ATPM

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Welcome

Gobble, gobble. Gobble, gobble. This may sound like a traditional holiday sound — because it is one. It's also the sound of consumers around the world buying up the new generation of Mac OS computers. Especially those consumers among us with expiring Apple Citibank dollars. It was a cool program while it lasted but we think the latest price cuts on quality Apple hardware is an even better one — this time everyone's included in the fun.

We still want to know who in the personal computer industry is doing the counting and forecasting of Mac stuff. We also think they must have all graduated from the Pentium School of Mathematics. It's a good thing these people don't work at the North Pole, counting the number of kids to be visited by Santa (he'd run out of toys before Scandinavia).

There's even a few Wall Street financial types who still question the feasibility of Apple's continued success. We answer many of those naysayers in our cover story "Financially Speaking…" We figure their brains must have spent too much time at the North Pole because they sure seem to have a lot of "toys in the attic". If this weren't the holiday's we'd say that they all belonged in Never-Never Land.

ATPM Speak…

Our e-zine has recently been accused of too much Apple-hype. What can we say to comments like that! It is the time of year when we wish to be generous and kind so we will refrain from any brash words. We'll just think up new definitions for old ones — such as the following…

Word: amelio•rate
Pronunciation: Gil
Function: verb
Date: 1996
Transitive verb : saving a really cool company
Intransitive verb : making the computer world a lot better
Synonym see: new & improved Macintosh computers

We've decided to recommend to our friends, the dictionary folks, that the above-referenced word be changed to this really cool new meaning. We know it's a verb but Apple's had a lot of action this past year and we're all happy with the results. We wanted to share our editor's scholarly find in the annals of English-language words. Check out the old meaning and see why Dr. Gil is appropriately named for his newest job. It fits well, don't you think?

Thanks to you…

With the approach of Thanksgiving Day here in the States, we think there's a lot for which we should be thankful. First and foremost we'd like to thank you, our loyal readers, for your continued support. Thanks to you our subscriber base and world-wide readership has grown exponentially in the last six months. We are, of course, grateful. We have some cool things planned for 1997 and beyond...

It's a small world…

Remembering the words first put to music by that other company that started things with a mouse, the World Wide Web sure seems to be making the world even a little bit smaller, after all (sorry, we just had to do that). As we mentioned in last month's advisory, we're still accepting nominations for the ATPM Page o' Links web resource to be published in our February issue. Please see the notice in this issue.

Yule appreciate the story…

Every once in a while we take a peek from behind our monitors, gaze around and visit that other seemingly virtual reality. In this, the season of hope, we look forward to a happy time with our friends and family. We also wish you a happy holiday season. This issue includes our regular columns and a kind of special edition of Apples, Kids & Attitude. Best of all, Rob tells us the ending is true. We'll take his word for it. We hope you do, too.

Happy holidays from Michael, Rob, Mike, Evan and Belinda

Page 'o Links

Dear ATPM Reader:

The ATPM Staff is happy to announce the start of our official "ATPM Reader Page o' Links" program.   Simply put, we're asking you — our loyal readers — between now and December 15th to send us the URL of your favorite Mac-related web site.

The recommendations will be reviewed, "sliced, diced and categorized" by the ATPM Web o' Matic drill team. Your recommendations come first. Our decisions our final. The result will be a fun-filled web resource for Mac addicts of all ages and sizes. This special Mac-related web guide will be published in our February issue. So please send us your entry now.

To submit your favorite Mac-related web site for consideration simply send an e-mail to: ATPMEditor@aol.com Please include in your message the web page URL and the reason why you think the site should be considered for our ATPM Reader Page o' Links web resource.

Please note: Shameless plugs are allowed. However, wording similar to the following is requested: "Gosh, I made the site, I like the site, it features an Apple logo and the all-important ATPM web site link. It deserves to be in your ATPM Reader Page o' Links web resource."   This program is open to everyone and any Mac-related site may be recommended.

This is an exciting opportunity for you, our loyal readers, to let all of cyberspace know what in all the World Wide Web catches your fancy, blows up your balloon, tickles your cat or just brings to mind other mixed metaphors.

As always, thanks for your support and your participation.

The ATPM staff

eMail

What The Mac's About…

I'm writing to say I particularly enjoyed reading your editorial [Apples, Kids & Attitude] in ATPM 2.06. (It was on the British Mac Magazine "MacFormat" Cover CD).

As a primary teacher, I was discussing with a parent (Who has a Win95 machine at home), about why our schools should continue to support the Mac. The parent's position was that children would barely use a Mac once they had finished education, and that schools should be buying Wintel machines. Of course I disagreed, and talked about how Mac have a stronghold in DTP etc, and, besides, we teach children to learn, and as such they will adapt to changes they face.

Thus when I read your comment "The Macintosh was not designed to compete with other PCs; it was designed to set the standards for personal computing." - I immediately thought of this parent. Further discussion will not persuade her; I'll just tell her this and say that our children deserve the best equipment we can provide.

Anthony Seng
ajseng@t130.aone.net.au

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Sign Me Up…

Just got version 2.06 of ATPM with a Macworld CD-ROM (UK) and it's pretty cool, so I thought I'd find out about subscribing.

Tim W.

iocentre@tcns.co.uk

<p style="text-align:center">• • •</p>

ATPM is a MacGoody

I'm really impressed with ATPM so I'm putting you at the top of my next MacGoodies! list, a monthly roundup of online notes. It should be posted about November lst on the MacTwain Macintosh User Group Page <http://www.mlode.com/~mactwain>

Chuck Heath
sunpwr@telis.org

<p style="text-align:center">• • •</p>

We'd love to hear your thoughts about our publication. We always welcome your comments, criticisms, suggestions, and praise at ATPMEditor@aol.com. Or, if you have an opinion or announcment about the Macintosh platform in general, that's ok too.

Financially Speaking…

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

There's been a lot of talk lately about the changes at Apple Computer. There's been a lot of confusion on Wall Street and on Main Street as to what Apple's recently released financial numbers and recent statements by Apple executives really indicate about the health of the company. There has also been some concern about the overall direction of Apple Computer and its extraordinary operating system, the Mac OS.

This article will attempt to help readers better understand many of the issues being discussed and how recent statements by executives of Apple Computer represent a more open, better organized and more forward looking management team. It is this writer's view that Apple Computer is positioning itself quite well for the coming changes in the personal computer industry and the way that we will communicate and exchange information.

Recent statements by Dr. Gilbert Amelio, Apple's CEO, have actually added a bit more intrigue to the seemingly endless speculation of market insiders and industry pundits as to the direction of a company which has become an icon of American entrepreneurial success and technological innovation.

When a company as large and well known as Apple Computer undergoes a major change in top management, corporate focus and direction, eyes and ears turn toward every "whisper." Many are tempted to try and "read between the lines" in order to detect any subtle nuance that may represent a "signal" of further change.

Dr. Amelio recently stated to a conference of investors that the company's revenue and market share were not his top priority. Rather, his primary focus was improving the company's underlying operations and continuing to enhance the company's product lines. To many people these statements sparked a great deal of conversation about Apple's industry position and financial condition. It is this writer's view that the above-mentioned comments were no more than the honest thinking of a very bright and talented corporate chief.

A year ago, computer stores and catalogs were flooded with Macintosh Performas built around the 68k chip technology. There were also many Powerbook models which featured the 68k chips as well. Meanwhile, Apple Computer was in the latter stages of its transition to the Power PC platform. Many people felt that the decision to continue to manufacture and sell the 68k machines was a short-term attempt to do nothing but grab market share and create short-term revenue and profits by saturating consumers with

lower-priced, soon-to-be-outdated, machines. And, as many of us know, this decision helped create a financial disaster for Apple Computer.

Even if the plan to increase market share and market presence through the sale of lower-priced 68k machines had been more successful in terms of immediate sales and profits, the company would have been saddled with either very unhappy customers when the future operating systems and third-party software releases were not made "backward compatible" to accommodate the 68k machines or the company would have been burdened with much larger expenses and development costs to ensure backward compatility, not to mention the costs to developers who would want to release software products for the Mac OS. No matter how you look at it, the decision was a disaster waiting to happen.

Dr. Amelio has been working quickly to reduce the company's expenses, eliminate inefficient product lines and restore a reasonable margin or 'return" on each piece of computer hardware that is sold by Apple. This necessitates a reduction in market share and sales revenue in the short-term, in order to reap the benefits of greater efficiencies, better products and larger margins in the long-term. It does not mean that Dr. Amelio and Apple's management are writing-off any markets or are disinterested in revenue growth, it means rather that they are more interested in solid financial fundamentals than they are interested in short-term sales and immediate profits. In the last fiscal quarter Apple was able to once again establish gross profit margins above 20%. This is a tangible sign that the company is poised for efficient growth and better financial health.

It has been stated by some financial analysts that Apple's turnaround is a three-year process. It's this writer's view that if it is a three-year process than Apple Computer is well ahead of schedule.   A look at last quarter's financial (three months ending 9/27/96) gives a strong indication as to the swiftness of the company's turnaround. Below are a few of the highlights appropriate to the focus of this article:

• Apple Computer achieved $410 million in positive cash flow from operations during the quarter and reduced inventories by nearly $400 million since June.

• Net income for the quarter was $25 million.

• The company ended the quarter with over $1 billion in cash and short- term investments, which is $610 million more than its outstanding debt.

This performance indicates that the company was able to significantly reduce inventories and convert these assets into positive cash flow. In this writer's opinion, the ability to create $410 million in positive cash flow is more important than the $25 million in net income for the quarter. The company also has ample financial resources to sustain operations while it continues to improve and streamline its products.

• Unit shipments for the quarter were approximately 932,000, a sequential increase of 11 percent from the June 1996 quarter.

• International revenues represented 47 percent of the quarterly total.

Although the unit shipments were down compared to one year earlier, Apple Computer was

able to increase unit shipments significantly from the prior quarter. This indicates that sales momentum is continuing to improve for the company's products. In addition, the Mac OS compatible computers made by Power Computing and other licensees have not been factored into these numbers. In addition, there was a lack of higher-end Powerbooks and the Performa line had yet to be updated.

The fact remains that Apple Computer has a big international presence. Those of us who live in the States mustn't forget that almost half of Apple's revenue comes from areas outside of the U.S. It also demonstrates that Apple Computer is active and competitive in several major markets throughout the world.

There has also been a lot of speculation concerning the potential acquisition of the Be OS, which runs on Mac OS compatible Power PC computers. As of this writing no formal plans have been announced concerning such an acquisition nor should speculation on this matter lead people to believe that Apple if having undue trouble developing OS 8.

From a purely financial standpoint, the development of a new operating system is an extraordinarily large investment. This is true whether the new OS is developed in-house or acquired from outside sources. Apple Computer has stated repeatedly that it will release incremental upgrades to the Mac OS and that it is in the process is in the process of completing the planning of its long term operating system strategy. Many of us have downloaded and installed the latest incremental update 7.5.5. We're also looking forward the release of System 7.6

Whether or not the acquisition of the Be OS is advantageous will be determined by evaluating the operating system in comparison to Apple's plans for the Mac OS. If the Be OS fits the strategy and can incorporate many of the system enhancements Apple has planned, than an acquisition might be an appropriate approach to furthering the development of the Mac OS. Two other factors which need to be considered are the investment required by Apple to continue its current development versus the acquisition cost of the Be OS and also the matter of time in terms of bringing an updated OS to market and thus allowing for a quicker return on investment. It is not an indication that Apple is having trouble with its current development of OS 8.

In keeping with other comments by Dr. Amelio, there is one more issue that does signal a bit of a change in Apple's approach to the market place. It's apparent that Apple's current management team does thinks that the Mac OS is an underutilized asset. As Mac users I think we can look forward to more steady and timely incremental updates and commercial upgrades.

I recommend that readers spend some time at the Apple home page
 <http://www.apple.com> and read through the information made available concerning the company's direction and management plan. I believe that you will see that many of the recent announcements concerning the company are less new pronouncements of change and more of a refinement of the management plan that is already in place. Apple Computer will be in the fore-front of change as we revolutionize the manner in which we communicate and exchange information. Watch closely and listen carefully.

who sometimes writes articles for ATPM.

Babies, Cribs, Popcorn & Braces

She approached the crib in a pensive manner. The woman bent down and cautiously looked at the pink and blue paper adornments. She carefully viewed each one and then, in a very sudden move, she reached out, grabbed one of the paper tags, placed it in her purse and quietly left the church.

This was a scene that repeated itself many times during the month of October. For the past two years I have set-up a "crib project" at my church community. It works as follows: I place a baby crib toward the front of the church, I decorate it with pink and blue teddy bear tags that describe essential baby items such as diapers, infant clothing and baby blankets. People are asked to take a tag, buy the item described, bring the item to church and place the item in the crib. The items are then distributed to organizations that work directly with women and families with crisis pregnancies. The project lasts exactly one month and for the past two years has been scheduled for October.

Many times I emptied the crib of donated items only to have it filled again by the generosity of people who simply wanted to help meet the needs of others. Although the project is a lot of work, I must admit that I enjoy doing it. What I like most is that it provides a wonderful and practical opportunity for people to help other people. Some of the items requested, such as baby soap or lotion, are items that can be purchased with a manufacturer's coupon for less than a dollar. Thus, virtually no one is excluded from an opportunity to give and every item purchased and returned to the crib will not only be used but also tangibly affect the well being and quality of life of an infant or very young child.

As I mentioned, the way people initially approach the crib decorated with teddy bear tags is quite familiar. So, too, are the broad smiles and more relaxed postures as each person finds a teddy bear tag describing an item they can contribute. Many people, in all walks of life, are very happy to have an opportunity to directly help others especially a single mother or small family that's struggling to meets the needs of a newborn or soon-to-be-born baby.

The couple who came up with the idea for the crib project had a dream. They very much wanted to have children. Unfortunately, they were unable to have a child of their own. The crib project was their way of helping others who were able to have children, but who might not have ample material means to support them.   Life can often work in funny ways. This couple, whom I now consider friends, hoped for a child for well over a decade. Last year, through the crib project at their church, they met a young woman who was pregnant with twins and was searching for adoptive parents. My friends adopted the twin boys.

Another reason that I like the crib project is because it's something that Matthew, Jessica and I do together. Everyday they were with me during October, we would go to the church together and gather the items. At home, we prepare them for delivery to various organizations which work directly with women and families beset with a crisis pregnancy. Like my friends, I also have a dream. It's a dream I've shared with Matthew and Jessica. Each day at church, Jessica looked for the pencil and paper by the prayer box so that I could write it down. Each day after I slipped the piece of paper in the box we asked all of Heaven to hear the request.

Each of us has dreams. Some are big dreams and some are small ones. In our August issue (2.08), I wrote that the last few years have been a time of transition for me. But through it all I've kept hoping for one dream in particular. That dream is also the desire of my heart. I mentioned earlier that the holidays are a very special time. We allow ourselves to be more generous, more outgoing, more jovial and a bit more fun. It's also a time many of us find renewed hope for the world and our own personal dreams, goals and desires.

Over the past eleven months Mac users have had an edge-of-the-seat ride through the ups and downs of Apple's restructuring and management changes. By the end of this calendar year a whole new generation of Macintosh computers will have been brought to market, a healthy and expanding clone market better developed and a more focused and deliberate business strategy and corporate model established. In short, it's been an exhilarating and fast-paced year of change for Apple Computer and Macintosh users. The company today is structured and is operating in a way that many of us would not have envisioned eleven months ago. But in many ways the company is much better at what it does and much more efficient in the manner by which it does it.

While many of us may not have thought that Apple Computer would be structured as it is today, we do know that the company again has a profit and is continuing to innovate its hardware products and improve the much-coveted Mac OS. In my view the company will continue to make changes and improve its products, so much so that I also believe another year from now many more things about Apple Computer will have undergone a major revision. The continuing development of the Mac OS and further advancements in computer hardware technology will again reshape how we use computers and the way in which we communicate. Because of the recent changes at Apple, the company will once again be at the forefront of innovation.

Several months ago I decided to finally get a set of braces.   This was not an overnight decision. In fact, it had been postponed for about twenty years. I have been known to procrastinate and this may serve as a prime example of that habit.   What I didn't know was that in addition to wearing the braces, there were certain foods I could not eat, including one of my favorite snacks — hot-air popped corn. It also meant an end to carbonated beverages. I don't mind cutting up apples and steaming my vegetables, but I do miss the popcorn (although I have been known to sneak a few kernels when I make some for the kids). I mention this simply because what I first envisioned by this decision has turned out to be more of a change than I expected. This isn't necessarily bad, just different. As a result of the changes in the way that I think about and prepare food, my diet has improved, too. I'm much more choosy about what I eat and the prefix "junk" does not apply to the foods now stored in my kitchen.

When I purchased the computer for Matthew and Jessica, I had in mind certain software

titles for education and play. As I sit down to do my Christmas shopping, CD catalogs containing children's titles are now part of my gift selection repertoire.   The decision to buy them a computer is still one of the best decisions I've made this year. It's also turned out to be more of a decision than I originally expected. You can be sure that under our tree will be at least one children's software title for each of them. They very much like this interactive approach to learning about the world.

When I decided to do the crib project, I had only read about it, although I talked at length with the couple who first developed the idea. It was difficult getting people excited about a project no one had ever seen.
But, from the moment the crib was put on display with its pink and blue teddy bear tags, the project was a success. By the end of the month several hundred items were contributed by people who dared to dream that they could help make life a little better, one baby item at a time.

In some cases, donated items became the first baby gifts received by a woman who was pregnant and alone, abandoned by her own family. Other new mothers were able to keep their newborns warm during the colder winter months with donated blankets, pajamas and socks. The project had captured the hearts and minds of a church community. Their gifts helped meet the needs, and sometimes fulfill the dreams of a first-time mother or small family.

This Christmas, under our tree, along with the educational CD-ROMs, the other nicely wrapped gifts and cute little packages from Kindergarten and pre-school projects that were brought home just in time for Christmas, there will be a little envelope.   Inside will be written the seventeen words that I would write everyday and place in the prayer box. These words are a hopeful reminder that my dreams may still come true.

Just the other day I saw my friends (the couple who initially developed the idea for the crib project) and their twin boys. This was a wonderful opportunity for us to talk and laugh.   They had just been to the doctor's office for an "ultrasound" evaluation. It appears that the twins will soon have a younger brother! Dreams do come true. Sometimes in ways we never imagined they would.

Feliz Navidad. Happy Chanukah. Merry Christmas. Happy Holidays. Wishing you a Macintosh on every desk and a dream fulfilled for every heart.

So Goes Newton, So Goes Apple

It's been a while since we saw anything completely new come out of Apple's famous research and development centers. Most of the recent releases have simply been machines with faster processors, and software with bug fixes. After all, even the PowerBook 1400 cannot be considered industry-leading innovation; as MacWeek correctly pointed out, it is the PowerBook Apple should have released last year. However, Apple just introduced two revolutionary products that will provide some ammunition for those of us who consider Apple to be an industry leader. I am referring of course, to the Newton MessagePad 2000 and the eMate 300. Unfortunately, I haven't been able to try either of these in person, but all the spec sheets and articles I've read indicate that they should be winners.

The MessagePad 2000

With its new StrongARM processor, the MessagePad 2000 should be about half a dozen times faster than it's predecessor, the MessagePad 130. Now, you might think that speed isn't necessary for a palmtop. After all, the old Newtons were quick, and they aren't expected to do too much heavy calculating anyway. In this case though, every MHz of processing power makes a difference. Newton OS 2.0 quieted those who criticized the accuracy of the Newton's handwriting recognition. The faster processor will quiet those who found it too slow. Furthermore, it will make possible several technologies that have yet to be seen in a palmtop, such as speech synthesis, and even voice recognition. The StrongARM, coupled with the larger screen should make the Newton an even more useful product than it already is.

Unfortunately, it will take a while for people to realize how powerful Apple's new PDAs really are. The company has been criticized for not marketing its products well enough. The original Newton was, thanks to John Sculley, one of Apple's most successfully advertised products. Just about everyone I knew at the time had heard of Newton before it was even released. When I finally saw one at MacWorld, I was surprised and disappointed at the same time. The Newton was one of the most amazing and promising products I'd ever seen, but it just wasn't what it was cracked up to be.

In typical Apple-bashing style, the press made the Newton — and all it stood for — sound like a joke. I think they set the entire PDA market back a year by coloring the public's perception of how useful handheld computers actually were. The MessagePad 2000 doesn't contain any of the original's shortcomings, but it will still take a long time for people to realize this. If Apple had waited until this year to announce its Newton plans, and introduced the MessagePad 2000 as its first handheld, public perception would be

radically different.

Of course, it doesn't do any good to realize this in hindsight, so Apple needs to do what it can to make the best of the situation. Perhaps it should stop calling the Newton a PDA, or tell the world that the Newton is a Network Computer. After all, it can browse the web, check email, and do all the other things that everyone is expecting of NC's. During their times of financial trouble, many people suggested that Apple drop or sell the Newton division. I'm glad they didn't, but they also need to decide what they want the Newton to be. The Newton is much more than an organizer, and contact manager, and it's also much more than a Network Computer. It's a versatile tool, and people need to realize that.

The eMate 300

I applaud Apple for creating the eMate 300, a clamshell version of the MessagePad aimed at the education market, with a keyboard. There are many schools who want units in the under $1000 price range that are reliable and need little maintenance. But by making education the first channel for the eMate's market, Apple is once again introducing a stereotype into the public. The eMate is underpowered compared to the MessagePad 2000, presumably to keep the price down. How much trouble would it have been to make a faster version for the business market? By making the *only* eMate a slow machine for the education market, Apple risks the public thinking that *all* eMates are underpowered children's toys.

The eMate does not ship with a web browser — not because it can't run one, but because Apple doesn't think educators want their students surfing the web without supervision. This is a horrible oversight. Schools are clamoring to get their students access to web browsers, and it's far easier to prevent a built-in browser from being used than it is to add a browser later. I'm sure that many teachers will not realize that the eMate can function as a Network Computer because it doesn't come with the software. Wouldn't it have been easier to make it "web-ready" and to have a option to password protect the browser software?

History Repeats Itself

The Newton seems to be following in the steps of the Macintosh line. It started off as revolutionary, and expensive, but is now both a good deal, and the leader in its class. Apple's interface group clearly spent a lot of time refining Newton OS, and the result is a clean and quick interface that is probably more intuitive than Mac OS. Microsoft, noticing the potential of the PDA market announced that it was working on Windows CE, a version of its popular operating system that will run on handheld computers (though I believe it will require a keyboard). However, at least in the beginning, it will not be able to compete with Newton OS because will take up too much memory and screen space.

The Newton story is in many ways like the Mac story of the 1980s. The Newton was the first of its kind to get out the door, and is recognized as being the best in its market, but price, quirks, and marketing prevented it from being what it could have been. Now, there is more competition in the market that Apple created, and it is no longer clear whether a superior product is enough to overcome the initial public perception of the Newton as a toy. In any event, I think the success (or failure) of the Newton will dictate how well Apple

does in general. Both the new Newtons and the new PowerBooks are in short supply. If Apple can get its Newton marketing and production acts together, it will be a good indication of how well it can focus its Mac efforts. As always, the technology is there; it's just a question of getting it into the publics' hands — and minds.

"The Personal Computing Paradigm" is ©1996 by Michael Tsai, mjt@sover.net.

Me and my Mac

I live in a very small hamlet in the backwoods of Southern Alberta, Canada. It has a few houses surrounding a general store, gas station and a fire hall just across the road. It also has an ice cream and craft shop that is only open in the summer months when our town is "invaded" by campers from the city.

My first introduction to computers was when I took a course at the local high school during the 1992-1993 school year. I took the course to qualify for admission to the Business and Industry, Communication Arts Program at my local college. My dream was to be a journalist and writer.

I enrolled in a computer programming class at the high school and learned early that IBM users have an attitude of superiority. This bothered me right away. I was impressed with an advertisement that I saw on TV which featured people on a job site all waiting to use a Macintosh. The Mac was user friendly. In the commercial the bosses were impressed with how many people wanted to use the Mac. The people in the commercial were diplomatic in not putting down the competition, yet the words "user friendly" stuck in my mind.

The class required that I learn about both Apple and IBM, but we were expected to do our assignments on the IBM. To discourage us from being converted to the Mac, the IBM lab had shiny, new IBM-compatibles with the latest version of MS-DOS along with an instructor from the USA. he was an expert on computers and delivered a continuous, high-pressure sales pitch during each class. In the Apple lab, however, we were using ancient, dirty and second-hand computers. I was confused by all this and so I refused to learn all the computer language that you had to learn just to run the IBM. I chose to do all my assignments on the old Apple and thus learned the wonder of computers without having to go through a maze of codes and computer language just to find my stuff. Of course, a mouse was not supplied in either lab.

Using the Apple I learned how I could correct all my work and move things around and edit stuff and all without the need to retype. I could add, subtract, save and delete with ease. The most wonderful thing was spell check. I could also save all my stuff on disc without using up a tree. This was in sharp contrast to using my old typewriter. I used to retype and retype until everything was perfect without using "white out" because my typing instructor in high school called it "bird poop" and refused to accept any paper that contained it. My only complaint was that things were not compatible between the Apple and IBM which would have allowed a person to go from IBM to Apple without the need to retype. While at the high school I used all my spare lab time in the Apple Lab. My grade was reduced because I didn't learn the IBM well enough, but I passed the class because I could

prove that I new the basics. This allowed me to move on to the college program.

 I arrived at Lethbridge Community College to find out that the whole Communication Arts Program was exclusively Macintosh. Oh, was I relieved! They started us working on LCII's with PageMaker, Word Perfect, Click Art, Super Paint, Excel and MacWrite. I was in heaven. During my second year, I was involved in the production of a newspaper and magazine using the same programs on a Macintosh SE.

When I was close to graduation, the computer people at the college (all IBM people) allowed us to try out the internet on an IBM-compatible for approximately 15 minutes per person. No pictures, just white words on a black screen. We were allowed to try a scanner for about half an hour. Fortunately, The local daily newspaper ("The Lethbridge Herald"), is an all Macintosh environment and it filled in the gaps in our education. We were able to learn about scanners and wonderful gadgets for photography that eliminate the use of the "wet" darkroom.

On a field trip, the graduating class toured the much larger daily newspaper, "The Calgary Herald". The place is "user friendly" and everything is Macintosh. It seemed like science fiction. For the first time I saw large monitors that showed the entire newspaper page that was being worked on and the computer had a "garage" to plug in a power book, like it was a car (a PowerBook Duo Dock). There was no retyping or having to wait until your disc is translated. Awesome! I also saw digital cameras that went straight into the computer without manipulating the photo first. I graduated in May of 1995 with high grades and was complimented for having learned more about computers than they had to teach me.

When I'm not at work I'm now at home with my Macintosh Performa 5200CD. It is my first personal computer which I bought in April 1996. "Me and my Mac" are working on a steady stream of writing assignments, complete with deadlines. I used my Mac to do a column last winter for a smaller local paper, "The Quarter Section." The newspaper was comprised of one editor, one advertising manager, one distributor and one Macintosh Performa that was hooked up to a scanner and printer. My Column was called "Backwoods Observations" and it was about local birding, how to build bird houses and bird feeders and the habits of birds in the wild.

This past summer I did mountain hiking and used my Mac to write reviews on hikes in the area for the "Waterton/Glacier Views". This is a seasonal paper that runs as long as the park is open. It's also another paper that is completely Macintosh equipped. It is so pleasant to be able to hand a disc to the editor and not have any hassles. I have also used my Mac to write for an environmental newsletter published in Lethbridge.

"Me and my Mac" have been traveling on the internet, too. However, I am new to the internet and I have a lot to learn. But learning I am! So far I have learned how to travel on the internet anywhere I want to go. I have joined a discussion group and I'm an "aunt on-line" with 6 nieces and nephews who write regularly from their home school in Utah, USA.

I have tried Turbo Gopher twice, I find it slower than Netscape and it does the same thing. I have learned how to use Netscape (I think). I also have more questions than knowledge these days about the internet but I am interested in learning more.

As I mentioned, I live in the backwoods of Southern Alberta, Canada. I work during the day

as a housekeeper for a company located in the Waterton International Peace Park and in the summer I also do gardening. They are not converted to the Macintosh. When I was asked to do the inventory sheets for the housekeeping, I was so happy to come home to my Mac and use the spreadsheet component of Claris Works. The boss was impressed. This is the first step to conversion.

Last year I worked for a ski resort and I had to do some inventory sheets on a long, drawn out program while using an old IBM-compatible. All the while I was wishing that I had a Mac with a quicker and more efficient spread sheet program.

My current job helps me to pay off my student loan a little faster. If I need to work out side of my home it might as well be a pleasant place to work no matter what I have to do. As the saying goes "Do what you have to do until you arrive at doing what it is you want to do". I don't know who said it first. So, I do what I want to, while working at what I have to, just to pay the bills.

I love my Mac, and we are going places.

One year of writing for ATPM and life has intervened again. So, if any of this makes sense along the way, forgive me.

Scott's doing fine, thanks for asking. On what would have been his birthday had he gone to term, he weighed 8 pounds, 4 ounces. He's almost up to my original weight of 8 pounds, 13 ounces, which I'm still trying to get back to.

"Huge life" has taken a considerably ugly turn. All at once, I was informed that I must be "certified," that Huge is launching a new project that will guarantee I won't be here much longer, and my badge expired. Coincidence or psychic phenomenon? You be the judge!

My badge expired a week ago Thursday. This means I'm no longer "legal" here at Huge. I haven't been lounging around or anything, because what passes for security here has no clue, or they know me. I just walk right by as if I own the place, and everything's fine as long as they don't look too closely at my badge, which broadcasts to the free world "11-07-96". Of course, my start date wasn't until the 13th, but whose counting. That's right, one year at Huge. I found out today from someone who knows someone at Dreamworks SKG that they've decided the Playa Del Rey site has become too costly. So they're going to purchase CBS Studio Center near my old stomping grounds in Studio City, which proves that maybe, you can go home again.

So, my late lamented badge lies in a mountain of paperwork. The badge request was made properly. I turned the form in on time. Then, some "higher up" decided that contract workers shouldn't have off-hours access. What this means is that if you need me to come out and make sure your Network Control Panel is set to Ethernet at 3am, I can't get into the facility to do it. So, my supervisor's supervisor signed the appropriate paperwork. Unfortunately, the fine people at Badge & ID think the paperwork has been processed, and I already have my badge. Problem is, it hasn't, and I don't. So, the off hours request has gone unheeded, because the people that need to ok it are either out of the country, or making our city safe by serving jury duty. Therefore, their supervisor needs to ok it, but for some reason, hasn't gotten around to it. So, this gives me time to sit here and hack out my column — late.

Yet another thing to ensure my life is a living hell — Project Houston. Now, to learn about Houston, certain people were sent to Tuscon for training. As opposed to the people that were sent to Houston for Project Tuscon training. But I digress. Some free thinking individual at CSC sold Huge the Brooklyn Bridge. The concept is simple. Instead of the currently distributed desktop architecture, create an additional level of servers that hold all the applications. This will free up space on your hard drive, presumably to hold more data. Personally, I feel it's going to create an outbreak of local versions of MYST, but... Anyway,

this was probably done to justify the above-mentioned person's job. We won't see the end result for awhile, so I'll let you know. Probably around February. Which will mark my one year writing for ATPM.

Which brings up the certification issue. I don't know if I mentioned this before, but we've been undergoing a certification process here for about four months. It all started when Huge decided that CSC wasn't doing a good enough job. Nevermind that we're consistently turning in record metrics, marred only occasionally by the good folks at the Help Center in San Diego (who can't get us a ticket on time if their life depended on it). So, in response, CSC came up with the Training Accreditation Program, or TAP (I'm sure I've already told you of our company's love affair with acronyms). As a CSC Desktop Support Technician, I've suddenly been asked to be an expert about DOS and Windows in addition to my demonstrated expertise with the Mac Platform.

I've always contended that you can't spell DOS without, 'Duh', but there I was, dutifully seated in the conference room to attempt a 20 question DOS test. Which I failed. Miserably. Same with the Windows test two weeks later. I didn't expect to pass, but I did expect to be able to answer relevant questions. Instead, what I got were questions like, "What are the 17 switches you can use with the QMM command?" So, when it came to the Mac test, I was feeling pretty good. After all, I am a Mac Tech at Huge Aircrash. So, like the dutiful son, I sat down, prepared. It wasn't pretty — trick question after trick question. Furthermore, the acceptable margin of error was not good. You could only miss one question. It makes it doubly hard when the correct answer isn't even part of the multiple choice.

Did I mention that the company I'm contracted to commissioned these tests? I didn't? Well, it's almost irrelevant because a couple of months go by and, lo and behold, I find out not only didn't I pass, but that CSC is scrapping the test in favor of their own. Of course, I was given this tidbit a mere hour before the next test. This one was a little better. We were given 50 questions and told 75% and above is a passing grade. Personally, I thought I had taken my last test when I graduated USC. The result was just announced in front of God and everybody — I'm now TAP Certified. I get a certificate signed by people I don't even know, and a little cloissonne pin to put on my badge. I can use it to hide the expiration date.

Happy Thanksgiving, Everyone.

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You've Got Questions!!!

I've got answers? Well, it seems that last month, of few of you were indeed awake, which apparently is more than I can say for myself. Blame it on constantly typing with deadline quickly approaching. I was informed by some of you that Stuffit Expander is actually free, yes free, for the asking. The ones you have to pay for include, but aren't limited to, Stuffit Deluxe, Drop Stuff with Expander Enhancer, and Stuffit Lite.

This reader put it best:

Actually, stuffit expander is a FREE program for the limited capabilities that the normal download comes with (.sit, .hqx, .bin). It's when you want to buy DropStuff with

ExpanderEnhancer that you have to pay. This extension includes a drag and drop stuffing program and enhances Expander so it can handle ANY file that you can get from the net. Pretty handy. Nice random thoughts. =)

Todd — Todd Clements
Todd_Clements@hmc.edu

Yes Todd, you're correct. [Although Expander Enhancer cannot expand password protected zip files. -Ed] As always, the earliest postmark wins, however, we received this from another fine reader:

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The answer supplied in About This Particular Mac is not quite precise, in my opinion.

StuffIt Expander is an essential utility, but it does nothing other than expand compressed archives and is freeware. I insist you grab a copy!

StuffIt Lite is Aladdin's shareware utility for creating and managing StuffIt archives, and does the decompression as well. I've used it for several years, and I suggest you try it out if you want to create StuffIt archives at some point.

StuffIt Deluxe is a complete compression solution and has scads of features which you may need in the future if you need to handle a lot of compressed archives (I am eagerly awaiting my copy from Aladdin).

Mike Poplawski
mpoplaws@mail.educ.gov.bc.ca

Thanks for the succinct answer, Mike. Again, I blame the hour of my missives. After all, I did at the time say I was running out, and the time is late. Now, can you get me financing for my film?

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When I installed 7.5... it showed me how to make the launcher icons big or small. I do not remember what it was. I can't find the ans. in the Guide. What is the trick?

Max Manshel
MaxM7@aol.com

OK, there are two ways to resolve this one. One is more right than the other. You be the judge. Go to your Monitors control panel, click on "Options." If you have two resolutions of screen size available, pick the other one. This will not only shrink down your buttons, but your entire screen.

The method you probably read about in your manual was to go to the Launcher, then click

and hold on the background. A pop-up menu will appear with three options; Small, Medium, or Large Buttons (which is like a midget psychic escaped from jail — a small medium, at large). Anyway, select the size you like, go forth, and sin no more. Or you can go fifth.

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What does it mean when I am unable to drag your APTM enclosure to the desktop to expand and read? It just rubberbands back. Possibly a corrupted download?

I had this same rubberband problem with MacAssistant Newsletter about a month ago. Now using Claris Emailer 1.0v3. These are the only two instances in 100+ hours a month on this 7100/66av, 56/1.2, System 7.5.5, >>using FreePPP2.5v2 and now, OT1.1.1.

Chuck Heath
sunpwr@telis.org

Well, by the look of things, I'd say that, for whatever reason, your Drag & Drop function has been disabled. Which concerns me, because it should be built into the system you're running. Go to your Extensions Manager, and make sure Drag and Drop is turned on. Also check out the individual apps and see if there's a switch which turns off D&D. This is all I can come up with, Chuck. I'll scan the newsgroups, and see if anyone else is having this problem.

And, don't worry Chuck. I don't feel slighted that you couldn't come to me with this problem. Let's open this one up for the readers. Bueller? Anyone?

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Read your issue through Macworld. Hope you can assist as I am at my wits end. I have a Power Mac 7500/100 and it runs perfectly-almost. You see I seem to have a constant problem when I log off from Netscape 3 Gold. After log off, all mouse clicks and computer applications open at a sticky, snails pace. I have tried Norton Disc Docter but it doesn't seem to help. What am I missing here.

Help!!!!

Hamish Brown
mcham@pacific.net.sg (from Singapore)

It seems to me you've got that sinkin' Memory feelin'. In your TCP/IP control panel, go to "Options." Make sure the "Load Only When Needed" option is clicked OFF.

Also, you can get Open Transport 1.1.1 from all the usual suspects, and that should help alleviate your problem. Other options are to restart or get the Mac OS Purge utility. Again, the latter is available from the usual suspects.

I think this is my first overseas letter, someone correct me if I'm wrong. Now internationally, not too many people know that I'm famous.

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Well, that does it for this month. Next month, more user questions, so make sure your Mac breaks down at least once. Also, MacMan's Annual Christmas Survey!!! I can hardly wait!!!

Mike Shields is a perspiring Screen Writer who needs $600,000 to produce his recently finished screenplay. He can be reached at Mshields@ccgate.hac.com or ATPMOPed@aol.com. Or, if you just have a Mac question, that's ok, too.

ABOUT THIS
STUFF
STUFF

REVIEWED BY EUGENE F. MAROTTA,
Eugene_F._Marotta@designlink.com

ATPM RATINGS
EXCELLENT

Energizer Bunny
(Screen Saver & Desktop Wallpaper)

Requirements: Macintosh with color or gray scale monitor, 2MB RAM, 4MB recommended, `
    System 6.0.7 or later and 32 Bit QuickDraw.
Author: Owen W. Linzmayer
Email owenink@ix.netcom.com
Web: <http://www.netcom.com/~owenink/home.html>
List Price: $29.95
Special Price: $5 at the Web site.
Footnote: Owen authored the hilarious book, "Bathroom Reader." Visit his site to purchase
    the Energizer Bunny at a terrific price. Also check out the other offerings. You just
    might find a fun Christmas stocking stuffer (birthday, thank you, or other occasion
    gift) for a Macintosh enthusiast/evangelist.

The ubiquitous and indomitable Energizer Bunny(EB) is now a Screen Saver designed exclusively for the Macintosh and PowerBook by PC Dynamics. True to his spirited reputation, he just keeps going and going, strutting his stuff with sound and animation. EB parachutes through clouds; snorkels under water with fish, ocean plants and sharks; or sports a cowboy hat and holster while turning and nodding as he drums along. For variety, choose the "random cycle" feature and see all the scenes.

You can even wallpaper your desktop with EB. Another setting causes EB to "drop in" on you at preset times. EB can even be configured to make these guest appearances without interfering with other screen saver products.

The 465K EB Screen Saver is a Control Panel Device. Preferences options include size, appearance, and sound/no sound. To disable EB, simply start up your Macintosh while holding the "Caps Lock" key down. Passwords can be set to protect sensitive data.

EB Screen Saver is distributed on a 1.4 MB high-density diskette. If your Macintosh doesn't have a Superdrive, an 800K diskette version is available.

I'm sure this screen saver will "outlast" all others (that I have). It's practical, entertaining, and the current price offered by Owen W. Linzmayer is unbelievable.

ABOUT THIS
STUFF
STUFF

ATPM RATINGS
VERY NICE

SHAREWARE REVIEW BY MICHAEL TSAI, *mjt@sover.net*
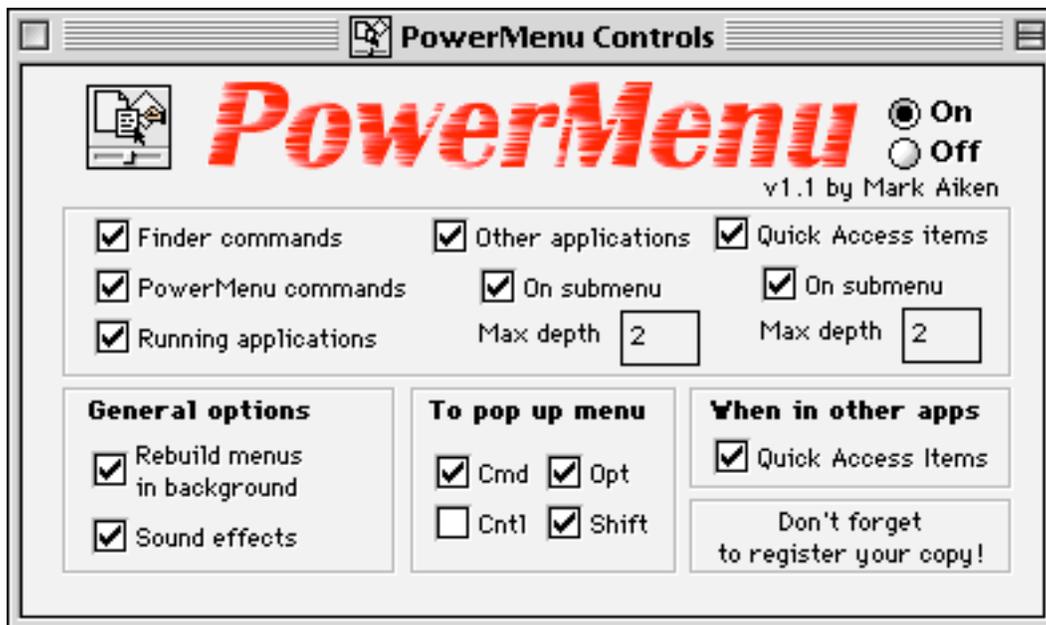
Requirements: System 7.5.x or System 7.1.x with the Scriptable Finder installed
Author: Mark   Aiken
Email: marka@kagi.com
Web: <http://www.kagi.com/authors/marka/>
Shareware Fee:$10

It's been a while since I've seen a new productivity enhancing utility, and PowerMenu is one of the best ever. It was inspired by the contextual menus that Mac OS 8 will have. With PowerMenu installed, you can select on an icon in the Finder, and then click the mouse while holding down a combination of modifier keys to bring up PowerMenu's popup menu. It is not contextual, but it offers many useful commands. You can open, print, and delete the selected items, and using PowerMenu to do this is often faster than going up to the file menu, or dragging the icons across the screen to the trash can. You an also instantly add the select items to the Apple Menu without having to go into the System Folder.

```
Add to Quick Access list
Open PowerMenu Items folder

Open with running app          ►
Open with                      ►    Adobe Photoshop™ 3.0.5
Quick Access items             ►    BBEdit 4.0
                                    ClarisWorks
                                    Jade FAT
                                    JPEGView
                                    Microsoft Word
                                    Nisus® Writer
                                    WordPerfect
```
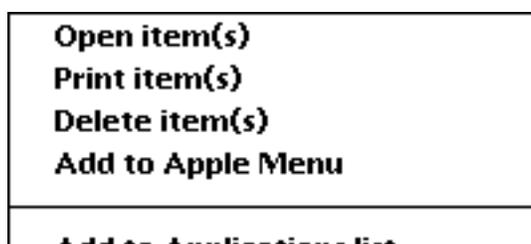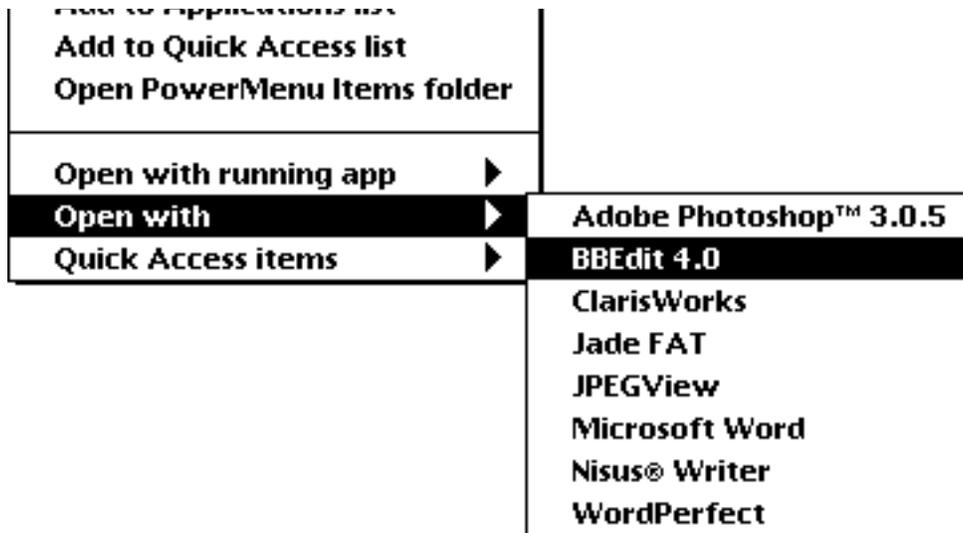
However, what really make PowerMenu useful are the three submenus at the bottom of its popup menu . The first two items let you control which application to open the selected documents in. Suppose for instance that you select a text document. There are probably a handful of programs on your Mac which can read or import the text, and you might prefer different programs for different kinds of text files. ReadMe files that come with software will open with SimpleText if you double-click them, but many people prefer to view them with the shareware TextEdit Plus. Other text files, for instance from the internet, will open with SimpleText by default, but may be too large to be viewed with it. You might want to view these types of files with an industrial strength text editor such as BBEdit, or a word processor such as WordPerfect.

I used to have a collection of icons on my desktop so that I could drag and drop documents onto the program I wanted to open them with. Now, I use PowerMenu's "Open with" command, which offers the same functionality as drag and drop, without the desktop clutter. Using PowerMenu, you can add applications to the "Application list." These applications will now automatically appear in the "Open with" submenu. Applications that are currently running appear in the "Open with running app" submenu. Using these two menus, you can have full control over what applications open your documents.

The Quick Access list is available in any application when you click the mouse with the appropriate modifier keys. It allows you to quickly launch applications and to switch between them. The contents of the Applications list and Quick Access list are controlled by folders that PowerMenu creates in your preferences folder, and behave much the way the Apple Menu Items folder does. For instance, you can add folders inside these folders to group the Applications list and Quick Access list into submenus.

PowerMenu is one of the most useful utilities I have used, but there are two things I don't like about it. These are most likely a result of the control panel relying on the Scriptable Finder, rather than the author's programming, but they are annoying nonetheless. First, it takes two clicks on an icon to open the PowerMenu for it. The first click selects it, and the second click (with modifier keys held down) activates the menu. This feels somewhat unintuitive, especially compared to Windows and OS/2 in which you can right-click to select an icon and bring up its contextual menu at the same time. The second problem is that there is a slight but noticeable delay between when you click to summon the

PowerMenu and when it actually appears. However, even with these two slowdowns, PowerMenu is a very useful utility that speeds up common tasks without overwhelming the user with complexity or taking up screen space. I highly recommend that you try it.

Guidelines

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

A little bit about ATPM's Mission

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

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

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

We want to hear from you!

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

In addition, ATPM is also looking for people interest in joining our editorial staff. We currently need a **Cover Story Editor** and a **Shareware Reviews Editor**. Please

contact us at ATPMEditor@aol.com if you're interested.

Cover Art: We are proud to display new, original cover art every month. It's one of our most successful sections, and we want to keep it that way. If you're a Macintosh artist and you'd like to do a cover for us, all you have to do is ask. As soon as we have a topic, we'll let you know, and then it's all up to you. Covers are not paid, but we do mention the artist and offer space for your own plug, with an e-mail address, or a web page, or whatever you care to add. Write to: ATPMEditor@aol.com

eMail: Got a comment, a question, or a dig? We publish the most interesting e-mail every month, and would love to have yours. Send it to: ATPMEditor@aol.com

Tech Help: Got a technical question for us? Need some help with something crashing on your Mac? This is all too familiar a problem for Mac users, and we only want to make it easier. Send your problem to Macman! at MShields@ccgate.hac.com

Segments: Slices from the Macintosh Life: This is one of our most successful spaces, we think of it as a guest column. This is where we put your stories, your opinions, your pictures, your kid's MacPaint composition… this is your space. If you want to share something about how much you love your Mac, this is where you can see it published. We really want to hear from you. Send it to ATPMOpEd@aol.com

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

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

Wishful Thinking: Wishful Thinking is a space for Mac enthusiasts who know exactly what Apple's advertising should be. Did you come up with a great advertising tag line? Have you had a Mac campaign stewing in the back of your mind for a year now? Send your ideas, or your art, to ATPMEditor@aol.com

Wishful Thinking

BY DONALD M. KRAIG, *DMKraig@lamg.com*

The ads that people remember and think about — 1984, I'm going next door because they have a Mac — have all followed the advertising paradigm, "don't sell the steak, sell the sizzle." And yet, 99% of all of Apple's ads have been about the wonderful features of our fave 'puter. My suggestion is something that combines the two with the tag line:

"It's a Mac" spoken with an air that seems to say "Of course! Didn't you know?"

• • •

1) Two people are working at computers. The one at the Wintel throws a pencil across the room in frustration. "I don't understand it," he says. "We're both using the same version of Authorware, but I can't get anything done! There's no logic and it's not intuitive. How can you be getting so much done?"

The other guy doesn't even turn from his computer. "Well, it's a Mac," he says in a tone of voice that wonders why the other guy would even ask.

• • •

2) A man is looking over a print job just back from the printer. "Oh no! The fonts aren't right! That's a $5,000 print job down the drain!" Meanwhile, a delivery has come in for another worker who looks it over. The first one asks, "Did your's come out ok?"

"Of course it did," he says, surprised that the other guy would even ask.
"What did you use so that it would work?" asks the first.
"It's a Mac," says the second, as if the answer should be obvious.

Wishful Thinking is a space for Mac enthusiasts who know exactly what Apple's advertising should be. Did you come up with a great advertising tag line? Have you had a Mac campaign stewing in the back of your mind for a year now? Send your ideas, or your art, to ATPMEditor@aol.com

Next Time

Next month, we'll bring you the next installments of Apples, Kids & Attitude, The Personal Computing Paradigm, and Macman to the Rescue. You'll also find more commercial and shareware reviews in our New Year's Issue.

While you're waiting for the next issue of ATPM, you might want to keep up to date on happenings in the Macintosh world with the MacCentral web page at: <http://www.maccentral.com>

Until then, enjoy the **personal** computing experience.