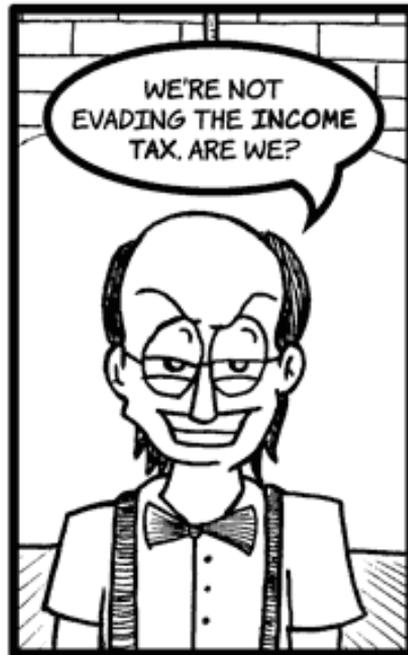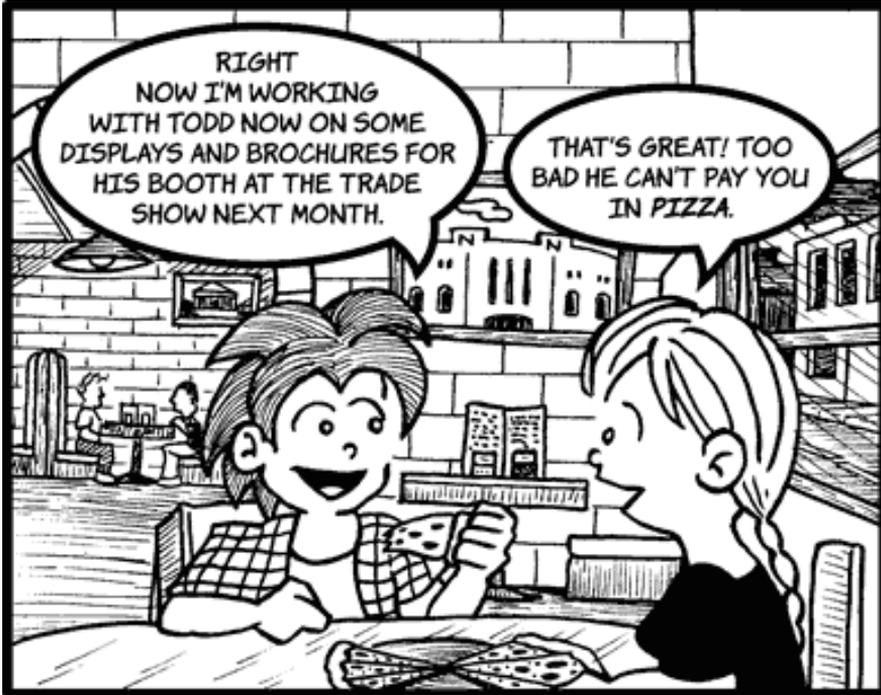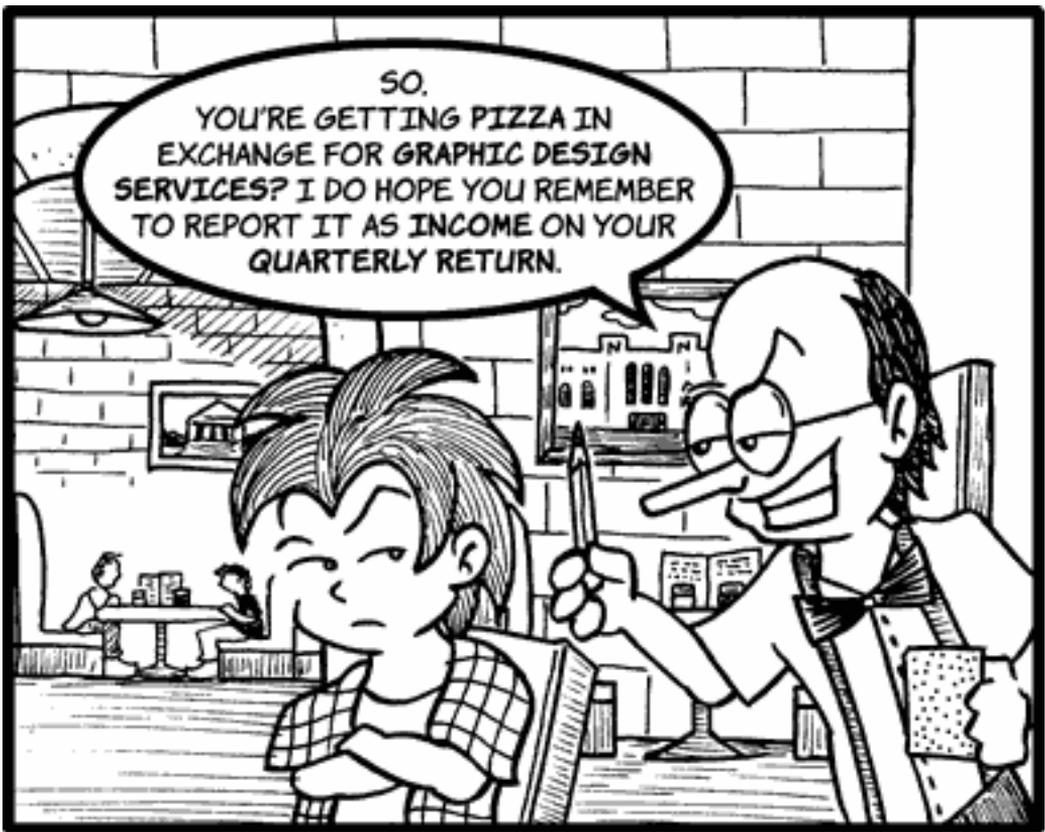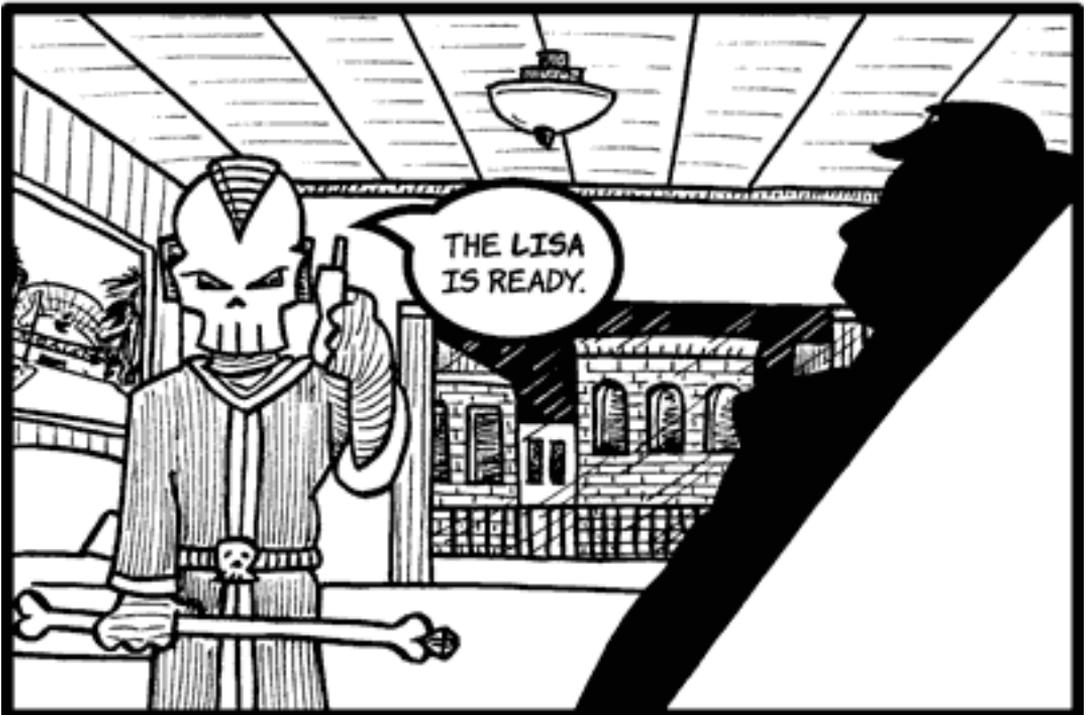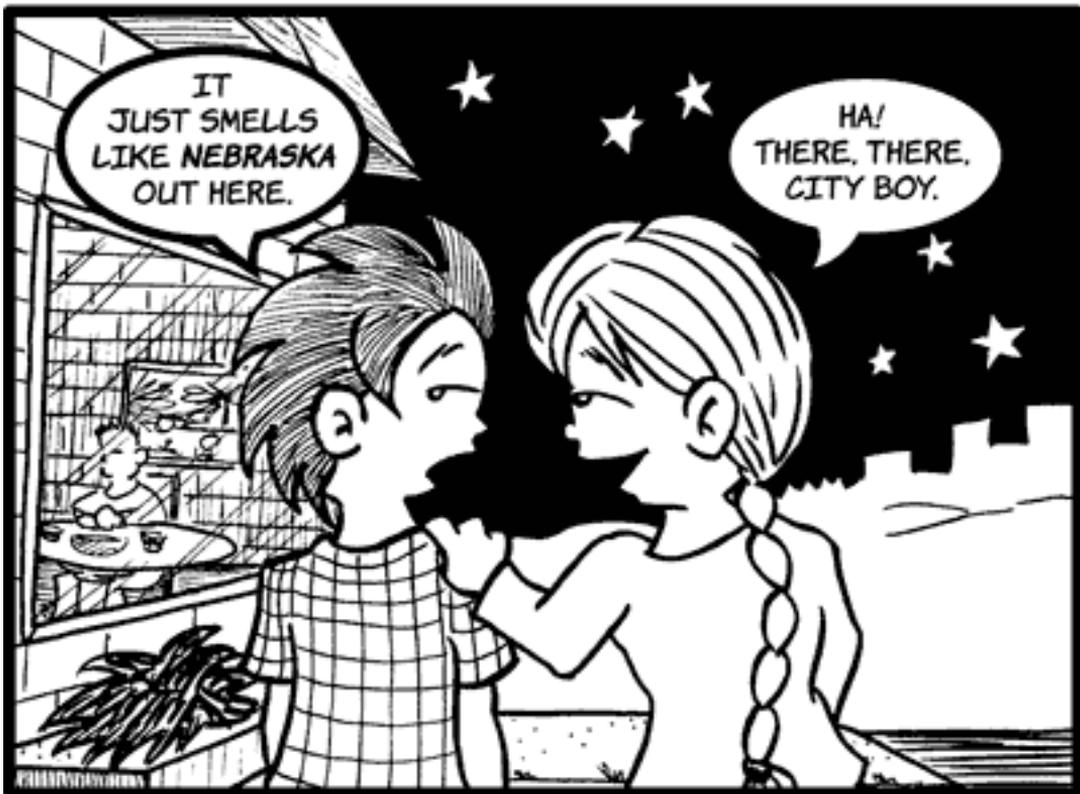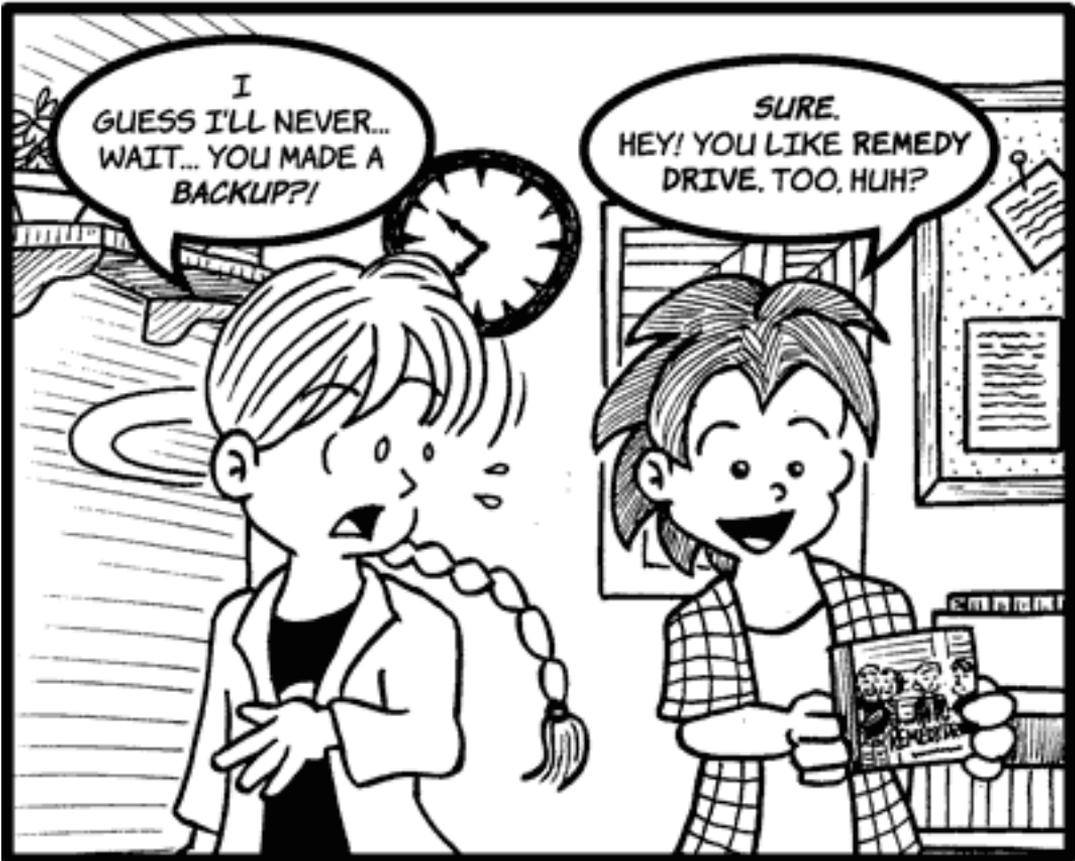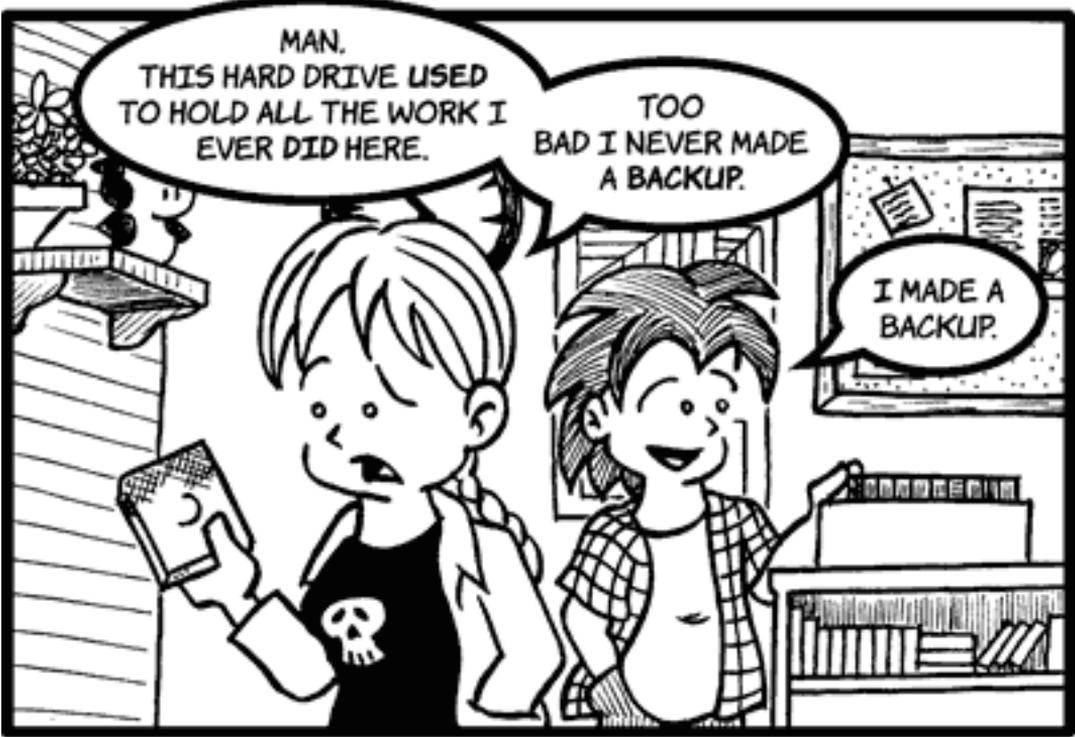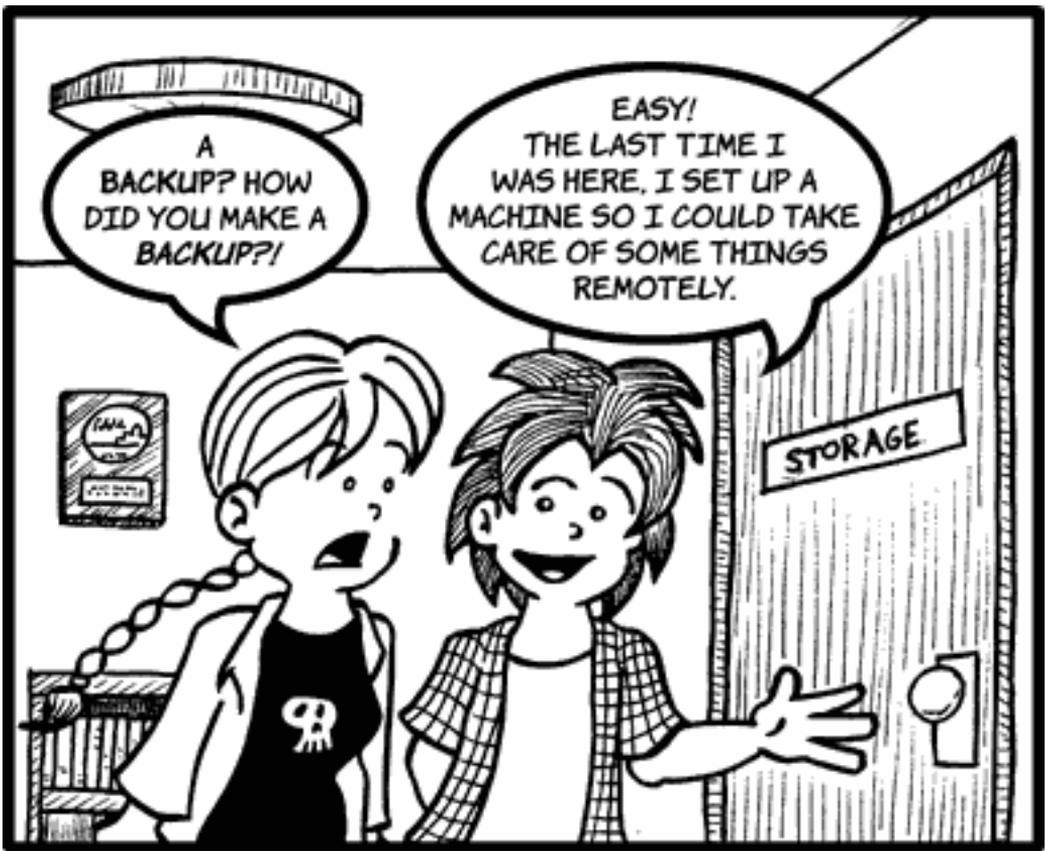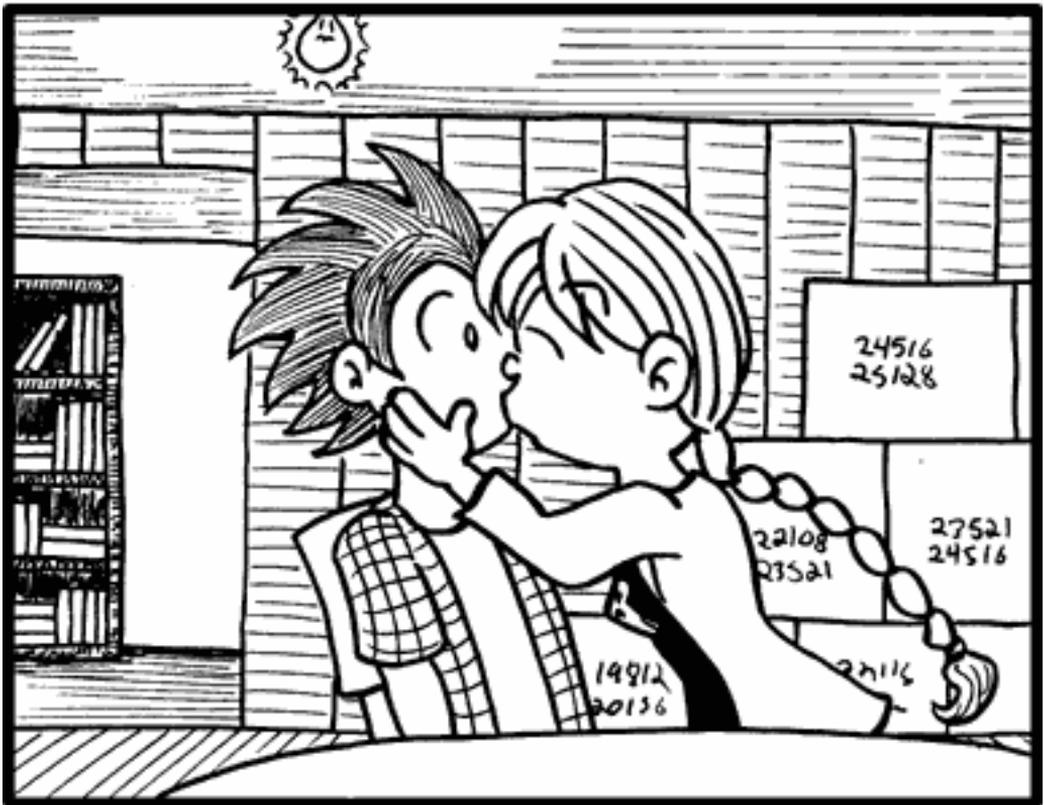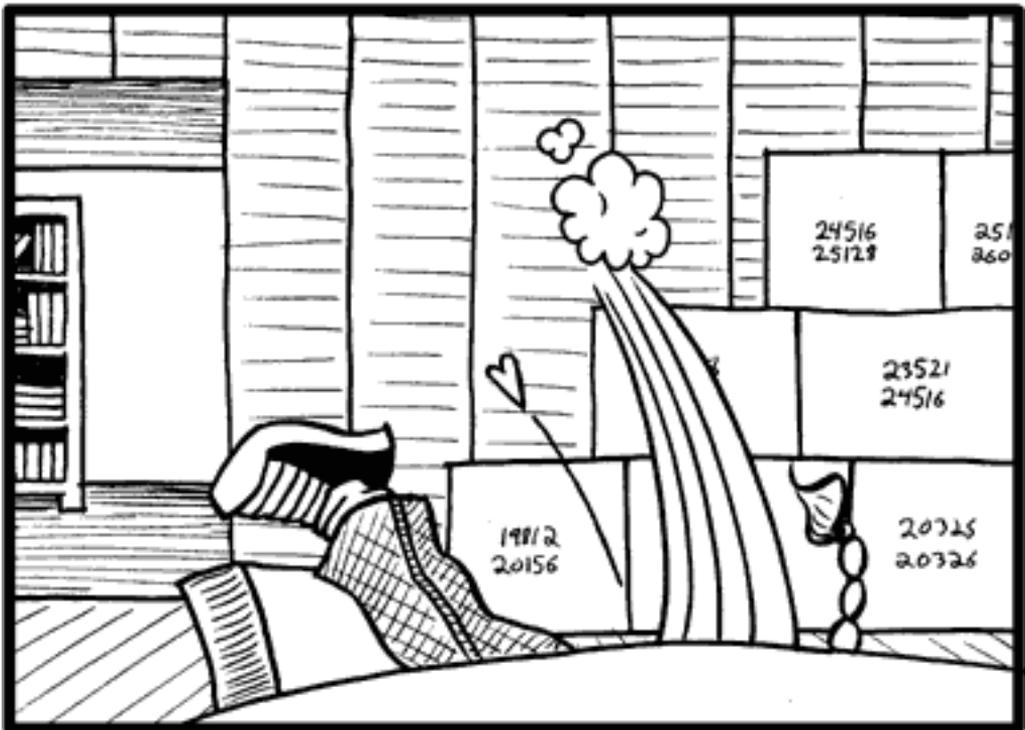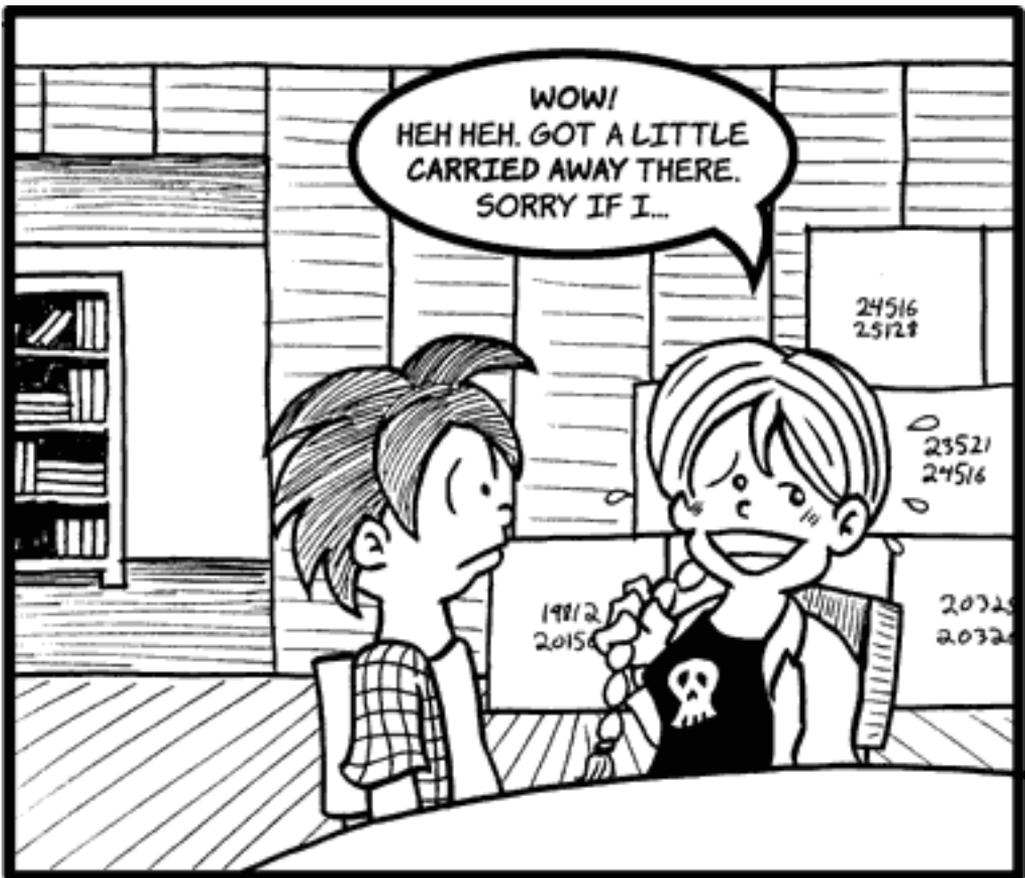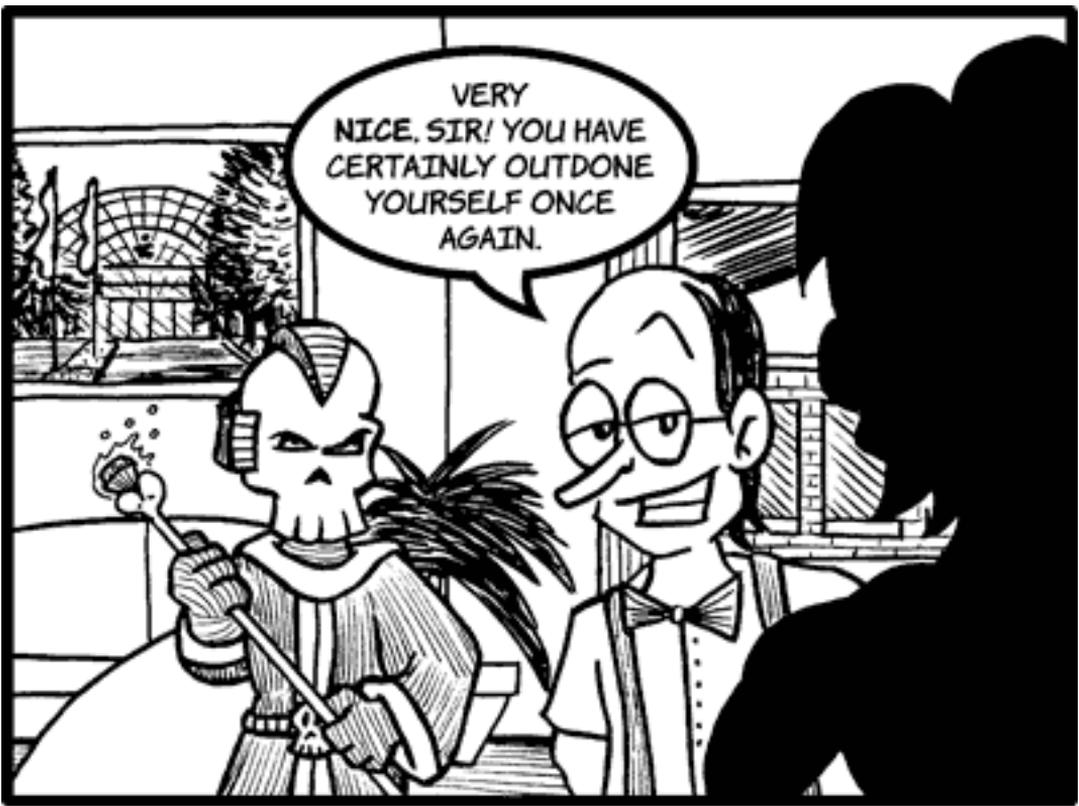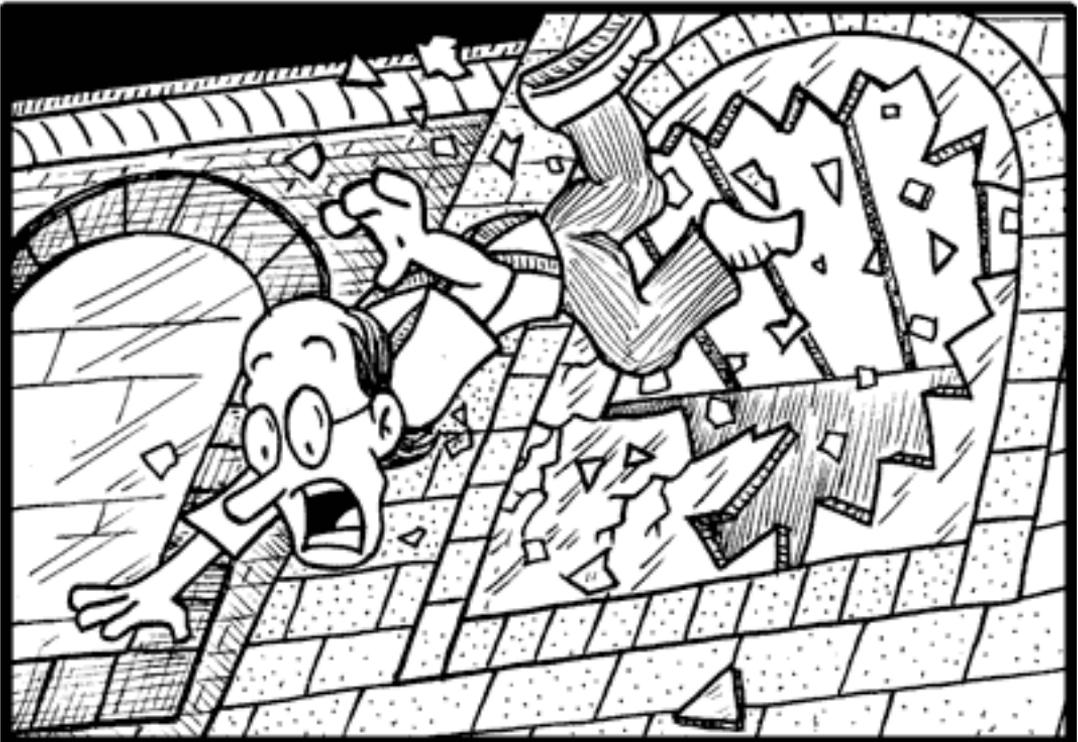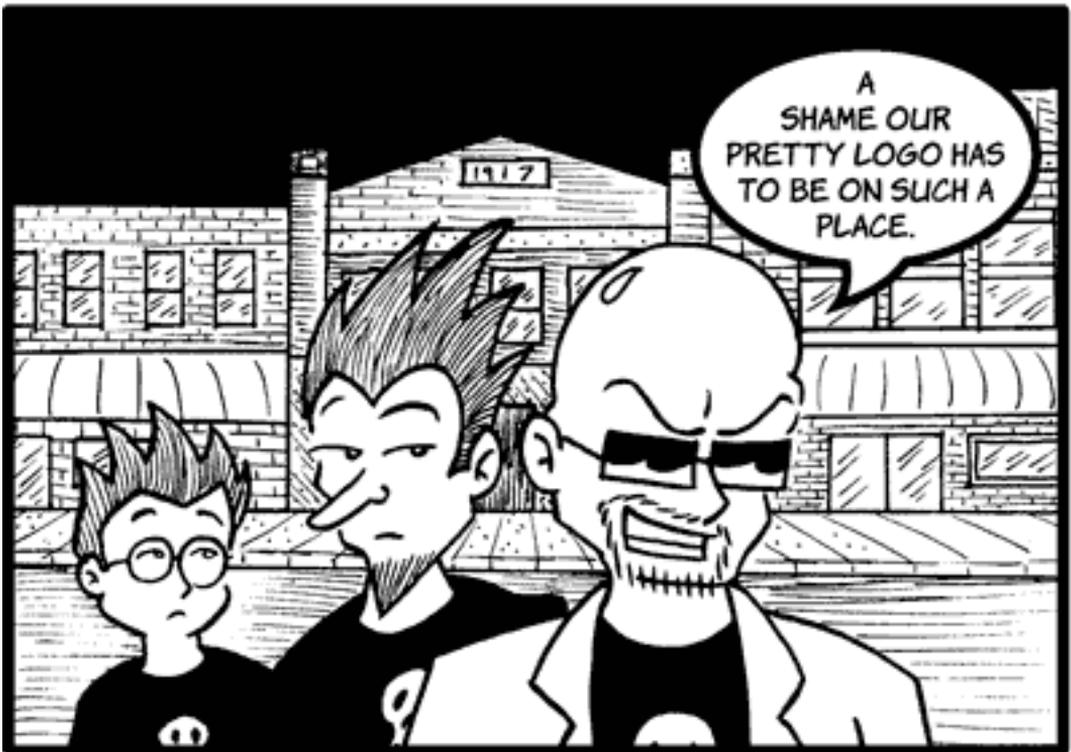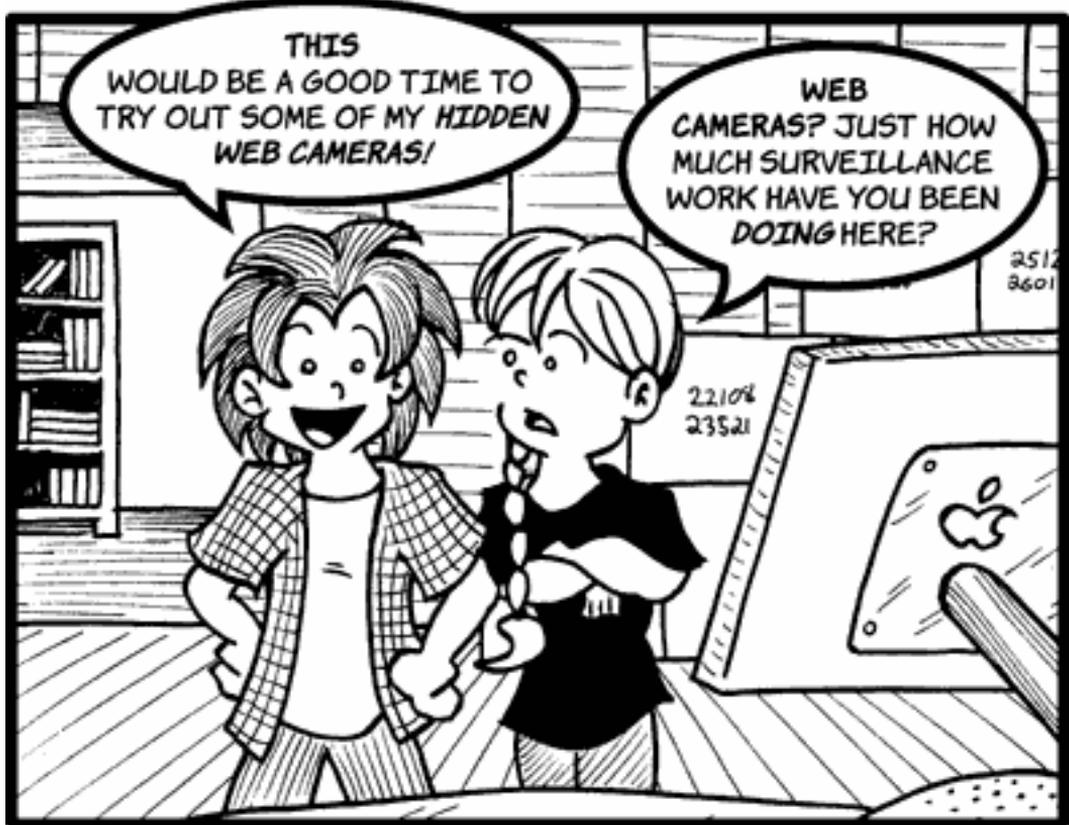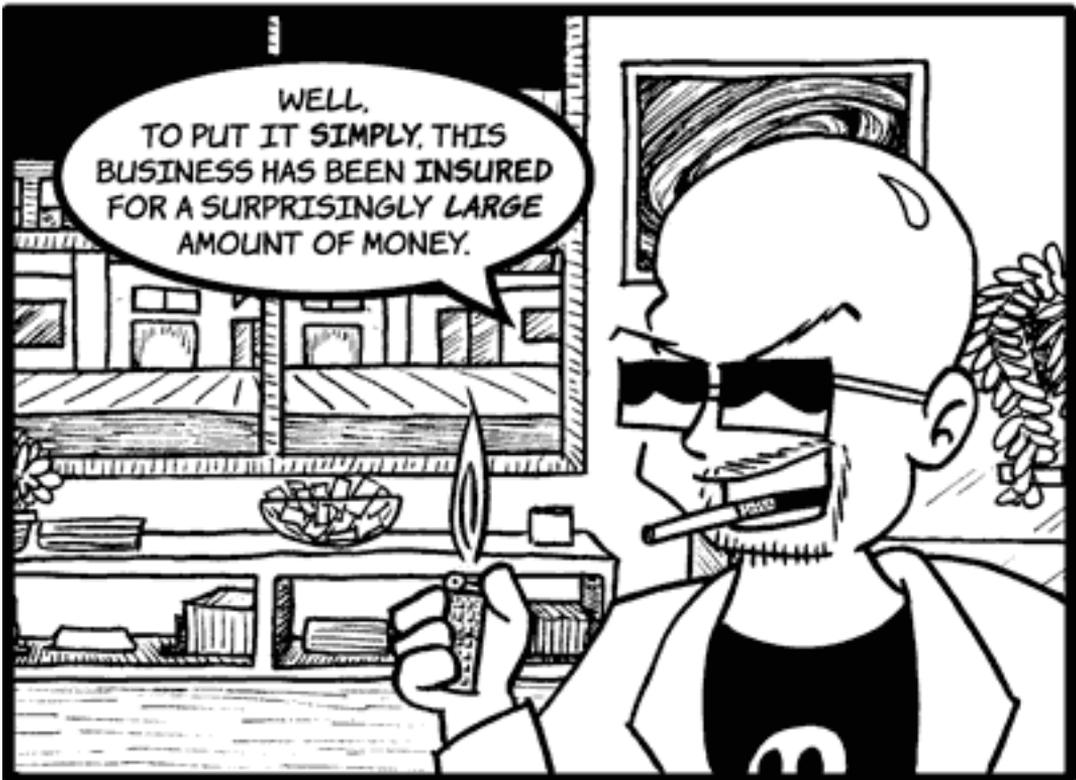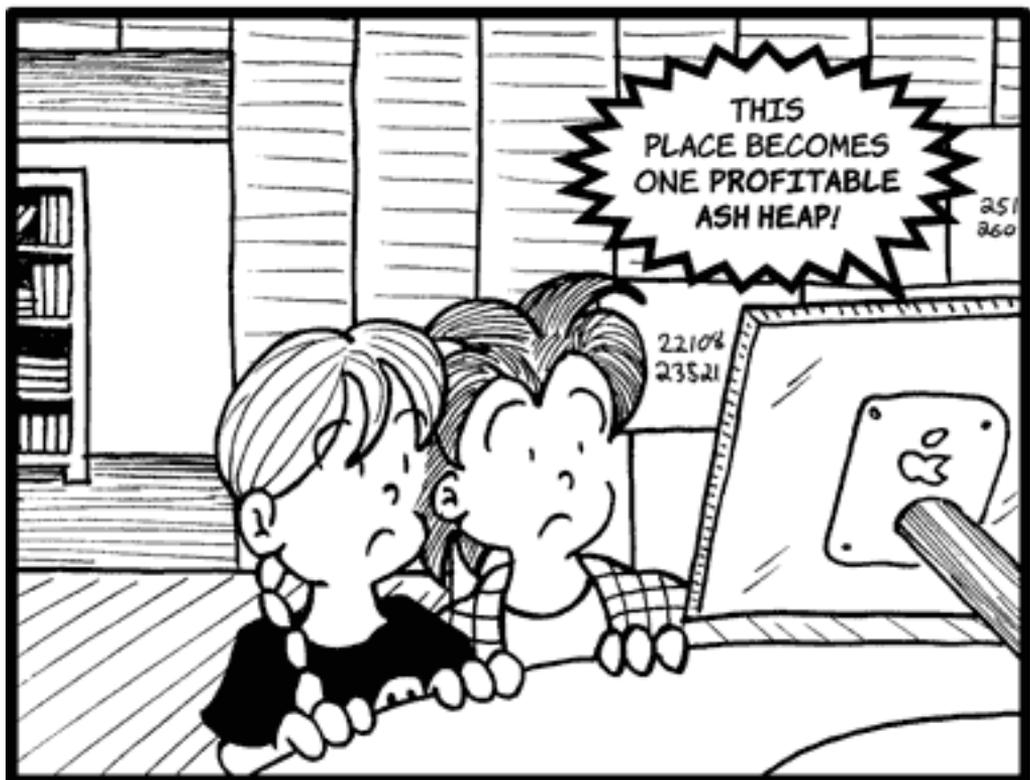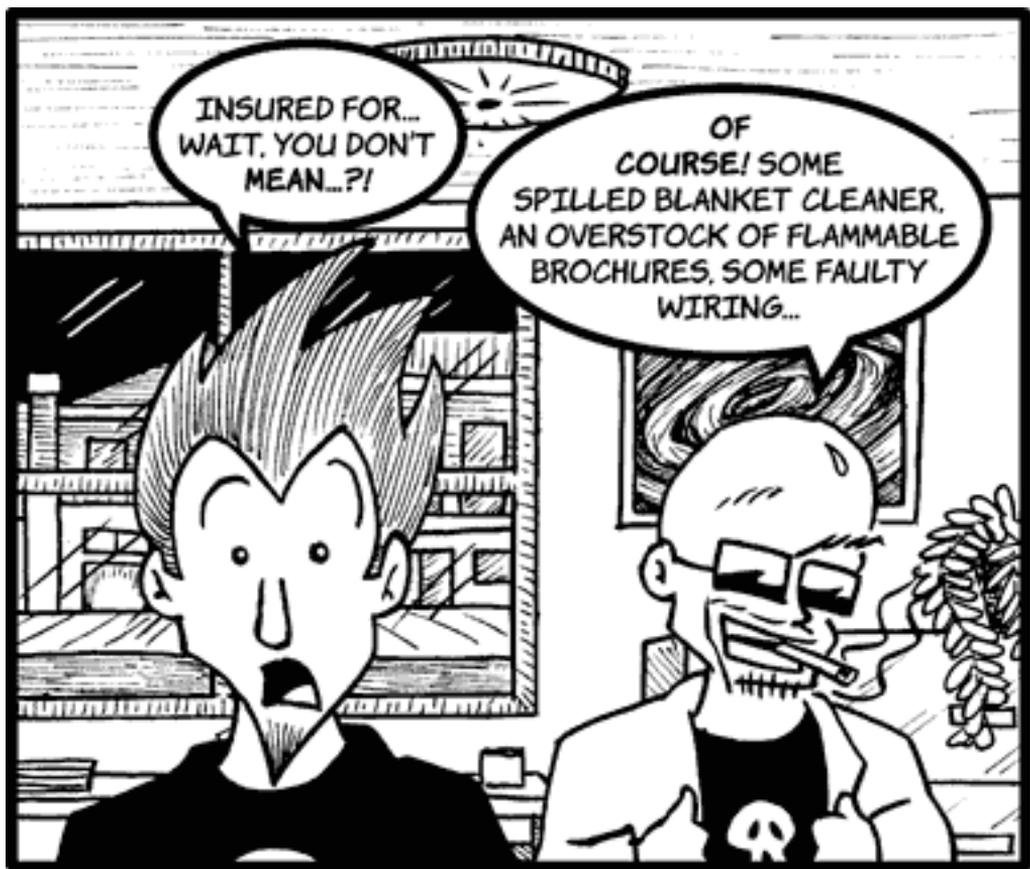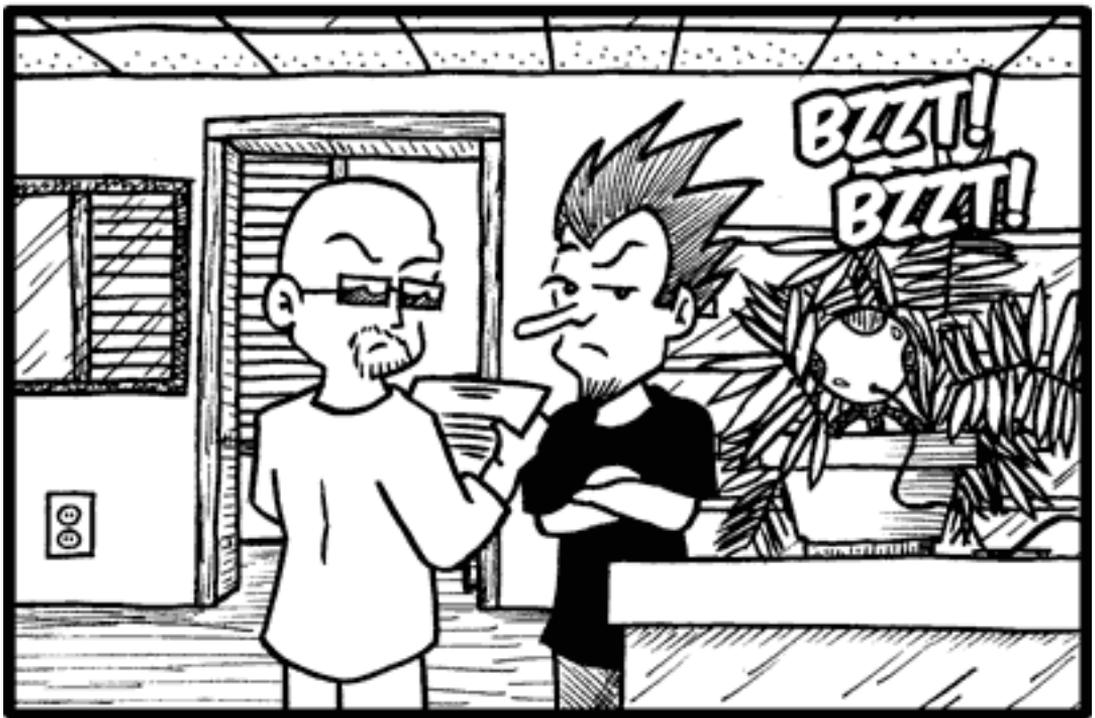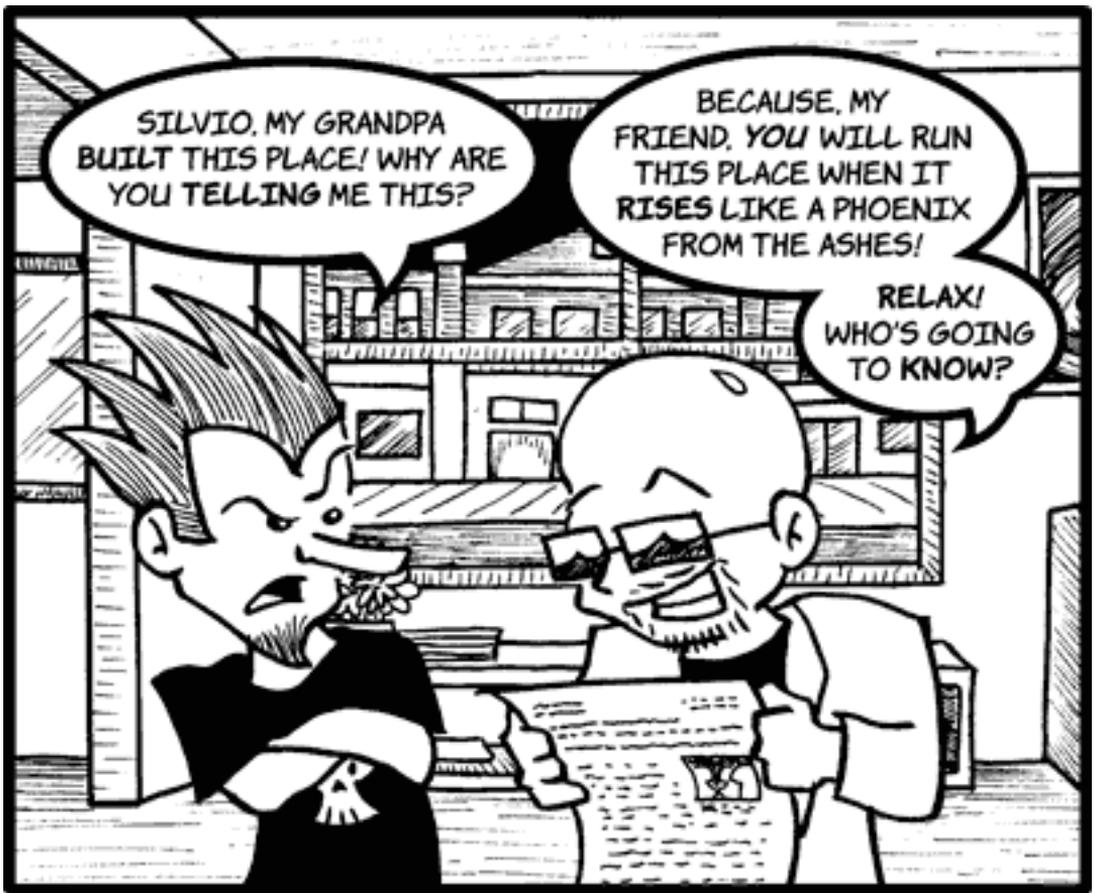
Frisky Freeware

by Matt Johnson, mjohnson@atpm.com
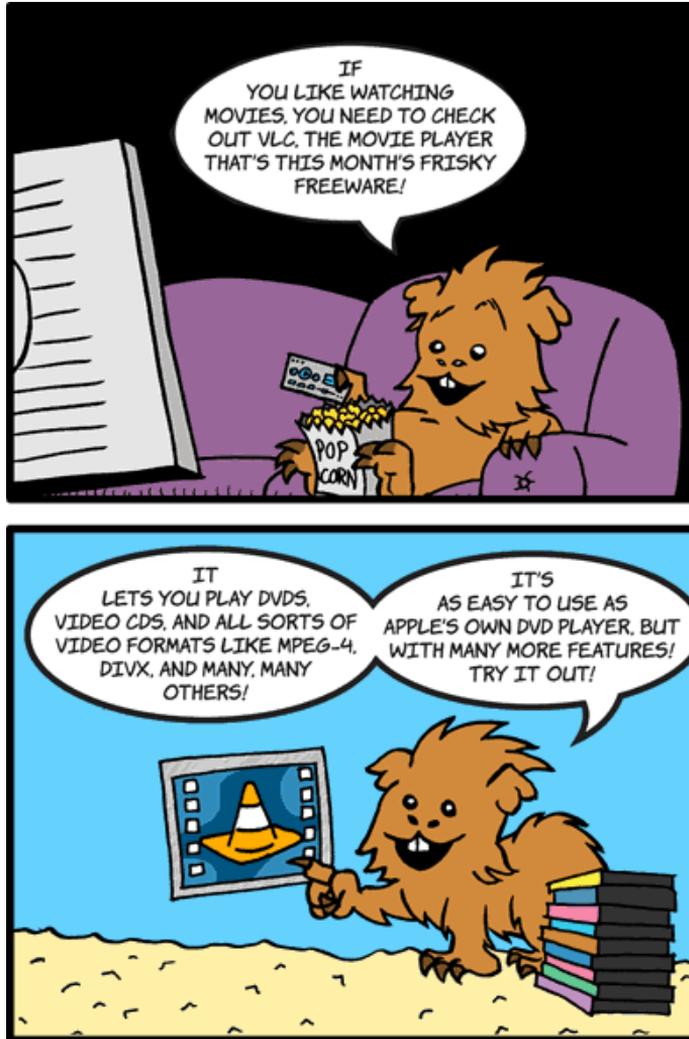
VLC Media Player

Docktopus 1.0.1

Developer: Startly Technologies
Price: $20
Requirements: 500 MHz Mac with Mac OS X 10.4, access for assistive devices enabled.
Trial: Fully-featured (30 days)

The idea behind Docktopus is one that you've had before, I assure you: it's along the lines of, "Well, couldn't that information be displayed on a badge on the icon in my Dock, *à la* Mail?" Startly's answer is, "Sure, we can do that! Kinda. Er... well, only if it fits a very regimented definition of our tasks." So from the get-go, Docktopus is both delightful and infuriating.

Docktopus has a set of predefined badges that it will allow you to put on applications, four at a go. They consist of: CPU Meter, Drive Space, Number of Objects, Item Size, and Memory. There are also application-specific badges for iCal, iTunes, and Apple Mail, and a Launch Menu option. The concept behind Docktopus is great: click the cute little cartoon octopus on the dock and a floating palette will appear above the dock, providing you with clever badges that you can attach to any of the four quadrants of the application's icon.

Want to know if Safari is being a memory hog again? Docktopus makes that easy. Drag the memory badge to a corner of the icon. Want to know if Mailsmith is using up extra processor cycles again? Docktopus makes that really easy. Drop the CPU monitor on a corner of the icon and away you go. It's in doing the hard things, the really useful things, that Docktopus drives me bats. See, their mail badge only works with the Apple Mail

client, not with Entourage, Mailsmith, FirstClass, or the other mail programs that I have handy. Their calendar badge only works within iCal, not with Palm Desktop or with Now Up-to-Date. So, some of the tasks I hoped Docktopus might solve remain frustratingly unsolved.

However, Docktopus is aesthetically quite nice, providing badges that are both useful and pleasant to look at. The memory badges display the memory that the applications are actively using, and the CPU monitors can be set to trigger when they pass a certain percentage of the available load, so you can see when Mailsmith begins to enter a death spiral. This, alone, is worth the $20 price of admission. What really acts as this application's saving grace is its expandability: there's an API for building further badges, and Startly even makes an SDK for making a badge freely available. This is the sort of thing that made Konfabulator so valuable, Dashboard and Automator so interesting, and Web services like Flickr, Google, and Yahoo Maps into multi-million dollar products. Until we see someone taking note of that, however, I will keep Docktopus firmly in the Good category.

iFM

Developer: Griffin Technology
Price: $50
Requirements: 3G or 4G iPod (a dock connector version for 4G and 5G iPods will be available soon)
Trial: None

ATPM RATINGS
GOOD

Griffin Technology's iFM is absolutely fabulous in its primary capacity—receiving radio broadcasts. This redeeming factor only barely makes up for its other shortcomings.

Don't let the diminutive size fool you. The iFM is a hearty FM radio receiver.

The Tuner

The reception was as good as any portable FM receiver I've ever used. Even inside my home with the wires not stretched out in any way (the headphone cord doubles as an antenna), the music sounded good. The receiver's frequency response is 20Hz-15KHz, and it outputs a maximum of 20mW each into 32 ohm speakers. A bit more power wouldn't be a bad thing, but the iFM drove my Bose headphones quite well.

The iFM requires absolutely no access to your iPod in order to listen to a broadcast; it just needs to be connected so it can draw power. This means you can leave your iPod tucked away in a bag with a cord leading to the iFM, which can be clipped to your pocket. Your headphones connect to a shorter cable that comes out the bottom of the iFM. It stores up to six preset stations and can be adjusted for tuning ranges in the United States, Europe, and Japan. If you do decide to listen to music stored on your iPod instead of the radio, simply shut off the iFM's switch. There's no need to disconnect it—iPod music passes through to the headphones transparently.

While the iFM performs flawlessly in the FM tuner department and is adequate as a corded iPod remote, I found it rather lacking in all other respects.

The Shape

Even though it is pleasingly small and the radio sounds great, the physical design could use a rework. Most functions are controlled by sliders and buttons on the sides of the product and felt a little bit cumbersome to use. On more than one occasion, I accidentally slid the Power/Radio/Remote switch to a different position while trying to use the volume and tuning buttons on the opposite side.

The Record button is presumably miniscule to prevent accidental presses (a good thing), but I almost have to use the edge of my fingernail to reliably press it. Moreover, for my third-generation iPod, this button is mostly useless since it can only initiate recording on later models. For 3G models, you must use the iPod's interface.

The bottom of the iFM has two wires coming out—one that includes a reasonable length before connecting to the headphone and remote jack of an iPod, and a shorter one with a connector for your headphones. It's slightly unwieldy and might be nicer if there were an integrated headphone jack.

The Recordings

If you recall last year's iTalk review, you'll remember that I was completely satisfied with the product. The iFM also functions as a recorder but, unfortunately, pales in comparison to the iTalk. Besides lacking the playback speaker the iTalk sports, voice recordings are drastically lower in volume than those made with an iTalk. Please note that this sample is the raw recorded file from my iPod and has not been altered. Compare it to the normal distance recording from the iTalk review, which was also unaltered.

The iFM can also record radio broadcasts, but I found this feature pathetically useless (turn down your volume a bit before playing this radio recording). The puzzling thing is that

these recordings seem to be overdriving when the voice recordings are so much softer than those from an iTalk. No, what you heard is not broadcast static. Prior to recording, the music sounded wonderful. I found myself actually hoping my unit is simply defective. I would've assumed the broadcast recording function would have been better-tested before the product was released. Perhaps the Apple-specified 8KHz, 16-bit, mono WAV files are to blame, but one would think some built-in attenuation would solve the problem. Sure, monaural music at 8KHz won't sound superb, but it should at least sound like music and not like needle scratches.

The Price

No need to mince words. The iFM is too expensive.

Conclusion

In spite of the FM receiver's splendid quality, the "icing" features (remote control and recording) are not of sufficient quality to justify the price point. My take: lose the recording functions that don't work well anyway and cut the price by half or more. I have little doubt I'd rate such a revised version as Excellent.

Serious Editing in iPhoto 5

Publisher: Books That Don't Go Bad
Author: J. Kevin Wolfe
Price: $25
Trial: Fixing Washed Out Images, Posterization

Ever since I was a kid, I liked taking pictures. While I've certainly come a long way from cutting off heads with a Fisher-Price 110 camera (both in terms of equipment and skill), many of my pictures could stand some improvement. In the past, I've looked to Photoshop and Photoshop Elements as my touch-up tools of choice. With iPhoto 5, though, Apple added several new image editing features to the photo organization tool. In my attempt to better use these new tools, I turned to *Serious Editing in iPhoto 5*.

Serious Editing in iPhoto 5 is essentially a cookbook for manipulating photographs in iPhoto. As you would expect with a cookbook, *Serious Editing* is broken down into different section: a brief introduction, Color Fixes, Exposure Fixes, Cleaning Fixes, Effects, and tips. The introduction walks through iPhoto's editing controls, briefly explains how the histogram works, explains different retouching techniques, and presents a baker's dozen Power User Options.

Each individual recipe contains a description of the problem (for fixes) or effect result (for effects). For simple fixes, like fixing redeye or fixing crooked images, the descriptions are fairly basic. Other fixes, like fixing off-color exposure, have more in-depth descriptions. Also, certain fixes contain followup discussions related to the original recipe. For instance, the recipe for better black and white conversions ends with a discussion on the effect of different tints on the conversion process. Finally, each recipe explains the steps needed to go from the Before version to the After version of each photograph.

25 of the 51 recipes presented in the book are categorized as "Effects." When I first saw the table of contents, I couldn't figure out how the author was creating 25 effects with iPhoto. When I think of effects and image editing, I usually think of Photoshop filters, actions, and plug-ins. As far as I know, iPhoto doesn't offer any of these things. What I failed to remember is that many of these Photoshop features achieve their results by modifying many of the same image attributes that are available in iPhoto's Adjust palette. 17 of the 25 included effect recipes do just this. Another seven of the effects are a bit more outside the box—they involve working with two images (or creating a copy of the original image), manipulating one of the images, and taking a screen shot mid slide-show. Although these effects can create looks which are otherwise impossible in iPhoto (like warping an image),

your end image is limited to your screen's resolution instead of your camera's resolution. The final hint involves using iPhoto's Book functionality to create a collage.

Serious Editing in iPhoto 5 is distributed as an eBook and, as such, has some advantages and disadvantages over a traditional paper book. The main advantage is that the author has promised free updates for anybody who purchases the book. The book also takes advantage of the linking abilities available in PDF documents—the table of contents contains sample images from each fix or effect, and clicking on said image takes you appropriate recipe. Additionally, links to related hints are sprinkled throughout the text. Finally, since the book is a PDF, it's quite simple to keep the reference on hand whenever you are working with iPhoto.

There are also several downsides to eBooks, and these are also present in *Serious Editing in iPhoto 5*. My main complaint is that it's often difficult to keep both iPhoto and the book on screen at the same time. Sure, if you're editing your photos on a Cinema Display, you've got plenty of real estate. On a PowerBook, however, you can find yourself flipping between iPhoto and Preview as you try to work through a recipe. My other comment is that a physical book could include the a CD of the source images referenced in the text so the reader can demo each recipe on an image that's known to exhibit the issue being addressed. Personally, I didn't have images that displayed every issue covered by *Serious Editing*, so I wasn't able to successfully apply all the recipes. Of course, this issue could also be addressed by making the images available for download.

Before reading *Serious Editing in iPhoto 5*, I wasn't aware of any books that specifically focused on iPhoto 5's image editing capabilities. Having read the book, I now more comfortable with how iPhoto's new features are supposed to work, and when it is appropriate to use those tools. If you use iPhoto and want to touch up your digital image library, you should check out this book.

The TCP/IP Guide

Publisher: No Starch Press
Author: Charles M. Kozierok
**Price:** $80
Trial: Sample chapters.

It's another weekday morning of radio traffic alerts, in-depth news reports, and just a bit of music as I jump from radio station to radio station to avoid commercials. I started my day before sunup to beat the traffic and make the first leg of my daily commute no more than ninety minutes. I knew what was on my task list at the office as I tried to keep myself distracted by watching the sun's early rays bounce off the canyon topography while listening to news and traffic reports as they bounce off my car's antenna and pour through my car's stereo.

My approach to finding information during the early morning commute is not unlike my approach to finding information on workplace solutions. I don't like commercial pitches and desire to have as much knowledge as possible. In my view, the Web as an information source is often no better than radio news—snippets of information interspersed between commercial pitches and banner ads.

Solutions Sought

Among the items on my office task list is laying out a network integration plan and the evaluation of Internet-based telecommunication options. Like many professionals with an IT background, I'm familiar with networking principles and know my way around the hardware and software resources needed to make technology solutions happen. But advances happen every day, and happenstance often derails the plans of the unprepared. The Web offered little help in my search for quality, concise, and reliable information.
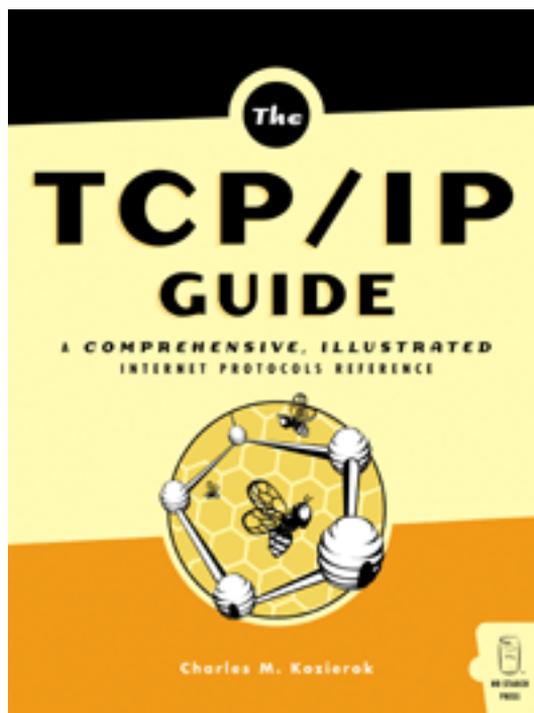
Evaluation

Needing solid information about what lies at the core of my plans, I turned to No Starch Press for answers. No Starch might best be described as a "print house for geeks," amateurs, and pros alike. Among its latest offerings is *The TCP/IP Guide*, written by Charles M. Kozierok. If this book is an accurate indicator, Mr. Kozierok is a very busy guy with a boatload of tech stuff on his mind.

At more than 1,500 pages, *The TCP/IP Guide* weighs in figuratively and literally as a hefty resource on its topic. I have to admit that, upon opening the box containing this exhaustive volume, I took pause just to marvel for a moment at its sheer size. I learned quickly Mr. Kozierok's latest published work is much easier to navigate than it is to lift. Spanning 88 well-developed chapters, the book's $80 price tag works out to only pennies on the page. In a world where time is money, quick and easy access to quality information may prove this book to be a bargain for people in search of TCP/IP answers.

Rightly named, the book should be called *The All-In-One TCP/IP Guide, Detailed Protocol Review and Comprehensive Concordance*. The table of contents and index provide a convenient and easy-to-follow road map of the book and the exhaustive amount of material that lies between them. Smartly illustrated, the book is easily navigated for both brief overviews of the subject matter and more in-depth study of TCP/IP-related topics.

Solutions Found

For novices this book may at first appear intimidating due to its size and towering word volume. But looks are deceiving. Not only does Mr. Kozierok's book seek to satisfy the

appetite of the tech savvy, it also provides well illustrated explanations of TCP/IP basics for readers otherwise unfamiliar with the topic. The first several chapters are devoted to an overview of TCP/IP fundamentals and meaningful explanations of industry terms and acronyms.

Personally, I don't like to wade through pages of esoteric or recondite text to find my answers. It took just a few minutes to locate answers to my own TCP/IP questions. Specifically, I needed answers on TCP/IP performance issues, network standards, and interoperability, as well as information on protocols and network administration. Though the information I needed was addressed in different areas of the book, my answers were found easily using the book's effective Contents In Details section.

Admittedly, there are several chapters of this guide I may never have cause to read. But the inviting style with which Mr. Kozierok has composed this book has lead me to read beyond the points I needed to find and the answers I needed to discover.

Conclusion

The time I spend each day between my morning and evening commutes is often as harried and stressful as the hours I spend behind the wheel. In search of answers even the Web has become a congested mess with commercial ads that loom larger than freeway billboards. Finding a comprehensive yet concise resource such as *The TCP/IP Guide* is a welcome change from the information congestion common on the Information Superhighway.

Figuratively speaking, when it comes to finding answers to TCP/IP-related questions, this guide and reference source puts both novices and pros in the fast lane of answers. The easily navigated contents and index sections are like having your own drive-up window of facts.

Hardware Review

by Andrew Kator, akator@atpm.com

X-Arcade Trackball Mouse

Developer: XGaming
Price: $100 (limited-time launch price); $130 (list)
Requirements: Mac with USB or PC with USB or PS/2
Trial: None

In recent years XGaming has become one of the premier suppliers of arcade-style gaming controllers. Their previous products, the X-Arcade Single Joystick and Dual Joystick controllers, set a high standard for solid quality construction that would last through years of heavy use. The X-Arcade Trackball Mouse is XGaming's new controller, but the precedents set by their previous products mean this device must meet high expectations.

Overview and Installation

XGaming stands behind their products with a lifetime warranty, which is easily understood the moment the Trackball Mouse is removed from the packaging. The controller case is made from 5/8″ hardboard with a black melamine surface and arcade-style t-molding. Six arcade buttons frame the large trackball, with two pinball buttons located on the sides and a button on the back. The entire unit measures approximately 5″ H × 17″ W × 10″ D, with an attached 10′ USB/PS2 cable.

The Trackball Mouse is recognized as a standard three-button mouse, so installation only requires plugging the cable into your computer. No additional drivers are necessary, making the controller compatible with any game that accepts mouse input or configuration. Trackball sensitivity is adjusted by changing the Mouse settings in System Preferences. The other X-Arcade controllers can be used with game consoles (with an console adapter), but the Trackball Mouse can only be used on consoles with console games that accept mouse input. Because I do not own any mouse-compatible console games, I did not test console compatibility.

The trackball has a solid feel, more than many other trackball input devices. The trackball movement was a little stiff upon first use, but it loosened up after the first 5–10 minutes. After the short "break-in period," the trackball movement and responsiveness were impressive. The ball has enough weight that it can be "free spun" to rapidly cross the screen. This is an optomechanical trackball, meaning the ball sits upon rollers and the rotation of the rollers is registered by photogates (light sensors).

The interior mechanical components are as robust as the exterior—those stainless steel trackball rollers will resist distortion and wear.

The top and side buttons function as mouse buttons 1, 2, and 3. The left pinball button triggers mouse button 1 and the right button triggers button 2. The three buttons on either side of the trackball are mirrored to accommodate right and left-handed users.

An additional arcade button is located on the back. When this button is pressed, trackball movement is restricted to vertical input. At first it didn't make sense why this would be a feature, but the usefulness becomes obvious when configuring the controls in some

games and emulators. Because it is difficult to manually restrict trackball movement to only one axis (horizontal or vertical), pressing this button makes game configuration easier by ensuring that only the vertical input is registered in the game settings.

All of the buttons on the Trackball Mouse are large one-inch raised arcade buttons that can be found on arcade machines over the last 25 years. They all give tactile and auditory feedback as the springs and switches are activated with use.

The Trackball Mouse is easy to set up with anything that uses mouse input, games or otherwise. It can be used for non-gaming applications, but is best suited for gaming because of the controller's size and button configuration. The controller can be used with one hand, but is really better suited for two-handed use—and its size is considerable, taking up a lot of desk space that makes use as a primary input device cumbersome. Even so, I tested it with many non-gaming applications, including word processors, Web browsers, graphics programs, and even video editors. Other than the previously mentioned considerations, the Trackball Mouse performed perfectly.

Arcade Emulation

Controller setup is similar for MacMAME, MAME, MAME32, and X-MAME. Once the software and a game ROM are launched, pressing the Tab key will bring up the configuration settings. There should be at least two input options available.
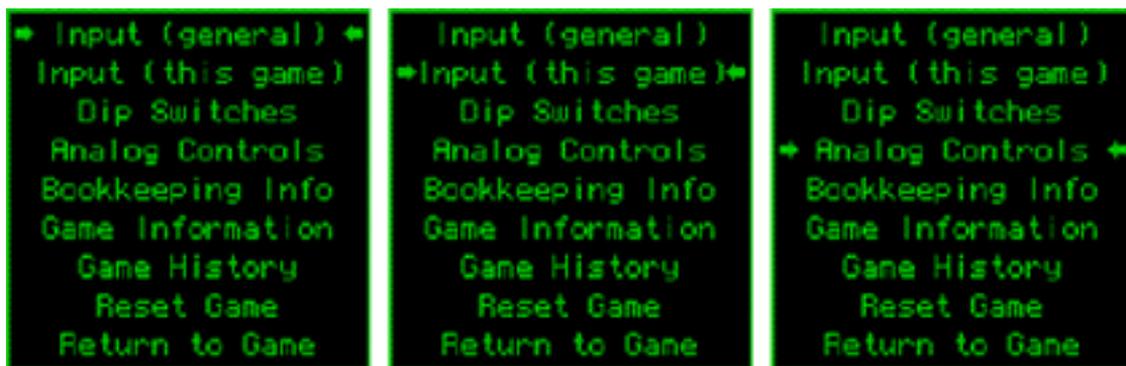
Once a game is running, pressing the Tab key displays options for controller settings.

The "Input (general)" option allows controller settings to be applied to all games. "Input (this game)" overrides the general input settings and adds custom controller settings for just the game being used. Using the back button on the Trackman Mouse helps setup the vertical axis analog input.

Some games may have a third option, "Analog Controls," that offers sensitivity and other adjustments for analog devices like trackballs and joysticks. Every user has a tendency to setup his games differently, so there is no one correct way for controller setup.

The Trackball Mouse performs perfectly with games that originally used trackball controls, such as Centipede and Marble Madness—but it also performs nicely with paddle games,

replacing the rotating knob better than many other input devices. The controller works seamlessly with the other X-Arcade joystick controllers, because the joystick controllers are recognized as a keyboard so their input doesn't conflict with the Trackball Mouse.

Mac Gaming

A CD containing PC versions of Atari Anniversary Edition Volumes 1 & 2 is included with each Trackball Mouse, but no Mac-compatible software was included with the controller. While it is a little disappointing that Mac-compatible software was missing, XGaming does provide a Web page listing Mac games that have been tested. All of the games listed performed well with the controller.

While not specifically designed for trackball use, several first-person shooters worked very well with the Trackball Mouse. Marathon: Aleph One, Cube, and D2X (Descent 2) use the trackball for targeting, looking around, and firing weapons. The trackball was not only easier but much faster for targeting and view changes than a mouse.

As with MAME, the Trackball Mouse can be used with the X-Arcade Joysticks for general Mac gaming. This creates an excellent FPS controller setup, replacing the need for keyboard controls. With one hand on the trackball and the other hand on a joystick, player control is much more natural.

Results

An unexpected test of how fun this controller is came over the Thanksgiving holiday, when my baby-boomer father sat down for an hour to play several rounds of arcade classics…and enjoyed it. There can be no higher recommendation than when a controller is so appealing that it introduces a non-gamer to gaming.

The X-Arcade Trackball Mouse controller delivers a fun and satisfying gaming experience. The sturdy construction, solid trackball movement, and large arcade buttons bring new life to arcade classics and even make mouse-based Mac games more fun.

Logitech TrackMan Wheel

Developer: Logitech
Price: $30 (corded); $50 (cordless)
Requirements: Mac or PC with USB
Trial: None

There are many multi-button input devices to choose from, but when it comes to mice there isn't much difference between one model and the next—at the end of the day, they all leave users with stiff joints and wrist pain from repetitive movements and stress. For many users, the Logitech TrackMan Wheel can offer significant relief from repetitive stress aches and pains by providing superior ergonomics. Instead of moving the hand and wrist as is typical with mouse control, the hand and wrist are stationary when using the TrackMan. The user's thumb rotates the trackball to control the cursor, and the remaining fingers can be used for the buttons or scroll wheel.

Installation is simple and pleasant. With the corded model, plug the cord into an available USB port. With the wireless model, plug the USB radio dongle into an available USB port, and make sure the AA battery is installed into the TrackMan. Logitech chose to use a proprietary radio dongle over Bluetooth. Using their own system ensures compatibility with Macs that do not have Bluetooth, however it also uses an additional USB port and duplicates technology already available on Bluetooth-equipped Macs. The device becomes instantly available without further installation, but Logitech provides additional drivers that allow programmable scrolling, application switching, and keystroke shortcuts.

The TrackMan Wheel requires only finger and thumb movements, so it requires little desk space. Because the device works independently of the surface it is used on, the TrackMan Wheel can even be used almost anywhere (even in your lap) with no problems.

The trackball moves smoothly under the thumb, and the resulting cursor actions are equally smooth and precise. The tracking is precise enough to make text selection easy, even in

the first few minutes of use. The buttons offer feedback, both with an auditory click and noticeable movement. The scroll wheel has a rubberized coating, offering a tactile separation from the plastic buttons surrounding it. Using the scroll wheel as a button was a little mushier than expected, but still adequate.

The TrackMan Wheel may take a few hours to get used to. After years of practice, most people automatically try to pickup the TrackMan and move it the same way they would a mouse. This old habit completely disappears after a few days of retraining.

The only thing I would like to be improved about the TrackMan Wheel is the appearance. In my opinion, the gray-metallic-plastic and maroon speckled trackball are not a pleasant combination; it's reminiscent of the cheap plastic telescopes and science kits available at the local toy store. Something less techno-kitsch would be welcome.

Results

I tested the TrackMan with word processing, graphics, 3D, games, and video editing applications. The device performed admirably in all, and was surprisingly easy to use for precise tasks. This is not only due to the precision of the device, but because during mouse-clicking the cursor will remain stationary even if the entire TrackMan moves—unlike with a mouse. While the TrackMan works for games, it doesn't offer the solidity or ergonomic options necessary for hard-core game use. Other trackball controllers are better suited for anything more than casual gaming.

Overall, I recommend the Logitech TrackMan Wheel, especially for older users who suffer from aches due to repetitive mouse use.

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**. Please <u>contact us</u> if you're interested.

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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.

- The **Offline Webzine** is an HTML version of ATPM that is formatted for viewing offline and made available in a Mac OS X disk image. 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.

- The **Print PDF** edition is saved in Adobe PDF format. It has a two-column layout with smaller text and higher-resolution graphics that are optimized for printing. It may be viewed online in a browser, or downloaded and viewed in Apple's Preview or Adobe Reader on Macintosh or Windows. PDFs may be magnified to any size and searched with ease.

- The **Screen PDF** edition is also saved in Adobe PDF format. It's a one-column layout with larger text that's optimized for reading on-screen.

What Are Some Tips for Viewing PDFs?

- For Mac OS X 10.3 and 10.4 users, we recommend Apple's Preview. You can <u>download</u> Adobe Reader for free. If you have a Power Macintosh, Acrobat Reader 5 has better quality and performance. ATPM is also compatible with Acrobat Reader 3, for those with 680x0 Macs.

- With Adobe Reader, 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 drawer in Preview or the bookmarks pane at the left of Adobe Reader's main viewing window.

- For best results on small screens, be sure to hide the bookmarks; that way you'll be able to see the entire page width at 100%.

- Try turning Font Smoothing on and off in Acrobat Reader's preferences to see which setting you prefer.

- All blue-underlined links are clickable.

- You can hold down Option while hovering over a link to see where it will lead.

- For best results, turn off Acrobat's "Fit to Page" option before printing.

How Can I Submit Cover Art?

We enjoy the opportunity to display new, original cover art every month. We're also very proud of the people who have come forward to offer us cover art for each issue. If you're a Macintosh artist and interested in preparing a cover for ATPM, please e-mail us. The way the process works is pretty simple. As soon as we have a topic or theme for the upcoming issue we let you know about it. Then, it's up to you. We do not pay for cover art but we are an international publication with a broad readership and we give appropriate credit alongside your work. There's space for an e-mail address and a Web page URL, too. Write to editor@atpm.com for more information.

How Can I Send a Letter to the Editor?

Got a comment about an article that you read in ATPM? Is there something you'd like us to write about in a future issue? We'd love to hear from you. Send your e-mail to editor@atpm.com. We often publish the e-mail that comes our way.

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How Can I Contribute to *ATPM*?

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

Segments: Slices from the Macintosh Life

This is one of our most successful spaces and one of our favorite places. We think of it as kind of the ATPM "guest room." This is where we will publish that sentimental Macintosh story that you promised yourself you would one day write. It's that special place

in ATPM that's specifically designated for your stories. We'd really like to hear from you. Several Segments contributors have gone on to become ATPM columnists. Send your stuff to editor@atpm.com.

Hardware and Software Reviews

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

Shareware Reviews

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

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

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Back issues 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.

What If My Question Isn't Answered Above?

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