

Worldwide Mac Numbers?



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Hacking Mac OS X Tiger, Mac Annoyances and other Mac OS X Tiger books

Commandos Battle Pack

Geek Jewelry

iKey

Delicious Library, Adobe Photoshop CS 2 and VideoCue Pro

And much, much more...

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Masthead

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And we continue our extend our special thanks to those who have allowed us to review their products!

Letter From the CEO

Mac Numbers? by Robert Pritchett

There has always been a point of debate, whether lying with statistics using “market share” or guesstimating, exactly how many Macintosh computers are still in use today. Just be aware that statistics are tools for misleading marketing and should be viewed with a critical eye: <http://faculty.washington.edu/chudler/stat3.html>. And yes, I read *How to Lie with Statistics* a few years ago, so I tend to be a bit jaundiced when it comes to percentages. Numbers and earnings figures I can deal with. For an example of percentage silliness, if I sold one item last month and sold one more of the same product this month, I had a 100% increase in sales over a one month period. Ergo, business is booming if I say I had a 100% increase in sales. Did I make any money off the transaction and is business prospering? I didn't give you enough data. You don't know my overhead, bill of materials, what I sold the item for, etc. Get the picture?

Contrast the “debate” with the latest financials from Apple and this issue almost becomes a mute point doesn't it? The iPod pheno is Apple's current cash cow, even though they sold even more Macs this past quarter. Their combined earnings are higher than ever in any earlier quarter in Apple history!

http://news.yahoo.com/news?tmpl=story&u=/mc/20050713/tc_mc/applereports320millionprofit

Gene Steinberg finessed the financials:

<http://www.macnigtowl.com/news/2005/07/week3.htm#again>

And don't pay too much attention to the Financial Analysts (FAs). Apple will never be “good enough” for them and when they are wrong, they never say so either. Did you ever read a contraction of their misguided remarks? Who pays them to be so stubbornly wrong all the time?

Jonny Evans guesstimates that 400,000 non-Mac platform users moved to Macs since January 2005: <http://www.macworld.co.uk/news/index.cfm?RSS&NewsID=12117>

Apple is so much more than just “computers” or “software”. They are not a “one-trick-pony” by any stretch of the imagination, so why are the FAs trying to pigeonhole them?

http://macdailynews.com/index.php/weblog/comments/financial_times_on_apple_computers_results_only_matter_of_time_before_fall

What is really driving the Apple Doomsayers nuts is that the 3rd Quarter of any given year is usually a “slow period” for the High Tech Industry. And Apple still beat sales predictions and other computer manufacturers in nearly 3-to-1 sales.

Gathering Numbers

How many folks around the world use Macs as their main machine? To satisfy my curiosity and other staff members, I did a little research of my own. Like all good researchers, I started googling for sales figures:

There is Al Fasoldt's article from March 2004, <http://aroundcny.com/technofile/texts/mac033104.html> and Dennis Sellers' article in April 2004: <http://www.macsimumnews.com/index.php/archive/37/>. John Papola wrote about focusing on specific markets and percentages in January 2005, <http://homepage.mac.com/jpapola/iblog/C142463209/E1354383806/> and this comes from the MacDailyNews, June 2005, <http://macdailynews.com/index.php/weblog/comments/5933/>.

Meanwhile, SlashDot gathered commentary, <http://apple.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=05/06/05/0548225&from=rss>.

I love this quote from SlashDot;

" While I don't have any hard numbers to provide, from what I've seen working in a Mac/PC repair shop is that we see a lot more old Macs come in for service than old PCs. People are still bringing in old grey PowerPC laptops and Performas. They use them every day. When we suggest they upgrade, they say no, this machine does everything I need it to. And that's a machine that's 10 years old. It won't do everything I would personally want, but for these grandmothers and so forth, it's still operational and useful.

We do see PCs come in that are getting near 10 years old, very, very rarely, and it's almost always to do a data transfer to a new machine. You just don't see someone with a 10-year-old PC that says; "this machine still does everything I need it to." Now that might be a statement about the user or about the computer, but I tend to think it's a mix of both.

For that reason I would expect the install base for Macs to be surprisingly large. All said and counted, I might go as far as to say that 30% of all Macs manufactured, ever, are still in use today. If I had to guess wildly on PCs, I'd place that number at somewhere closer to 10%."

However, I tend to disagree a little with the commentor's percentages. According to Apple, there were 60 million Macs that had been sold worldwide by **1997**. These were mostly pre-G3s http://www.theapplecollection.com/various/why_prefer_mac.html. Many are still in use, but we probably can heavily discount how many are in use today.

The G3's began shipping in 1997 and Peter Perlslo has captured a timeline at <http://haxor.dk/articles/apple.html> and so has <http://www.apple-history.com/>. If you want the info on each Mac model, you can always download MacTracker at <http://www.mactracker.ca/>.

The “MacTotals” between 1997 through 1999 can be found at <http://www.lowendmac.com/musings/apple99.shtml>. Here are more numbers gleaned from Apple's PR Department 2000 through 2004 from <http://paste.lisp.org/display/662>. Those were table-ized from <http://www.apple.com/pr/library>, which then got us up through 3Q 2005.

Fudge Factoring

There could very well be over 85 million Macs in use today around the world, but I created an arbitrary 20% attrition rate and “real” numbers may reveal themselves soon enough. We can't factor just Safari browser numbers and because not all Macs are online (many folks are still using pre-Mac OS X on their systems i.e. Mac OS 7 through Mac OS 9), or are left on all the time. If we factor in 2 or 4 or more people using most of those machines, than we have a whole lot more folks out there than we have previously been counting. Than again, there are folks who have kept their older machines and I've seen storage rooms stacked full of used older Macs (see **Retiring and Recycling** later) and even seen folks use them as high-tech furniture, so even though the older boxes may be “retired”, they are still being used somehow (Mac Aquariums for example). But for the purposes of this research, we can't really count those as being “in use by Users”, now can we? (Older Macs don't become boat anchors, they become fish holders.)

My Figures

My best guesstimate is that there is somewhere around 80 or so million Mac **users** worldwide today. I bet the actual numbers of users are higher. Why?

- More than one person uses any given Mac if educational facilities are taken into account with labs. The best anecdotes come from there as labs are outfitted with a majority of non-Macs that are left idle, while there is a waiting list for the Macs to be used in those same labs.
- Mac machines tend to last 10 years or longer. And older systems still have value on eBay.
- Apple has sold a *lot* more Macs since 1997.
- Quite a few Macs are used in institutions and enterprises to be used in kiosks, clusters and server farms.
 - 17% of Enterprises with more than 250 employees are using Macs.
 - 21% of Enterprises with over 10,000 employees are using Macs.
 - 14% of those are using Apple's Server software.
<http://www.macworld.com/news/2005/07/21/osx/index.php?lsrc=mwrss>

Now let's get a little crazy ourselves. Say that none of the pre-1997 machines were being used (and that's not accurate at all). So *snap*, we erase 60 million systems out of circulation just like that. That still leaves us with nearly 30 million machines (see the column in the table, **Running Total Newer Machines**).

Apple was claiming that as many as 25 million copies of Mac OS X were sold. So let's go with that number. There are lots more that have not "switched" to Mac OS X, either because their systems are older (pre-G3) or because they "can't", due to application software they "have to have" that hasn't transmogrified into Mac OS X-mode yet.

If we do as Apple does and add an average of 3 people to the Mac OS X-based 25 million, we still end up with somewhere in the neighborhood of 75 million users that use Macs, right?

Retiring and Recycling

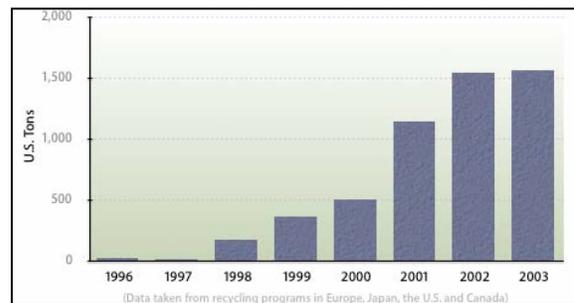
Do we remove 20% of the systems to either the recycling center or to retirement? We created a **Running Total Retired** column, knowing full well it isn't any where near being accurate (unless Apple reveals to us a count of those machines that have been destroyed [or buried, like they did with the Lisas]). How many iMacs have you seen tossed into landfills? Many are repurposed, resold and even given away even now by the likes of Sun Remarketing (<http://www.sunrem.com/>), Recycled Goods (<http://www.recycledgoods.com/computers.htm>) educational institutions, government entities and others like <http://w3.trib.com/~dwood/recyclemacs.html>, <http://www.lanecrrc.org/about/macrenewal.php> or <http://www.gcmac.org/html/chs2000.html>.

Apple has had their own recycling program as well (keeping machines out of landfills);

<http://www.apple.com/environment/recycling/nationalservices/us.html>
<http://www.apple.com/environment/recycling/>

The recycling reports are in tonnage (<http://www.apple.com/environment/recycling/data.html>) instead of machines and thoughtfully include non-Mac equipment, <http://www.apple.com/environment/recycling/success.html>. There are also a lot of non-CPU items like monitors, printers, etc. in that mix. Getting a recycled/retired CPU number is next to impossible, because Apple isn't the only one doing recycling of all computer equipment and peripherals. Remember, these are not the units that go back out into public sale. They get reduced back to metal, plastic and glass and go through remanufacturing processes in an effort to keep the environment "green".

So for giggles, lop off another 6 million Macs and we are at around 24 million active, running, in-use G3, G4 and G5 Macs. That is only a few million more than we have "retired" in the table. Is 20% attrition of total Macs ever made, too low a number? (That is my own SWAG [Scientific Wild-A**ed-Guess]). That is why we have a **Running Total In Use** column. Whack off the 48 million at the top of that column and that still



leaves us with 21,245,000 of Macs sold since 1998. 63,735,000 users (we multiplied by 3, per Apple averaging) is still a healthy number for the G3 through G5 crowd. Add 5,510,600 and you end back up to our final **Running Total In Use** because we added back some of the 48,000,000 pre-G3 units in the table. That can't be too far off, can it?

So I think my so-called off-the-cuff estimate is close to being accurate. Prove me wrong. Or agree with me.

Apple's Worldwide Mac Sales

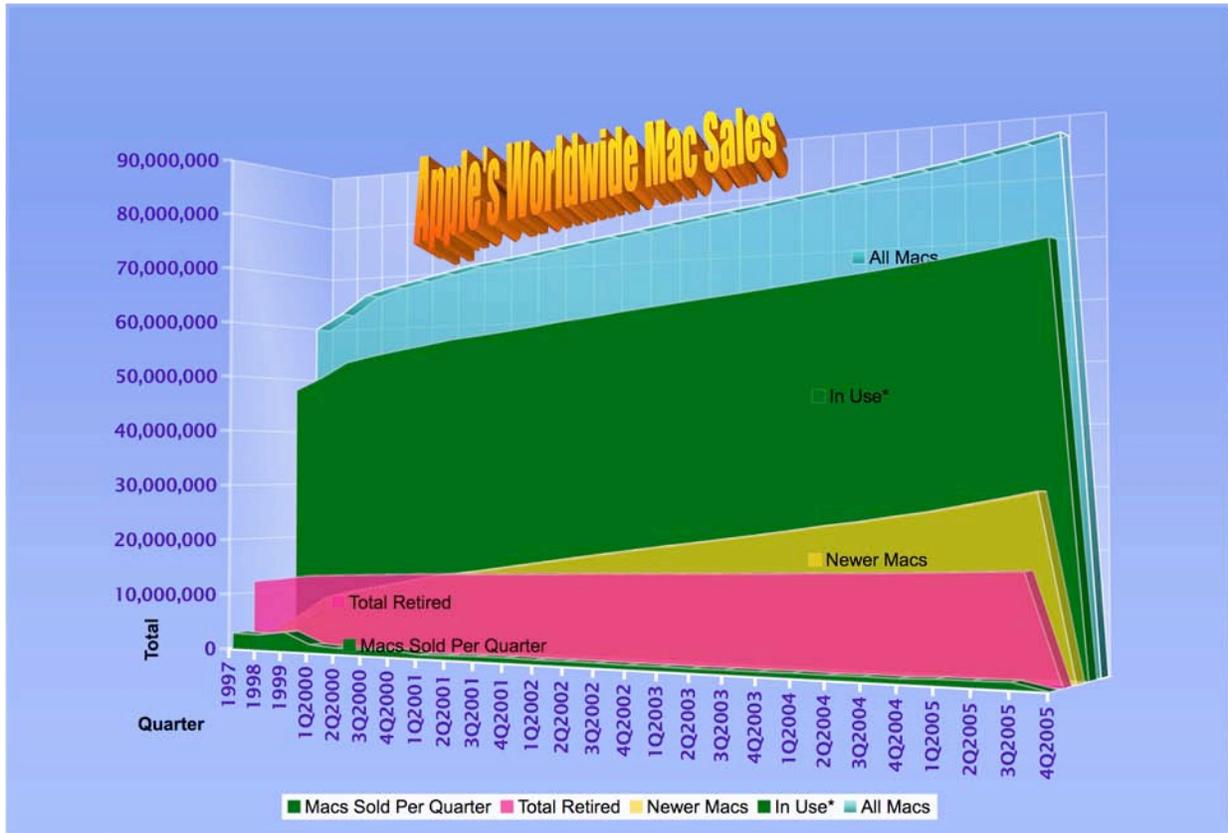
Year and Quarter	Macs Sold	Running Totals			
	Per Year and Quarter	Newer Macs G3, G4, G5	All Macs	Retired (20%)	In Use
1997	2,874,000	2,874,000	60,000,000	12,000,000	48,000,000
1998	2,763,000	5,637,000	62,763,000	12,552,600	50,210,400
1999	3,448,000	9,085,000	66,211,000	13,242,200	52,968,800
1Q2000	1,377,000	10,462,000	67,588,000	13,517,600	54,070,400
2Q2000	1,043,000	11,505,000	68,631,000	13,726,200	54,904,800
3Q2000	1,016,000	12,521,000	69,647,000	13,929,400	55,717,600
4Q2000	1,122,000	13,643,000	70,769,000	14,153,800	56,615,200
1Q2001	659,000	14,302,000	71,428,000	14,285,600	57,142,400
2Q2001	751,000	15,053,000	72,179,000	14,435,800	57,743,200
3Q2001	827,000	15,880,000	73,006,000	14,601,200	58,404,800
4Q2001	850,000	16,730,000	73,856,000	14,771,200	59,084,800
1Q2002	746,000	17,476,000	74,602,000	14,920,400	59,681,600
2Q2002	813,000	18,289,000	75,415,000	15,083,000	60,332,000
3Q2002	808,000	19,097,000	76,223,000	15,244,600	60,978,400
4Q2002	734,000	19,831,000	76,957,000	15,391,400	61,565,600
1Q2003	743,000	20,574,000	77,700,000	15,540,000	62,160,000
2Q2003	711,000	21,285,000	78,411,000	15,682,200	62,728,800
3Q2003	771,000	22,056,000	79,182,000	15,836,400	63,345,600
4Q2003	787,000	22,843,000	79,969,000	15,993,800	63,975,200
1Q2004	829,000	23,672,000	80,798,000	16,159,600	64,638,400
2Q2004	749,000	24,421,000	81,547,000	16,309,400	65,237,600
3Q2004	876,000	25,297,000	82,423,000	16,484,600	65,938,400
4Q2004	836,000	26,133,000	83,259,000	16,651,800	66,607,200
1Q2005	1,046,000	27,179,000	84,305,000	16,861,000	67,444,000
2Q2005	1,070,000	28,249,000	85,375,000	17,075,000	68,300,000
3Q2005	1,182,000	29,431,000	86,557,000	17,311,400	69,245,600
4Q2005					

For those who are in their right minds, we have this table in graph form as well. The **Macs Sold Per Quarter (GREEN)** doesn't look like much, does it? That is the "market share" the Financial Analysts focus on. In this graph, it hardly looks worth the effort.

Now look at the **Newer Macs (GOLD)**. This is the nice gradual increase that investors love to see in business plans.

If we remove **Total Retired (PINK)** from **All Macs (TURQOISE)**, we end up with **In Use (TEAL)**. This is the part the Anal-ists conveniently keep forgetting. The established in-use base is much broader than they can imagine and this is what really counts in the long run.

In Use is really us, the ones who buy the additional software and peripherals, the add-ons and the updates. *We* are the installed base. And with all things considered, I personally think that the 69,245,000 Macs as *users* is pretty darned close to being right. I still like to think there are closer to 80 million Mac users worldwide.



Next year with the MacTel chip, and Leopard, we once again will see a springboard starting point at perhaps around 80 million sold (factor in a million new machines sold each month and attrition between now and then), instead of 60 million sold as in 1997. Hey, it could happen. It is a great base to work from - and Apple and Intel both know it.

Musings From Mars by Leland Scott

<http://www.musingsfrommars.org/>

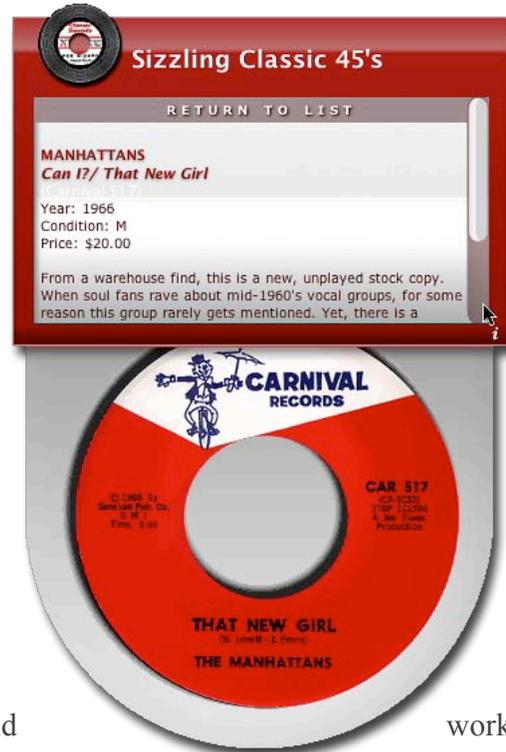
Anyone Can Develop A Dashboard Widget (And They Probably Will)

Wow! This project really took me back a few years... and forward a few years as well.

The "back a few years" part is a reflection of how long it's been since I worked on a major JavaScript/CSS (dynamic HTML) project. I had forgotten how frustrating it could be to debug JavaScript. When I was doing this nearly full-time earlier in the century (doesn't *that* sound odd?), the frustration stemmed partly from trying to build two totally different "document object models" (DOM) --Netscape's and Internet Explorer's. Because Microsoft trounced Netscape in the browser wars, the IE DOM won out, and today it's pretty much the standard, as defined by the W3C. Developers who remember trying to build dynamic HTML that would work in both browsers are simply relieved that you no longer have to deal with the "Netscape 4 problem," though some--like me--mourn the good ideas that went down with that model. Now, with Firefox and Safari ascendant and IE waving from the sidelines (anybody remember the Tortoise and the Hare story?), even Microsoft's proprietary extensions to JavaScript will hopefully be abandoned by everyone who hasn't already done so.

That's the good news. Today, the frustration I felt programming JavaScript stemmed mostly from the fact that I hadn't put together a good development toolkit for Safari. In other words, I needed some tools that could show the JavaScript errors clearly to help me debug them. Once I had these, I wasn't trying to code in total darkness anymore.

The project took me forward a few years as well, since I got a clear glimpse of what life beyond browser-based HTML will be like a few years from now. I was skeptical at first, but because of both the explosion of Dashboard widgets since May 1 and the amazing usefulness of many of

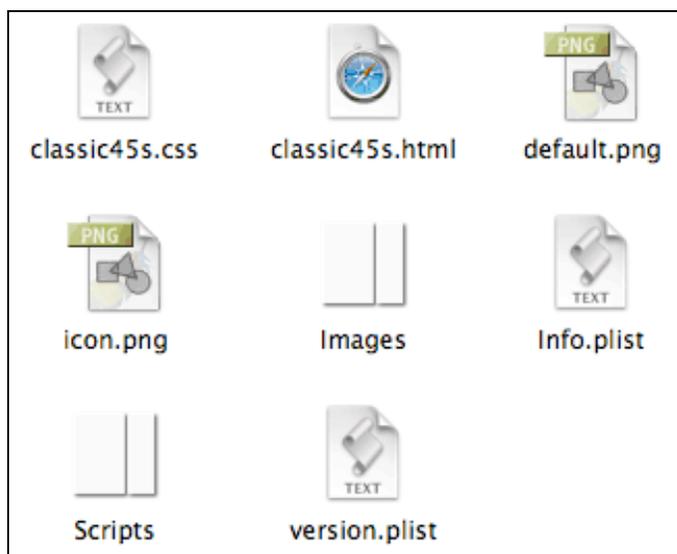


them, I'm now convinced that this new way of getting web information is the future. It's really the next step beyond Sherlock, and in some ways is just an extension of RSS and an easy way of leveraging web services on your desktop. If I needed any confirmation for my gut feeling on this, Yahoo provided it this week by gobbling up Konfabulator (before Microsoft could get to them, I'm sure)! (More on that later...)

Building this widget also took me back by confirming what I had read about Dashboard widgets--namely, they are really just little web pages that use transparency and run outside of a web browser. They can do more than web pages can do if you get fancy with them, and Apple has added some spectacular animations to Dashboard to make them look cooler than anything a browser can do, but... bottom line... if you know HTML, JavaScript, CSS, and graphics, you can build a Dashboard widget!

Of course, to get started, I found a couple of good widgets to crib from. :-) Heck, that's how I learned HTML and JavaScript in the first place! One of the reasons the web took off like it did is that the underlying code for web pages is totally transparent. All you have to do is "show source", and there's the code for you to study. Creative types who like simple programming (Gee, isn't that what a Mac user is?) were delighted with what they could do as web page design matured, and they'll be similarly delighted with the widget model.

With widgets, you have to know how to look inside Mac OS X "packages," but that's easy enough to do. Right-click (Ctrl-click) on a widget in the Finder, and select "Show package contents." Once inside the Contents folder, you'll see that there are just a few little files--an HTML page, one or more JavaScript files, a Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) file, some graphics, and some widget-required .plist (property list XML) files.



Before I started mucking around with those files, though, I read through Apple's excellent documentation on the subject. Apple developers are lucky to have such great technical documentation at their disposal, so be sure to utilize it if you head down this path. A quick visit to Apple's [Developing Dashboard Widgets](#) website will orient you much better than anything else

Here are quick links to the main documents I started with:

["Introduction to Safari JavaScript Programming Topics"](#)

["Introduction to Dashboard Programming Guide."](#)

(Note: If you installed the Developer Tools that came with your Tiger discs, you've already got these documents on your Mac.) I strongly recommend you start by reading through this material. After that, just start ripping into the code! :-)

And speaking of code to rip into, Apple has also provided a set of example widgets that demonstrate how various kinds of actions work. Here you'll find standard JavaScript functions for many of the animated actions you want to program, as well as for functions like looking up and displaying information from elsewhere on the web. There are about a dozen of these example widgets, and you'll find both a working widget as well as a folder with the code for each, so you don't have to do the "Show Package Contents" thing. The examples are at the [Dashboard Sample Code](#) site from Apple. Note that Apple's website includes updates to some of the examples that came with Tiger, as well as a new example--the SampleRSS widget--which in my case was very fortuitous.

One of the things I was most interested in trying out was the relatively new "AJAX" web programming method. (AJAX stands for Asynchronous JavaScript with XML.) This is the web application model Google has employed so spectacularly on its new [Maps](#) site, as well as elsewhere. This model enables richer web applications by allowing web pages to download and display data without having to be reloaded.

A fairly common type of Dashboard widget is one that loads one or more RSS feeds, and this was, in fact, the goal of my project. I wanted to "asynchronously" load the RSS feed from [Classic 45's](#) into my widget, without the widget itself having to be "reloaded." Whenever my RSS feed is updated, I wanted the widget to just fetch and display it without the user having to do anything. AJAX programming makes this possible. (You can read more about [AJAX starting with this essay](#).)

So off I went... It took about 2 weeks, working around everything else in my life... to get the widget ready for posting on Apple's website. But what a blast I had! Along the way, I checked out some of the emerging widget development tools and actually ended up forking over a few bucks to the guy who developed [Widgetarium](#). It's still a young tool that I'm sure will get better, but I paid the shareware fee primarily because I loved the "Panel Maker" that's built in. This utility makes creating slick widget background images child's play. Yes, I could've done it from scratch in PageMaker, but this was so much easier! He's since added an "Icon Maker" to the tool. Widgetarium has an embedded Safari WebKit engine that allows you to see and manipulate your widget in a transparent window similar to how it will look in Dashboard itself.

There are many other useful developer add-ons to Safari and widget development tools that are worth checking out, and I'm sure a year from now there will be even more and better ones.

Widgets are simply going to explode in numbers, so it's great that Apple moved fast to improve Dashboard's ability to manage them. If you haven't upgraded, Tiger 10.4.2 includes a Widget Manager in Dashboard that's a big improvement over the first version that shipped with Tiger.

When I finished my widget on July 6, there were about 700 widgets listed on Apple's "[widget download](#)" site. When I checked just now, the total had climbed to 926! If that rate of growth continues, there will be almost 5,000 widgets a year from now. Nearly all of them are released as freeware, including many that are handy replacements for Mac software you would otherwise have to pay for.

For me, an example of the latter is the [DoBeDo widget](#), which lets me enter to-do items that are synched with iCal. I can assign due dates, priorities, and a description for each item. The widget lets me easily view lists by calendar, and simply checking them off is the same as doing that in iCal. For me, what's particularly great about this kind of app is that I can have a synchronized to-do list both at work and at home, thanks to my .Mac account. Before DoBeDo, I was using [Burnout Menu](#), a menu item application I had paid for. Actually, I find DoBeDo to be much faster and more stable than Burnout Menu... and it's free! (Burnout Menu does have a few tricks DoBeDo widget doesn't, but they aren't things I need.)

The appeal of widgets is one of the reasons Yahoo snapped up the rights to Konfabulator this week. Windows will need something to compete with Apple's Dashboard, because widgets will clearly become a source of OS-envy as their popularity spreads. (Yes, Konfabulator did get ported from Mac OS X to Windows last year, but you still had to pay a license fee to use Konfabulator widgets.) Unfortunately for Yahoo, Konfabulator is not nearly as good as Apple's Dashboard system. Why? The primary problem with Konfabulator is technical... rather than leveraging an existing JavaScript engine (WebKit), as Dashboard does, Konfabulator runs its own. Why try to maintain your own JavaScript engine when everyone who would ever use Konfabulator already has one in the form of their favorite browser? As a result of this, Konfabulator can be a memory and processor hog, whereas Apple has carefully designed Dashboard so that widgets take up no processor cycles or memory when not in use. (Of course, if you've set your widget to continue working even when Dashboard is hidden, the widget *will* do just that.) John Gruber has an excellent article explaining this a lot better than I can on his [Daring Fireball](#) Blog.

It's really hard to explain what a Dashboard widget is to a Windows user without showing one. So one of the things I prepared with the launch of my new widget was a little [QuickTime movie](#) that shows the widget in action--scaled down, of course. Once I had all of this prepared and fully tested, I submitted information about it to Apple's web site and also to MacUpdate. A couple of days later (it didn't take as long as I thought it would), I was the proud owner a whole page on Apple's Dashboard download site devoted to my new "[Sizzling Classic 45's](#)" widget! Ah, fame.

You can also find this spanking new widget (along with other projects) at my .Mac site: [Software Noodling](#). On Mars, of course, nothing is ever really finished, so I already have the first set of enhancements to the widget on the drawing boards: First, I want to make the widget roll up into a much smaller size when not in use, and Second, I want to let users listen to mp3 snippets from the Classic 45's "Jukebox" by playing them within the widget itself.

sigh A Macintosh Software Noodler's work is never done... So many cool programming toys, so little time! :-)

The Mac Night Owl by Gene Steinberg



The Mac Hardware Report: 400,000 Windows Users Can't Be Wrong

<http://www.techbroadcasting.com> and [http://www.macnightowl.com/](http://www.macnightowl.com/http://www.macnightowl.com/news/2005/07/week3.htm#again)
<http://www.macnightowl.com/news/2005/07/week3.htm#again>

It seems whenever I want to make a point, I have to offer a little history lesson. I've you've been around the Mac universe for very long, this little refresher course may seem familiar to you, but I have a point to make and, as usual, I'll take my time getting there. Just bear with me.

In the mid-1990s, it went the other way. Mac users began to desert the platform in droves. Doesn't seem possible? Well, some technology pundits seem to think it was the result of the switch from the original 680x0 processor to the PowerPC. How come? Well, I suppose they believe that the near seamless transition from one processor family to another must have been confusing and frustrating. But the real reason was, in large part, the arrival of the first almost usable version of Windows, and that was Windows 95.

Maybe it was that infamous Rolling Stones spot, using their hit song, "Start Me Up." It's hard to believe now, but when Windows 95 hit the store shelves, folks were lining up to subject themselves to punishment, or rather buy copies. Microsoft becoming hip? Not quite, but Windows 95 was good enough to convey the impression to many users that it had reached parity with the Mac OS. Of course that huge advertising campaign didn't hurt.

Now to be fair, it is true that some software companies who were probably on the fence about continuing to build Mac software decided that updating their products for the PowerPC wasn't worth the time and effort. But these publishers would have probably ditched their Mac products eventually; they just used this as an excuse. At the same time, Apple seemed to lose its way, which only compounded the problem. Rather than amaze us with new products, they came up with wrong-headed designs that made such simple acts as adding RAM a major chore. Do you remember the Quadra 800 and its successors? You had to remove a logic board just to get to the memory slots.

The Mac OS? Well, development seemed to have stalled, while Microsoft worked furiously to deliver a better product. The best some Mac users could offer was that the Mac OS "sucked less." This "lesser of two evils" argument just didn't fly. In all fairness, I stuck with the Mac, although I also had to acquire a PC box because I was offered some Windows-oriented book assignments that I had to accept to pay the bills.

Somehow, Apple muddled its way through, and now that we are well into the Second Age of Steve Jobs, it appears Windows users are finally getting the message. For the first half of this year, an estimated 400,000 Windows owners bought Macs as Apple outpaced the growth of the PC industry.

It may be too early to break out the champagne, but it appears a number of these Mac converts were influenced by the iPod. To think Apple could build something that would become a cultural icon rather than just a boutique product. But Microsoft has also managed to shoot itself in the foot in recent years, suffering from the programming lapses of yesteryear that made the platform vulnerable to all sorts of malware.

At the same time, Apple faces an important challenge. If those 400,000 newcomers embrace the Mac OS with enthusiasm, they could become evangelists for the platform, encouraging others to make the move. Here first impressions count for a lot, and if the Macs they buy fails to "just work," it could have a really bad effect. These people have already been burned by Windows. They came to the Mac hoping that life on the other side of the tracks would be better, and if they have any suspicions that it's not so, Apple may not get a second chance.

As much as you'd like to regard your Mac as an appliance, it's a complicated and sometimes temperamental beast. True, most of you will unpack your new Macs, turn them on, and get on with your business. But the experience isn't always seamless, for otherwise there would be no need for troubleshooting sites, books and articles to help you get a handle on the problems you confront all too often.

In fairness, you can't expect perfection. No personal computer comes even close to behaving as reliably as a typical household appliance. Sure, the Mac is close, and it's true that many of you can carry on for days, weeks, or months without encountering a lick of trouble. I still provide consulting services for a number of local clients, and I delight in the fact that I can set them up with a new Mac, or perform a "tune up," and seldom get a call to make a return visit to fix some new problems. It's not that I am so perfect, but it's a nice thought. The truth is that Macs don't require near as much maintenance as the counterparts from the Dark Side.

But there are still problems that are just too irritating, and Apple has to work harder to improve its quality control. Tiger, for example, was probably released prematurely, and it's taken two maintenance updates for things to settle down. And now the pressure is on to deliver the goods to those brand new Windows switchers, and Apple can't afford to drop the ball.

Views from the Ivory Tower by Ted Bade

As Apple products continue to grow in popularity, we are going to see some companies do their best to perpetuate the misconceptions of the past about Apple and its products. Those guys in Redmond will no doubt, be more than happy to fuel these misconceptions and use their clout as the most popular as well as the richest technology company to this end.

For instance, I have a Tivo Digital video recorder. It would be nice to make backups of certain shows I have watched to see them again at some later date. If I owned a Windows PC, I could do this. somehow, someone has convinced the people at Tivo Corporation to only support Window's Media Players digital rights management (DRM). And for some unknown reason, the version of Window's Media Player for the Macintosh doesn't provide this feature.

I expect to see other covert attacks at Apple and its computers and other devices as time goes on. I suggest we all complain bitterly to those vendors that leave the Macintosh out of their equation. With enough people complaining, perhaps we can make a difference!

iTunes 4.9 brings Podcasts to your Mac - We have been hearing a lot about Podcasts. A Podcast is an audio show produced to be disseminated across the Internet and listened to on an iPod. The material it contains could be anything one can imagine. Think of it as AM radio talk shows on steroids. Anyone with basic computer equipment can produce one and you don't have to live near a radio station that broadcasts it to listen. Mostly, you find Podcasts by visiting web sites of interest. If the person or organization offers a Podcast, you can download it. There are literally thousands of different Podcasts available on the Internet.

Apple now provides any iTunes user easy access to most of them. Using iTunes version 4.9 you will see a new item in your playlist area, called Podcast. There is also an area in the iTunes music store that lets you search through the giant list of Podcasts to find one or more right for you. In this area the Podcasts are organized by topic, such as Arts & Entertainment, comedy, politics, science, technology, and more. Each of these categories has one or more sub-category.

Chances are there are more than one Podcast you will find interesting. Apple has made these items easily accessed by organizing links. They also provide automatic updates. Once you use iTunes to subscribe to the Podcast, you can easily access new ones from that author or group with iTunes. You can listen to the Podcasts on your computer or on your iPod.

I think this is really terrific. Apple has provided easy access to the thoughts of anyone wishing to express themselves for whatever cause!

Intel chips - I have seen a lot of conjecture about why the move from the PPC platform to Intel as a chip for Macs. In one quote I read, a representative of IBM mentioned that they could have kept up better production of the PPC chips and they don't know why Apple decided to leave that chip.

Perhaps they could have, but from where I am sitting it looks like they didn't produce better chips. Moving from Motorola to IBM chips only stalled the change to a new chip format. If IBM could have made a better chip, they should have. Frankly, I believe that the sales to Apple are

small enough in the grand scheme of things that IBM didn't feel it warranted a lot of effort.

One interesting opinion was given in an article posted at: <http://www.it-director.com/article.php?id=12794>, called IT director dot com. In this article Arnold Reinhold points out that Intel has been hampered by its relationship with Windows. They can't really do anything spectacular with their chips, such as innovate new and interesting things, unless Microsoft approves it! Wow, I had never thought of that...

The article also goes on to explain why he believes that the switch to Intel will lure developers to the Mac platform. It's an interesting article with lots of good information. Give it a read.

iTunes still a hit - This article comes under the general heading of "You know your good when..." *Ecommerce Times* recently reported that the University of Rochester started providing free access to Napster's new online music downloading service to students with high marks. Sounds like a nice benefit for hard working students and I applaud the University for this.

However, it appears the students still enjoy *paying* to use the iTMS rather than using Napster for free! Of a survey, 71% of those surveyed used the iTMS to get songs even though Napster was available for free.

This is an important thing for two reasons. First, it is good news for Apple. It means that customers of their music store appear to be as dedicated to it as Mac users are to their Macs. It also tells us that the Napster business model isn't the most appealing to students, but Apple's is. Very interesting.

Perhaps even more important, is the fact that perhaps the ethics of the students is being reached by Apple's music business model. If one can imagine that a survey like this indicates they would rather own paid-for music than have access to free music.

You can read the full article and the other statistics that go along with it by visiting <http://www.ecommercetimes.com/story/44531.html>.

Apple financial statement - Apple announced another impressive quarter, which ended on June 25th. Once again they beat the analyst estimates on iPod sales by almost 1 million units, by selling over 6 million iPods! They also sold 1,182,000 Macs. Which indicates a growth 35% for Macs and 616% growth in iPods over the same quarter a year-ago.

As for revenue it grew 75% with a net profit growth of 425%. Wow, that sounds impressive! You can read Apple's statement by visiting <http://www.apple.com/pr/library/2005/jul/13results.html>.

It is great to hear that the iPod is still doing well and that Mac sales are up. Perhaps the halo effect is really working, who knows.

Apples moves up to #4 - We have reported Apple's position in PC market sales in the past. Apparently, they just moved up another spot. It moved to the #4 position in the US markets and #5 worldwide. While Window's-based computers still have almost all of the market, Apple is making headway. There is an interesting article covering this topic which you can read by visiting

http://www.thestreet.com/_yahoo/tech/chriskraeuter/10233033.html?cm_ven=YAHOO&cm_cat=FREE&cm_ite=NA.

This type of PR is great for Apple, because it tells potential customers that others are buying Apple products. I personally hope that Apple is able to continue blowout sales of both the iPod and Macs. But I think the MP3 player market is getting saturated, so tremendous sales cannot continue forever. Obviously, what Apple needs is another killer device. I have heard some rumors of a video-playing device. But what I have heard is really limited and mostly speculation. So I can speculate some my own.

What I would like to see from Apple is a video player, hard drive-based like the iPod. One that would let you transfer video to it via the FireWire 800. I don't know where the video for these units would come from, since Hollywood is so touchy about DVDs. I imagine that Apple could sell videos, perhaps the music videos, so you could listen to and watch them on your new video pod (I hope Apple comes up with a really cool name for it, if they develop such a beast). But it's all dreams and speculation on my part. We shall see.

But wait, there's more. In a recent article posted on the Forbes site, they indicated that Apple has moved up in market share to 2.5%, again while this isn't tremendous, it is upward growth, which is good. <http://www.forbes.com/markets/2005/07/25/apple-pc-market-0725markets14.html>. They expect that Apple's market share will grow to 3 to 5% in 2005! Good news. Keep buying those Macs people ;-)

In a related article, <http://www.forbes.com/markets/2005/03/18/0318automarketscan10.html>, they also indicated that conversion of users from PC to Mac was a lot higher when polling iPod owners. They saw a 19% conversion rate, versus an expected 10% conversion rate that was expected. This indicates, at least to me, that there is a "Halo effect" associated with the iPod.

No matter how you cut it, new people buying Macs as well as returning sales are all a good thing. Perhaps someday we will see Apple market share back in the double digits.

Apple making inroads in the server market - Not only is the consumer sales of Macs doing better, but apparently the higher end server market is slowly beginning to accept Macs as a viable option.

As reported on the MacNewsWorld.com site <http://www.macnewsworld.com/story/71090YR17mzkFa/Apple-Rolls-Into-the-Data-Center.xhtml>, where once IT people would laugh if you mentioned Macs, they are now gaining respect and acceptance. This apparently is helped by the fact that Oracle supports the Mac servers with their 10g database, as well as a robust group of software that goes with the Apple Server. While the article mentions there is a long way to go before Apple is fully accepted in the market, the signs are good.

A close look at the Moon - As you might have heard, Google has been offering their version of online maps. As would be expected with an innovative company like Google, they have added some features that really improves working with maps. My favorite is the ability to click/hold the mouse button, then move the map this way and that to get the exact placement you like for printing or viewing. A tremendous improvement over the standard click, then have the map redrawn a little, moved in the direction you choose.

One very clever addition to the map is the ability to access an aerial view of map you are interested in. It is pretty cool to get a map of your home area, then view a satellite image of it. Of course, there are people out there that will try just looking for interesting things. I heard that, if you know how to look, you can get an satellite image of Area 51 and some other recently declassified military sites, such as a nuclear bomb test crater.

Of course, one of the most impressive maps is the one of our moon. They have listed the Apollo landing sites and you can move around an look at some impressive detail. For a real laugh, bring the zoom level of the map to maximum... I always knew this was true. Definitely visit <http://www.google.com/maps> and <http://moon.google.com/>.

That's all for this month. Hope you enjoy being a Mac owner as much as I do.

Rants, Raves and Revelations by Harry {doc} Babad

An Introduction to Chuck Ross's article on "FileMaking"

As many of you know, I am a heavy but inhibited user of FileMaker Pro [FMP] and a, presently stuck at version 6.0v4. I have databases dealing with address lists (four of them) and collections (books, movies and music, Macintosh tips) as well as household associated databases in which I collect tax related information. [I don't do Quicken.]

My primary reason for not upgrading is I'm not sure I want to take the time to integrate and make relational, my collection of four large address books. The four databases in question contain addresses that are family, nuclear professional contacts, Crafts Customers, and sources of stuff-suppliers. These were all created using different templates in which I gave key data field's different names (that's easy to deal with) but different functions (e.g., information contents). For example, one database has the City-State-Zip as one data fields, but in the two that followed, I give these items separate fields. Last but not least, for professional contacts, I added a country field.

Nevertheless, I read, and on occasion review FMP related books as well as checking articles in the various eZines and magazine to which subscribe. I was therefore delighted, earlier this month to find a column in ATPM *About This Particular Macintosh* — <http://www.atpm.com/> called How To by Chuck Ross that was entitled "FileMaking" at <http://atpm.com/11.07/filemaking.shtml>. Chuck's article is a tutorial on creating a simple database with FileMaker 7 to track serial numbers. The database created was relational, which means that Chuck tried (and succeeded) to eliminate the duplication of any data, minimizing the need to enter unique data into the DB more than once.

I started reading, and despite other high priorities, I was glued to the pages till I finished reading. This article appeared in the July 2005 issue 11.07 of ATPM and is linked with both Chuck Ross and ATPM's permission. Read it... take the plunge and get relational. As Chuck noted in the article "If you don't already own FileMaker, you can download a demo version from the Web site."

Now if Chuck could only find time to write a tutorial on how to create an FMP 7 database from a collection of flat file address lists created without real regard for uniformity of data fields and their contents. Well, when I figure out how to, perhaps I can write such a tutorial.

doc_Babad

Books

Data Crunching: Solve Everyday Problems Using Java, Python and More reviewed by Robert Pritchett



Author: Greg Wilson

Pragmatic Programmers, LLC
P.O. Box 293325
Lewisville
TX 75029-3325
Or
9650 Strickland Road, Suite 103-255
Raleigh
NC 27615
1-800-699-PROG (800-699-7764)
sales@pragmaticprogrammer.com
pragprog@pragmaticprogrammer.com
<http://www.pragmaticprogrammer.com>

Booksite:

<http://www.pragmaticprogrammer.com/titles/gwd/index.html>

Released: April 2005

\$30 USD, \$42 CND

Pages: 208

ISBN: 097451401

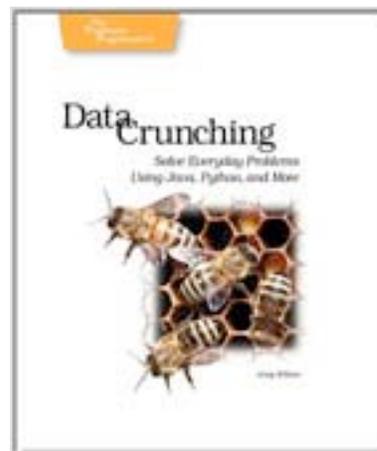
Requirements: A desire to want to use data-crunching techniques to solve problems.

For anyone interested in doing data crunching or data munging.

Strengths: Provides ways to enhance data manipulation.

Weaknesses: None found.

Data Crunching: Solve Everyday Problems Using Java, Python and More by Greg Wilson shows us how to tackle conversion issues, work with XLST and transforming XML, extracting information from relational and SQL databases, design and building and testing programs for searching log files.



Would you like to know how to translate formats from one proprietary system to another? How about testing them in Java or Python?

If you feel comfortable parsing XML, using SAX, DOM or XSLT and can encode in binary, than this book will help.

There are 7 chapters in the book and If you go to the summaries first and understand them you can move on. If not, go back and dig deeper in the chapters you need help with. There is a short 2-page resource in Appendix A, but most of the information is anecdotal from Greg Wilson's own experiences as he explored each of these technologies and discovered a few thing along the way.

Developing Feeds with RSS and Atom: Developer's Guide to Syndicating News and Blogs
reviewed by Robert Pritchett



Author: Ben Hammersley

<http://www.oreilynet.com/cs/catalog/view/au/909>

<http://www.benhammersley.com>

O'Reilly

<http://www.oreilly.com>

<http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/developrssatom/index.html>

Released: April 2005

Pages:

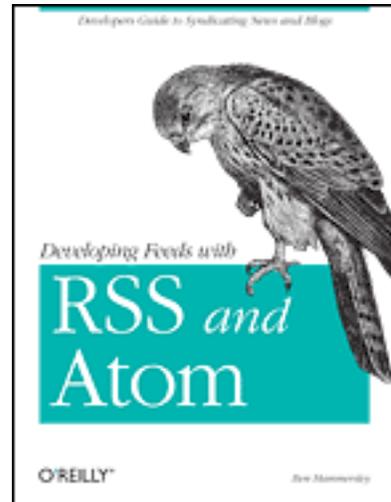
\$40 USD, \$56 CND, £28.50 GBP, €36 Euro

ISBN: 0596008813

Requirements: Some knowledge of HTML, XML, some Perl and a desire to be a professional programmer.

Strengths: Practical, not theoretical approach to RSSing and Atomizing newsfeeds and Blogs.

Weaknesses: None found.



Developing Feeds with RSS and Atom: Developer's Guide to Syndicating News and Blogs by Ben Hammersley does an excellent job discussing the ins and outs of RSS and Atom coding for Blogs, Newsfeeds and XMLing RSS.

If you do Blogs and want to get syndicated, this book will get you there. You will also discover the short history behind why there are so many different RSS versions, some of their strengths and weaknesses and why Atom is going strong.

The book does not assume you know anything, but does assume you know a little about Perl, so if you are an "advanced" RSSer, this book may not be of interest except for the chapter on XMLing RSS.

If you want to learn about RSS modeling and scripting, then you have come to the right place.

That's right, 3 formats. Two RSS (1.0 and 2.0 and no, one is not a revision of the other) and one Atom. Atom is still maturing, but we use it in our Blog at macCompanion.com.

There are plenty of Perls of wisdom found here and even some Ruby and PHP.

If you are a web developer, you are going to want to get this book , assuming you do site that provide newsfeeds or are interested in distributing content for syndication.

There are 11 chapters and two Appendices, one of which covers XML and the other is the resource center for the book listing sites and software. Chapter 10 lists a few examples of unconventional RSS feeds that provide ways to use this technology in other ways besides syndicated distribution – and is why I was interested in the book. These technologies are going places.

DHTML Utopia: Modern Web Design Using JavaScript & DOM reviewed by Robert Pritchett



Author: Stuart Langridge

<http://www.oreillynet.com/cs/catalog/view/au/1951>

<http://www.kryogenix.org/>

Simon Willison, Technical Editor

SitePoint Pty. Ltd.

<http://www.sitepoint.com>

Booksite: <http://www.sitepoint.com/books/dhtml1/>

Released: May 2005

Pages: 318

\$40 USD, \$56 CND, £28 GBP, €35 Euro

ISBN: 0957921896

Requirements: A desire to create Dynamic websites and previous knowledge on JavaScripting, CSSing and HTMLing.

Strengths: Offers coding examples for Dynamic HTML in a cross-browser-friendly environment.

Weaknesses: Some coding could use more explanation.

DHTML Utopia: Modern Web Design Using JavaScript & DOM by Stuart Langridge and Technical Editor Simon Willison takes the static out of web design and makes it dynamic.

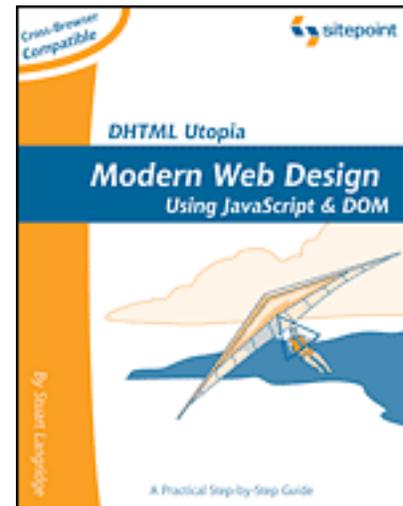
This is a techy-geeky book that requires some previous knowledge on the topic to be able to get through it. And it requires hands-on to walk through the examples. Grab the first 4 chapters online to see what I mean.

What makes this fun to read is that it opens up the world of JavaScripting in a way that you “get it” and want to jump right in and try things.

There are 10 chapters on DHTML technologies, the Document Object Model (DOM), handling DOM events, detecting browser features, animation (yes!), forms and validation (double yes!!), advanced concepts and menus, remote scripting, communicating with the server and DOM alternatives-XPath.

If you want the Codes from the Code Archive, you need to buy the book, and get the magic word asked for at <http://www.sitepoint.com/books/dhtml1/code.php> as a .zip file.

Learn how to make code work nicely (unobtrusively) in many of the most-used browsers and a few famous websites (Google, Flickr, GMail, etc.)



Way back in chapter 8 there is some discussion of AJAX (Asynchronous JavaScript And XML).

To get the most from this book, go to the booksite listed above and look around. The few errata are being captured and the Code Archive is updated as errors are corrected.

Are you interested in making reusable modular image rollovers, providing dynamic feedback to viewers, creating AJAX signup forms that can be corrected before submission, or self-suggesting drop-down menus? Get a grip with Stuart Langridge's latest book on Modern Web Design.

Ending Spam: Bayesian Content Filtering and the Art of Statistical Language Classification reviewed by Robert Pritchett



Author: Jonathan A. Zdziarski
<http://www.oreillynet.com/cs/catalog/view/au/1861>

No Starch Press
555 De Haro St., Suite 250
San Francisco, CA 94107
1- 800-420-7240 or 1-415-863-9900

Fax: 415-863-9950

info@nostarch.com

<http://www.nostarch.com/>

Booksite: <http://www.nostarch.com/endingspam.htm>

\$40 USD, \$54 CDN, £28 Net UK, €35 Euro

Published: July 2005

Pages: 448

ISBN: 1593270526

For SPAM Geeks or wannabees.

Strengths: Anti-SPAM solutions for programmers.

Weaknesses: None found.

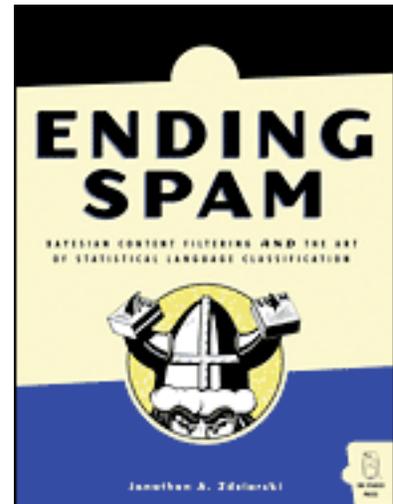
Ending Spam: Bayesian Content Filtering and the Art of Statistical Language Classification by Jonathan A. Zdziarski goes soup to nuts with history, examples and concepts and algorithms used to counteract the nefarious (yes, nefarious!) activities of those who inundate us with unsolicited advertising for products we have no business ever buying.

The book for the most part is built like a charcoal filtered water system. It guides us through the fine parts and pieces (statistical filtering) needed to reduce the flow without cutting off legitimate Email and drinkable water at the other end. And Jonathan Zdziarski does a great job educating us on logic and thought taken to combat this SPAM blight on the Internet.

Chapter 7 gets into problems, solutions and why they are important, what works, what does not and more importantly, why.

He is interested in getting as close to 100% effectiveness as possible. Interested in tokenization, Bayesian analysis or Markovian discrimination? It's all here.

There are 3 Parts on filtering in 14 Chapters and one Appendix that gets into open source solutions including one the author has created (DSPAM). That Appendix is where the meat is closest to the bone. There is a process for beating back the hoards and this book provides the methods required to get there.



Firefox Secrets reviewed by Robert Pritchett



Author: Cheah Chu Yeow

<http://www.oreilynet.com/cs/catalog/view/au/2107>

SitePoint

<http://www.sitepoint.com>

Booksite: <http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/0975240242/>

Released: June 2005

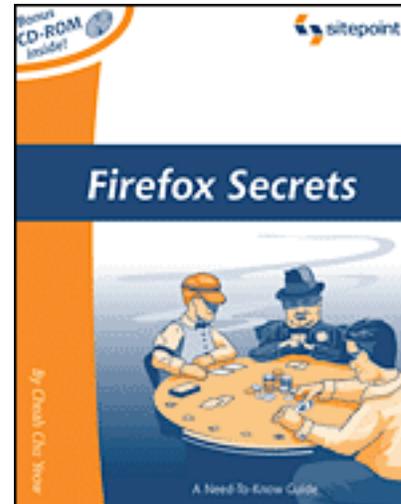
Pages: 250

\$30 USD, \$42 CND, £21 GBP, €99? Euro CD included.

ISBN: 0975240242

Requirements: Internet Access.

Strengths: Shows one of the best alternatives to MSIE.



Weaknesses: SitePoint needs to do a better job with their book search function on their website.



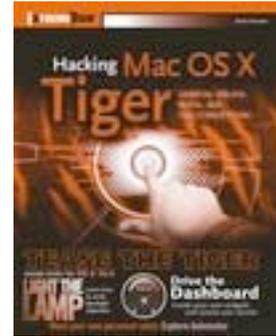
Firefox Secrets by Cheah Chu Yeow legitimizes Firefox as a valid browser by offering the little-known things that make it an alternative to MS IE and since it is cross-platform that even makes it a better choice. It came out with tabbing way before Safari did. It even takes it a step further and shows how to go beyond the default setting to make it respond even faster and even create multiple home pages.

I particularly enjoyed the history that led up to Firefox, as depicted by Cheah Chu Yeow.

There are 8 chapters that discuss features, revisiting websites, changing the skin, and personalizing the screens, tips, trick and hacks and even web development that covers JavaScripting, DOM inspector and editor, ability to view headers and validation of HTML and CSS and Accessibility. It ends with a short chapter on troubleshooting, working with Apple's Mac OS X Exposé, nightly builds and leveraging Firefox for web content.

If you've been using Firefox, this is a quick read. If not, the CD has it all for you for version 1.0.3 and Thunderbird version 1.0.2, including 6 themes and 22 extensions.

Hacking Mac OS X Tiger: Serious Hacks, Mods and Customizations reviewed by Robert Pritchett



Author: Scott Knaster

Wiley <http://www.wiley.com>

The Extreme Tech Series: <http://www.wiley.com/go/extremetech>

Product Site:

<http://www.wiley.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd-076458345X.html>

Released: July 22, 2005

Pages: 408

\$25 USD \$32 CND £17 GBP €22 Euro

ISBN: 076458345X

Downloads:

<http://www.wiley.com/WileyCDA/WileyAncillary/productCd-076458345X.html>

For those interested in modding their Macs.



Strengths: Excellent hacks and mods not found elsewhere.

Weaknesses: None found.

Hacking Mac OS X Tiger: Serious Hacks, Mods and Customizations by Scott Knaster is a 3-part book covering tips, mods and hacks for Mac OS X Tiger. If you are into geeking or hacking, there is information within the pages of this book not found elsewhere. Sure, you can download the coding, but you will want the book anyway – and not just for its fancy nearly 3D cover.

Scott Knaster didn't dream up all these himself, he had help from the "hack Pack" and a lot of others he has listed on his Acknowledgements page. The book is totally engaging starting with turnaround quotes from Bill Joy, who co-founded Sun Microsystems and said in 1985 that Mac didn't run UNIX to 2003 where he said Mac OS X was a rock-solid system and preferred it to Linux.

Don't skip over the Tips section. There are items on unfreezing frozen .zip files, cloning widgets, putting the Dock at the top of the screen or sit in a corner, pimping the Blob, changing the dialog to something more friendly when apps crash, enabling Root, grabbing iTunes music videos to play in QuickTime through Safari, finding hidden tracks on CDs and iTunes, customizing X11 and a host of other things.

In Mods, Scott Knaster opens up application bundles, property lists, Automator, XCode and Quartz Composer.

With Hacks, we learn about Badger, a dynamic Dock manipulator, building Widgets, , John Vink's Top Tunes widget, Video Desktop (processing camera input into a real-time Mac OS X desktop) , taking advantage of the Services menu using TextFiler by Mark Dalrymple, XMLing Spotlight, and using Commando by Shane Looker, that puts an Aqua face on Unix shell commands and finally both mach_override and mach_inject by Jonathan "Wolf" Rentzch that dynamically overrides apps.

The source codes are listed and those can also be downloaded from the website.

If you want to dig deeper into tips, mods and hacks that make difference, Scot Knaster has done an excellent job compiling and presenting a few of those for us.

Learning Unix for Mac OS X Tiger reviewed by Robert Pritchett



Author: Dave Taylor

<http://www.oreillynet.com/cs/catalog/view/au/849>

O'Reilly

<http://www.oreilly.com>

Booksite: <http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/ltigerunix>

Released: June 2005

\$20 USD, \$28 CND, £14 GBP, €17 Euro

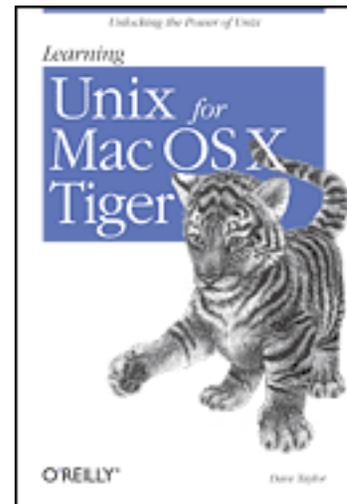
Pages: 288

ISBN: 0596009151

Requirements: Beginning knowledge of UNIX and Mac OS X Tiger as UNIX 101.

Strengths: Assumes nothing. A great training guide.

Weaknesses: Some processes take more than one look to figure out, but maybe that's just me.



Learning Unix for Mac OS X Tiger by Dave Taylor is a beginner's guide to looking behind the curtain with Mac OS X, but don't let that cute Siberian Tiger cub on the front cover fool you. There is a whole lot of power that is just begging to get out of the bag and Dave Taylor has a very good grasp on how best to instruct on how to get there from here.

There is a whole new world for the Unix wannabees and I actually learned a lot from this book as I went through it. In the process, I discovered I had a lot of the tools discussed towards the back regarding X11, Fink and Open Source Software when I loaded XTools 2. I also found out that I could have saved a penny or two for what I paid for Fetch and Transit, if I had known about the FTP commands built into the Mac OS X Tiger version of UNIX if I wanted to do the command-line thing. It really is all there after all. I like Fetch and transit, however because they have all those neat GUI-goodness about them and I prefer not to be command-lining everything. However, if I want to get geeky and talk turkey with the Linux techs, I need to know this stuff to communicate on their level. And of course, there is X11, which is the GUI for UNIX and allows secure remote accessing from other Macs or UNIX systems with Apple's version for Macs.

You might as well get into Terminal rather than going postal with Tiger. Sooner or later you are going to want to know how to clean caches, and `grep` (global/regular expression/print) around a bit. Heck, I even discovered that I could do multitasking from the command line. And instead of Option-Apple-Escaping to shut down recalcitrant programs, I can discover all the other processes (many hidden) that are running that may be adding to the system hiccupping that may be the real root cause of the problem.

Dave Taylor is up front about the Mac-flavored UNIX OS and gives us 10 commands to cut our teeth on. He refers to his other book on Wicked Cool Shell Scripts he had published by No Starch Press over a year ago for folks who want to dig even deeper.

He even shows how to use vi (text editor) and Pine (Email program).

Master the command line? Well, maybe not quite, after all there are a few hundred commands and this book just hints at the power behind the curtain.

What I did do however was play with X11, and Fink, load NeoOffice/J (a Java-based Open Source alternative to MS Office) and goof around some with GIMP (GNU Image Manipulation Program, Open Source app that functions like Photoshop).

There was just a little bit of frustration as I tried finding the Terminal Inspector (*Terminal > Window Settings > Terminal Inspector*) that somehow got stepped-over with otherwise fine screenshots and examples. I still need to get more familiar with Fink and GIMP. Fink opens up a whole new world by letting Open Source apps into the Mac.

There are 11 chapters and no Appendices, but there is a short ending chapter that hints at shell scripting with Perl, Python and Ruby and compiling with C and C++, Objective-C and Cocoa and Carbon.

Dave Taylor does an excellent job walking us through the Unix process and every once in a while his humor shows through. He's comfortable in this environment and we should be too. This book should be a prerequisite for the one I reviewed last month, *Mac OS X Tiger for Unix Geeks*, but then again, they already know eat, drink and sleep this stuff. No, *Learning Unix for Mac OS X Tiger* is really for the person who is comfortable in the Tiger environment who wants to play with the cute Siberian Tiger cub. Learn why so many UNIX and Linux folks are going gaga over Mac OS X Tiger. You already have that cute cub in hand and with Mac OS X 10.4.2, we may see that Tiger cub having reached adolescence. Learn a little of what they know.

SignCraft



Author: Dan Antonelli

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Booksite:

<https://www.signcraft.com/secure/cart/items.asp?cat=7>

Released: June 1, 2000

\$25 USD

Pages: 72

ISBN:0918399173



Requirements: A desire to do logos “correctly”.

Strengths: Great signage to print processes.

Weaknesses: None found.

Logo Design 2 for Small Business: Creation, Marketing, Sales by Dan Antonelli is his first picturebook of logos by design. He designed for signage and than that gets translated to print, not the other way around. Forget big corporate swashes or obscure graphics that “need to be explained”.

Dan Antonelli takes earlier work, critiques it and with a keener eye and lots of experience shows how it could have been done better – and is. This is the first of two books and they probably should be stapled together, but were written years apart. I got both because I wanted to work on my company’s logo and improve upon it. I’m to there yet, but Dan Antonelli has provided a few ideas and isn’t that what this is all about, getting the creative juices flowing?

This book has over 120 examples of effective, not defective, logos used in real businesses. It is intended for the designer and not the client. Book 2 does that. This one lays the groundwork and principles and provides proposed logos that lead to profits, not so much for him, but for his clients who become repeat customers, because he walks in their shoes.

Logo Design 2 for Small Business: A Designer's Reference Guide To Practical Logo Design
reviewed by Robert Pritchett

SignCraft



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<http://www.graphicd-signs.com>

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<http://www.signcraft.com>

Booksite:

<https://www.signcraft.com/secure/cart/items.asp?cat=7>

Released: December 15, 2004

\$25 USD

Pages: 72

ISBN: 0918399181



Requirements: A need to adding a logo to your business.

Strengths: Lots of eye candy.

Weaknesses: None found.

Logo Design 2 for Small Business: A Designer's Reference Guide To Practical Logo Design by Dan Antonelli is a picturebook of logos by design. Samples of bad, good and better and why are discussed. He shows why logos for small business are different than for large corporate environments (more color and elaboration vs. simple and "safe"). He talks about market-partnering and not just logo-milling quick logos for clients. Also shown are full end-to-end stationary with themes that provide visuals of not just a name, but some food for thought behind the logo creation that expresses what a business is all about.

Trowels for masonry, brushes for painters, trees or flowers for landscaping, eyeglasses for sight, gift boxes for gift shops, lightening bolts for electrical contractors, get the ideas?

This is a companion book to *Logo Design For Small Business: Creation, Marketing, Sales*.

Inside are around 175 logos by Dan and others and some of the thought that went into them.

What I learned is that a great logo has power and it doesn't cost (somewhere in the neighborhood of \$400 to start), it pays.

After reading the book, I've been paying more attention to the signs and painted vehicles around here. It really opened my eyes! I'm also noticing the sign shops around here too that I just never noticed before.

So who is the book really for? For folks that are looking for effective logos that are not just well designed but are well designed. Dan provides some dos and don'ts and gives examples of each. Yeah, this book is eye-candy for making our businesses memorable in the minds of prospective clients.

It really is the thought that counts – and a little technique.

Mac Annoyances: How to Fix the Most ANNOYING Things About Your Mac
reviewed by Harry {doc} Babad, edited by Julie M. Willingham



Author: John Rizzo

<http://www.oreillynet.com/cs/catalog/view/au/1832>

O'Reilly

<http://www.oreilly.com/>

Series: Annoyances

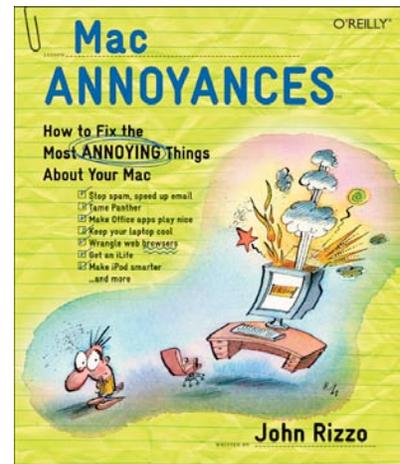
Booksite: <http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/macannoy/>

Released: November 2004

Pages: 176

\$25 USD, \$37 CND, £14.95 GBP, €22 Euro

ISBN: 059600723X



Experience Needed/Audience: Macintosh users with an annoying itch about their hardware or software that needs scratching, at least for problems covered by this book. The author assumes that you know enough about your Macintosh and the software to follow the fixes provided.



Strengths: The book is well written and comfortably and logically laid out. A detailed and comprehensive index is aimed at helping you navigate to the section you most need, thus enabling application of ‘calamine lotion’ to the itching annoyance.

Weaknesses: Unfortunately, John Rizzo highlighted many annoyances that I didn’t know I had, so I was forced, as a type A personality, to deal with them. As a result, I was able to correct or compensate for at least a baker’s dozen minor irritations that had not yet become full-blown annoyances.

From the Publisher’s Overview

“Anyone who plugs in a Mac, whether it’s the proud owner of the very latest version or someone still tapping away on yesterday’s model, usually finds these machines to be an immensely popular and beneficial tool. Unfortunately, they can also be a royal pain in the neck. Any way you slice it, Macs still have a tendency to induce minor headaches at the most inopportune times.

“*Mac Annoyances* feels your pain. Developed precisely for the individual who can’t live without a Mac yet can’t deal with its fickle temperament, *Mac Annoyances* provides solutions to scores of common problems faced by Mac owners. Contained within its pages are hidden (plus well-documented) tips, tricks, and workarounds designed to drastically improve specific problem-solving capabilities. The result: a significant enhancement of the overall user experience and a tremendous savings of time no matter which version you own.”

Introduction

As always when I get a ‘hints’ or ‘fixit’ book, I ignore the author’s instructions, such as to use the index to find the cure for that specific itch you get when using a product or software genre covered by this book. No way! To get joy from a book and perhaps learn a little, I needed to read almost all of a book from cover to cover.

Therefore, in my reading of annoyances and their fixes, I would find myself at my computer scratching some of the itches I get when using Mac OS X Panther or Jaguar (Chapter 1). Annoyances with Eudora, my preferred email client (in Chapter 2), also kept me hopping.

One delight was the author’s recommendation of SpamSieve <http://c-command.com/spamsieve/>. An interesting chapter on the Internet starts with the general and then focuses more narrowly on both Safari, other browsers and the now stagnant MS Internet Explorer (Chapter 3). Problems and issues with MS Office (the mother of all annoyances, see Chapter 4) those related to MS Word caught my immediate attention. Many of the annoyances were familiar, and the fixes were instantly valuable to me. The last section that proved extremely helpful was the information on hardware annoyances.

A cure for ignored email is provided, its content has almost always been my habit. Prior to retirement I was fortunate to attend a seminar on effective email habits – the fix works.

ALPHABETIZE YOUR BOOKMARKS

The Annoyance: What genius decided that browser bookmarks have to be in chronological order—the order in which you bookmarked them? With my Bookmarks menu endlessly scrolling, I can’t find anything in there without calling in a search party. Would it kill a browser developer to include an option to alphabetize bookmarks?

The Fix: Once again, this is a matter of which web browser you are using. Several browsers have built-in sorting features. Those that don’t offer the ability to search your bookmarks. Here’s a rundown of your options:

- Safari doesn’t let you alphabetize bookmarks or search them, as many other browsers do. But you can add a free utility, SafariSorter (<http://dearjerry.home>).

WRITE EFFECTIVE (NOT ANNOYING) EMAIL

Email is a great communication tool, but it can also be an annoying distraction. If you want to get your point across, don't aggravate friends and coworkers with email that is unfocused or difficult to read. To write effective email, follow these basic tips:

- ☒ Use descriptive, short subject lines, such as "Update on Henderson Report." So much spam and virus mail have vague, nondescriptive titles, such as "Your Document" or "Web Site." You want to make it easy for your recipients to separate the wheat (your message) from the chaff (everything else).
- ☒ Get to the point. Email is not the place for grand introductions. Like a newspaper story, the first sentence should convey what your message is about. Minor points should come last.
- ☒ Use paragraphs—a lot of them. A message in one, long rambling paragraph is hard to read and, therefore, annoying. Don't be afraid to hit the Return key after you finish a thought.
- ☒ Use capitalization and punctuation. These innovations of civilization were created to make text easier to read. Without them, your message is a chore to get through and, worse, could convey an ambiguous meaning.
- ☒ Use spellchecking. Bad spelling is often the result of bad typing, but people don't often make that distinction. Spelling errors reflect poorly on you, particularly if you are in a business or academic setting.
- ☒ Edit your message. Don't hit the send button right away. Take a minute to reread your message and try to shorten it. If the message is important, save it as a draft and come back to it later, or even the next day. Effective email is well written, and writing always benefits from a second look.

What is missing from this fix, John, is for folks to limit their message to one issue or focus. Email messages that contain multiple subjects and action requests are not effective. You reader is likely to respond to the first item you discussed, but to miss the rest.

The book also contained cures for iLife annoyances. However, I have a Mac-life that goes beyond Apple's offerings and prefer alternatives to iLife, so paid little heed to Chapter 5. I also get my music from CDs that I collect rather than from an iPod, so only skimmed Chapter 6. Nevertheless, for those who love these Apple applications, buy John's book and you will get 40 pages of annoyance-killing advice.

The book is formatted most simply: annoyance descriptions and their solutions are organized by chapter. All of this is interlaced with hints, references to underlying technical information, and at times, recommended shareware. (I downloaded many of the latter because... hmmm.) A taste of the book's organization is tabulated below.

Mac OS X Annoyances – Chapter 1	Finder and system... 23 vexations and botherations
Email Annoyances – Chapter 2	General Annoyances, Apple Mail, Entourage, Eudora, and AOL
Internet Annoyances – Chapter 3	Web Browsing, Google, Sherlock, iChat and AIM Messaging
MS Office Annoyances – Chapter 4	Word, PowerPoint, Excel, and Virtual PC. [Entourage is covered under email.]
iLife Annoyances – Chapter 5 – Chapter 6	iTunes, iPhoto, iMovie, iDVD, and Garage Band
iPod Annoyances	...Stuff about 17 irritations
Hardware Annoyances – Chapter 7	General Hardware, Keyboards & Mice, Displays, PowerBooks, and iBooks

The book is more than annoyance and fixes

More Info When Needed — The contents of this book go far beyond the collected annoyances and their clearly defined and illustrated fixes. John provides us not only with links to shareware that provides a better fix than that possible within the annoying software, but with sources of information to deal with annoyances that fall outside the scope of this 157-page book. There are many available links, the author notes, where the reader can gain detailed information about a given fix or its underlying problem. I've copied some below.

To seek out more information about a given annoyance, the reader is directed to both Apple's Knowledge Base, via Sherlock, and to the Apple discussion boards <http://discussions.info.apple.com>. Information is also available on the O'Reilley's Mac DevCenter <http://www.macdevcenter.com/> website. Among my favorite sources for troubleshooting answers are MacInTouch <http://www.macintouch.com/> and MacFixit <http://www.macfixit.com/>. Although I've not yet used the O'Reilly site for solving problems, the others have helped me get out of binds with both my software and hardware. I do however, prefer my troubleshooting books prior to dealing with an exponential number of hits obtained from the sites referenced above.

Of Mice and Buttons — The good news is that John provides shortcuts designed for 2- and 3-button scroll wheel mice. The bad news is that Apple hasn't gotten the word that even newbie users can use a 3-button scroll mouse. Anyone who has used a game controller knows such devices are more complex than multiple-button mice. It's easier, Steve Jobs, sir, to give users a three-button mouse than to ask them to switch to an Intel-chip-based MacTel platform.

Getting Back to Search Findings — Often when I do a Google, Food Network, or MacUpdate search there are more hits than I can deal with in the time available. This is especially true for recipe searches seeking novel twists for a major ingredient (e.g., asparagus.) I have comparable problems, super-*hitites*, when skimming findings when searching upload offering on shareware sites. John an alternative to the hint on Page 64, is to drag the link (from my browser) to my desktop in order to ‘tab’ where I am in multiple page searches — I can get right back to where I was.

Shareware Links and More — The author Identifies shareware products for various annoyances that provide either specific first aid or enhance the utility of the wimpy features provided by either Apple or Microsoft. I’m downloading some of these shareware tools and will be writing about them in future macC reviews.

UNIX (Terminal) Based Fixes — Some fixes require minimal knowledge of the Terminal Application (e.g., Apple’s UNIX tool), but as long as you can copy the provided information, using Terminal as a means to implement John Rizzo’s fixes is straightforward and easy.

Annoyance unanswered...

Eudora — A missed annoyance in Eudora 6.2.3 – No matter what I’ve done to try fix it, I can not get Eudora’s settings (preferences) to default to AppleDouble (MIME) setting for encoding my attachments. The software, no matter what preference (.plist) files I’ve tossed, continues to revert back to ‘binhex.” Of course, most of my PC-using friends and colleagues can’t deal with that encoding. It’s time to post this and see what John comes up with. Despite suggestions, none of the responses I’ve received from Eudora technical support have solved my problem.

MS Word 2004 — In MS Word 2004, when opening and working with a new document, attempting to change the format of a line of text (e.g., bold, italic, underline) reformats the whole document, as does changing font size. None of my books on MSW 2004 deal with that problem, and a quick Internet search gave me too many unfocused hits. I can cheat by using a blank document as a new document source, created in MSW X, but that’s a drag. I actually mailed this one in to the author of Word Annoyances, but since its still driving me nuts.

Minor Gripes, Glitches, and Gotchas

Typographic Issues — The typographic conventions used in this book, in general, worked for me (Introduction, page xiii.) However, the bilious pale lime green type color used by John to focus our attention on important key points. Yuck, sky blue anyone? To make matters worse, many of the fixes that require using the Terminal to implement them are typed in very small lime green type that required use of a magnifying glass under 100 watt desk lamp to read.

Trashing Fixes — Using `⌘-D` for moving a file to trash (page 7) needs a warning. Better yet the author should recommend a product like iCan <http://www.kanzu.com/>, a menu trash deletion utility (macC January 2005, Volume 3, Issue 1) that provides information on the number and total size of the items in he trash can, something Apple eliminated when going to OS X.

Where is the Special Character — For easily finding and entering special characters, the simplest and most effective tool I've found is PopChar 2.2.1 (see page 14). [<http://www.macility.com/products/popcharx/>]. It, too, lives in the OS Menu Bar and is available in a 'text' using application.

Norton Utilities (Mac) is Dead and Gone — Symantec, at the time Apple selected TechTool Pro as its recommended disk repair software utility, stopped developing Norton Utilities for the Macintosh (page 16). That is a real shame, because Micromat's product has irreversibly trashed more of my friends' hard disks this year than the Symantec product did over its lifetime of our use. At the advice of a trusted software Macintosh support expert at a major corporation, this is one of the few products I shall never use on my computer. (Safety First... I clone my disk at least every two weeks, and key folders whenever they significantly change.)

Alphabetizing Bookmarks — The freeware product that allow alphabetized bookmarks, SafariSorter (page 57) no longer exists. It has been replaced with the shareware product named Bookdog 1.2, and will be the subject of a future shareware review.

In Closing

Mac Annoyances is a useful, easy to read book full of annoyance solutions that were easy to implement. It also was a good read, full of interesting hints, tidbits, and a bit of gentle humor, all of which I enjoyed. I recommend it to all Macintosh users.

As noted by David Weeks in [MyMac.com](#) January 2005, "*Mac Annoyances* is a fine collections of hints and tips to get around the rough edges of OS X...When I first cracked open Mac Annoyances, I thought it would be not much more than a collection of shopworn hints that only newbies would appreciate. I was quite wrong...there are plenty of tasty tidbits to enjoy."

The book is well worth 4.5 macC's

Review PS

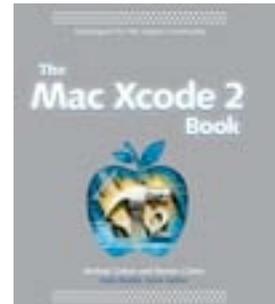
I just got word that O'Reilly has published *Word Annoyances - Wrestling Word into Submission* – by Guy Hart-Davis. So, with a little bit of luck, you'll read about that book in the September macC. I'm looking forward to the review because I am more annoyed with MS Word 2004 than with any other software program I use daily. John Rizzo's information on Microsoft Office Annoyances (Word, pages 72-85) doesn't even scratch the major itch I get whenever I use that necessary but annoying program.

The Mac Xcode 2 Book reviewed by Robert Pritchett



Authors: Michael Cohen
Dennis Cohen
Andy Ihnatko

http://www.wiley.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd-0764584111_descCd-authorInfo.html



Wiley Developed for the Apple Community Series
<http://www.wiley.com/WileyCDA/Section/id-108050.html>

Product Site:

<http://www.wiley.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd-0764584111.html>

Released: June 2005

Pages: 350

\$30 USD \$39 CDN £19 GBP € Euro

ISBN: 0764584111

For Mac-coding wannabees.



Strengths: Well-written with a healthy dose of humor.

Weaknesses: A couple of typos.

The Mac Xcode 2 Book by Michael and Dennis Cohen and Andy Ihnatko take a fun approach to learning how Mac Xcode 2 is designed. The authors were told to make it fun to learn and I think they did a magnificent job doing so.

What? You don't know Xcode? That's okay. Learn it here. Crash-course, but not un-understandable. If all learning were this easy, we wouldn't need schools.

These guys show how drop-dead easy it is to "program" now with XCode 2. Literally anybody can do it and they show how.

Will you be able to code after reading this book? Sure! There are 6 parts on the IDE of the Tiger, Coding, Dragging and Dropping, Building and maybe running Carbon, Cocoa, Java and AppleScript, Cat herding and Fleabaths by debugging, optimizing and using version control and of course, 2 Appendices on SDKs and migrating from CodeWarrior and other projects.

I bookmarked the heck out of this book and you will too. These guys are great at making learning fun again.

MySQL In A Nutshell: A Desktop Quick Reference reviewed by Robert Pritchett



Author: Russell J.T. Dyer

<http://www.oreillynet.com/cs/catalog/view/au/1250>

O'Reilly

<http://www.oreilly.com>

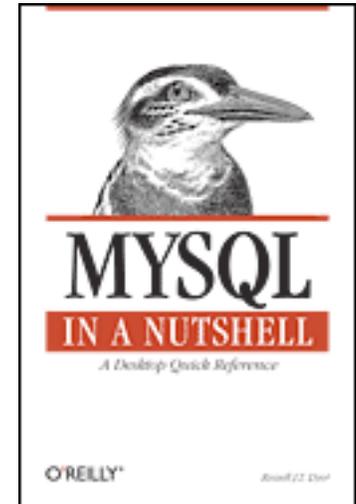
Booksite: <http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/mysqlian/index.html>

Released: May 2005

\$40 USD, \$56CND, £28.50 GBP, €36 Euro

Pages: 352

ISBN: 0596007892



Strengths: C, Perl and PHP API are treated.

Weaknesses: No Java.

For Intermediate level

MySQL: <http://www.mysql.com/>

More: <http://www.devshed.com/c/b/MySQL>



MySQL in a Nutshell by Russell J.T. Dyer is a desktop reference that shows APIs for MySQL in C, Perl and PHP as well as the MySQL utilities.

Instead of searching all over for the right stuff, it is all here.

There are 14 “Chapters” covering intro and installation MySQL basics, SQL Statements, String, Date and Time. Mathematical and Aggregate, Flow Control and Misc. functions, MySQL Server and Client, Command-line utilities, Perl, PHP and C APIs and 3 Appendices covering Datatypes, Operators and Environment Variables.

Care to get involved in database speed, power and flexibility? My SQL has come a long way. Each chapter has a tutorial that discusses what follows.

Macs have MySQL already. Now you can have an idea of how to use it.

Podcasting: The Do-It-Yourself Guide reviewed by Robert Pritchett



Author: Todd Cochrane

<http://www.geeknewscentral.com/>

Wiley Extreme Tech Series

<http://www.wiley.com/WileyCDA/Section/id-108050.html>

Product Site:

<http://www.wiley.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd-0764597787.html>

Released: May 2005

Pages: 298

\$20 USD \$26 CND £13 GBP €18 Euro

ISBN: 0764597787



Strengths: A great starter book on PodCasting. Cross-platform focus.

Weaknesses: A couple of typos.

Other PodCast book review:

<http://www.webpronews.com/news/ebusinessnews/wpn-45-20050703BookreviewpodcastToddCochranesPodcasting.html>

Podcasting: The Do-It-Yourself Guide by Todd Cochrane answers the questions regarding what PodCasting is and why it exists. And his main message is; “Have fun!”

Internet Radio – err - PodCasting has been around awhile, but PodCasting per se, has really been popularized within the last 6 months (this is 2005) or so. VODCasting is just beginning and if you use iTunes and click on the PodCasting Directory and do a search on TV, a few VodCasting sites will appear. Todd doesn’t go there, but we did in our Blog. Now back to the book;

Todd Cochrane is a “veteran” PodCaster with his *Geek News Central* PodCast. What he does with this book is show what PodCasting is, how to participate and the devilish little details and equipment needed to rival the moneyed-media systems. So far, the PodCasting networks are not regulated, so just about anything goes. Even Apple finally has begun to add “Explicit” to a few PodCast streams and lots of banned verbiage is the norm on a lot of “Shows”. iTunes isn’t the only way to access these and I gave a few links in the July issue of *macCompanion* in the *Letter from the CEO* titled, “PodCasting Marvels”. That was before I got this book.

The book is divided into 5 parts consisting of listening, joining, recording and performing, hosting and preparing and posting. This is all done in 15 short chapters. Probably the meat for me is in parts 3 and 4 where Todd digs into the recording process and cites software needed to do the job as well and publishing and distribution methods. You will need plenty of bandwidth once your PodCasts become popular so you will need to find a way to make this hobby pay for itself or end up with a unhappy surprise in your ISP bill and Todd nicely covers that in Chapter 14 on Feedback, Promotion and Paying the Bills..

PodCasters broadcast what they love. There are lots of “podcatcher” applications out there, depending on which platform is being used to listen to them and Todd captures most of them in Chapter 2. This book was published prior to iTunes 4.9 so no mention is listed in Chapter 3 on Finding and Subscribing to Podcasts. Chapter 4 is valuable in that it sets aside formats, preparation tips and licensing and legal issues.

If you have been reading our own Blog at <http://www.maccompanion.com>, you can search on Podcasting and find that we have been exploring PodCast-enabling software. Todd captures those in Chapter 5 and also ones on non-Mac platforms are discussed as well. Chapter 6 delves into gear and gets technical about mics, mixers and professional digital recorders. There is even stuff about telephone interview equipment.

For post-production, Todd obviously likes to use *Audacity* for cleaning up noise.

Way back in Chapter 12, Todd brings it all together with RSS before getting into uploading and publishing your work.

Personally, I’ve been participating with Tim Verpoorten with his *Mac ReviewCast* (<http://www.macreviewcast.com>) weekly presentations for a few weeks and Tim has been prepping his PodCasts and footing the bill as he migrates from the WinTel environment (*Surf-Bits* fame) to the Mac environment and discusses his discoveries. He read Todd’s book too. What I learned from Todd is that I should not be so worried about coming across as a professional and lighten up a little. The joy comes through as we discuss our passion for something we enjoy doing.

Going global with your work doesn’t require an FCC license nor thousands of dollars in equipment and sound studio gear anymore. And it doesn’t take all that much effort to get the word out to computers, MP3 players or cell phones any longer. With this book, you can follow Todd Cochrane’s lead.

Apple didn’t start the “PodCasting” phenomenon, but they enabled access to the technology on the Mac and with iPods. And quite a few of the presentations I’ve listened to recently are sounding and acting a little more “professional” as time goes by. Those who are vocalizing their work and moving from Blogging to PodCasting are having the time of their lives!

Switching to VoIP: A Solutions Manual for Network Professionals reviewed by Robert Pritchett



Author: Ted Wallingford

<http://www.oreillynet.com/cs/catalog/view/au/1959>

<http://www.macvoip.com>

O'Reilly

<http://www.oreilly.com>

Booksite:

<http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/switchingvoip/index.html>

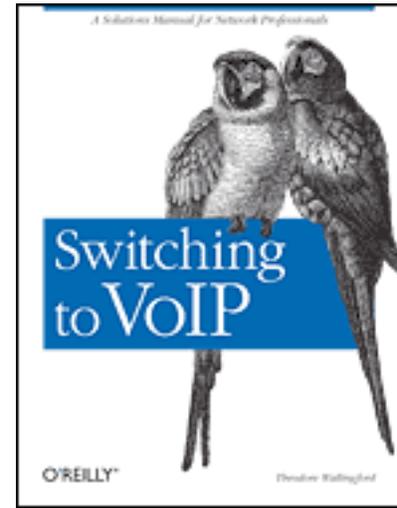
Released: June 2005

\$40 USD, \$56 CND, £28.50 GBP, €35 Euro

Pages: 477

ISBN: 0596008686

Requirements: Linux, Mac OS X or MS Windows and a desire to use Asterisk.



Strengths: Cross platform approach to Asterisk.



Weaknesses: None found.

Switching to VoIP: A Solutions Manual for Network Professionals by Theodore Wallingford takes us soup-to-nuts with migrating from regular phone systems to Voice over IP or in using Internet Telephony.

My experience as a Computer Telephony Engineer tracks nicely with what Ted Wallingford has put together here, but he takes it further by showing how to use Asterisk, an Open Source telephony server that runs on either Linux, FreeBSD or Mac OS X systems as a soft PBX (Private Branch Exchange). This isn't so much a *What* book, but rather, a *How* book. And a lot of it revolves around Ted's findings regarding Open Source VoIP apps and uses Asterisk (created by Mark Spenser) as the foundation. A commercial version of Asterisk can be obtained from Digium at <http://www.digium.com/> with Open Source support at <http://www.asterisk.org/> and documentation located at <http://www.asteriskdocs.org/>. More can be discovered here: <http://www.onlamp.com/pub/a/onlamp/2003/07/03/asterisk.html>.

What held special interest for me was that apparently there is a version of Asterisk available for Mac OS X by way of <http://www.macvoip.com/>, but found it here: <http://www.versiontracker.com/php/search.php?mode=basic&action=search&str=Asterisk&plt%5B%5D=macosx&x=0&y=0> with support here <http://www.voip-info.org/tiki-index.php?page=Asterisk%20MacOSX%20Support> and here <http://www.astmasters.net/>.

Folks have so far logged over 4 million calls using Asterisk, but many more have used Vonage, Skype and others.

Just so you know, the book isn't all about Asterisk. Chapter 16 is devoted to the latest list of Softphones, Instant Messaging Software, Desktop Telephony Software Developer Tools and SoftPBX systems, VoIP Service Providers and Telephony Hardware Vendors. The playing field has leveled off somewhat from when I did my thesis project on Internet Telephony for my Masters degree and many of the companies I knew and tested while working at TMC Labs (<http://www.tmcnet.com>) are still there.

Ted does an excellent job showing how VoIP continues to become the “disruptive” technology that has changed the fortunes of the existing Bell Telephone companies around the world forever.

This is a book for telephony geeks (and I guess I'm in that category too). There are 17 chapters covering the differences between Voice and data, convergence, Linux as a PBX, circuit-switched telephony, Enterprise applications, voice circuit and call signaling replacements, implementation plans, quality of service, security monitoring and troubleshooting tools, trunks and network infrastructure converged apps, problem situations, VoIP vendors and services and the Asterisk Reference. There are also 3 Appendices on SIP methods and responses, AGI commands and the Asterisk Manager socket API syntax.

Are you interested in looking at both the strengths and current weaknesses of circuit and packet-switched networks and how VoIP interacts with them? Interested in learning how VoIP is relatively secure, but want to know how to harden the SoftPBX server even further? Want to know how to configure IP phones or how to work with SIP and firewalls? Or bring together Email and Voicemail? How about understanding how VoIP plays with the OSI model and telephony call signaling standards?

Ted Wallingford brings it all together in typical non-boring O'Reilly fashion. Now I just have to figure out how to get the Asterisk Launcher to work properly under Tiger. By the way, the team at *Astmasters* are looking for more programming volunteers to help them make Asterisk play nicer with Mac OS X.

Talk Is Cheap: Switching to Internet Telephones reviewed by Robert Pritchett

O'REILLY®

Author: James E. Gaskin

<http://www.oreillynet.com/cs/catalog/view/au/2137>

O'Reilly

<http://www.oreilly.com>

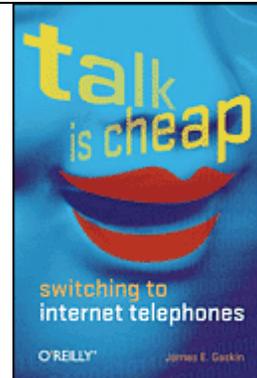
Booksite: <http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/talk/chapter/index.html>

Released: July 2005

Pages: 272

\$20 USD, \$28 CND, £13 GBP, €12 Euro

ISBN: 0596009607



Strengths: VoIP for the non-telco-geek.

Weaknesses: Focus on Vonage and Skype, mostly.

Talk Is Cheap: Switching to Internet Telephones by James E. Gaskin pokes fun at the existing telcos and delights in sticking it to them with Voice over IP options in this short 9-chapter book.

If you have either DSL or cable service for broadband connections, moving to VoIP should be an easy activity. James Gaskin devotes a lot of attention and tries to balance between two leaders in the current VoIP market; Vonage (phone-centric) and Skype (computer-centric). I use both and experiment with others, so you may see I enjoyed reading what he had to say.

And - surprise! – he shows how you are already using VoIP without your knowledge.

James does a great job comparing costs between legacy phone systems and broadband options and also asks the right questions regarding quality of service, reliability and 911 services.

What I like most about the book is that he attempts to not get in too deeply into the acronym-happy telco-speak, prevalent in the industry.

An area that he also points out is the Telco inroads being made by the incumbents into Internet services. And may I make an observation he neglected to mention? Telcos service customers like stallions service mares – and that is why millions of people have been moving to broadband dial tone.

This book is a great entry-level intro to VoIP.

The Mac OS X Tiger Book reviewed by Robert Pritchett



Author: Andy Ihnatko

Wiley Developed for the Apple Community Series
<http://www.wiley.com/WileyCDA/Section/id-108050.html>

Product Site:

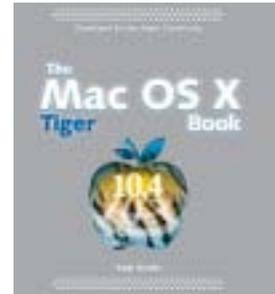
<http://www.wiley.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd-0764579576.html>

Released: May 23, 2005

Pages: 522

\$25 USD \$32 CND £19 GBP €22 Euro

ISBN: 0764579576



Strengths: Strong sense of humor piled on top of watered down technicalleeeze.

Weaknesses: A couple of typos.

Mix some fun into reading about Mac OS X Tiger 10.4 by reading Andy Ihnatko's aluminum sided Mac Towercase-looking take with *The Mac OS X Tiger Book*. Andy invents a lot of words and uses them as he alliterates and adulterates the English language with his blarney. I have to believe he makes up a lot of his "for instances" with the blue side notes posted on practically every page. As you read the table of contents you know he has his tongue firmly planted in cheek and he rivals Scott Kelby with editorial hubris and comedic content [Editor: "*the quality that makes you write (and maintain) programs that other people won't want to say bad things about*".]

In other words, this is just a fun read that is a worthy competitor against the likes of David Pogue's *Missing Manual* series on the same topic.

Somehow Andy Ihnatko keeps the energy up all the way to the last page as he cavorts with the Tiger. His treatment on AppleScript and "Automationalizing" help take the edge off of the "something new to try" mentality. He just helps us jump right into the deep end of the pool and he filtered the water so we could see clearly, no surprises.

This is the book you give to the Mac OS 9 holdouts, those that would delight in a stand-up comic approach to learning – and everyone else.

The book comes in 3 parts; *Using Tiger*, *The Technical Bits* and *Bonus Material* in 25 chapters. I think the *25 Questions from My Aunt Estelle* in Part III is worth the price of the book. And unfortunately we don't rate high enough as a magazine to be included in *his Drop the Book and Come Out Peacefully: Online Resources* yet. We are the one Mac magazine he hasn't written for yet. Maybe he should.

Mac OS X Tiger Unleashed - Knowledge > Solutions > Mastery reviewed by Robert Pritchett



Authors: John Ray

<http://www.sampublishing.com/authors/bio.asp?a=7846f3f0-daf0-4011-8636-a43c5e458a0b>

William C. Ray

<http://www.sampublishing.com/authors/bio.asp?a=d6308ea0-2353-4de2-84ac-5c101d84c2c9>

<http://www.macosxunleashed.com/>

SAMS

<http://www.sampublishing.com>

Booksite: <http://www.sampublishing.com/title/0672327465>

Released: June 29, 2005

\$50 USD, 70 CND, £36 GBP, €44 Euro

Pages: 1,560

ISDN: 0672327465

Requirements: Mac OS X 10.4 Tiger.

For Intermediate or advanced.



Strengths: Easy to read and understand approach to both Apple and other solutions for using the best OS on the planet today.

Weaknesses: Nary a one.

Mac OS X Tiger Unleashed by John and William C. Ray is a big fat, heavy book the size of a Bible. Well, that is exactly what it is. It covers everything, soup-to-nuts for Mac OS X Tiger, all 1, 560 pages of it!

John Ray and William C Ray are not afraid to let you look into the UNIX and FreeBSD side of Mac OS X and by the time you get done reading it, you've become an expert in Tiger esoterica, just as they have become.

They didn't just drink the Apple Kool-Aid, it is almost as if they invented it. They show the strengths and weaknesses, both Apple solutions and 3rd-party solutions.

You'd think a book this thick would be all textbook, but code is interspersed with pictures and explanations are well rehearsed.

There are 7 parts to the book from using Mac OSX, hardware setup and configuration, advanced user and network settings, introduction to BSD on Tiger, and advanced SD concepts server and network administration and finally, system and server health. There is enough stuff here to keep you busy until Leopard is released!

I'm constantly amazed that every time I read "another Mac OS X book" I learn something new and this book is so full of new learning it almost hurts! My barometer of a good book is weighed and measured by how many pages I've dog-eared. This one is no exception.

I learned about QuickTime Pro features, Dictionary integration into apps, Smart Mailboxes, encrypted messages and viewing mail activity, integrating apps designed for Linux such as CUPS foomatic drives and support software, security functions secreted just about everywhere, Perl, Python, MySQL, database access using ODBC, Apple remote Desktop, ProFTPD (instead of using ftpd and creating a webserver with Apache, and even some stuff on tripwire and learning about a little thing called listing the Bill of Materials along with the receipt files, with installations, and built-in diagnostic and repair tools. If any of those got your attention, there is a lot more where that came from.

This book is another keeper as an excellent resource for Mac OS X Tiger esoterica and triviamasters. This is not a codebook, but there is plenty of that floating around inside too. What it is, is a reference guide built on all past Mac OS X versions and it just keeps getting better with each rev – just like Mac OS X.

Wicked Cool Shell Scripts reviewed by Robert Pritchett



NO STARCH PRESS

Author: Dave Taylor

taylor@intuitive.com

<http://www.intuitive.com>

Interview:

http://www.itworld.com/Comp/1375/transcript_taylordave_scripts050208/

No Starch Press

<http://www.nostarch.com>

Booksite: <http://www.nostarch.com/wcss.htm>

Released: January 2004

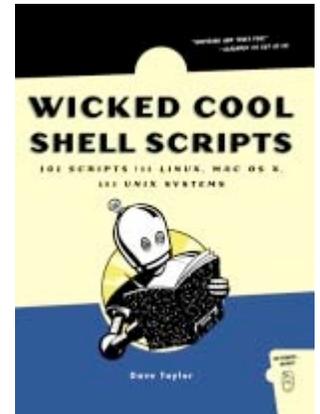
Pages: 368

\$30 USD, \$44 CND, £23 GBP, €26.50 Euro

ISBN: 1593270127

Oopsies: <http://www.intuitive.com/wicked/errata.shtml>

For Advanced Scripters, or scripter wannabees.



Strengths: Cross-platform knowledgebase.

Weaknesses: Check out the Oopsies link.

Wicked Cool Shell Scripts by Dave Taylor is a hands-on book. Not really a tutorial, but more of a cross-platform scripting cookbook. Dave Taylor appears to be happy working Linux, Mac OS X and UNIX and provides no less than 101 scripts to do the job. The scripts may not be exactly the best way to do a job, but they are at least one way. If you are into Perl, than this book may not be for you. If you have not gotten into Perl yet, than this book is for you and will at least get you into the ballpark, even if it doesn't exactly let you make a home run with every instance. But hitting a home run with every swing takes practice and so does scripting.

The other book I reviewed by Dave Taylor (*Learning Unix for Mac OS X Tiger*) kept referring back to this book, so I decided to request *Wicked Cool Shell Scripts* for review.

Dave Taylor dedicates one whole chapter (about 16 pages) to Mac Scripting (Chapter 11). He also enjoys using the Bourne Shell.

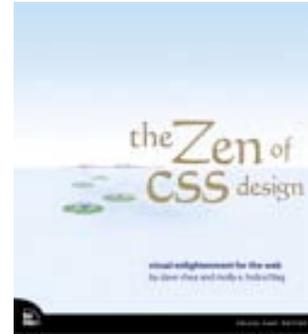
Just follow how Dave Taylor processes both syntax and logic and the information gleaned will help in cross-platform situations. He points out the issues between Shells and Unices in each platform environment. The formula is; list the code, than explain how it works, run the script and see the expected results. As with most "Code" books, there are inevitable printing issues and since the book was released in January 2005, there have been a few verified gotchas, so go to the [Oopsies](#) link early on, so you don't get frustrated. Also check out the follow-up, "Hacking the Script" pieces to learn how to possibly tweak the code even further.

Heck, even Kirk McElhearn recommends this book in his "The Mac OS X Command Line: Unix Under the Hood" and that recommendation is good enough for me.

There are 12 chapters and an afterward.

Now, with Automator and AppleScripting improvements, maybe you will find a thing or two here that you can use too, if you use Mac OS X Tiger, so others can be wowed by your supergeekiness!

The Zen of CSS Design: Visual Enlightenment For The Web reviewed by Robert Pritchett



Authors: Dave Shea

<http://www.peachpit.com/authors/bio.asp?a=b2aeb575-5996-4b87-9efe-7f94b3ec2be8>

Molly E. Holzschag

<http://www.peachpit.com/authors/bio.asp?a=a7b250d1-af55-4945-923f-2e6116ad2ee2>

<http://www.csszengarden.com/>

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1249 Eighth Street

Berkley, CA 94710

800-283-9444

FAX: 510-524-2221

<http://www.peachpit.com>

Booksite: <http://www.peachpit.com/title/0321303474>

Released: February 17, 2005

Pages: 304

\$40 USD, \$56 CND, £29 GBP, €35 Euro

ISBN: 0321303474



Strengths: Pure CSS eye-candy!

Weaknesses: Some designs can only be appreciated online.

Graphics in some cases are small enough in print to be underappreciated.

The Zen of CSS Design: Visual Enlightenment For The Web by Dave Shea and Molly E.

Holzschag shows not only how to use CSS effectively but richly as these authors weave an evermore sophisticated tapestry of design that graphically portrays that web designers are more than just the sum of their parts.

This book is coffee-table multi-colored inspirational quality that gently lets us walk through the CSS Zen garden and lets us smell the CSS roses and other electronic magic that delights the senses. No stone has been unturned in creating designs with CSS, but the ground is teeming with rich brown earth full of enzymes, without the smell of fertilizer.

Make no mistake, this is Dave Shea's germination of a website, but he has let it be a community effort and everyone has their own special fruits and vegetables to grow and display. Molly Hoolzschlag brings in her master-gardening techniques from years of design experience from preparing the web soil to harvesting the fruits of their web-based labors. The Zen balance is there working in the background instead of up front in the content.

They take ordinary to extraordinary! And they know what works and doesn't depending on which Browser is being used at any given time. They show when to plant to avoid the early-morning killing frost of misbehaving browsers, yet demonstrate how best to water without over watering or plant without overcrowding or under weeding.

This is not a beginner's book, but it is a must-have keeper once you have started CSS-gardening on your own and have migrated from Styrofoam cups to 1/2-acre plots.

It took me a while to get through this book, because each page is rich with information that absorbs the mind. There are 7 chapters on source, design, layout, imagery, typography, special effects and reconstruction with each chapter pages a different pastel color and attention to detail.

Much like the authors of the Logo books, even the masters share what they have learned along the way and suggest how even what they did can be improved and even show how browser obstacles can be overcome. Oh, and there are sidebars aplenty, with links for digging deeper too.

I became engrossed in font sizing, fixed vs. elastic design, image replacement techniques and the last part on reconstruction goes from planning to final deliverable with notes along the way.

Why garden when you can go to the store? Why not learn from the masters, so you too can become a master CSS-Gardener! Hey, it's all in how it is presented, isn't it?

Games

Commandos Battle Pack reviewed by Derek Meier



Publisher: Feral Interactive
3 St. George's Court
131 Putney Bridge Road
London, SW15 2PA
United Kingdom
+44 208-875-9787
FAX: +44 208-875-1846
<mailto:info@feral.co.uk>
<http://www.feralinteractive.com>

Released: July 2005.

\$40 USD £ 35 GBP

Requirements:

Commandos 2: Men of Courage; Mac OS X 10.2, 500MHz,
256MB RAM, 16MB VRAM, 1.85 GB Hard Drive space,
Keyboard & Mouse, DVD Drive.

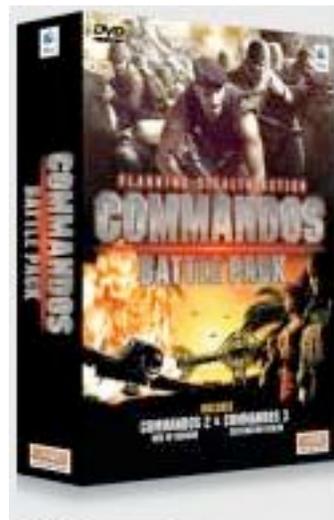
Commandos 3: Destination Berlin; Mac OS X 10.2, 867 MHz,
256MB RAM, 32MB VRAM, 2.5GB Hard Drive space,
Keyboard & Mouse, DVD Drive.

Test System: Mac Mini 1.42GHz, Mac OS X 10.4.2, 1GB
RAM, 64MB VRAM, 80GB Hard Disk, Superdrive.

Strengths: Good graphics, atmosphere enhancing soundtrack,
challenging.

Weaknesses: Learning curve, Sound effects lacking, Missing
first game. My be too challenging for caual gamers.

Some of you may have already play Commandos on other platforms know its a real treat to have *Commandos 2:Men of Courage* and *Commandos 3: Destination Berlin*. Originally released in 2001, these games were part of the popular series which will continue to be added to with an upcoming release of a first-person shooter called *Commandos Strike Force* which should be released this summer. Unfortunately, a Mac version does not appear to be worked on yet. First question I have is why not include the first Commandos? We may never know the answer, but hey, you get these two for the price of one.



Gameplay

Both Commandos 2 and 3 are real-time squad-based strategy games based on one of my favorite war genre for games; World War II. In both games, you get a top-down perspective of your current location to fulfill the objectives. Objectives can include, but are not limited to, rescuing Allied POWs, assassination, and item retrieval. There are primary objectives and secondary objectives in the game.



The missions themselves are huge, taking hours to finish and believe me, they are not easy. Unfortunately these missions caused me hours of frustration but not because the game is bad, but because it was really hard, at least for me. So it might be a good idea to do a little planning before you start your mission. Your team has a vast array of special abilities to help you get you through your missions. One of the key elements to a successful mission is stealth, making sure the enemy does not know you are there. That means taking precaution and good old fashioned sneakiness, otherwise you may have a swarm of guards coming to greet you. Using the combined abilities of snipers, spies and so on using teamwork, you will eventually be able to succeed in your missions. Actually, what is even harder than the missions is remembering the keys on the keyboard and what they correspond to.

As far as the multiplayer aspect of the game, I did setup a GameRanger (<http://www.gameranger.com>) account as required for Commandos 3, but unfortunately could not find other Commandos players online, possibly due to early release?

Graphics

The background graphics for both games are pretty good. They are detailed and do a good job of replicating a WWII look with burnt-out buildings and cool lighting effects for night missions. Commandos 3 does have enhanced graphics over Commandos 2, adding some 3D interiors to the game. While this is nice, I wonder why they did not do 3D on the landscape as well? The soldier animations are great looking. They are small, but detailed and fun to watch. They really did a nice job on them. It's easy to see the actions they are performing.

Sound & Music

Commandos 2 & 3's score sets the mood very nicely, keeping to a WWII theme. The sound effects unfortunately are very bland and weak sounding. They could have done better job on the effects. They are kind of disappointing.

Verdict

Commandos 2 & 3 are very good games despite their age and you get them for the price of one. Unfortunately, the first Commandos is missing. The graphics are very good in both titles, but a little shaky on the sound effects, but on top of it on the soundtrack. They are challenging on the side of being really hard, but a die-hard real time strategy gamer should not have too much trouble. Although the difficulty may put off casual gamers. There is a learning curve on the keyboard commands. I still mess those up, which can cost the mission. This set is a worthwhile addition to any war-gamers arsenal.

Laser Dolphin 1.2.1 reviewed by Derek Meier



Dingo Games

Vancouver, BC, Canada

support@dingogames.com

<http://www.dingogames.com/dolphin/>

Released: May 15, 2005

Shareware \$20 USD.

Requirements: Mac OS X or Windows

Strengths: Level editor, 3 modes of play, Price. Nonstop action.

Weaknesses: The ocean is kinda bare, bad soundtrack. So So sound.



Test System: PowerBook G4 1.25GHZ 512MB RAM, ATI RADEON 9200 32MB. 80 GIG HD.

Overview

Oh no! The Prime Minister has been abducted by Aliens! This is the beginning for Laser Dolphin. He is recruited into saving the Prime Minister. See, Laser Dolphin is a high tech dolphin that is armed to the teeth. This guy is not Flipper! And Ecco the dolphin has nothing on him. In an ocean full of things that go bump in the water, Laser Dolphin is here to kick some butt! Laser Dolphin is a 2d side scrolling shooter by Dingo Games



Gameplay

The game is controlled with using a mouse and keyboard. The controls took a little while to get used to and at first I thought it was awkward playing with a laptop, but eventually I got used to it. But complex moves take a bit of control.

There are three different modes of play; Action, Stunt, Racing and difficulty levels start at very easy to extreme.

Action

As Laser Dolphin, you start out in search of a spaceship so you can go after the alien captors and rescue the Prime Minister. Along the way you find some weapons of mass destruction. The first one I encountered was the guided missile that you shoot and the it homes in on the target. It's handy for shooting in the air and underwater enemies attacking



you. More power-ups for weapons get added later in the game. I just love the default weapons animation. I just think it looks really cool when shot. Also on the levels, there are gold dolphin coins that restore health.

The enemies in Laser Dolphin are plenty, and they consist of seagulls dropping bombs, underwater mines, gun turrets and missile-shooting fish, to name a few. The mines for me were the hardest. It seemed they had a sign that said, "run into me, it's a good thing". "Very easy" to me, seemed pretty hard, but your results may vary.

Stunt

In stunt mode you get to do as many tricks as you can to win medals. Tricks like doing flips and jumping through hoops. Medals include Bronze, Silver and Gold

Race

In Race mode you race through the tunnels, through hoops and making jumps through hoops. Just like the Stunt mode, you can win medals.

Level Editor

Rounding out the game is a level editor. I did not test this, but you can create your own customized levels adding some replay-ability to the game. It does appear to have a learning curve.

Graphics

The graphics in Laser Dolphin are pretty decent for a shareware game. They are not spectacular, but they are not bad. I like some of the effects of the weapons in the game and the movement of the body of the dolphin itself. The animation is fluid and smooth, although the levels seem a bit barren and not full of life like the ocean. Adding more animated scenery would definitely add to the game.



Sound & Music

My biggest fault is the annoying techno-music in the game which plain is not good. The squeaks and squeals of the dolphin are fine, as well as the explosions, but nothing spectacular. The graphics bring a lot more to the game than the sound or music.

Conclusion

Laser Dolphin is a fun diversion to play for a while. It's a good side scrolling shooter with a somewhat original character. The sound and music need some work, but the graphics aren't bad, except for the ocean being somewhat desolate. The level editor adds to the game as well as having the three play modes; action, stunts and racing. Not a bad game for the price, but nothing really exciting.

Power Game Factory 1.0.4 reviewed by Derek Meier



Sawblade Software
45 Baldwin Hill Rd
Litchfield, CT 06759
support@sawbladesoftware.com
<http://www.sawbladesoftware.com>

Released: July 25, 2005
\$44 USD

Requirements: Mac OS X 10.2 or above; 800 MHz or faster;
256 MB (512 MB recommended); 2 GB available disk space;

Graphics: 32 MB graphics card or better

Applications: Image and sound editing applications are recommended;

Tech Specs: Hardware-accelerated OpenGL graphics at a variety of resolutions, plus transparency, projectile rotation, and character scaling. Graphics may be created in any of 8 common formats.

Animation: Dozens of animation sequences per character, with up to hundreds of high resolution animation frames for each sequence

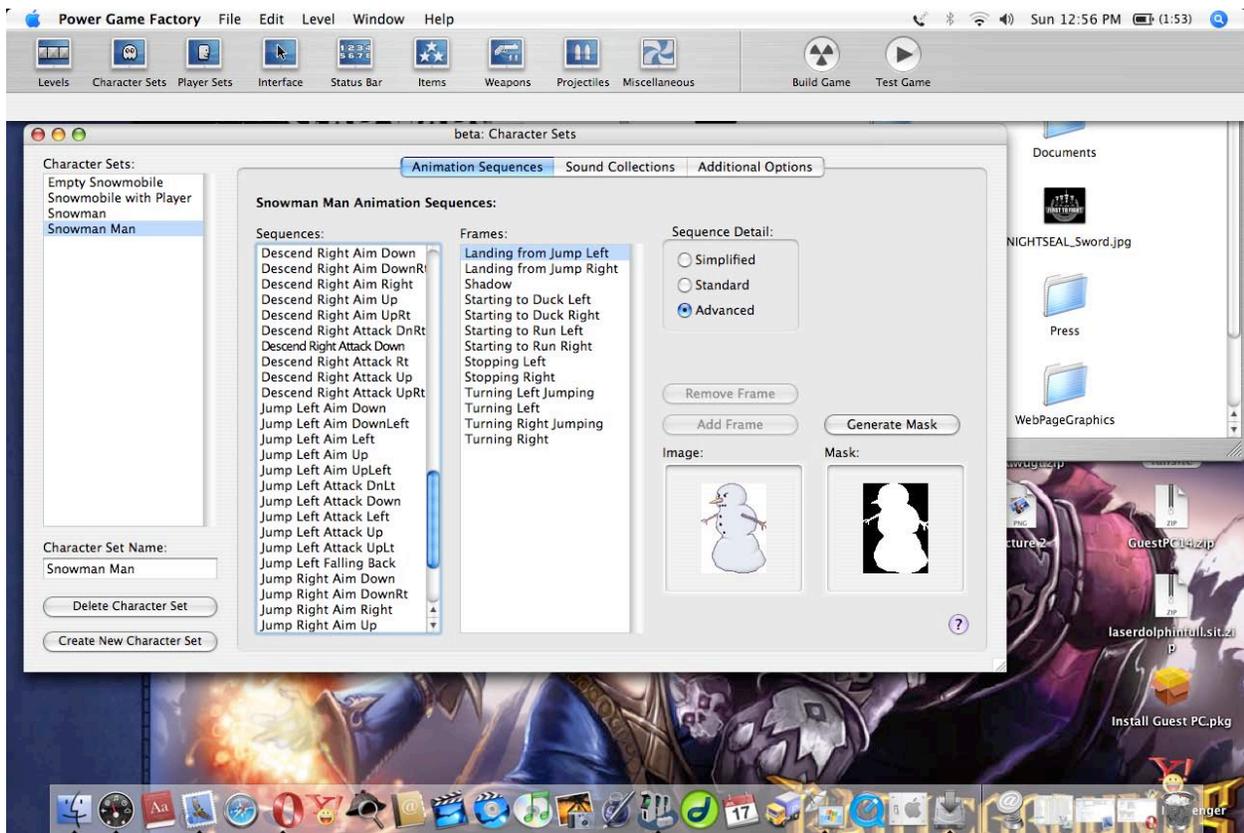
Audio: Capacity for CD quality stereo background music and ambient sounds, plus multiple variations of all sound effects.

Level Design: Levels may be up to 32576 pixels in width and height, with a grid of 8 by 8-pixel collision blocks for precise architectural design. Support for hundreds of characters and objects per level.

Strengths: Highly configurable, royalty free, can play game without software, no programming experience required, game possibilities are endless.

Weaknesses: No hardcopy of the manual.

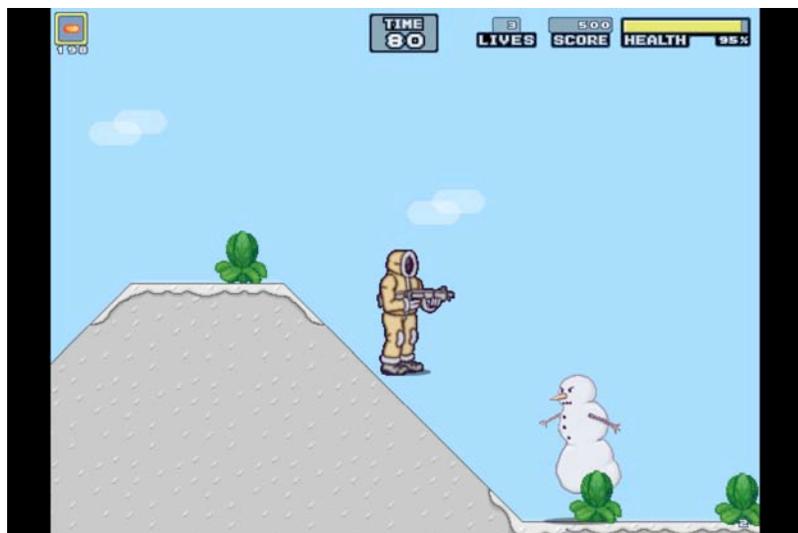




Ever thought of writing your own game and then come to the realization, “Oh I can’t code”, than loosing that thought while going back to play a game someone else has made? Well Sawblade Software may have a solution for game-writer wannabe’s with Power Game Factory (PGF). It is royalty free and you can run the game without the software. Sound interesting?

Power Game Factory allows you to make 2D sidescrolling shooter for the Mac. Games that can be created like the original Mario Brothers, Metroid and the original Duke Nukem series on the PC. PGF lets you have virtually total creative control from the background music to character animations to cutscenes.

The interface is laid out very nicely for the buttons you need to access. Any section of the game that you can configure are laid out on the top of the screen and referred to as the toolbar. This toolbar is something you will use frequently in your game creation. For example, clicking on the levels button allows you to design the levels in the game. It allows you to select character placement, add scenery and add characters to that level. This is done by clicking the appropriate button, than selecting where you want to put them. If you don’t like the placement, you can move them easily by dragging-and-dropping. It’s all really quite easy, with no programming experience necessary.



Characters and all objects in the game are all highly configurable from the animation to the sounds the character makes, in doing different actions, like shooting or jumping. Hopefully you have some artistic talent, since the game only comes with a single baddie, a snowman and default cabbage for scenery. You can also add your own graphics into the game by dragging and dropping. This goes for all the graphics in the game. PGF makes it really simple, except you need

to have a source for the graphics, whether you create your own or have someone create them for you. My biggest dilemma is, is there a market for a stick figure action hero?

During my testing with the default graphics and sound except for the added Nine Inch Nails song the game was not bad and could even be better with custom graphics, if I had any. What would have been nice is if it came with more stock graphics. But understandably it is meant for you to add your own. During the time I have had the Power Game Factory, it had several updates and it appears they are doing a good job keeping it updated.

While the interface is well laid out and it is easy to use drag and drop and changing properties of objects, kinda like visual programming without the coding, I wish they had included a hard copy of the manual. For a program this highly configurable, I felt this is a must. Returning back to the HTML manual was a pain. But on the plus side, the HTML manual and, tutorial is really easy to follow.

At first I was a bit skeptical but Power Game Factory has a lot to offer, but in the end, I believe Power Game Factory is a great program for non-programmers. It is extremely easy to use and highly configurable. Don't get me wrong. Creating a game won't be that easy. It still takes hard work, but at least you now have a great tool to do that work with. One thing I think is missing is a manual. Also, it does not have more stock graphics and sound but I really can't begrudge them for that since it is not really meant to make generic games from a template.

Being royalty free and runnable without the development software itself is a definite plus. For any gamer or wannabe programmer who wants to make a 2D sidescrolling action game should take a serious look at Power Game Factory. Hopefully if this does well, we may see an adventure game version of this. To see all Power Game Factory does, check out their website <http://www.sawbladesoftware.com>. Then let's see some new games!

Star Wars: BATTLEFRONT reviewed by Derek Meier



ASPYR MEDIA, INC.

Aspyr Media, Inc
P.O BOX 5861
Austin, TX 78763
<http://www.aspyr.com>
\$50 USD.



Requirements: Mac OS X 10.3.6 or later; PowerPC G4/G5 or later; 1GHz or faster; 256 MB or higher (512 MB recommended); 2.7 GB free disk space; Radeon 8500 Video Card (ATI) or better; GeForce4 MX Video Card (Nvidia) or better; 64 MB Video Memory (VRAM) or higher; DVD Drive.



Online Play:

Internet and LAN (TCP/IP) play supported.
Internet play requires Broadband connection.
Mac-to-Mac-Internet play via GameRanger.
Mac-to-PC play on LAN or Direct IP only.

Test System:

PowerBook G4; OS X 10.4.2; 1.25GHz; 512 MB;
Video Card (ATI), Radeon 9600;
Video Memory (VRAM), 64 MB.

Intro

After about a year of being available for the PC and PS2 as well as having a sequel about to be released, Aspyr unleashed Star Wars Battlefront. For those who have not heard of Battlefront, it's basically Star Wars meets Battlefield 1942. Battlefield 1942 was an excellent game itself, but multiplayer Star Wars first-person shooter. What a cool concept I can know be a Stormtrooper and serve the Empire!



Gameplay

In Battlefront the battle takes place in two time periods; the Clone Wars and the Galactic Civil War. In the Clone Wars you play events that take place during episodes 1-3 Republic vs. the Separatists and in the Galactic Civil War, the events correspond with episodes 4-6 Rebels vs. the Empire. Each team has five different soldier classes; a basic soldier with rifle, a scout with sniper rifle, a heavy weapons soldier, a pilot that distributes health/ammo as well as fixes things.

Even if the pilot is in the vehicle, it is automatically repaired. Then there is the

last class, which is specialized for every team. A Wookiee smuggler for the Rebels, which has a bowcaster, mortar launcher and timed bombs. The Republic and Empire both have troopers with rocket packs. The last is the Separatists, which have the Droidika which can curl into a ball like a Pill bug and can generate a force shield for a limited time, power permitting. What's missing? Uh, Jedi of course. Why can't we play a Jedi??



Each team has different vehicles and ships available to them. Some of the ships include X-Wing and A-Wing fighters, Jedi Starfighters, Snow Speeders, as well as Tie Fighters, AT-AT's, Snow Walkers and much, much more from each time period. The extensive collection of vehicles gives you a nice variety. Each is easy to control and add to the gameplay nicely.

There are many worlds and time periods the battles can take place from Hoth, my personal favorite, to Tatooine to Cloud City. All ten planet's scenery are nicely done and very distinct. Ah, there is nothing like riding a Taun-Taun or piloting a Snow Walker on Hoth. Hoth keeps true to the Empire Strikes Back with the Millennium Falcon sitting in the launch bay, as well as having a shield generator that can be destroyed like in the movie.

In single-player mode, you can select the Clone Wars Campaign, Galactic Civil War Campaign, Galactic Conquest or Instant Action. In the Clone Wars Campaign and Galactic Civil War Campaign you follow the events in the both sets of movies. The Galactic Conquest lets you take over planets one after the other. In Instant Action you can choose any map or maps you want and play them in order. All of the single player selections will lead you to playing with and against bots. As with most games the bots are kinda dumb and do dumb things like not running for cover or stand there and be shot, typical. The objective is to capture all the spawn points in the game by holding the position



with at least one person controlling the area. NPC's are most abundant in the game which you do not normally see in this type of game. Medical droids, ammo dispensing droids, Ewoks, Jawas, heck even Darth Vader will throw in an appearance in the game. Dislike those furry Ewoks? Well you can blast 'em in this game. The most fun in the game is to play against life-breathing opponents.

Multiplayer is what definitely Star Wars Battlefront is all about. Unfortunately, unless you are on a LAN or direct IP connection, you won't be able to play Windows users. Instead of Gamespy you are limited to the Mac-only GameRanger, most likely for the high licensing fees of Gamespy reported before. Does this limit you in any way? Yes I believe so. You will have less hosts to connect to and less players to play with online, since Windows has the largest base of gamers between Macs and PCs. But understandably, we will probably see a lot of Mac developers using GameRanger instead of Gamespy. Of course I am getting a bit off topic. Multiplayer online is fast paced and fun. Competing with up to 32 players at a time is really cool in the Star Wars universe. Fulfilling the same objectives as single player will allow your team to conquer the enemy. When you look at it, it's just like the gameplay of Battlefield 1942. Is that bad? No, I enjoyed both immensely and if you are Star Wars fan like me, you will enjoy it to with all the vehicles and the variety of maps.

Graphics

Battlefronts graphics are really well done. Bringing you into the Star Wars galaxy with authentic looking ships, weapons, planets, and characters. Graphics are not awe inspiring, but they do the job well. From the small speeder bikes to the Imperial Snow Walkers, the vehicles look good and the characters look good as well, especially with the overdramatic rag doll physics when a person is killed, sending him rolling or flying in the air. For the most part, the background scenery is pretty nice as well, replicating well-known areas in the Star Wars universe quite well.



Sound & Music

The sound and music of Battlefront is nonetheless a great feature. We are treated to music from composer John Williams. The music from the original films adds some great atmosphere to the game. Even the voices in the game sound authentic and the sound of the blasters sound like they come directly from the movies, giving a truly cinematic experience. Turn it up loud for full effect!

Conclusion

If fast and furious multiplayer Star Wars universe combat is what you're looking for, run out and get a copy from the recruiters office and join the ranks of the Rebellion or the Empire! Star Wars Battlefront is a fun, fast-paced multiplayer first-person shooter. While the bots in single-player can be dull-witted, the main reason to play this game is to play against live people online. The game has stayed faithful to the Star Wars universe with its maps, vehicles and characters. The gameplay and style has been done before, but being set in the Star Wars universe, it gets some added personality that makes a really worthwhile purchase. It's large battles on an epic scale with the good quality graphics and immersive sound puts you on the battlefield. I highly recommend this game!



Hardware

Geek Tags = Chic Geek Jewelry reviewed by Mike Swope



Manufacturer: Badali Jewelry

Geek Tags Web Site:

<http://www.badalijewelry.com/geektags.htm>

Manufacturer Web Site: <http://www.badalijewelry.com>

Released: 2005

\$11 USD to \$20 USD.

White Bronze & Sterling Silver

Target Audience: Geeks and those who love them

Strengths: Imaginative, fun, uncomplicated, inexpensive, widening product line.

Weaknesses: None.

Who's Your Geek?

We all know one. We may not admit that we are a geek, but we certainly know at least one. But Geek is now chic, with the explosion of the Internet and this decade's crop of record-setting superhero, big budget Hollywood flicks. And there's no better way to advertise that you're a Geek and/or no better gift to give the Geek in your life, than a Geek Tag necklace or key ring from Badali Jewelry.

Geek Tags in White Bronze or Sterling Silver for Everyone

The Geek Tag collection offers a dozen plus designs in both key ring and necklace formats, in both base metal or sterling silver, including I [heart] geeks, uber geek, computer geek, comic geek, sci-fi geek, gamer geek and others. Among my favorites are the computer code geek tags that require some kind of explanation or translation. For example, the *133+ tag* translates to "leet." Then there's the *ph3@r +h3 5k1!!5 tag*, which translates to "Fear the skills." These are the geekiest of the geek tags. Though these geekiest tags are for hardcore hackers <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leet>, there is a tag for just about every geek. Or there will be.

An Ever-Widening Product Line

The Geek Tag product line has widened briskly. Badali Jewelry has attended several geek-couture conventions (including ComiCons) and has had several requests for Nerd, Dork, Geek Girl, Fiend, Goth, Punk and Chic Geek, to name only a few. These new Geek Tags are reported to become available in early August 2005. Badali Jewelry also offers custom phrases and logos. Contact Badali Jewelry for more information. Heck, send them your suggestions. I did.

Anything More Would Be Less

The quality of the jewelry is geek fitting. Reasonably priced, Geek Tags currently come in square and/or oval dog tag format as either a necklace or key ring. The jewelry is a 1.2 mm thick charm/pendant of raw white bronze or sterling silver. The necklace or key ring is silver colored key ring or bead chain. Paradoxically, anything more commercial would be less valued, IMHO.

Bottom Line

Buy a Geek Tag necklace or key ring for the Geek in your life! You'll love making your choice, and they'll love you for the gift that recognizes and honors their geek depths of their soul!

[Editor: Learn more about Mike Swope at:

<http://www.maccompanion.com/info/aboutus.html#mikeswope>]

Shareware

Introduction to *doc_Babad's Software and Shareware Reviews*

Three Great Software Tools for you and yours
by Harry {doc} Babad, edited by Julie M. Willingham



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This month I continue sharing my software and shareware finds with you. As is usual, I continue to pursue my interest in utilitarian software and shareware esoterica and when something on the Internet catches my fancy, I provide you with a separate few eclectic tidbits. Remember, there is no rhyme or reason for my choices other than what appears interesting, amusing, or heavens forbid, useful.

Note, for shorter reviews, I do a quick several hours long test run, at the very least, on the shareware items I review in this column, and may at time contact the developer when things don't work as I believe they should. Such shareware review is never as complete as the multipage individual in-depth reviews of the more complex software-shareware products I do for macC.

When reviewing commercial software products, most of which are more feature rich than their shareware counterparts, I spend 2-3 days working with the product and in addition, I also take the time to read manuals, users guides and help files. Sometimes I read before I test the product, but usually it's after I get just a bit stuck.

Indeed, for software and shareware reviews, where I agree with the developers' description and other comments, stripped of all adjectives, I unabashedly use them in this column. If not, you'll read about it, loud and clear! [Aren't mixed metaphors wonderful?]

List of Items Reviewed In August

DEVONagent 1.7 — DEVONagent overcomes the shortcomings that make Google & Co. such a pain when attempting to do a serious research. It provides more than 50 plug-ins for search engines, scientific databases, and research tools, allowing you to do a more narrowly focused, predefined search using its plug-ins and search set configurations. It has a clean, easy to use user interface that makes it a good tool for finding information on the WWW. [Editor: This one is in the Software Section.]

iKey 2.1B3 — iKey is an automation utility, a program that creates shortcuts to accomplish repetitive tasks. It allows you to assign global hotkeys to a wide variety of single or multiple step complex actions. In essence, an iKey shortcut is a little program in its own right, but you don't need to know the first thing about programming to create one. All you have to do is put together the three necessary parts of a shortcut: one or more commands that give the shortcut its functionality, a context in which it runs, and a launcher that defines how the shortcut is activated. iKey helps you combine these to achieve your automation goals.

Print Window Pro 3.1.3 — Print Window offers the ability to print a file listing from directly within the Mac OS X Finder. No more taking screenshots of a window or settling for text-only printouts of filenames only. Print Window provides the works: icons, file information, sorting, and more! All it take is the familiar print command from the finder, you know—Command-P, and the contents of your folder can be captured and printed to either paper or saved to PDF with ease.

iKey 2.1b — A hot key automation application
reviewed by Harry {doc} Babad, edited by Julie M. Willingham



Publisher: Script Software
ikey-info@scriptsoftware.com
<http://scriptsoftware.com/ikey/>

Released: July 14, 2005

Shareware: \$35 USD single user.

File Size: 7.9 MB

Extensive manual written by Adam C Engst (TidBITS).

Requirements: Mac OS X 10.2 or later, including Tiger (Mac OS X 10.4)

Strengths: You can easily use iKey to automate countless tasks, freeing you to do things that are more interesting.

Weaknesses: Although the interface is straightforward, as a user of QuickKeys and MS Word I found the interface took a bit of getting used to. After all, there is a difference between simply and carefully recording an action, and taking a few minutes to plan a set of actions built with the iKey Editor, adding them one at a time in sequence to produce a shortcut to use as you will.

Audience: All user levels.

This software was tested on a 1 GHz dual processor PowerPC G4 Macintosh with 2 GB DDR SDRAM running under OS X 10.3.9.

Product and company names and logos in this review may be registered trademarks of their respective companies.

Software Overview

iKey is an automation utility, a program that creates shortcuts to accomplish repetitive tasks. It allows you to assign global hotkeys to a wide variety of single or multiple step complex actions. In essence, an iKey shortcut is a little program in its own right, but you don't need to know the first thing about programming to create one. All you have to do is put together the three necessary parts of a shortcut: one or more commands that give the shortcut its functionality, a context in which it runs, and a launcher that defines how the shortcut is activated. iKey helps you combine these to achieve your automation goals.



Introduction

Over the years I've, on rare occasion, had a need to create and use a macro (e.g., shortcut) to ease doing repetitive tasks; but, overall, I am not a compulsive user of shortcuts. Despite my usual lack of need for them, the ability to use a hotkey to complete a multiple step action continues to intrigue me. Therefore, I checked out the software and planned to make it easier to accessing my favorite NPR stations. Specifically they were to *universally* access the local National Public Radio music or news and views from my keyboard.

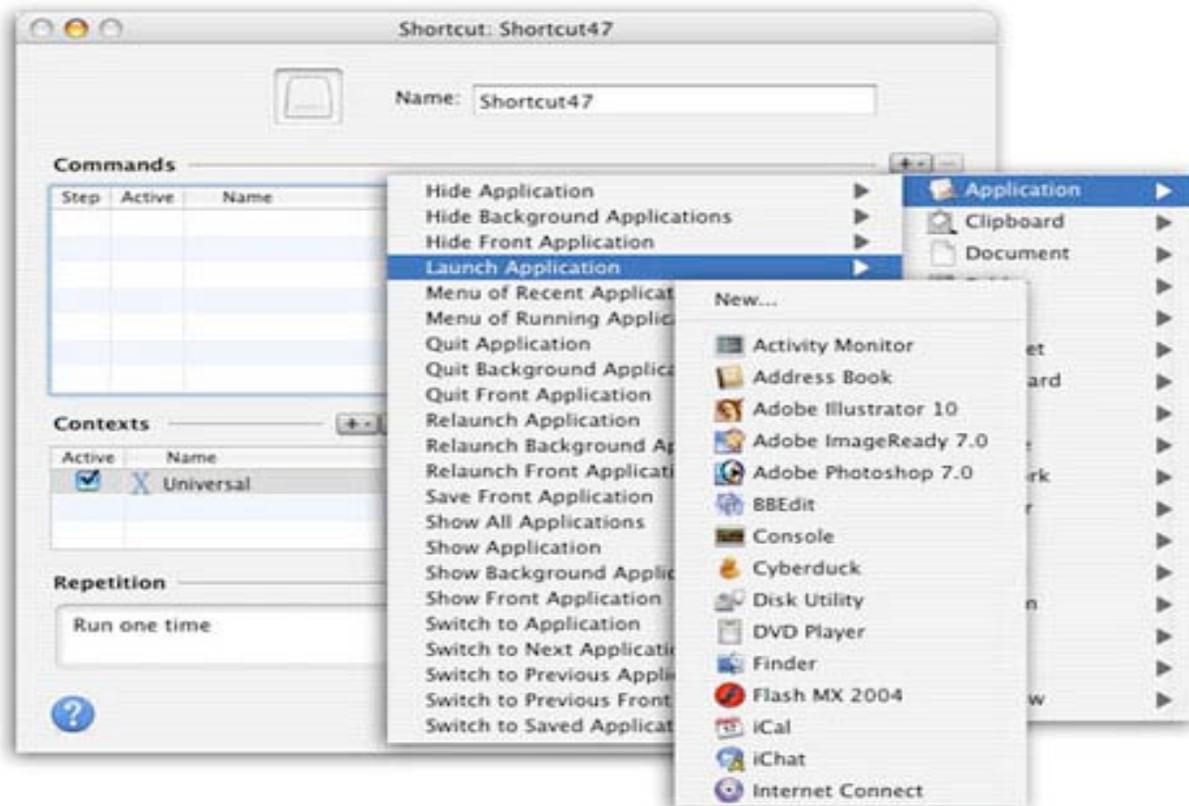
My plan, on paper, was: (a) finding and opening the desired station on my hard disk; (b) parking its window on my dock so it would be out of my way; (c) then, making things louder so I could hear them. After fumbling around a bit, actually more than a little bit, my initial tries did not come close to working. The iKey interface was one that was not intuitive to me. I then turned to Adam Engst's 148-page manual called *Taking Control of iKey 2* for help. That helped me to better understand the concepts that underlie the iKey interface. We'll talk about that later in this review.

No, I'm not a slow learner. My troubles are likely due to the fact that all other macro creation software I'd used previously recorded my steps so all I needed was to use my keyboard and mouse around.

Working With the Product

Download the product, copy its folder into your Applications folder, and the software is ready to use. The first time you use the iKey editor, it asks you for your administrator's password, because some the shortcuts will likely be applied system wide.

iKey comes with 15 built-in shortcuts, but I found all of them unsuited to my computing needs and style since I don't use most of Apple's iApplications. Therefore, for this review, I created my own shortcuts. To create a new shortcut, launch the iKey Editor. When it opens, select "New", and the shortcut creation screen will appear.



iKey Main Shortcut Window

From the main window, you also have access to iKey preferences pane.

As shown in the figure on the left, the shortcut window contains four main fields: Name, Commands, Hot Key, and Contexts. The *hotkey* feature is hidden in the developer's image I've shown, but using it serves to keep review graphics clutter under control. (I've provided definitions of these terms further in the review.)

Name your shortcut in the name field, and start by creating a Command for iKey to implement. "Commands" are the actions you want your shortcut to perform. The plus sign in the window opens a menu with options such as application, keyboard, document, AppleScript, etc. Each top-level option has a submenu listing additional selections. After a command is selected that defines what you want the shortcut to do, a *Hot Key* (the key that activates the commands) can be assigned to the action. "Contexts" allow you to assign the *hotkey* as universally available in all applications or to be applicable only to a specified application. Press "Save", and you are done. In addition, there are lots of other sleek ways of fine-tuning what, how, and when your hotkey will work.



Definitions — A shortcut, according to iKey's developer, is made up of three main parts:

- **Commands** — A command is the action, or series of actions, that you want iKey to perform. An example of a command is: Open Photoshop and start a new document.
- **Contexts** — The context is the circumstance in which your shortcut can be activated. Most commonly, the context is set to "universal" so that it will work regardless of which application you are in. However, you may wish to set a hotkey for use only in Photoshop, so in this case the context would be set to Photoshop.
- **Launchers** — The launcher activates your shortcut. Most commonly, it is a hotkey or date/time event. For example, launch Windows Media Player to play your favorite news and views station by pressing a keyboard combination, or arrange to have it load for you at a predetermined time each morning.

Okay, you get the idea. After a bit of a learning curve, you'll likely be able to create shortcuts for your most irksome multi-step tasks.

Features

- Tell your computer to launch, switch, show, quit, and re-launch software applications, or to open specific documents.
- Simulate both keydown events and mouse events (i.e., control the computer as if someone were physically using the keyboard and the mouse).
- Copy, paste, and add text or images to the clipboard.

The information provided by iKey's developer, both on the website and in Adam C. Engst's outstanding manual, is rich with proposed uses and examples of the product's versatility.

My Test Saga Continues

Accessing my favorite radio stations — By reading and following the tutorial, I was able to produce two hotkeys to access my music from anywhere on my computer. (Not easily the first half-dozen times, but the software interface grew on me as I became familiar with its ways.) To quickly access my two favorite FM stations, the shortcuts I created were a good news-bad news situation. The good news is that my learning curve was shorter than when I created my first FileMaker Pro contact list database. The bad news is that I have a faster and more effective way to access both my favorite public radio stations, but that's not the fault of the developer.

(Years ago I installed a haxie called Fruit Menu from Unsanity - <http://www.unsanity.com/haxies/fruitmenu>, software that gives me the ability to customize both my Apple [e.g.,] Menu and my contextual menus. The product out-Apple's my Apple menu from what I was able to do in Mac OS X 9.x. As a result, I have the aliases to all my favorite Internet radio stations stashed in a folder that appears at the top my fruit menu list. As a result, I'm a mouse-click away from all of them, just as if I'd created a set of hotkeys for all of them, my substitute for using iKey.

Software or Reviewer Limitations

I do, as many of you remember, quite a bit of Internet recipe hunting. This is going to get messy, so bear with me. Usually when you turn up a recipe, the pages contain lots of advertising and junk associated with that web page. At times, the original web page contains a photo of the recipe. One can often get to a printer-friendly version of the recipe, but it is a formatted text-only file, so the image is gone.

Six hours of trial and error—coffee didn't help nor did the otherwise fine manual—disappointment was my only reward. It may be possible to build a macro, either as one long and complex command and context chain or perhaps as a series of them, but I couldn't figure out how to create a shortcut for sequentially capturing recipe text from the Internet to MS Word and then subsequently transferring its image to my word document.

Conclusions

The iKey software was not intuitive, but when I'd learned its interface, it was surprisingly easy to use. Although my test time was limited, I found I could create, reliably, almost all the shortcuts I wanted. From the perspective of working with the product, and formerly working with QuicKeys, iKey is a good productivity aid for Mac OS X. iKey is cost effective shareware [\$30] and at times will likely meet my relatively simple needs.

If you are willing to take more than a few minutes to create shortcuts and can remember their hotkeys, iKey can be a useful shortcut creation tool. It can save you many, many keystrokes and reduce the tedium of repetitious actions. If you want or need a utility that allows creation of shortcuts to perform an action or sequence of actions, each of which can be launched by key combinations or menu or event, iKey is the utility for you. This easy to use, macro/automation utility can save time, typing, and hundreds of clicks everyday. The publisher noted that it could help you avoid carpal tunnel syndrome.

iKey is not a tool I'm likely to use often (not my computing style), and it has a bit of a learning curve, but I rate it **3.5 macC's**. However, if macros turn you on and automation is your thing, try and then buy the product.

Print Window 3.1.3 - print folder contents listings from the Finder reviewed by Harry {doc} Babad, edited by Julie M. Willingham

Developer: Searchware Solutions

Website: <http://swsoftware.com/products/printwindow/>

Freeware (includes 30-day demo of advanced version)

Shareware (advanced version) \$15 USD.

Review Caveat – Since I did this review over a more extended time period than the author’s free use of the advanced features permits, I contacted scott@searchwaresolutions.com, providing him with the final draft of this review. I have lowered my review score by **1 macC** because of the developer’s attitude.



Requirements: Mac OS X 10.1.5 or higher (some features require Mac OS X 10.2 or higher). Tiger ready.

Size: 3.3 MB

The software was tested on a 1 GHz dual processor PowerPC G4 Macintosh with 2 GB DDR SDRAM running under OS X 10.3.9.



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As you know, when Apple developed the Macintosh OS X operating system, they left out, for reasons known only to Steve Jobs, classic features we had loved in our classic operating systems. Some of these gaps have been filled by the folks at Unsanity <http://www.unsanity.com/news/> and other shareware developers, but I have long missed the ability I had in OS 9 to easily print a folder's list of files from directly within the Finder. Searchware Solutions has come to my rescue and yours. Their fine product is available both in a freeware version and in a more capable shareware version. This is the best type of "try before you buy" business model, since the clock doesn't shut down your free use of their product.

So, What Does Print Window Allow You To Do?

Print Window offers the ability to print a file listing from directly within the Mac OS X Finder. No more taking screenshots of a window or settling for text-only printouts of filenames only. Print Window provides the works: icons, file information, sorting, and more! All it takes is the familiar print command from the finder, you know—Command-P, and the contents of your folder can be captured and printed to either paper or saved to PDF with ease.

Print Window Standard (the freeware) provides you with the ability to fully control what your printed listings look like. You can decide whether to include icons, file information, and page headers. You can pre-sort file listings by a variety of criteria. You can even print your file listings in multiple columns on the same page!

Listing of "PrintWindow 3.1.3 Freeware" (Page 1)				
Name	Kind	Size	Date Modified	
Developer Dialogs	Folder	4 KB	6/16/05 at 1:02:20 PM	
Print Window 3.1.3 for macC	Microsoft Word text document	4 KB	6/16/05 at 1:02:07 PM	
Details and Background Info	Folder	148 KB	6/16/05 at 1:20:39 PM	
Print Window 3.1.3 - MacUpdate.pdf	Adobe PDF document	148 KB	5/4/05 at 6:19:44 PM	
Graphics	Folder	164 KB	6/16/05 at 2:14:28 PM	
PrintWindow Icon.png	PNG document	24 KB	6/16/05 at 12:34:46 PM	
PrintWindow Preferences.jpg	JPEG document	32 KB	6/16/05 at 2:13:18 PM	
PrintWindow Welcome.jpg	JPEG document	61 KB	6/16/05 at 2:11:42 PM	
PrintWindows Advanced Screen.jpg	JPEG document	36 KB	6/16/05 at 12:39:18 PM	
PrintWindow 3.1.3 Review.doc	Microsoft Word document	46 KB	6/16/05 at 1:56:27 PM	
PrintWindow User Guide.pdf	Adobe PDF document	792 KB	1/20/05 at 6:42:56 PM	
printwindow.dmg	disk image file	3.3 MB	4/30/05 at 1:48:21 PM	
SearchWare Solutions - Products - Print Window.webloc	Web Internet Location	708 bytes	5/4/05 at 6:20:53 PM	
SearchWare Solutions _ Print Window.pdf	Adobe PDF document	169 KB	5/4/05 at 6:20:39 PM	

Harry's OSX HD:Users:harry:Desktop: Tips-Shareware for July:Print Window 3.1.3 Freeware f: Thursday, June 16, 2005 at 2:15:46 PM

I've copied below, for your convenience, the publisher's description of the available options when printing a folder window. Working in advanced mode, I sent a few captured window contents to my printer to create a paper copy. However, in most of my work, I captured folder windows by printing to PDF. In addition, I also used the software to produce a list of files for a booklet to go with a data backup CD I was creating. By working with captured folder contents in 'Print to PDF Mode', I was able to use Acrobat Pro 7 to capture the text listing and transfer that information directly to a CD label template. It worked both in AppleWorks and in *disclabel*; after all, you're just copying and pasting text.

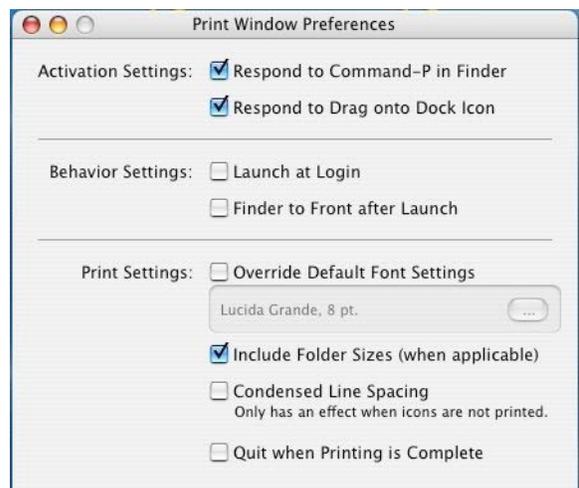
- **Icons** – You can decide if you want your file listings to include icons or not. If you do print icons, you can also decide how large you want them (16x16 pixels to 128x128 pixels).
- **File Information** - With Print Window, you can decide if you want your file listing to include just the file names or if you want to print a wide variety of information about each file.
- **Look Deeper** - Have a folder that contains multiple subfolders that also have files you want to include in your file listing? No problem! Print Window will allow you to automatically expand subfolders so that your file listing will include those files as well.

Print Window Advanced

Print Window Advanced is a new shareware program first developed for Version 3. Along with the other features in Print Window Standard, Print Window Advanced provides even more great features to provide improve your control of the final look of your file listings.



Print Window Advanced screen



Print Window Preference pane

- **CD and DVD Covers** - If you've just burned a CD or DVD and want to include a list of files found on the disk, now you can! Print Window Advanced will print your file listing preformatted to fit in a standard CD or DVD case. CD covers will even print as a booklet, if your listing takes up more than one finished page!
- **Manual Expansion** - Print Window Standard provides the ability to expand subfolders. Print Window Advanced also allows you to manually select what folders to expand. So, if you want to expand some and not others, that's fine. It's your choice.
- **File Information** - Print Window Standard allows you to print information for each file included in your file listing. However, it doesn't allow you to decide what information to include. Print Window Advanced allows you to pick and choose what information to include about each file.

Two wishes for a future upgrade.

First, when capturing the contents of a folder that contains only a few entries, Print Window leaves a lot of space between that last item on your folder contents list, and the footer that provides capture information date and folder pathway. I created the image of my Print Window review folder as a PDF file and then removed the empty space in Acrobat Pro 7. It would be nice to do this in a simpler fashion.

Second, can a template be created that allows printing the folder contents directly onto a CD label? There are only two CD Label formats commonly used in the US. Centered, two on a sheet, and diagonally placed, two on a sheet.

Conclusion

Print Window 3.1 is the simplest folder/file list-printing software I've tried since switching to OS X. I had used more tedious workarounds, such as screen capture methods, but those did not give me the flexibility of choosing how I wanted the window's contents to appear. The flexibility of selecting not only how many folder levels I wanted printed, but to select and open only those I wanted expanded is a great feature. In addition, of course Print Window is far more flexible than it was in classic Mac OS. And unlike most shareware I've reviewed, the developer created an exceptionally clear and complete users guide.

If you need to capture the contents listing of a folder window, this product is the only way to go. Download the product, try it out, and then swing \$15 for the advanced version. From my perspective as a reviewer, testing 5-7 pieces of software a month — over 250 for macC alone, this one would be a definite keeper, but!...

The Rest of the Story —

Gentle readers, I write, as a volunteer, many software/shareware reviews and believe in thoroughly testing the product under review. However, I also have a life. Sometimes things happen that delay my review progress, although I do my best to complete reviews in a timely manner. (It's not easy getting old, you know!) So when I returned to review this product after tending to more worldly matters, I found that the 30-day free demo of the advanced version had expired.

During this process, I attempted to again communicate with the developer, asking for a NFR serial number to continue to use the advanced version (shareware) to continue my review, but my request was ignored. So, I finished my review of the advanced mode features the hard way, by again downloading the product a second time. Please understand, I flatly refuse to pay a shareware fee for writing a review about any product. Nevertheless, telling you how to cheat on paying for shareware, is something against my principles.

In summary, of the many developers I have contacted for the over 250 software/shareware reviews I have written, this individual is the only one who has refused me a NFR serial number. The upshot of all this negative interaction, is that I felt compelled, albeit reluctantly, to reduce Print Window's score to only **3.5 macCs**. After all, service is a key part of a developer's job, and other developers have continued to tell us how well our reviews serve to make their products more visible to you, our readers.

Software

Delicious Library 1.5 reviewed by Robert Pritchett



Delicious Monster
6252 34th Avenue SE
Seattle, WA 98115-7311
<mailto:mail@delicious-monster.com>
<http://www.delicious-monster.com>

\$40 USD. Additional \$175 for the Bluetooth scanner with purchase of license. <http://www.delicious-monster.com/buy.php>

Help: <http://www.delicious-monster.com/help.php>

Requirements: Mac OS X 10.3 or later; 15 MB disk space.

Strengths: Quick and easy organization of books, audio, game and video CDs and DVDs.

Weaknesses: Tied mostly to Amazon.com. And I have issues with their website, but that's me, not the software. Shelf labeling does not include DDC (Dewey Decimal Classification). Voice search is still spotty.

Other Reviews: <http://arstechnica.com/reviews/app/delicious-library.ars>

Interview with Wil Shipley:

<http://www.drunkenblog.com/drunkenblog-archives/000581.html>

Mac ReviewCast discussion:

<http://www.macreviewcast.com/?p=35>

Tested with iMac G5 and Mac OS X 10.4.2 Tiger.



Delicious Library by Delicious Monster is an organizer with a twist. It is an electronic Librarian for books, CDs DVDS, etc. Why would you get it if you have FileMaker Pro handy? It is not just great eye-candy, but it also works with the FireWire-based iSight camera as a barcode reader. Keyboard-entry-only for library organization can become pretty much a thing of the past. Or you can get the Bluetooth-based Flic Wireless Laser Barcode Scanner if you don't have an iSight camera or use the USB-based CueCat (remember those?). Just point the back of a book where the barcode is located or a CD case up to the iSight camera for example (assuming it has a barcode) and the magic begins. And if you are into loaning out your stuff, that too can be tracked now.

I found that I had to get the books within 2 inches or so, depending on lighting conditions, for the barcode reader function to "take". An audible beep occurs just like those barcode beeps at The Home Depot or Safeway with a successful scan. Sometimes the barcode lookup fails and manual entry is required. I found that multiple barcodes on the back of books confuses the barcode scanner too. Retry with just one of them and it works most of the time, assuming Amazon has the book listed.

Trying to find books not in the Amazon database can produce interesting results. For example, I have a book by Nemetschek North America that is a private printing I reviewed last month (July 2005 *macCompanion*) named "Images of CAD: the Art of Computer-Aided Design". That had to be entered manually. I just dragged and dropped the image from my book review and it took. Other details had to be copy/pasted. If you want all the blanks filled in, those too will need to be input manually.

Software is going to be hit-and-miss. Microsoft Office 2004 Professional (Mac) came through fine, but FileMaker Pro 7 did not. Amazon has lots of FileMaker Pro books though! Other software that is barcoded also failed to get a "hit", so those have to be manually input as well.

I noticed that entries end up in "Collections" under Books, Movies, Music or Games, but if I add a shelf, and I remove entries, they come back, unless I go to remove them from Collections. I don't know if that is a failsafe mechanism or what, but I don't like going back and rekeying over and over again when I want to clean up files. Just remember that *Collections* takes entry priority as far as the app is concerned.

I do like that the shelves can be sorted by various criteria, but don't like that I can only sort by one at a time. I can sort either by title, or publisher/label, but not both.

title
creator
rating
amazon® users played / read
secondary stuff
series
number in series
genres
✓ publisher / label
release date
edition
format
of media
language
rare
book
illustrator
no. of pages
collecting
retail price
current value
purchase price
purchase date
used
condition
signed item
where
location in building
owner
creation
creation time
lookup time
amazon® #
u.p.c.

The barcoding app looks at a reverse image and translates that. Watching it work is fascinating. There are 5 red lines that run across the iSight video screen. To improve functionality I probably ought to do the toothpick – rubberband kludge, but the distance I currently have for best reading is close to the beveled front edge of my iMac G5, so I don't need to do the toothpick workaround they show on their website.

A separate Bluetooth barcode scanner can be purchased for an extra \$175 USD with the purchase of a license. If you still have one of those USB-based CueCat scanners around, you can modify it to become a commercial scanner and then it too will work with Delicious Library.

There is also a Delicious Library Widget that is automatically installed with the app for searching online.

A scanner isn't necessary either. If you know either the UPC code, the ISBN or ASIN number (Amazon Standard Item Number), those too can be looked up and automatically entered from Amazon.

Once data has been captured, it can be Spotlighted, or Voice-searched. And if you don't like the wood-grained shelving, the items can be viewed in a list instead.

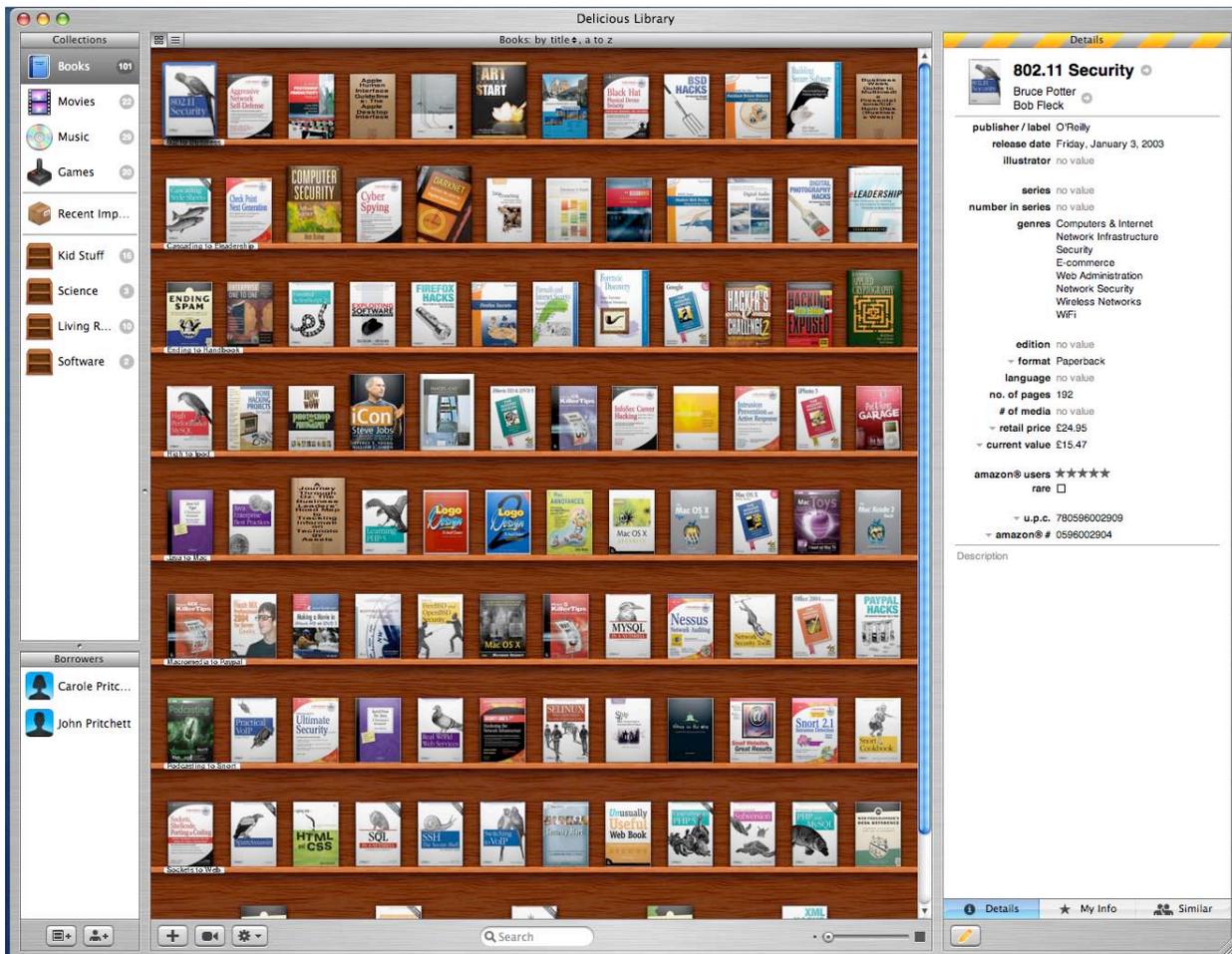
Data importing isn't limited to just Amazon. If data is in either tab-delimited file format or in other applications, those too can be imported locally.

Once items are captured, they can be added to the Amazon list for either buying or selling. All proceeds through delicious-Monster that are Amazon purchases are donated 100% to relief funds.

The Delicious Library Help function works perfectly and is essentially where all the documentation is located.

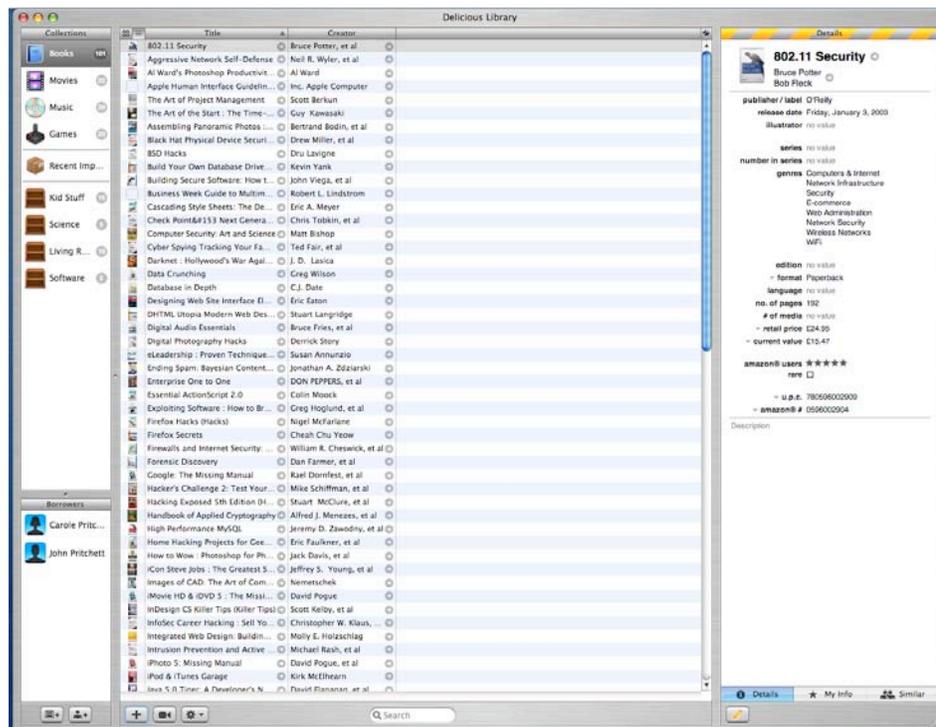
If you would like to check out items to others, more than likely those individuals are in our Address Book and Delicious Library assumes so, so it creates an initial Borrowers List from there. It also grabs information from vCard files.





And if you have an iPod, you can sync the Delicious Library with it.

I added two pics showing the *Book Collection* in both the default mode where the sort function can occur and the *Show as List* function where the books and authors are shown side by side.



If you want to export the Delicious Library database to other applications, it will choose the tab-delimited route.

If you are familiar with the book reviews we do at *macCompanion*, you may understand why I am excited about the Delicious Library book format. It details a lot of what we capture so cross-verification of content will be easier to do.

And even though the WebDewey tutorial by the OCLC does not support Unix or Mac OS X, maybe, just maybe these Delicious Monster guys can pull it off and include the Dewey Decimal Classification (<http://www.oclc.org/dewey/>) in the next release for the shelves? Please?

I tried the Voice Search and it was hit-and-miss. Must be me and my voice. Some books were picked and other apps showed up when I provided book titles by voice. Feelin' lucky today?

Anyway, now I can restock my real shelves, based on the order I can organize them in using the virtual shelving provided by Delicious Monster. Now you can too. The app is both sweet and sour, but it is delicious to the taste, and very desirable.

BTW, Shawn King interviewed Mike Matas about 45 minutes or so into the YourMacLife program for November 10, 2004:
<http://www.yourmaclife.com/article.php?story=20041110201900840&query=Delicious>, but you need to be an Audible (<http://www.audible.com>) subscriber to hear it. Apple must have heard it because Mike Matas is moving on to become part of Apple.

Man oh man, you have to go read DrunkenBlog's interview of Wil Shipley (skip over the few swear words intermingled in otherwise excellent interviewing and response) at <http://www.drunkenblog.com/drunkenblog-archives/000581.html>. He also has a downloadable 23-page PDFed booklet by Mike Matas on "The Art of Delicious Library" there. He posted it in hopes folks wouldn't link directly, but would read the interview first.

We are looking forward to the promising 2.0 release, but you don't need to wait. If you are hemmed in by cataloguing projects or if you want a 1-button way to sell your excess Books, CDs or DVDs on Amazon, this is a way cool app to do it with. Way cool!

**Devon Agent 1.7 — A powerful enhancement to your usual search engines.
reviewed by Harry {doc} Babad, edited by Julie M. Willingham**

Publisher: Devon Technologies, LLC

support@devon-technologies.com

<http://www.devon-technologies.com/products/devonagent/>

Developer: Christian Grunenberg

Cost: \$35 USD. A free unencumbered 60-hour demo is available for download. Uninstaller is not included in either version.

Requirements: Mac OS X 10.3.9 or higher and a fast Internet connection. Compatible with Mac OS X 10.4. (Version 1.6.1 is still available for Mac OS X 10.3.8 and older.)



Audience: All users who need a powerful research-focused internet search tool.

Strengths: Generates a useful, effective, easy to understand digest of the search results. The software's interface is both intuitive and easy to use.



Weaknesses: None worth mentioning, but I didn't have the time to reach expert level in my testing.

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The software was tested on a 1 GHz dual processor PowerPC G4 Macintosh with 2 GB DDR SDRAM running under OS X 10.3.9.

Publisher's Software Overview (*paraphrased*) — DEVONagent overcomes the shortcomings that make Google & Co. such a pain when attempting to do a serious research. It provides more than 50 plug-ins for search engines, scientific databases, and research tools, allowing you to do a more narrowly focused, predefined search using its plug-ins and search set configurations. It has a clean, easy to use user interface that makes it a good tool for finding information on the WWW. However, DEVONagent is much more than just an interface for web search engines. It can help you search, collect, and organize information by using its powerful and flexible search architecture. As for hanging on to your results, it has a simple to use built-in archive feature. DEVONagent creates tailored summaries from your search results, making rapid checking of them easy. It can also act as a fast and lean stand-alone web browser that supports news feeds like RSS.

Introduction

I often need to do an information search on the Internet on topics as diverse as finding an *oriental style cabinet* to fit a space that is only 36" wide and 12-14" deep, or to check out the latest information on *phosphate glass for use in low-level nuclear waste disposal*. I can get much of my needed technical material at the Department of Energy OSTI Site [<http://www.osti.gov/bridge/>.] However, the DOE site has no advanced search features, so cherry picking to find my needed information is tedious.

You all know about the hits and *myths* of a Google search. I know I've recently read a detailed article on specialty search engines, but in my maximally disorganized paper collection, the article has gone to Never-never Land. Therefore, when I read about version 1.5 of this software in a Tidbits article by Matt Neuburg, I jumped at the chance to try it out. [Check out *DEVONagent Rushes In Where Google Fears to Tread*, in TidBITS #765/07-Feb-05, at <http://db.tidbits.com/getbits.cgi?tbart=07977>].

I was especially pleased with Matt's introductory discussion of what I call *Google-itis*, a disease I all too often suffer. Quoting Matt, "Finding facts on the Internet is not easy. Google is nice (and don't you wish you'd bought stock?), but what it gives you is just a list of links. Google alone doesn't solve your problem unless the first two or three links happen to consist precisely of a complete discussion of exactly the question you had in mind (*when you searched*), which rarely happens. Instead, Google just confronts you with a completely new task, namely, to start visiting all those links and perusing them, with hand and eye and brain, hunting for the information you want."

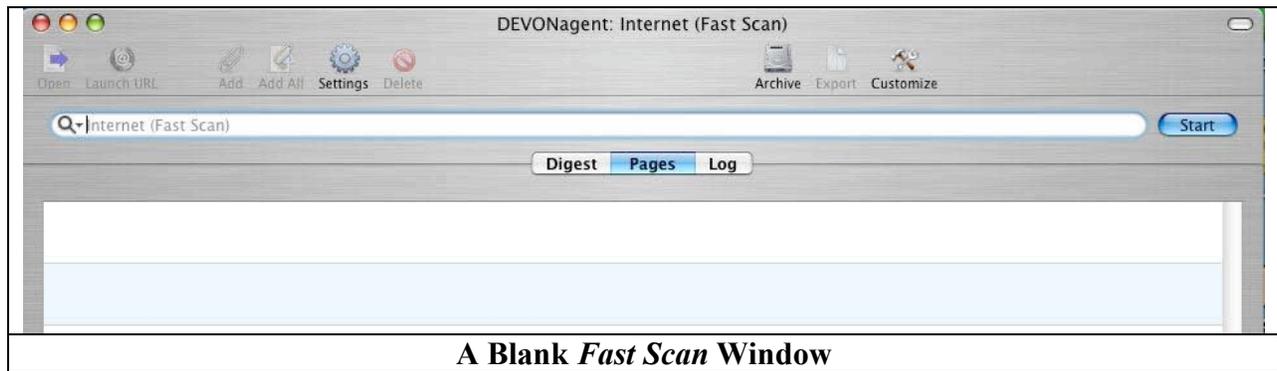
In my experience, even using Google's advanced search features doesn't help much. As Matt noted, "The truth is that when you have a question, what you want is not a list of links; what you want is content, and in particular, content that answers your question. What if you had an application that provided exactly that, by taking the second step for you? Using a search engine, it would perform the search, then visit all the top links, download the content, and filter that content by relevance and index it so that you could find the particular facts you were looking for, quickly and easily. That is what DEVONagent does."

Working With the Product (In part paraphrased from the users manual)

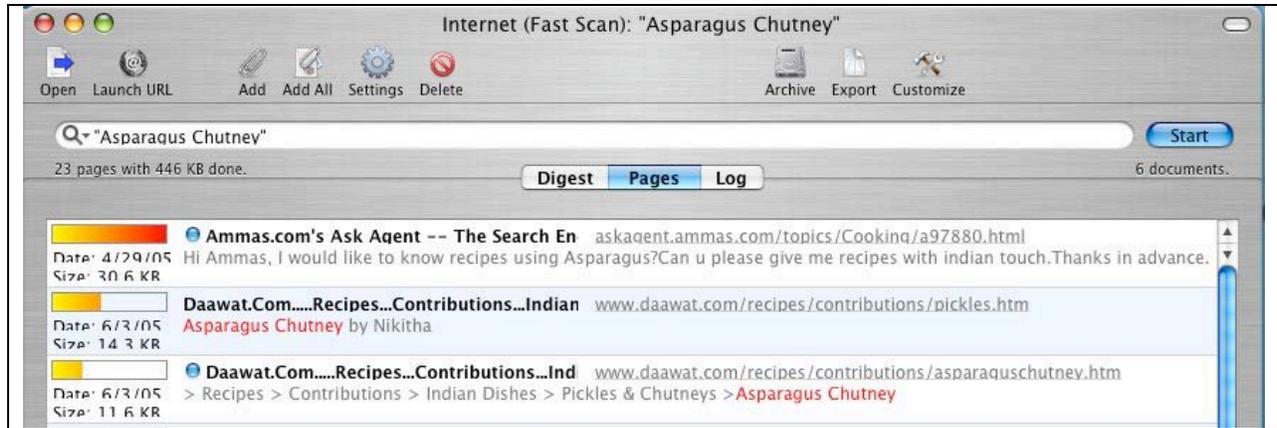
Okay, after I dragged the application to my application folder I was ready to start using it. No, I didn't, this time around, initially read the manual. I had enough confidence that I understood how the software functioned from the summary narratives on the developer's site. I decided a little bit of trust in the product was warranted, and I plunged right in. Some of my search experiences are reported later in this review.

To initiate a search with DEVONagent, simply open the application and choose "File > New Search..." if necessary, and select a search set from the search field pop-up menu (the little triangle in the search query field). Then enter the search term(s) you want DEVONagent to look for into the search field and click "Start".

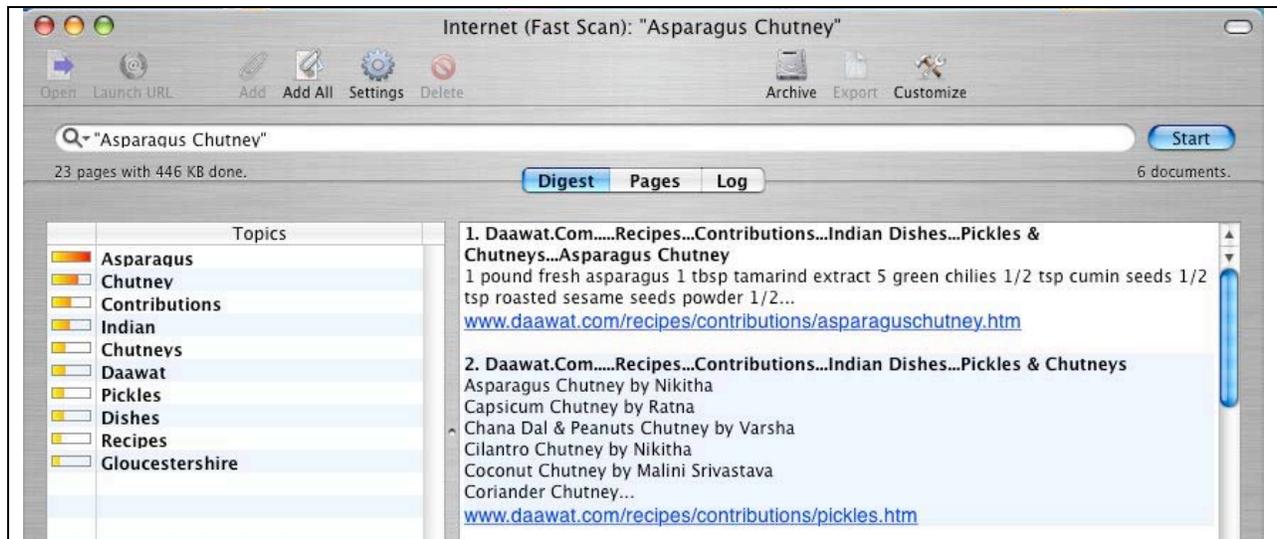
DEVONagent sends your query to one or more search engines, depending on the search settings (see manual chapters "Settings" and "Plug-ins"). It then collects the results and displays them on the "Pages" tab. Then select any of the found pages to display its relevant information as plain text in the lower frame. Use the Sort menu to sort the results on any way you need.



A Blank *Fast Scan* Window



Chose the Views You Choose to View — Pages



Chose the Views You Choose to View — Digest

From all collected results, DEVONagent calculates a dynamically updated digest, which can be found on the "Digest" tab. The digest is a plain text summary of all information in the result pool DEVONagent thinks to be relevant to selected topics. It is very useful when deciding which of the found links you might want to pursue.

You can also double-click a link on the pages list or in the digest to open the web page live in a separate browser window. This browser is based on the WebKit engine, which is also used by Apple's Safari and OmniWeb 5. Alternatively, use the toolbar menu command "Launch URL" to open the page in your default web browser, e.g. Safari, Mozilla (Firefox), OmniWeb, or Microsoft Internet Explorer.

I list some of the additional rich features of this product later in the review. However, the fast search capability combined with being able to select search sets give this product all the flexibility I presently need. As my search needs expand, it will be easy to satisfy them with DEVONagent.

Back to My Search Results — To keep things simple, I, for the most part, used the product's default *Fast Scan* mode, which limited my results to a maximum of a 100 hits. In once case I used the more extensive web search abilities of *deep scan* mode which can both search deeper using metacrawlers and other beasties to search deeper (and slower.) None of my search results in this mode approached that limit. The search results were returned so rapidly that I did not have time to take another sip of coffee after clicking *start*. Although the percentage of items I could use was often only 5-10% of what was found, the DEVONagent software allowed me to check (digest mode) an abstract of the website for relevance.

My searches made some, but not extensive, use of Boolean operators (e.g., AND/OR/NOT/NEAR, or grouping search terms with quotation marks. If I need them, I know I can use these combinations plus other logic operators described in the user manual). The software is able to work with more complex search criteria than Google or other search engines I've used. DEVONagent's well thought out Boolean logic feature helps focus a search and is especially useful when doing *deep scan* searches that can yield up to 500 results.

I tried the software, right from the startup, to learn the answers to questions like:

(Note for your convenience, I've italicized my search terms.)

- What kinds of *Specialized Search Engines* are available for Internet technical searches? — No matches, but the terms *Search Engines* returned 88 links. Google returned 31,100,000 hits. They were reduced to mere 28,100,000 hits when I restricted my Google search to search for only items in the English language and to entries made this past year.

By modifying my search definition in DEVONagent to *Scientific Search Engines*, I got 68 hits, some of which are keepers. I also found 43 links when I changed the search criteria to *Chemistry Search Engines*. I only skimmed these last two sets of findings, choosing not to do an in-depth numeric comparison of the hits. However, it seemed that the sets of found links were sufficiently different that it might be well worth doing a number of simple variations on search terms.

- Finally, having to move on to my next search, I checked *Chemical Publication Search Engines* and got 52 hits; but *Search Chemical Publications* slightly increased the number of hits. (Bits and bytes are strange — perhaps I violated some element of the Uncertainty Principal.)

Overall, based on thumbnail digests of the site found, about 5-10% of the sites were quite useful, so I bookmarked them for future use.

- *Tell me about Phosphate Glass for Low Activity Waste Disposal.* — The search resulted in only one inappropriate hit, a significantly lower number than I found on the DOE OSTI site. Other variations on that search theme did no better. I did find a few, too few, useful reference by searching for Vitrification of Low Activity Waste. Perhaps I'm asking the wrong question.
- Nat King Cole sings Spanish songs was my next search theme. Wanting to learn more about *Nat King Cole's Espanõl* albums turned up 76 documents, several of which had the information I sought as did a search for "Nat King Cole" "Spanish Songs". I was surprised that some of the found items were different, but I shouldn't have been.
- Finding the lyrics to *Tom Lehrer's Women Are Like Pianos* with DEVONagent did not yield any usable results in *fast scan* mode, despite variations on the search phase. However, a search for *Lyrics "Tom Lehrer Songs* turned up 34 results in *fast scan* mode and over 203 in considerably slower *deep scan mode*. None of the hits gave me the lyrics for which I searched.

In *deep scan* mode, I ran out of patience and stopped before the search was over. From my very subjective perspective, I did not need the extra hits resulting from it.

- Just for fun, I remembered I love optical illusions. I was surprised that a search for *Optical Illusions* only turned up only one hit, but the site <http://www.illusionworks.com> proved to be full of wonderfully distracting images. (Note I could not repeat this search to give me only one hit.) When I retried the search, I got 54 found links. Because using DEVONagent can be addicting, I changed my query to *M. C. Escher* or to *Escher images*. The search resulted in a much richer and more set of sites than I'd gotten, several months ago, when using Google.
- In addition, for my wife, I tried to find a small oriental cabinet. The search turned up 24 documents, of which only four were relevant, but my search for *Small Oriental Cabinet* turned up 55 documents, of which eight seemed appropriate to my needs.

Froogle turned up 329 hits for oriental cabinets of all sizes, but the search could not be modified to include the search attribute "small". A Google search for *Small "Oriental Cabinet"* turned up 338 documents, a bit more than I wanted to deal with.

My DEVONagent test sample limitations — To keep things simple, I predominantly used the default *fast scan* mode. That mode *artificially* limited my results to 100 hits. My searches made some, but not extensive use of Boolean operators {e.g., AND/OR/NOT/NEAR in all combinations plus other tools described in the user manual) which are discussed in the software's manual.

Using DEVONagent as my default web browser

Overall, I found that DEVONagent, based on the Safari engine, could serve well as an integrated web browser. However, I chose not to make it my default browser even though I know it is especially tailored to the needs of web researchers, among which I number. I've patched Safari with other shareware tools such as PithHelmet and I'd rather not give up Apple's product.

Looking under the hood — DEVONagent is built on a flexible and extensive plug-in architecture, 50 now and more to come that allow users to query a great variety of search engines simultaneously. Even a *relatively novice* programmer [my emphasis, but so 'tis claimed] can write new plug-ins with ease. In addition, DEVONagent can automatically scan your favorite web pages for news and follows promising links. Instructions for doing so accompany the product's documentation.

A Summary of DEVONagent's Key Features

Incorporates an easy-to-use but powerful web page archive feature allows you to organize and search results as stored pages.

Automatically queries multiple search engines.

Uses a flexible plug-in and scanner architecture.

Automatic filter eliminates junk, similar, archived, or error pages.

Presents search results as dynamic digests based on an intelligent topic list and stores results in a searchable web page archive.

A scheduler allows you to run predefined queries completely unattended, send an email, or speak a text. (Untested by me.)

Scanners look specifically for certain results like web-cams or multimedia

- I did not need this feature.

Enabled crawler auto-surfs your favorite web pages.

Software Limitations — As a professional technical peer reviewer, I search more deeply than most. Nevertheless, finding limitations such as those listed below, do not reduce the power of DEVONagent, they're only request to its developer for added power.

More ways of limiting searches — There is one feature, already available in Google advanced searches. I would find valuable. That is the ability to limit my search to a specified time frame and to items published only in English. If DEVONagent has such capabilities, I did not spot them in the extensive users manual.

Side-by-side comparison views needed — When searching variations on a theme, as I did for search engines, I would like to have the ability to display several search results side-by-side to more easily look for newly found items. I would welcome a "docucomp" feature.

Bookmarking issues — I have found no way to add found pages directly to another browser's bookmarks (e.g., MS IE, Firefox). My obvious solution was to open the found link and then to drag it to my desktop for future incorporation into Safari.

Finding key words in the found digests — Rather than scanning digest one at a time, I attempted to use the product's find feature to find a particular set of keywords in the “found” list of digests. It didn't work.

Conclusions

DEVONagent is a great search tool. I ended up finding almost all of what I needed to know, rapidly, and with fewer irrelevant hits than by doing advanced Boolean query-supported searches in Google. After only a few searches, I knew that this program was a **keeper**.

DEVONagent, as I've discovered and shared, is more than a simple search aid, although simplicity is built into its interface. It should be of use to all who search the Internet, but is best focused at users who hunt for generalized information that popular search engines either completely miss or bury in 10,000 hits. Indeed, even in *fast scan* mode I get more relevant results than when using Google's advanced search feature.

The image shows the Google Advanced Search interface. At the top left is the Google logo, followed by the text "Advanced Search" and a link to "Advanced Search Tips | About Google". Below this is a search bar with a "Google Search" button and a "10 results" indicator. The main section is divided into several categories:

- Find results:** Includes radio buttons for "with all of the words", "with the exact phrase", "with at least one of the words", and "without the words". Each option has a corresponding text input field.
- Language:** A dropdown menu set to "any language".
- File Format:** A dropdown menu set to "any format".
- Date:** A dropdown menu set to "anytime".
- Occurrences:** A dropdown menu set to "anywhere in the page".
- Domain:** A dropdown menu set to "Only" with a sub-label "return results from the site or domain". Below it is a text input field with the example "e.g. google.com, .org" and a "More info" link.
- SafeSearch:** Two radio buttons: "No filtering" (selected) and "Filter using SafeSearch".

An AAUG reviewer recently noted “the best thing about this program, in my opinion, is how it presents those results. The standard 'pages' view lists excerpts from each page much like a normal search engine would. The 'digest' view associates various returns to related key words that it lists in a side panel. Once you select one of those augmenting terms the results panel presents a list of only the results that contain that relevant cross-reference.

This makes it surprisingly easy to get the information you want out of several loosely related returns.” [Review of *DEVONagent & DEVONthink Software* by Gerrit Dalman, Alaska Apple Users Group, March 2005.]

It contains many rich features that I’m not quite ready to use. However, the well-written and illustrated 132-page PDF manual will aid me in using more of its capabilities. For this review, I did more than a half-dozen or so searches. Almost all the features I tested worked well, based, on my simple-minded understanding of the software’s capabilities and the Mac OS X interface. It even performed well in chasing recipes, on par with my many pack rat vices.

Even with my limited testing, some of which I’ve described in this review, I found DEVONagent to be a powerful and flexible, broadly effective online research tool. Internet users who squint at enormous collections of bookmarks or archived web search results will get instant relief and gratification from this product. I rate this product **4.5 macCs** and look forward to the next major upgrade, perhaps incorporating my wishes.

P.S.

The publisher is working on a version 1.8 of the software that will include 80 new plug-ins, a quick search feature, private surfing, and more. Stand by for a short update on this fine product.

For those of you who use *DEVONthink*, as expected, it is well integrated with DEVONagent.

iRemember: Digital Scrapbooking reviewed by Robert Pritchett



Intriguing Development, Inc.
1110 West main
Blue Spring, MO 64015
816-229-6768

FAX: 816-229-6955

sales@macscrapbook.com

<http://macscrapbook.com>

Released: June 28, 2005

\$50 USD.

Requirements: Mac OS X 10.3 or later, Mac OS X 10.4 recommended; 256MB RAM, 512MB recommended; 2GB hard drive space; CD Drive; Inkjet printer.

Strengths: Mac OSX-based self-contained memory-gathering app.

Weaknesses: None found.

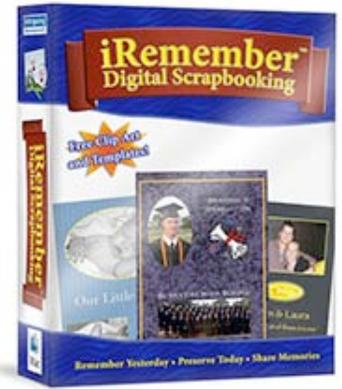
Scrapbooking. Why do it? We collect things. We take pictures. We cherish memories. We write down experiences, hoping someday they will be remembered and maybe make a difference in our family's lives. Enough experiences eventually become grist for books and biographies, memoirs and movies. iRemember expedites that process by being an electronic tool. "Remember the past, or you will be forced to repeat it."

You don't have to start from scratch. iRemember comes with 4,546 scrapbook searchable items in 12 categories and is why it requires 2GB of hard drive space to use. What I found intriguing is that there are a few Quotes, Poems and Scriptures as well as Backgrounds, Borders, Corners, Headers, Patterns and templates in different sizes (6x6, 8.5x8.5, 8.5x11, or 12x12 inches).

Now all those digital photos can be captured, organized and printed or presented to others online (as PDFed files or as filesharing with others who use iRemember).

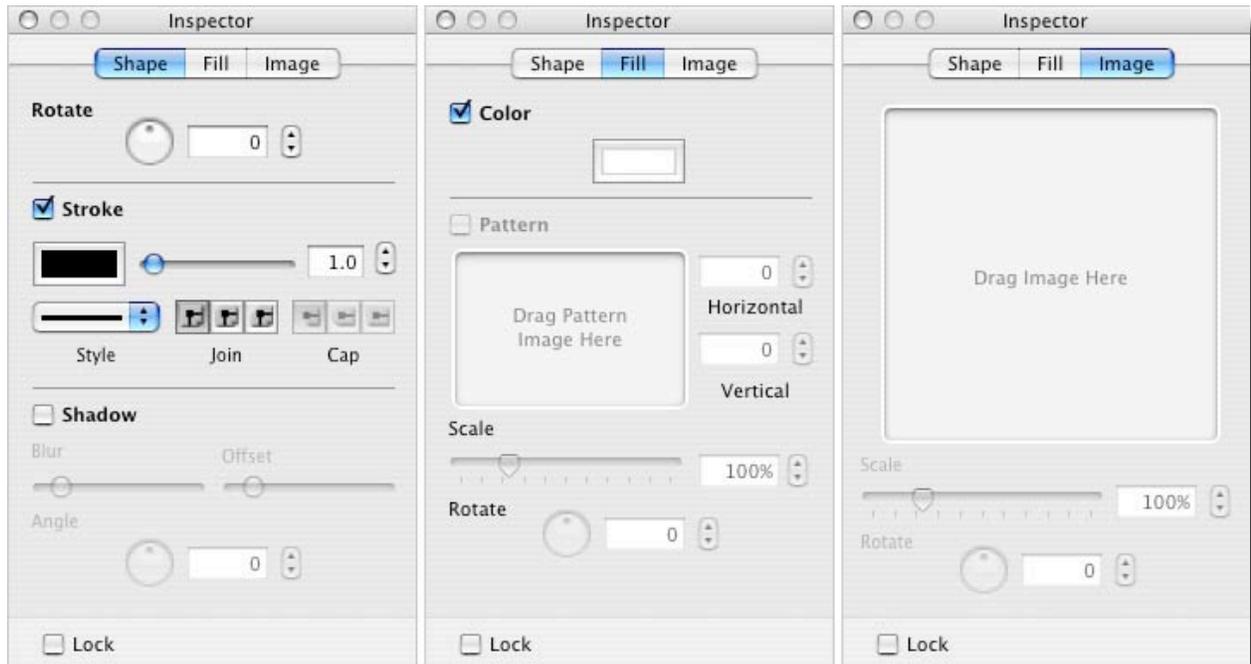
There are a few tools designed to help with graphics, text, cropping or dropping photos into predefined shapes or mattes, rubberstamping clipart backgrounds, add lines or zoom around if space is small on the screen.

Image file formats interactions are with PDF, TIFF, JPEG and iPhoto. Text formats accepted are RTF, MS Word, ASCII Text or TextEdit.



Most action is simply drag and drop. Object and images are resized separately. Off to one side is the Inspector Window.

If you are a semi-serious scrapbooker, than you have a tool available that will help you reduce your dependence on glue, scissors, and all those funny little stickers. Now you can do just about all of it on the computer. And if you need other supplies, MacScrapbook.com has a bunch of items that can be ordered online, such as Clipart, ink, paper, scrapbooks, cameras, printers and scanners.



The possible downside is lack of Import/Export. There is an *Insert...* function. But export is either PDFed or Print.

iRemember Help is where the documentation is secreted for getting started, creating a first scrapbook, features, functions updates and support. The same information can be explored online as well.

If your life is a pile of scrap, organize it and maybe someday it too can be the basis for iRemembering.

Digging Deeper

<http://www.oz.net/~markhow/writing/scrap.htm>

<http://www.ancestry.com/learn/library/article.aspx?article=1324>

<http://www.cyndislist.com/scrapbooks.htm>

iTaskX 2 Version 2.1.432 Project Management Solution reviewed by Robert Pritchett



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A-4221 Steregg
Stadtplatz 8

Austria

+43 732 64 05 71-0

FAX: +43 732 64 05 71-5

support@iTaskX.com or

http://www.itaskx.com/kontakt/frameset_kontakt_en.htm

<http://www.iTaskX.com>

Product Site: <http://www.itaskx.com/software/en/default.htm>

Released: May 11, 2005

\$82 USD €65 Euro plus 20% VAT; 5-pack \$376 USD, €300. 10-pack \$690 USD, €550, un limited €2,500. 30-day demo available for download.

Requirements: PowerPC G3 (min. 400 MHz), G4 or G5; 256 MB (512 MB recommended); Mac OS X v10.3.9 or later recommended (Tiger Compatible); 10 MB Hard drive space to install; Display with at least 1024-by-768-pixel resolution.

Strengths: Covers the bases for Project Managers. Uses Mac OS X Tiger to best effect.

Weaknesses: None found.

iTaskX 2 has a little bit of competition from FastTrack 8 Schedule and LeadingProject, but I think it can hold its own against them both. It has just been getting better with each release. For anyone using the Mac for managing projects, this application is designed from the ground up to work with Mac OS X. The Help function really is helpful. There are 3 areas to choose from: Help, Dialogues and Sheets and Hints. Start with Help first.

What really sets this app apart from the others is that it is Macishly intuitive. More importantly, it has an iTaskX Guide that steps through 9 project management steps with each having a definition so no one can feel they don't understand what is required; Define the project and general working times, organize the tasks into phases and schedule tasks, add more task information and columns of additional information, constrain tasks and add documents that can be embedded. Task relationships can easily be broken or linked, indented or "outdented", resources can be easily reassigned and it takes no time at all to go to a task, edit an item or notes, work with the simplified formatting or add simple drawings.



I wish I had this program when I was doing multi-million dollar telecom projects. This project management tool can almost do itself. Providing content now is the easy part and struggling to get a presentable format together is no longer the pain it used to be in MS Project for Windows.

A question I have is, ‘How scalable is it’? I used to work with PMs (Project Managers) that had MS Project for Windows files that went into Megabytes of hard drive space and took weeks to build. These files were monolithic monstrosities that took reams of paper to print out and traversed years and tons of phases to accomplish. I’m so glad I read the book I reviewed last month on Project Management. It put what was important into perspective. Maybe the good folks at Techno Grafik & Zisser Software read it too. Project Mangers can focus on managing projects instead of managing project presentation software.

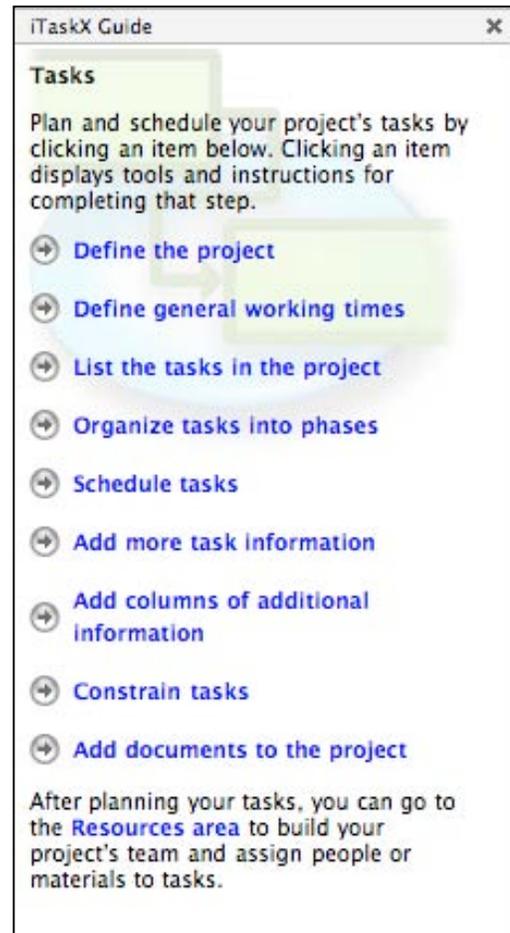
Apparently iTaskX took 2 years to get to version 2.1. The goal was to double the functionality at half the price. A free demo can downloaded, so you can compare it to either FastTrack 8 Schedule or Leading Projects and find out for yourself.

Preferences have references to LDAP and/or Exchange Server integration. Files can be saved as iTaskX Projects or Templates, MS Project XML or Data Exchange, Outline Processor Markup Language (OPML), Tab or Comma Delimited Text or as an iCal file. Project information is an easy dropdown menu and even has a statistics button that shows Start, Finish, Duration, Work, Cost and Percent Complete in the .itp file.

Oh, and did we mention that it works with Spotlight in Mac OS X 10.4.1 Tiger? Perhaps that answers the “scalability” question.

There are over 60 task fields with calculations for slack time, effort-driven scheduling, overtime, cost accruals and varying calendars for project, timescale, tasks and resources. And there is room for tables of all kinds, or at least 8.

Each view can be exported to PDF, JPG, TIF or PNG.



On their website there are 10 different views that are probably all too familiar to those who do PMing for a living or maybe some that are new to you including; Gant and Tracking Gant, Task Information Panel, Page Layout View, Calendar View, Network Diagrams, Customized Columns Sheet, Bar Style Sheet, Timescale and Working Times Sheets on their screenshots page. Go take a peek, or better yet, go download the demo and play with it for a month. I think you will agree that if you use a Mac for Project Management, this is going to be one of your favorite tools for doing the job.

NoteBook 2.0 (v230) reviewed by Robert Pritchett



Developers: Jayson Adams, Elizabeth Statmore
Circus Ponies Software,
P.O. Box 31417
San Francisco CA 94131-0417
415-695-3100

Fax: 415-695-1930

info@circusponies.com

<http://www.circusponies.com>

Product Site:

<http://www.circusponies.com/pages.aspx?page=products>

Download:

<http://www.circusponies.com/pages.aspx?page=downloads>
(24 MB)

Released: January 05, 2005

\$50 USD <https://www.circusponies.com/pages.aspx?page=order>

Requirements: Mac OS X 10.3 or later.

Forum: <http://circusponies.infopop.cc/6/ubb.x>

Video Tour: <http://www.circusponies.com/tour/index.html>



Strengths: Excellent outlining app based on 10-year old code modified to work with Tiger.

Weaknesses: Looks like my issues were resolved in the July 30 release.

Other Reviews:

<http://www.macreviewcast.com/podcasts/MacReviewCast3.mp3>

<http://www.atpm.com/10.05/atpo.shtml>

Update released July 30 2005:

<http://www.versiontracker.com/dyn/moreinfo/macosx/19025>

I may be at a disadvantage here because I discovered Aquaminds *NoteTaker* (review posted in the July 2005 issue of *macCompanion*) before tripping over Circus Ponies *NoteBook*. Actually, Derek Meier turned me on to it, but Tim Verpoorten reviewed Notebook 2.0 about halfway through Episode 3 of his Mac ReviewCast listed above. Ted Goranson also did an excellent job with his comparison review of both NoteTaker and Notebook over at ATPM in the May 2004 issue also listed above. (Read the comments to that article. Very enlightening!)

Jayson Adams (Code Poet) and Elizabeth Statmore were kind enough to send us a copy of Notebook 2.0 for review too. It is a combination outliner and free-form database. It allows us to clip, organize, and share any kind of unstructured information from any source on Mac OS X. Did Apple take some of the same code to create Spotlight? (That is an open-ended question.)

Jayson Adams worked with NeXTSTEP along with Scott Love some 10 years ago or so and they co-founded Millennium Software Labs. When that company dissolved, they went their separate ways with both retaining rights to the code. Since Jason wrote the original code for Millennium, it makes sense that he would continue the concept and that is why both are “Spiral Notebooks” but go different directions.

Version 227 of Notebook 2.0 was released to be compatible with Mac OS X 10.4 Tiger. There is a very healthy and active Notebook Community online at <http://circusponies.infopop.cc/6/ubb.x>.

NoteBook has a few things going for it. Outline of outlines and taking a graphic and making it part of the outline instead of using just text. It also allows for tab-hovering to go deeper into the outline. And cells can be collapsed or “folded” to one line. When touching that line, the cell automatically expands for viewing.

There are one or two things it doesn’t do and hopefully those can be addressed in the future such as dragging to a tab and dropping into that tab (copy and paste instead).

Like NoteTaker, Notebook handles multimedia nicely. It uses media frames to accomplish that. And it also does voice annotation and accepts web pages and can publish to web pages using the NBML or Notebook Markup Language.

Oh, and then there is database manipulation (superfinding metadata) and adding stickers to keywords in cells and generating indexes.

And there is support for camera linkages and a contextual menu for clipping and annotating.

Is Notebook really “the digital hub \$50 valet for iLife” and “spongeworthy”? Well, it sure beats writing in everything by hand! Import all kinds of things, like images, movies, photos, scans and sound files. Add some formatting like shadows, rotation, scaling and playback. Is it just eyecandy or does it really help get organized? With Spotlight is organization even needed? Well, in a word; Yes!

It is easy to let NoteBook create a table of contents, generate tabs or click on the turned page corner to go forward or backward a page at a time. And it is customizable so the look and feel can be adjusted and so can the outline setup with the Cell Inspector. External to NoteBook, a Clipping Service can gather items collected from the Internet or other sources and it will create a NoteBook file for that stuff. That is something Spotlight cannot do. And it is also supported in Safari and Mail.app. So go try it for 30 days and then pay for a non-expiring license once you too see its value.

Adobe Photoshop CS 2 reviewed by James Meister



Adobe Systems Incorporated
345 Park Avenue
San Jose, CA 95110-2704, USA
Tel: 408-536-6000
Fax: 408-537-6000

<http://www.adobe.com>

\$600 USD; Upgrade: \$150 USD

Downloadable Tryouts:

<http://www.adobe.com/products/tryadobe/main.jsp>



Requirements: PowerPC® G3, G4, or G5 processor; Mac OS X v.10.2.8 through v.10.4 (10.3.4 through 10.4 recommended); 320MB of RAM (384MB recommended); 750MB of available hard-disk space; 1,024x768 monitor resolution with 16-bit video card; CD-ROM drive; Internet or phone connection required for product activation.

Strengths: Many improvements, such as font handling, tighter integration with other Adobe products.

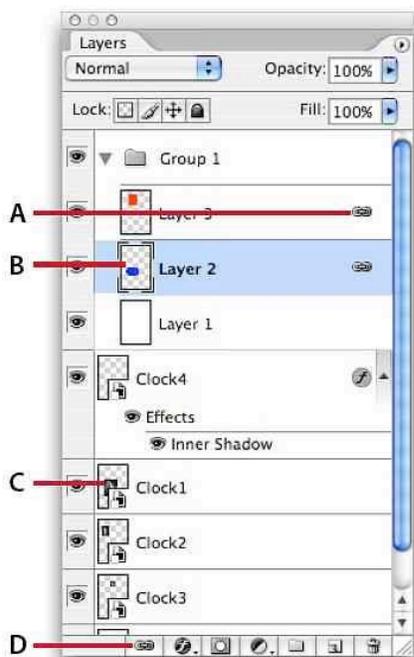
Weaknesses: New GUI 'enhancements' make experienced users feel a bit lost. Steep Hard Drive space requirements.

With the ninth release of their always cutting-edge photo suite, Adobe brings with it much needed tools for digital photographers, as well as graphic artists. While there are many enhancements that you will see as welcome, there is one addition that was met with mixed reactions from Mac users... Product Activation.

This is the first release for Mac OS X that implements Adobe's brand of product activation and I can't say I blame them. Besides being THE application to turn to for all your Graphic Design and Photo retouching needs, Photoshop has become the app for all sorts of teenage hijinx on the web. You know full well that most teenagers don't have \$600 USD sitting around waiting for Adobe to release the next version of Photoshop... hence Adobe's need for activation protection. Personally, I wish more software developers would do this.

The most obvious thing you notice when you first launch the app, is that there are some minor tweaks to the layout and design of the palettes. The one that tripped me up quite a bit was using

the layers palette to make a selection based on the contents of the layer. In previous versions, you need to do nothing more than *Command-Click* on the layer, to select its contents. Not true for CS 2., They've made it a bit more precise by requiring a *Command-Click* on the layer thumbnail. It took me quite a while to figure that one out. Another cool addition to the layers palette is the removal of the need to constantly link and unlink layers to transform or edit them, now you can command-click each layer you need, transform them and move on to a new layer without having to un-link them.

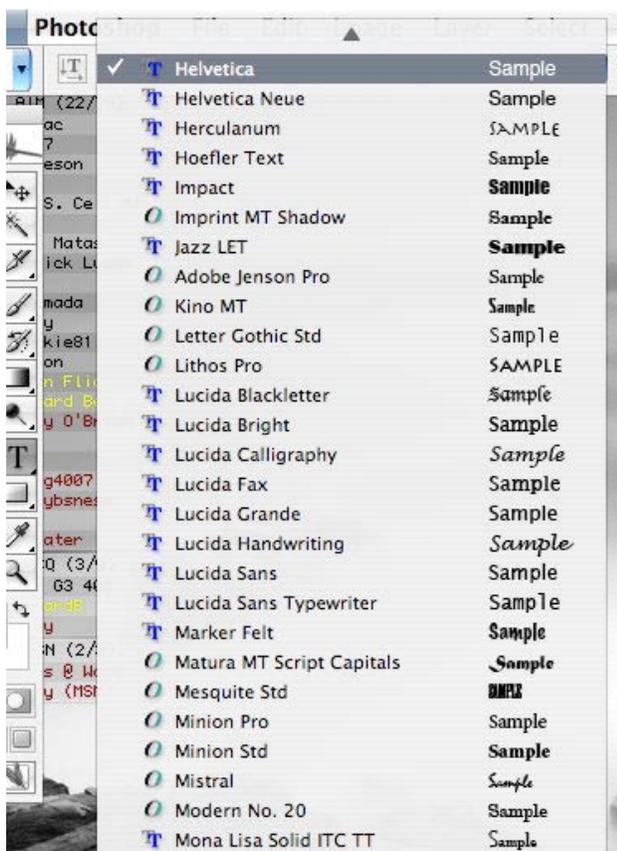


Layers Palette Enhancements

- A Linked layers indicator
- B Normal layer thumbnail
- C Smart Object thumbnail
- D Link layers button

Another addition to Photoshop is Smart Objects, otherwise known as lossless scaling. Most of Adobe's tutorials demonstrate Smart Objects using vector data, which is mostly what the general public will use it for, but you can also use raster data for Smart Objects and still retain line detail. Granted there are more limitations to the severity of the scaling with Raster data, but it's a welcomed improvement. You can also select multiple layers and group them into a Smart object. The best thing about that being that you can 'explode' the group again to work with the individual layers again. The downfall with smart objects is that your data is embedded into the PSD, adding whatever the original data size for the smart object was, to the overall size of the PSD.

By far the most welcome addition is that there is now a sample preview next to the name of the Font so you no longer have to one by one drag through your fonts when you're not sure which one you want to use.



Have you ever had to mock up a design on a coffee mug, or any other slightly non-flat surface? If you're a Photoshop veteran, you'll know that tasks like these have the possibility of taking

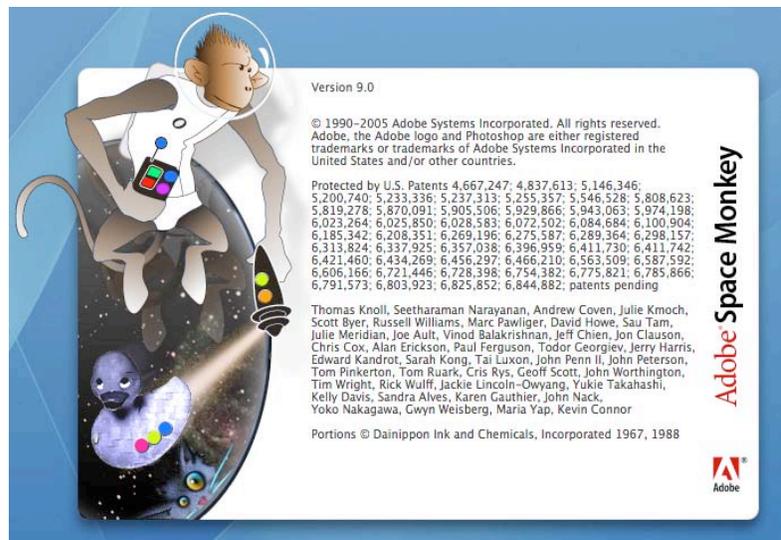
quite a while to look believable. Enter Image Warp! With this new tool you now have great flexibility when warping objects onto oddly shaped surfaces.

By far the coolest addition to Photoshop is the Vanishing Point tool. It was the first tool I played with when I launched CS 2 for the first time, and I think I probably killed a couple hours making all sorts of houses into 16 stories, or making a house covered in windows.

What Vanishing Point does is allow you to set up a perspective grid overlay on your pictures, in essence overlaying a 3D scene on top of the 2D picture. Then you can add objects or clone objects in the scene and they maintain perfect perspective relative to the photograph. I literally saves you hours of time cloning and trimming and bending and flexing.



All in all, if you're a professional that always finds himself using every aspect of Photoshop to it's fullest, then you're going to love this upgrade. If you're a novice, you'll benefit from some of the cool gadgets but if you already own CS 1, you probably don't want to rush out and upgrade, since most of the novice tools are the same in CS 2 as they were in the previous version. I'll leave you with the ever-famous Command-Option- About Adobe Photoshop screen.



Simon 2.0c5 reviewed by Robert Pritchett



Developer: David Sinclair

Dejal Systems, LLC

Portland, OR

info@dejal.com

Contact: <http://www.dejal.com/contact/>

<http://www.dejal.com>

Product site: <http://www.dejal.com/simon/>

Screenshots: <http://www.dejal.com/simon/images/>

User Guide: <http://www.dejal.com/simon/guide/>

Released: May 19, 2005

Basic, \$30 USD; Standard, \$60 USD; Enterprise, \$195 USD; Upgrade, \$20 USD. Try before you buy.

Download size: 3.5MB

Requirements: Mac OS X 10.3.9 or later

For IT and Website managers.

Strengths: Mac OS X-based website and Server monitor.

Weaknesses: None found.

Simon 2 by David Sinclair has been around for a while, but it has recently been updated to version 2.0c5. So what does it do? Simply, it monitors websites and servers for changes or failures as a watchdog app.

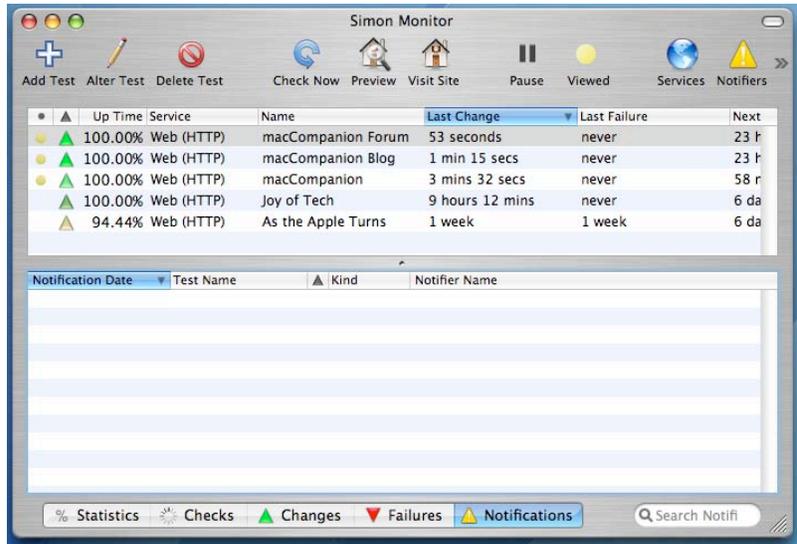
Notifications can be set to be either Emails, sound, voice or other. If you monitor sites, this runs in the background. If you have mission-critical servers, this watchdogs those too. If you want to check your ISP's server, find out about downloads, track polls, or even manage auctions, This app can do it using Action, Email, Launch, Sound Speech or Customized notifiers.



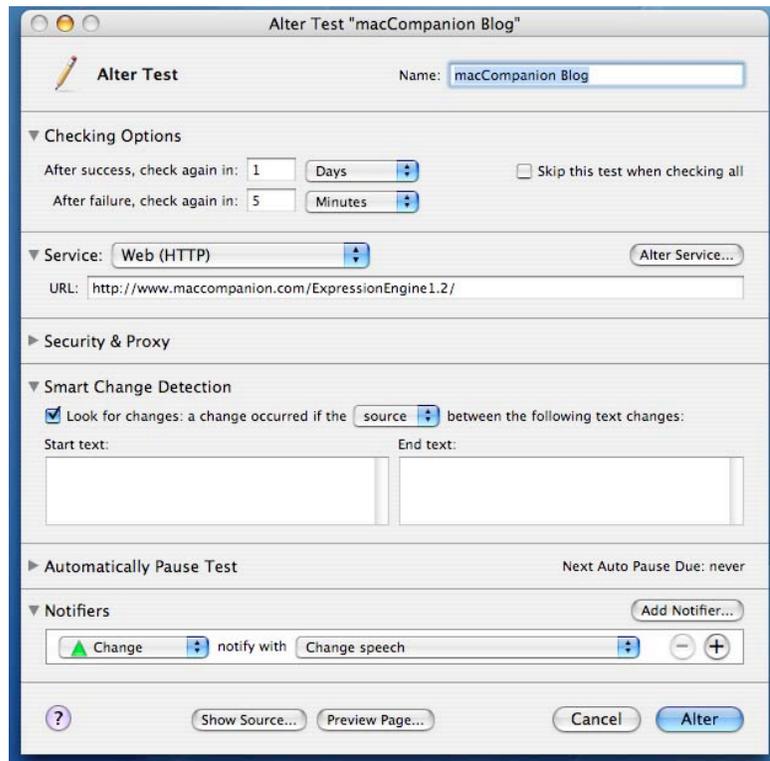
Everything is adjustable for checking uptime, failures, changes and status. It is dock-accessible too. It also has a Smart Change Detection function so site checking doesn't get false positives from banners, etc.

Oh, and in the Dock, notifier symbols change in the Simon screen.

Programming port functions is a snap with the Port service plug-in. It can make sure applications are present, incoming and outgoing mail (IMAP and POP) is available, Ping and SSH work and services can be changed with the *Add/Alter Service*. There is even a Capture Session panel for checking server types with session scripts.



As you get familiar with the program, test criteria can be altered to match more closely the work that is needed to be monitored.



The User Guide is online and is constantly being updated. The best thing to do is just go here to see the Table of Contents; <http://www.dejal.com/simon/guide/contents.html>.

To get to the plug-ins (Application, Basic Service, DNS Service, Ping Service and Port Service), the *Alter Service* button has to be clicked. The plug-ins are all there, so they do not have to be downloaded and installed separately. The same format is used with Adding/Altering Notifiers and Tests. In other words, it may take as much as 5 minutes to figure this all out and then let *Simon* run in the background to help you manage your servers and websites. Is this sweet or what?

You now have a watchdog that lets you have a life again as a system administrator. If you are using an Xserve from Apple, than you can really be enjoying the good life, because you will not be having to be on edge all the time worrying about uptime. Think about it. Then get Simon so you can have a monitoring utility designed to run from Mac OS X instead of from competing platforms.

VideoCue Pro Version 2 reviewed by Robert Pritchett



Vara Software, Limited.
London, England
Fax: 1-415-680-1656

<http://www.varasoftware.com/contact/email.html>

<http://www.varasoftware.com>

Released: July 20, 2005

VideoCue 2 \$40 USD; VideoCue 2 Pro \$90 USD.

Requirements: Mac OS X 10.3.5 or later; at least a 500MHz G3, G4 or G5 system; Quartz Extreme-capable graphics card.

<http://www.apple.com/macosx/features/quartzextreme/>

Case Studies:

http://www.varasoftware.com/products/videoCue/edu_casestudy.html



Strengths: Quick and easy VodCasting tool.

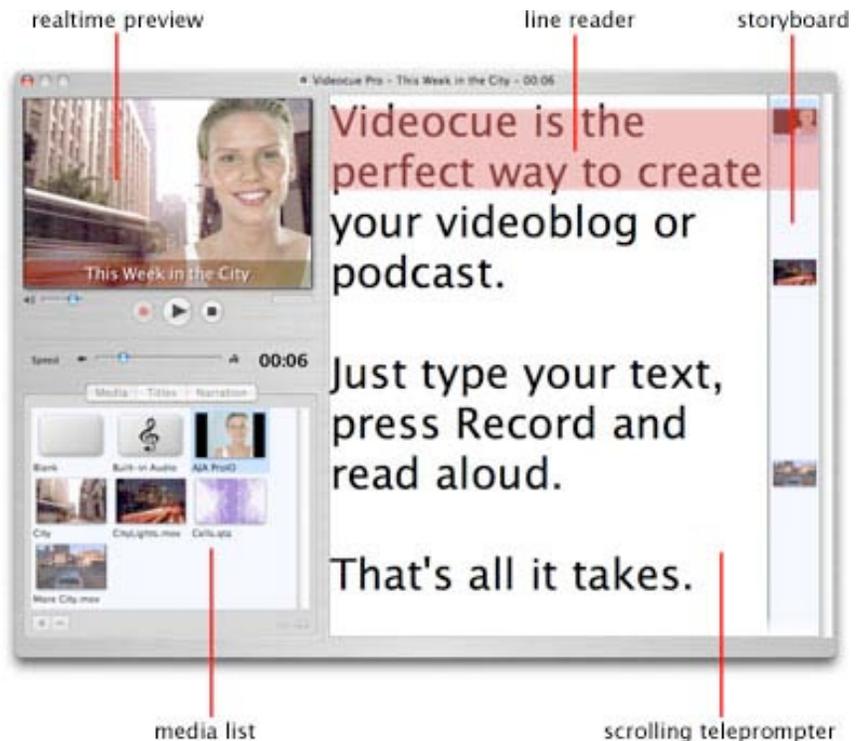
Weaknesses: None found, and that says a lot for this program!

Used with iMac G5; Mac OS X 10.4 Tiger; iSight camera and Avid Stereo headset.

VideoCue Pro Version 2 is a teleprompting, recording and publishing package that can be used for VodCasting. Files are saved as *.vcue* files.

Type in words in the *line reader* and let it scroll. Do transitions with media, titles and narration using the *storyboard* section in 1, 2 or 3 layers.

Miss a beat, stop and re-record. Scrolling can be sped up or slowed down and text in the *line reader* area can also be zoomed in or out.



One thing I didn't play with was the Chroma Key for working blue or green screen backgrounds. Nor did I publish directly to our Blog with a VideoBlog, because I'm working on a Safety and Security sequence for Mac OS X for Trusted Learning. Not quite Total Training quality, but it sure beats some other alternatives for the price!

What makes this product special is that it takes advantage of Tiger technologies such as Quartz Extreme, and Core Imaging. I enjoyed running *Ripple* for the title changes as I experimented with the tools available.

Feature	Videocue	Videocue Pro
Core Image transitions	✓	✓
Spotlight searching	✓	✓
Blog Publish support	✓	✓
Podcasting settings	✓	✓
FTP uploading	✓	✓
GPU accelerated	✓	✓
Built-in titler		✓
Support for multiple webcams		✓
Fullscreen Prompter		✓
Chroma Key		✓
Motion editing controls		✓
Prompter Mirror function		✓
Number of tracks	2	3

Just take the audio, run your text through the prompter and export to the *PodCast preset* or do the videoblogging integration with Blogger, LiveJournal, Moveable Type or TypePad. The audio works fine.

I also didn't take advantage of the mattes for media, but did figure out quickly how to use the subtitle overlays. If you use QuickTime 7, the text overlay can be turned off to avoid distraction, if necessary.

What I did was export to QuickTime 7 with the H.264 option (Advanced Video Coding) for MPG-4 and it reduced the video size anywhere from 5% to 50%. I also added the text under the video portion so that hard-of hearing could read what I was saying – mostly.

I also didn't take time to use the Quartz Composer integration, but Tiger has that tool available too. And VideoCue also takes advantage of both Spotlight and Automator.

Another feature I didn't take advantage of was the mirrored prompter. Apparently it is used for one-way mirror professional teleprompting. The prompter also can be used in full-screen mode.

Even though my presentation isn't "professional", I did save it as high-end, so the video is at least quality.



I discovered that when I record with VideoCue Pro, I need to have the files I drag&drop be located in the same folder, so when I go back to edit, it can find them again, otherwise they end up as black placeholders only. A popup screen appears saying the list of files used are not found.

It would make sense to not move files from the default saved location (usually in *Documents*). My mistake was that I loaded all the attached files on my Desktop and then moved them to a folder later.

Brian Novak of Vara Software, pointed out the following:

“If you put all files in the same folder with your *.vcue* file, or even if you put an *images* folder in the same folder, do this:

MyDirectory/MyProject.vcue
MyDirectory/images/First.jpg
MyDirectory/images/Second.jpg

If you do that, VideoCue should be able to open the *MyProject.vcue* file, even if you move the whole *MyDirectory* to another computer or put it on a CD-ROM, archive it for storage, or what-have-you.

Just to be clear: you only need to do this if you plan to move the files you have put in your presentation.

So, for example, if you create a *MyDoc.vcue* file with a *MyFriend.JPG* that is in your Pictures folder, then when you relaunch, it should find *MyFriend.JPG* just fine. However, if you then move *MyFriend.JPG* from your *Pictures* folder to *Documents* folder, VideoCue will not be able to find it if you re-open.

So the only problem will happen if you move the JPG *after* it's in the VideoCue Presentation...”

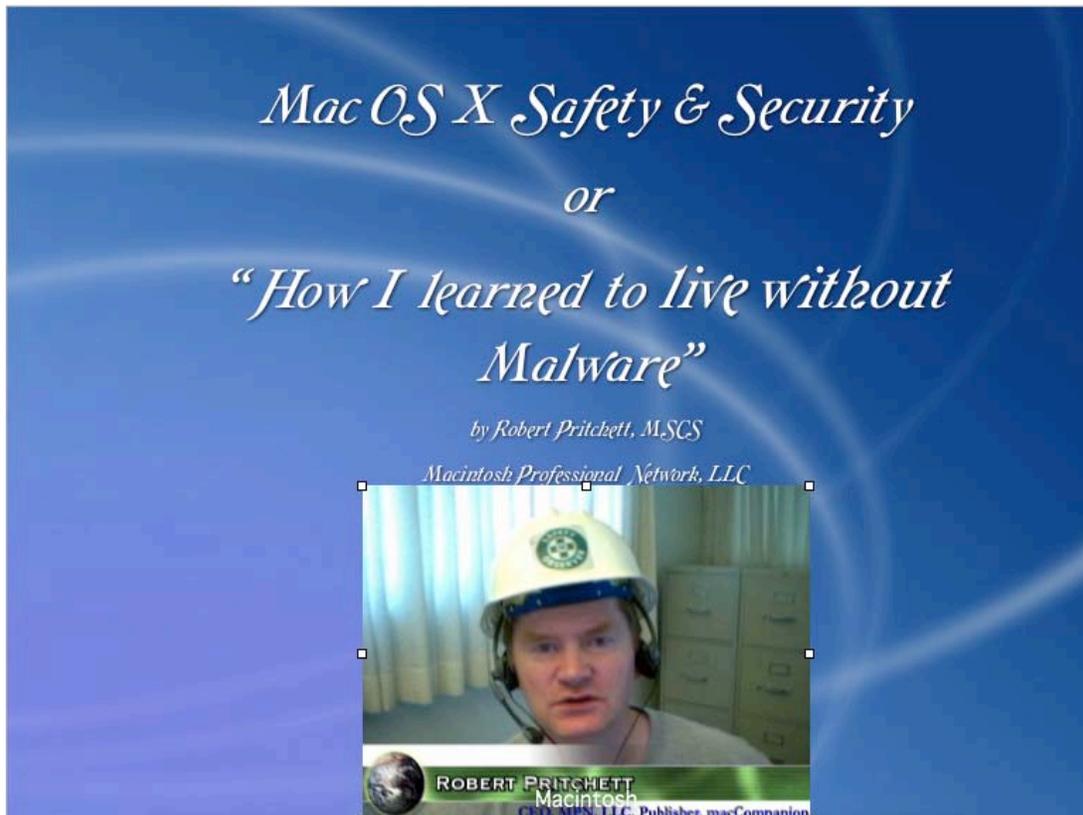
Which is what I did. My bad. This only affects the *.vcue* file. When exporting to QuickTime, everything plays nice. I just need to leave stuff alone until after I've exported to QuickTime, and not before.

While working this app late one evening, I tripped over an Easter Egg, where the teleprompter text ended up scrolling at a 45-degree angle instead of scrolling up after I fat-fingered the keyboard.

Again from Brian Novak:

Pressing *a* or *s* while recording will change the angle.
Pressing *q* or *w* will zoom in or zoom out.

Now if I can get it to work seamlessly with Keynote...well, I can load the resulting QuickTime video into Keynote and the results really are very, very good!



Anyhow, this is a fun program that has a short learning curve, because Vara Software did a great job with the tutorial video, and their Help menu really does help. What makes VideoCue even greater is that there is no “translation/conversion” activity between it and QuickTime 7. It just works. More time can be dedicated to presenting, rather than in messing around with controls. Isn't that the way all good software is supposed to function?

I think that if you are doing any kind of video or audio presentation for that matter, you are going to want to use a copy of VideoCue Pro. It lets you concentrate on content and not on how to get there.

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macCompanion Media Kit

We are the Macintosh® Professional Network (MPN), Limited Liability Corporation (LLC). MPN, LLC continues to evolve, ever since its creation in 1996 as a way to reach out to those who use computers for a living in an effort to make their lives easier and their work both enjoyable and profitable.

Besides consulting efforts, we also provide monthly book, hardware and software reviews at [macCompanion](#). We offer ways and means for folks to get comfortable using the Macintosh™ created by the Apple® Corporation in the multibillion-dollar computer industry. We know that bad software doesn't live long in the Mac™ environment. On the other hand, good computer equipment and software becomes great as the word spreads, and we are very good at helping to spread it. Our suggestions over the years have also helped improve many successful products in use today. Through kind and gentle efforts, we have been able to help many people move to better tools-of-the-trade so they can be more productive in their work.

Besides our website, we also create *macCompanion* as a freely available PDF-based monthly. It averages about 100 pages per month. July 2004 is the first-year anniversary of this labor of love. The *macCompanion* staff is an all-volunteer team of writers and reviewers from many parts of the globe, and they also have a great wealth of knowledge and experience in their backgrounds. That base of talent also continues to keep growing as the Macintosh Professional Network expands.

Statistical Analysis

We are very excited about our site statistics! The multilingual-capable [macCompanion](#) website surpassed 1 million hits a month, starting June 2004 and readership continues to increase rapidly through our "whisper campaign". Last October we switched over to our current host. They have provided us with excellent support and tools to help us do our job. They have the right tools to do theirs too. It is a great, robust relationship and we are very proud of them.

We continue to get greater visibility every day. Many of the various 35 computer operating systems (with many moving towards the Mac® OS X™ environment), 115 online search engines, 269 countries and domains and 319 online robots have discovered us – and continue to do so. So far, over 201 other websites have also linked to us. Many of our readers have made our site one of their favorites. While nearly 70% of our readership stops by for a quick visit via RSS feeds, over 23% spend between 1/2 to 1 hours at a time going through over 250 different pages on our site (mostly archives). Many of those who quickly drop by, come to get the monthly PDFed issue of *macCompanion*. Over 8GB of bandwidth was used in June 2004 alone for download purposes. Previous months have averaged around 6GB. Trend analysis indicates that will continue to increase.

Advertising with *macCompanion*

We have four advertising options you may choose from, and multiple months will receive a 20% discount for both website and PDF-based ads. All advertising must be paid in advance. We

accept credit card payments via PayPal, checks, money orders by regular mail and cash in US currency by hand.

Site Ad Rate

We offer site ads for a fixed-budget price of only \$100 per month on our site. Following the KISS principle, we accept banner ads in only one size at this time - 468x60 pixels (per the [Interactive Advertising Bureau](#) standards for a Full Banner Ad Interactive Marketing Unit.) The ad will be rotated through with other ads, and there is no limit to how many you want to include.

The billing cycle begins based on the first day the ad placed on the site and is renewable on a monthly basis. This can begin immediately or at any time.

(If you want us to create those online-ads for you, the cost is \$100 per hour, with a minimum 2-hour base fee.)

PDF Ad Rates

The published monthly version of *macCompanion* has a closing date of the 25th of each month for ads. Our target date for distribution begins the 5th of each month. Placement of the ads will be at our discretion, but we do listen to your suggestions.

Each ad will require a site link so our readers can click on the PDF ad and go to your site. Ads need to be submitted as PDFs with at least 300 DPI resolution.

(If you want us to create those ads for you, the cost is \$100 per hour, with a minimum 2-hour base fee. You will then need to send us proofs, etc. in JPEG or GIF formats.)

Rate Table

Page Size: 8 1/2" x 11"				
No bleed				
Style	Rate	Size Fractional	Size Decimal	Size Centimeter
1/16th Page	\$40 USD	1 5/8 x 2 1/4 in	1.625 x □□□□2.25 in	4.1 x 5.7 cm
1/8th Page Horizontal	\$50 USD	3 1/2 x 2 1/4 in	3.5 x □□□□2.25 in	8.9 x 5.7 cm
1/8th Page Vertical	\$50 USD	2 1/4 x 3 1/2 in	2.25 x 3.5 in	5.7 x 8.9 cm
1/4th Page Vertical	\$60 USD	3 1/2 x 4 3/4 in	3.5 x 4.75 in	8.9 x 12.1 cm
1/2 Page Horizontal	\$100 USD	7 1/4 x 4 3/4 in	7.25 x 4.75 in	18.4 x 12.1 cm
1/3rd Page Horizontal	\$70 USD	7 1/4 x 3 1/4 in	7.25 x 3.25 in	18.4 x 8.3 cm

1/3rd Page Vertical	\$70 USD	2 1/4 x 9 7/8 in	2.25 x 9.875 in	5.7 x 25.1 cm
2/3rd Page Horizontal	\$150 USD	7 1/4 x 6 1/4 in	7.25 x 6.25 in	18.4 x 15.9 cm
2/3rd Page Vertical	\$150 USD	4 3/4 x 9 7/8 in	4.75 x 9.875 in	12.1 x 25.1 cm
Full Page	\$250 USD	7 1/4 x 9 7/8 in	7.25 x 9.875 in	18.4 x 25.1 cm



Affiliations

We do affiliations, and work with those who have made arrangements with online affiliate systems, or we deal directly with you if you have created code, and have a contract we can sign.

Sponsorships

We also accept sponsorships. Please let us know if you would like to sponsor *macCompanion*!

And we also accept donations by those who feel our services are value-added.

If you are as excited about our *macCompanion* readership as we are, please download the contractual terms and conditions documentation that are online in PDF format, or we can send them to you as an attachment. We'd enjoy having an ongoing working relationship with you too.

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Well that's it for this issue. Please come back again next month!