

macCompanion  
YOUR GUIDE TO ALL THINGS MACINTOSH

What's in *your*  
stocking?



VOLUME 3 ISSUE 12 December 2005

Table of Contents

**MASTHEAD..... 6**

**LETTER FROM THE CEO ..... 7**

SONY's Faux Paux..... 7

**LETTER FROM THE EDITOR ..... 10**

Happy Holy-Days! ..... 10

**ACCORDING TO HOYLE..... 11**

Cross-Platform Software Development from a Macintosh Perspective, Part IV: CPLAT ..... 11

**BURN, BABY, BURN! A HOW TO ..... 14**

**HOW A MAC VETERAN SPENT VETERAN'S DAY ..... 18**

The Tale Of Moving Friends from Windows 98 To A G5 iMac Revision 3 (iSight)..... 18

**THE MAC ATTACK: MAC TIPS, TRICKS, AND HINTS ..... 22**

Firewalls, An Introduction ..... 22

**PRACTICAL STRATEGIES..... 24**

Get Dinner or Be Dinner ..... 24

**INTRODUCTION TO DOC\_BABAD'S SOFTWARE AND SHAREWARE REVIEWS.. 26**

Some Great Software Tools for you and yours ..... 26

**MAC PRO PODCAST ..... 28**

Intro to Video Codecs..... 28

**MACNIGHT OWL..... 30**

Revisiting the Apple/Intel Connection..... 30

<b>MACSIMUM NEWS .....</b>	<b>32</b>
Things are shaking up in the digital book world .....	32
<b>SURF-BITS .....</b>	<b>33</b>
Freeware for the Mac.....	33
<b>MAC OS X TIGER SWITCHER CONTEST FOLLOW-UP .....</b>	<b>38</b>
Full Emotion Video.....	38
Shame, Violence and Lust .....	39
Flying Pigs and Parkas in Hell .....	40
The Halo Effect .....	41
Halo Effect II.....	41
Mac Snobbery.....	42
Security Switch.....	42
<b>VIEWS FROM THE IVORY TOWER.....</b>	<b>44</b>
Pet Peeves and Copy Protection .....	44
<b>BOOKS .....</b>	<b>46</b>
Advanced Mac OS X Programming .....	46
Agile Web Development with Rails First Edition.....	48
C++ Common Knowledge: Essential Intermediate Programming.....	50
The Career Programmer: Guerilla Tactics for the Imperfect World.....	51
Commercial Photoshop Retouching: In the Studio.....	52
Core Web Application Development with PHP and MySQL.....	53
Take Control of Digital TV eBook .....	54
The Macintosh iLife 05: An Interactive Guide to iTunes, iPhoto, iMovie, iDVD, and GarageBand Fourth Edition .....	55
iMovie HD & iDVD 5: The Missing Manual.....	58
Internet Forensics: Using Digital Evidence to Solve Computer Crime .....	60

No Nonsense XML Web Development With PHP: A Practical Step-by-Step Guide.....	62
Practical Development Environments.....	63
PC Pest Control: Protect Your Computers from Malicious Internet Invaders .....	65
RT Essentials: Managing Your Team and Projects with Request Tracker.....	67
SPYCHiPS: How major corporations and government plan to track your every move with RFID .....	68
Build Your Own Standards Compliant Website Using Dreamweaver 8.....	70
Take Control of Switching to the Mac eBook .....	71
TCP/IP Guide: A Comprehensive, Illustrated Internet Protocols Reference.....	72
Unite the Tribes: Ending Turf Wars for Career and Business Success.....	75
<b>SCI-FI BOOK REVIEWS.....</b>	<b>76</b>
Tennis Shoes Among the Nephites .....	76
Gadaintons and the Silver Sword.....	78
The Feathered Serpent, Part 1.....	79
The Feathered Serpent, Part 2.....	80
The Sacred Quest.....	81
The Lost Scrolls.....	82
The Golden Crown .....	83
Warriors of Cumorah .....	84
Tower of Thunder.....	85
<b>HARDWARE.....</b>	<b>86</b>
IoGear FireWire MiniHub GFH610.....	86
iMac G5 (20") – First Impressions .....	87
Speck Toughskin for iPod Video .....	91
Speck Products' Grip•Skins for iPod and iPod Mini: Legendary Protection, Style & Comfort .....	93
Linksys EtherFastCable Modem BEFCMU10 version 3 .....	95
Watch this! Wireless Video Security Solution with Mac OS X.....	97

<b>SHAREWARE</b> .....	<b>100</b>
ClamXav 1.0.1 – Free Virus Scanner for Mac OS X.....	100
EasyFind – A flexible and powerful way to expand Spotlight’s functionality .....	102
Folder Contents CM — A contextual menu addition to allow you to check out the contents of your folders.....	105
N Commander – Stamp out the <i>New Folder</i> Command-Shift F sequence .....	108
SmartWrap — The way to rewrap your text!.....	110
Introduction .....	110
XMenu 1.7 – A way to bring back the <i>lost</i> features of the Apple Menu used in the more recent Classic operating system .....	113
<b>SOFTWARE</b> .....	<b>116</b>
ConceptDraw MINDMAP professional EDITION4 .....	116
ConceptDraw Project 2 version 2.0.1 .....	118
ConceptDraw V Professional version 5.2.8 - Business and Technical Drawing Tool .....	120
Default Folder — A full featured Finder enhancer focused on the open/save dialog boxes.....	123
DeltaGraph 5 version 5.6.1 – Premier Graphing Solution for the Mac .....	126
EvoCam 3.5.1.....	129
Mac School – Student Management .....	131
<i>Metrowerks' Swan Song: The Final Release of CodeWarrior for Macintosh</i> .....	134
Starry Night Pro Plus - through the eyes of an Astronomy Newbie.....	136
TheRecipeManager 2.0 .....	143
Visual Thesaurus 3.0.1 .....	151
<b>TRAINING</b> .....	<b>155</b>
Mac OS X Training for Windows Users .....	155

## **Masthead**

**Publisher**  
**Editor-in-Chief**  
**Consultants**

Robert L. Pritchett  
Robert L. Pritchett  
Harry {doc} Babad  
Ted Bade

**Assistant Editors**

Seth Matheson  
Julie M. Willingham

**Web Masters**

Derek Meier  
James Meister

**Contacts**

[webmaster@maccompanion.com](mailto:webmaster@maccompanion.com)  
[feedback@maccompanion.com](mailto:feedback@maccompanion.com)

**Correspondence**

Robert Pritchett,  
CEO of MPN, LLC  
1952 Thayer Drive Richland,  
WA 99352 USA  
1-509-210-0217  
1-888-684-2161  
[rpritchett@maccompanion.com](mailto:rpritchett@maccompanion.com)

## **This month's Authors (Alphabetical Listing):**

Harry {doc} Babad  
Ted Bade  
John Barnes (Guest)  
Dustin D'Andrea  
Bill Davies (Guest)  
Christopher Duncan  
Dr. Eric Flesher  
Jonathan Hoyle  
Daphne Kalfon  
Victoria Maciulski (Guest)  
Derek Meier  
Robert Pritchett  
Dennis Sellers  
Leland Scott  
Steve Stanger  
Gene Steinberg  
Mike Swope  
Tim Verpoorten

## **Application Service Provider**

<http://www.stephousehosting.com>

Our special thanks to all those who have allowed us to review their products!  
And to our readers, who make this effort possible.

## Letter from the CEO

### SONY's Faux Paux

I wanted so much to dedicate this month's column to each of you for dropping by and to wish you to change the Hollow-days into great Holy-Days and a Prosperous Safe New Year with your families, but instead, I devote time and effort to the soup-de-jeure – Copy Protection and Digital Rights Management and I call it -

### Pitfalls of poor corporate practices or SONY's Faux Paux

We discussed this on the *Mac ReviewCast*, episode #30 at <http://www.macreviewcast.com/?p=75> . Why? Because the part that affects Macs directly was not addressed in other media sources as deeply as we do here today.

4.7 million CDs are being recalled by SONY <http://www.wired.com/news/technology/0,1282,69620,00.html>. Look for ones that have "Copy Protected" printed on the cover.

Amazon.com is taking back ones that were polluted with Extended Copy Protection (XCP) "phone home" malware <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/technology/4448788.stm>. And a list of 52 CDs that are known to have the rootkit software installed on them was posted by SONY, <http://cp.sonybmg.com/xcp/english/titles.html>.

Somebody at SONY *obviously* has a quirky sense of humor, especially if you look at some of the album titles posted so far; *Phantoms*, *The Invisible Invasion*, *Healthy in Paranoid Times*, *Suspicious Activity?* and *Robbery*.

The released uninstall program by SONY is even worse than the original install, because it leaves a large security hole behind on Windows-based systems that use *ActiveX*, as discussed over on Freedom-to-Tinker.com by J. Alex Haldeman <http://www.freedom-to-tinker.com/?p=927> and Matti Nikki from Finland shows code issues at <http://hack.fi/~muzzy/sony-drm/>.

Bruce Schneier does an excellent job reporting on the *Rouge Rootkit* in a Wired.com article at <http://www.wired.com/news/privacy/0,1848,69601,00.html>.

Even Microsoft recategorized XCP as spyware. <http://www.freedom-to-tinker.com/?p=927>. However, none of the established anti-malware companies reported this issue or looked for it for over 2 years. Over 2.1 million Windows-based systems have been known to be affected so far.

BoingBoing is keeping a Blog page called the *Sony rootkit roundup* at [http://www.boingboing.net/2005/11/17/sony\\_rootkit\\_roundup.html](http://www.boingboing.net/2005/11/17/sony_rootkit_roundup.html)

CNET also has a link-tie on their site about this issue: [http://news.com.com/New+Sony+CD+risk+identified/2100-1002\\_3-5961560.html](http://news.com.com/New+Sony+CD+risk+identified/2100-1002_3-5961560.html)

A spoof on the XCP rootkit software being on one of SONY's Cybershot cameras was posted by Brian Briggs on the satire site, bbspot.com [http://www.bbspot.com/News/2005/11/sony\\_photo\\_sharing.html](http://www.bbspot.com/News/2005/11/sony_photo_sharing.html), but how do we know it isn't so? And what about DVDs?

Gene Steinberg interviewed Molly Wood from CNET, where they discussed this issue in the 11-17-2005 episode of *The Tech Night Owl LIVE*.

Microsoft has a team create a "fix" for Windows-based systems: <http://blogs.technet.com/antimalware/>.

And even Mark Russinovich who was the first to bring this to our attention, has a Blog that keeps up on the DRM issues: <http://www.sysinternals.com/Blog/>.

There is something even more sinister with the SONY CDs, and that is that there is malware on the CDs that affect Macs from the MediaMax Technology Corporation. Following up on Jeff Powell's report from last week on Mac ReviewCast, Apparently, the MediaMax malware has to be installed manually on a Mac, but SONY doesn't say anything about this and it is installed without consent by SONY along with the XCP on Windows-based systems.

Larry Loeb from the SECURITY IT Hub, discusses the *Start.app* program that installs two kernel extensions in Mac OS X system files (*PhoenixNub1.kext* and *PhoenixNub12.kext*) only after the person who wants to listen to the music on the CD inserts a username and password that activates the MediaMax Digital Rights Management software from SunnComm, (aka, Media Max Technology Corporation) that limits CD burns and adds number-of-play time-expiring copies of tracks. This was discovered on a SONY BMG subsidiary RCA Victor CD. [http://www.security.ithub.com/article/Sonys+DRM+Rootkit+Comes+in+Mac+Flavor+Too/165172\\_1.aspx](http://www.security.ithub.com/article/Sonys+DRM+Rootkit+Comes+in+Mac+Flavor+Too/165172_1.aspx). Steve Stanger from *The Mac Attack* wanted me to be sure to emphasize that this only is activated on a Mac, if a person follows through with the username/password login process to install the MediaMax software from the music CD.

The fix would be to remove the kernel extensions (*PhoenixNub1.kext* and *PhoenixNub12.kext*) from your Mac, if they have been installed.

*Mastering Mac OS X v10.4 Tiger*, page 775, discusses deleting kernel extensions (.kext) as follows;

- Go into Safe mode (restart with the *Shift* key held down and wait until the *Login* screen shows the words "Safe Boot").
- Open *System > Library > Extensions* and find the offending extensions and delete them (you have to be in an Admin account to do this).

Michael Righi posted feedback he got from MediaMax on his non-Mac system:

<http://www.michaelrighi.com/2005/06/20/use-sony-drm-format-your-hard-drive/> and instead of going to a previous restore date, he is planning to do the ultimate sacrifice fix and reformat his system.

This CD poison foisted on what SONY calls "consumers" and not "customers", violates the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act of 1986 in the USA and the Computer Misuse Act from 1990 in Great Britain, the Copyright Fair Use Doctrine as well as violating the GPL License agreements for Open Source software as provided to SONY by First 4 Internet, a software company based in Britain.

The California lawsuit, filed on November 1, claims that the software violates the California Civil Code Section 1750, Consumer Legal Remedies Act, <http://www.harp.org/clra.htm>, the Consumer Protection Against Computer Spyware Act, <http://www.ncsl.org/programs/lis/spyware05.htm> and the California Unfair Competition Law, <http://www.megalaw.com/top/unfaircomp.php>.

The upcoming lawsuit in New York would seek restitution for consumers nationwide.

I would think that MediaMax Technology Corporation also has violated a few laws. We shall see.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Computer\\_Fraud\\_and\\_Abuse\\_Act](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Computer_Fraud_and_Abuse_Act)  
[http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts1990/Ukpga\\_19900018\\_en\\_2.htm#mdiv1](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts1990/Ukpga_19900018_en_2.htm#mdiv1)  
[http://www.eff.org/IP/DRM/fair\\_use\\_and\\_drm.html](http://www.eff.org/IP/DRM/fair_use_and_drm.html)  
[http://www.siliconvalleysleuth.com/2005/11/is\\_there\\_no\\_lim.html](http://www.siliconvalleysleuth.com/2005/11/is_there_no_lim.html)

There are at least 3 class-action suits that have been put into the worldwide judicial system at this time.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Extended\\_Copy\\_Protection](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Extended_Copy_Protection),  
[http://en.wikinews.org/wiki/Sony\\_faces\\_class\\_action\\_lawsuits\\_for\\_DRM](http://en.wikinews.org/wiki/Sony_faces_class_action_lawsuits_for_DRM) and  
<http://www.alcei.org/index.php/archives/105>.

Mark Pertone over at Engadget, opines that SONY was pressuring Apple with their DRM technology against iTunes and iPods. Think SONY's strategy may have caused a backlash?

<http://www.engadget.com/entry/1234000123047528/>

And we discussed this issue on *Mac ReviewCast* with Tim Verpoorten in Episode #30

<http://www.macreviewcast.com/?p=75> with references to it and this article in Episode #16 of *The Mac Attack* by Steve Stanger at <http://themacsattack.libsyn.com/>.

Maybe we can convince Daphne Kalfon to do a SONY Faux Paux music piece with her GarageBand expertise.

Anyway, thanks so much for reading *macCompanion*. It has been a quick and busy year for us as we added more staff and stretched ourselves. You have pumped us up to around 2 million page views per month and more of you have been requesting to be notified when a new issue gets published. More and more folks have been migrating to the Mac and hopefully we have been able to be a positive influence in their decision to use tools that just work. Keep spreading the word!

And may you live in peace and enjoy wonderful Holy-days.

With deep love and affection for each of you,

Robert L. Pritchett

## Letter from the Editor

### Happy Holy-Days!

Since the *macCompanion Letter from the CEO* for this month was overshadowed by the SONY Digital Rights Management snafu, perhaps I can wish you all great Holy-days here...

May you enjoy your families this season and remember why these Holy Days even exist. May peace be with you and always.

Now, down to business:

We became very busy getting the December issue of *macCompanion*, the last for 2005, out the door and on to you.

We added a lot of new staff this year with the most recent addition of Christopher Duncan of *Practical Strategy Consulting* at <http://www.practicalstrategyconsulting.com/> as a columnist for posting common sense regarding the Enterprise environment as *Practical Strategies* from either his weekly columns of *Cubicle City* or *Reality Check*. This month, we posted his *Get Dinner or Be Dinner* article. We reviewed two of his books this month as well, *The Career Programmer* and *Unite the Tribes*.

We also include the *macCompanion Switcher Contest* results and the stories of the winners. Online will be the voice of the first-place winner who resides in Germany. We didn't turn it into a transcript, so if you want to hear him, you will need to go to the website at <http://www.maccompanion.com>.

We also have Joseph Nilo's first column article on an *Introduction to Video Codecs* garnered from *Mac Pro Podcast* at <http://www.macpropodcast.com/>.

We also have a guest article from John Barnes on backing up using CDs, courtesy of Washington Apple Pi, titled *Burn Baby Burn!*

And we reprinted another guest article from Bill Davies, *How a Mac Veteran Spent Veteran's Day* on conversion from Windows 98 to an iMac G5, courtesy of MacNexus.

Harry Babad talks to us about his shareware and software reviews this month. Ted Bade discusses events and Daphne Kalfon helps us understand bandfiles.

And of course, we have lots of book, hardware, shareware, software and training reviews for you to enjoy as you try staying warm during the winter in the northern hemisphere or enjoy the sun in the southern. A few of these reviews were also discussed this past month in the *Mac ReviewCast* podcasts at <http://www.macreviewcast.com>.

Please take time to click on our affiliates and advertisers on our website, so we can continue to pay for the bandwidth being used by you and your friends as you visit and download free issues of *macCompanion*. And keep spreading the word about us.

Once again, the overwhelming majority of visitors are coming from non-Mac environments as we offer Mac-based comfort food for the mind.

May the upcoming 2006, be a prosperous one for you and yours!

Sincerely and with deep gratitude,

Robert L. Pritchett

## According to Hoyle...

### Cross-Platform Software Development from a Macintosh Perspective, Part IV: CPLAT

by Jonathan Hoyle [jhoyle@maccompanion.com](mailto:jhoyle@maccompanion.com)

Three months ago, we began our series on cross-platform software development from a Macintosh perspective [http://www.maccompanion.com/archives/september2005/Columns/According\\_to\\_Hoyle\\_1.htm](http://www.maccompanion.com/archives/september2005/Columns/According_to_Hoyle_1.htm). We have reviewed two of the most well known C++ frameworks, Qt [http://www.maccompanion.com/archives/october2005/Columns/According\\_to\\_Hoyle\\_2.htm](http://www.maccompanion.com/archives/october2005/Columns/According_to_Hoyle_2.htm) and wxWidgets <http://www.maccompanion.com/archives/november2005/Columns/AccordingtoHoyle.htm>. This month we highlight the CPLAT framework, created by Ken Stahlman [http://www.ksoft.net/cp\\_home.htm](http://www.ksoft.net/cp_home.htm).

#### CPLAT Overview

CPLAT is a low cost royalty-free framework, which targets Mac OS X, Classic and Windows, with a Linux version under development. Reminiscent of PowerPlant, CPLAT contains dozens of C++ classes designed to access GUI elements, OS events, graphics, printing and even OpenGL. Knowing that most Macintosh developers prefer to use Apple's Interface Builder to layout the GUI, CPLAT allows you to use .nib files created by I.B. for your Macintosh projects. For those cross-platform-minded, CPLAT comes with tools which allow you to import .nib files and convert them into XML that can be used by CPLAT for Windows as well as Macintosh.

For the extremely low price of \$50 per license (\$300 for a site license), CPLAT is a tremendous value. The current version of CPLAT II can be compiled with Xcode, CodeWarrior or Visual Studio. For those interested in starting with the Mac version only, Ken has recently introduced CPLAT\_Mac II for the reduced price of \$25 per license. When using Xcode 2.1 or higher, CPLAT II and CPLAT\_Mac II can be used to build Universal Binary applications, which run natively on Intel-based Macintoshes. Users of CPLAT\_Mac may upgrade to the full CPLAT framework at any time for the \$25 differential.

#### Interview with CPLAT creator Ken Stahlman

Ken Stahlman agreed to talk with *macCompanion* about CPLAT for this article, and the following interview is taken from two days' correspondence:

*How long have you been using the Macintosh?*

Since the MacPlus days.

*What in particular inspired you to create CPLAT?*

I had an application that was written in another framework that was Mac OS only, and it needed to be useable on a PC. I looked at all of the options at the time, and really couldn't find anything that was affordable. So I figured that I would write my own cross-platform framework. At the same time, I figured if I had this need, there must be others that needed an affordable cross-platform framework.

*Who is your primary target audience for CPLAT?*

The primary target is Mac OS developers who want to port their apps to Windows. There have been a number of users who have used CPLAT to port their PowerPlant app to Windows, so I see that as a potential target audience.

*How long are you planning to continue Classic support?*

Unknown at this time. The current plan is to not remove it, but just keep the support at where it is. Only Mac OS X Mach-O will have new features added to the framework. CPLAT is used by some apps that are used in educational systems and need to continue to support older machines.

*How would you compare CPLAT to PowerPlant?*

The original design of CPLAT I was similar to PowerPlant. With the new version II of the framework, the design is more like a Carbon Event based application in that you register signal and slots for the events you want to handle. Like PowerPlant, CPLAT provides wrappers for most of the native OS's widgets and things. However, I think that one of the biggest differences is that CPLAT classes tend to provide more functionality than PowerPlant does, especially PowerPlant X.

*What would you say are the relative strengths of CPLAT?*

I would say the relative strengths of CPLAT are that it is a low cost cross-platform framework that is easy to use and understand and provides a lot of functionality needed to write an application, such as document, file system, undo and printing support. CPLAT is moving forward and keeping pace with modern OS features, and if CPLAT doesn't provide something you need, you can easily access the underlying OS object and use OS APIs to easily add or extend features to your app.

*What would you say are the relative weaknesses of CPLAT?*

The most often cited weakness of CPLAT is that it is developed by just 1 person. However, there are many users that provide bug fixes and enhancements.

*Have you had an opportunity to compare CPLAT with other cross-platform frameworks, such as Qt or wxWidgets?*

I've only briefly looked at Qt, and the most noticeable thing that strikes you about a Qt application is that it doesn't look right on Mac OS X, whereas CPLAT is using all native controls & HIViews on Mac OS, and native widgets on Windows so you get the natural look and feel of the underlying OS. I haven't used wxWidgets, but I had one user say they tried to port their PowerPlant app using wxWidgets, but gave up, and is now using CPLAT.

*You have recently made available CPLAT\_Mac II. Can you tell us about CPLAT\_Mac and how it compares with CPLAT?*

CPLAT\_Mac is the same as CPLAT but doesn't have any of the Windows or Linux code in it. Its purpose is for developers who want or need a framework to develop Mac OS apps and that are thinking about possibly going cross-platform, or who might want to consider switching to another framework now that PowerPlant is no longer being developed by Metrowerks. By using CPLAT\_Mac, users can build their applications for Mac OS now, and if at a later time they want to go to Windows, they can get the cross-platform version of CPLAT for just the price difference.

*How much of a transition is there to go from PowerPlant to CPLAT?*

There is not much of a transition in going from PowerPlant to CPLAT. The command handling system is a little different, but if they have used CarbonEvents, then the transition is very simple, in that you just register a handler for the event to be handled. The hardest part would be converting the UI, but CPLAT includes a tool that will read and convert PowerPlant PPobs to CPLAT xml files that construct the UI at runtime. Alternatively, there is a third party tool called Migrator that could convert the PPobs to InterfaceBuilder nibs which CPLAT can use.

*Besides the Macintosh and Windows, what other operating systems do you support?*

There is some limited support for building on Linux using the Gtk/Gtk2 widget set. I hope to strengthen this area in the next release.

*What's in store for the future of CPLAT?*

For the short term, making sure that CPLAT will fully support Mac OS on Intel. In the long term, I'm working on an editor that will allow the user to visually connect various UI elements signals and slots visually. Keeping up with advances in Mac OS and Windows, and adding functionality when appropriate.

*Finally, what would you like to say to Mac developers reading this article who are still deciding upon a cross-platform strategy?*

CPLAT provides an easy to use, low cost solution for moving your apps to Windows, in addition to keeping up with current Mac OS features. If your application is built with PowerPlant or PowerPlant X, you will find CPLAT an easy way to get your application ported to Windows. CPLAT also provides tools to allow you to use InterfaceBuilder to create your UI and convert it to a form useable on Windows.

## Conclusion

Although not as full-featured as *Qt* or *wxWidgets*, CPLAT's ease of use and similarity to *PowerPlant* make it an ideal choice for cross-platform development. CPLAT is much more intuitive and simpler to use than the cumbersome *wxWidgets*, and far cheaper than the overly priced *Qt*. Unlike so many other solutions, CPLAT makes the Macintosh truly a first class citizen, with no ugly compromises required by so many other solutions. As CPLAT continues to evolve, it is becoming more mature and robust.

Though CPLAT may not be sufficient for everyone's needs, its low price and small learning curve make it recommended for your first attempt. Those wishing to evaluate CPLAT for their own needs can download a trial version from its web site at [http://www.ksoft.net/cp\\_trial.htm](http://www.ksoft.net/cp_trial.htm). Legacy PowerPlant projects are ideal for this approach, although newer projects would also do well. Its biggest weakness is its small user base, but this has afforded Ksoft to respond to users in a more timely manner.

If you are looking for a reasonably priced C++ cross-platform framework that retains the full feel of Macintosh development, you will have a hard time finding a better product than CPLAT.

**Coming Up Next:** Having investigated some C++ frameworks in depth, we will now move on to examine other rapid application development environments. Over the next few months, we will be looking at non-C++ solutions, including *REALbasic* and *Runtime Revolution*. If there are any specific products you'd like reviewed, please email your suggestions to me at [jhoyle@maccompanion.com](mailto:jhoyle@maccompanion.com).

<http://www.jonhoyle.com/resume/>

# Burn, Baby, Burn! A How To

by John Barnes



(Revised May 12, 2005)

<http://www.wap.org/journal/burnbaby/default.html>

Reprinted with permission.

I have recently encountered a number of cases where people thought that they had backed up data from their machines by dutifully writing it onto a CD-ROM. Image their horror when they inserted the CD-ROM that supposedly contained their data into their CD-ROM drive, only to be confronted with the dialog box in Figure 1. For some reason or other nothing had been written to the CD-R disc. The remainder of this article describes the protocol that Macintosh computer users need to follow in order to avoid such tragedies. Conversations with friends reveal that a lot of people have had this experience, but that they learned from it quickly enough to avoid serious consequences.

## Encouraging Operator Error

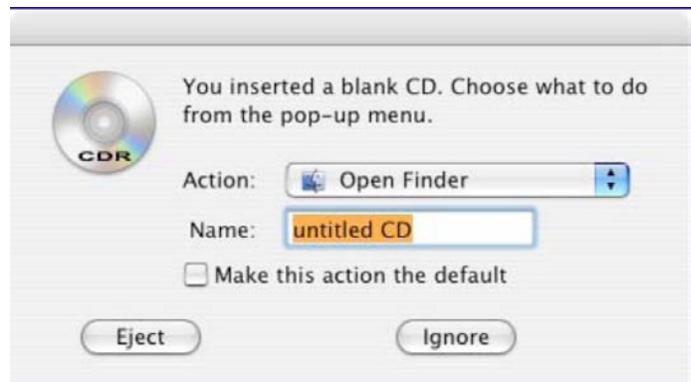
While copying data onto a writable CD-ROM disc (known as a CD-R) is a straightforward process, it is not trivial. Apple's software design fails to properly coach the end user at a crucial point in the process, virtually inviting the operator error that gives rise to the problem of the failed backup. Let's take a step-by-step look at the process of backing data up onto a CD-ROM so that we can clear up any misunderstandings and achieve reliable results.

The illustrations in this article focus on Mac OS X. I think that CD burning employing the Finder was introduced in Mac OS 9, but I made little use of it in those days because media like Zip cartridges were easier to use and adequate for my purposes. CD burners were expensive and bulky add-on items back in those days. At that time it would take months of work to generate 650 megabytes of data. Mac OS 9 now provides much of the same convenience in backing up to optical media that Mac OS X does, so Mac OS 9 users can benefit from this discussion.

## Initializing the Blank media

Figure 1 shows the computer's response when a blank CD-R is inserted into the drive. Back in the days when floppy discs came from the manufacturer in an unformatted state we got a very similar message. This signaled that we needed to "format" the disc. A directory structure was written to the disc and tracks were laid down to store the data that would soon be written onto the disc by the magnetic head of the disk drive. Those of you who are able to use DVD-R discs for backup can simply substitute that abbreviation for CD-R anywhere in this article.

Figure 1



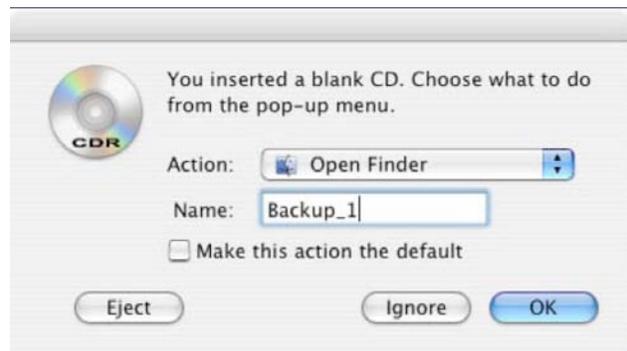


Figure 2

So, we would type a name like "Backup\_1" into the name field, as shown in Figure 2, and click on OK. In later times floppy discs, Zip discs, and other removable storage media came already formatted with a name like "untitled," a practice that continues to the present day. These media are ready to receive data as soon as they are connected to the computer. Renaming them is a simple matter of typing a suitable name into the right place.

After we dismiss the dialog box in Figure 2 by clicking on OK we see that a new icon appears in the Finder window (Figure 3) and on the desktop (Figure 4). This is where the problem starts. These icons look, for the most part, like icons from any other writable storage media. The shiny CD appearance is familiar to us from the occasions we put a commercial CD into the machine. The little circle with the black and yellow triangles is analogous to the radiation hazard symbol that one sees in nuclear installations. Perhaps this is meant to tell us that there is something sinister here.

### Readying the Files for Copying

The disc appears to be ready to receive data and indeed we can happily drag folders and files onto the icon. When we do so we see a dialog box like the one in Figure 5 telling us that files are being "copied" to the disc. This is the same dialog that we would see if we were copying files from one place to another on our hard drive. I find this to be deceptive labeling. The files are not actually being copied; they are merely being made *ready for copying*. I'm not exactly sure what the exact procedure is and it is not really important.

Figure 3

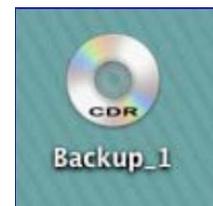
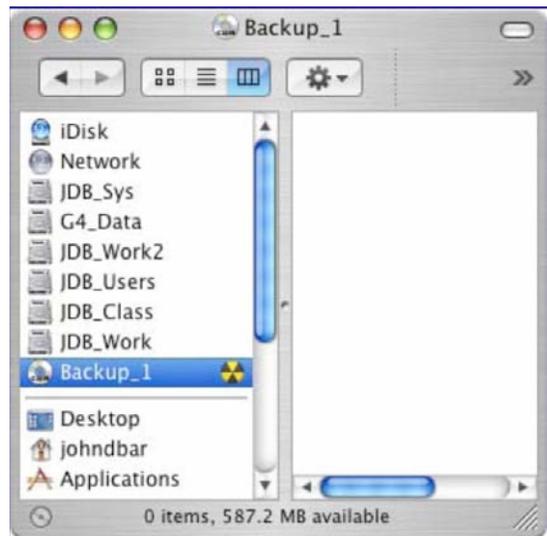


Figure 4

The important fact is that any folders or files “moved” to the CD-Rare only "virtual" at this stage of the game. If the user ejects the CDR it will come out as pristine as the day it left the factory and all of the virtual files will fly off into Never-Never Land. This is, in my humble opinion, a serious design flaw. There should be an alert to the user asking "Are you sure that you want to abort backing up the files to..?"

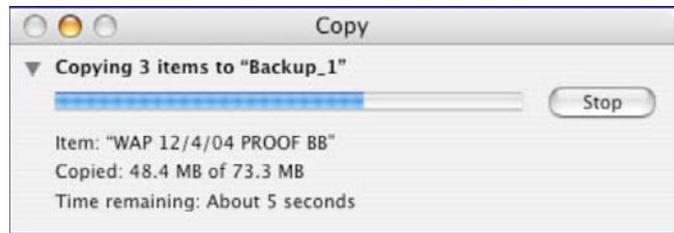


Figure 5

### Fixing the Files in Place

The final step in capturing these files onto the CD is called "burning". The name arises because a tiny laser beam changes the physical state of a dye that is embedded in the disc. On a CD-R this change of state is irreversible, so these are "write-once" media. CD-RW media can supposedly be erased and rewritten, but most of us have gotten turned off by past failures in using these media. The "burn" can be invoked from the Finder's File menu, from the burn icon in the Finder window (Figure 6), or from a contextual menu invoked by right-clicking the desktop icon for the optical disc. You will be prompted for your concurrence by a dialog like the one in Figure 7.

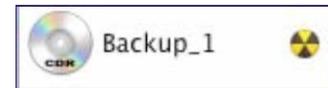


Figure 6

Be sure to select the "Burn" choice. Selecting "Eject" at this point consigns your carefully selected archive to Never-Never Land, never to be seen again.

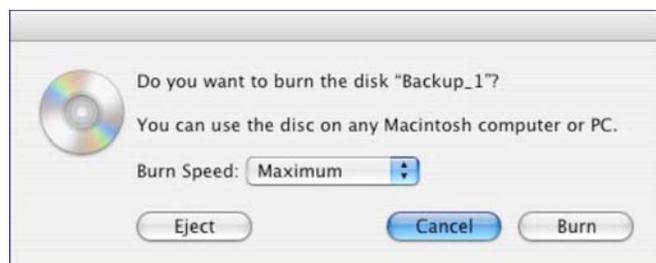


Figure 7

Burning takes quite a while because the laser has to put quite a lot of heat into the place where the phase change has to take place. A dialog like the one in Figure 8 will appear while the burn is going on. Once the burn is complete the user can decide whether or not to verify the result of the burn. It is a good idea to let the verification take place.

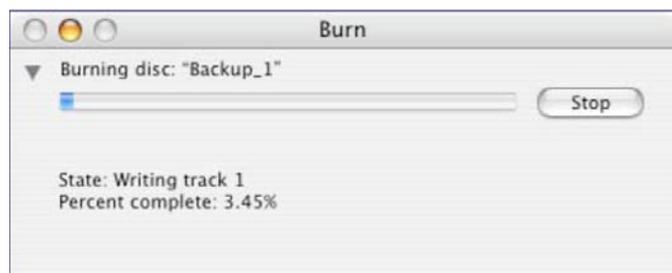


Figure 8

### Validate the Backup

OK, so the disc has been burned. Is this a signal to stash it away and wait for the day when you need to restore data? Definitely not. The very first thing one should do with a backup medium of any kind is to try to read it. If this step fails you need to redo the backup, and the sooner the better! The fastest, though not the most thorough, method of checking the disc is to re-insert the freshly burned CD and see if there is anything on it. Dantz Development's

*Retrospect* software product compares the backup set with its source files to ensure the integrity of a backup. Some people find this product too expensive and too cumbersome, but other products do not do as thorough a job.

Once the integrity of the backup is verified, it is time to get a goodnight of peaceful sleep, uninterrupted by worries about one's data.

Optical media are attractive because they are cheap and relatively durable. I have presented an approach that does not require any add-on software in the hope that more people will take the trouble to learn how to back things up properly. There are more robust and more automatic procedures that can be used to good effect. An investment in a sound backup product will pay for itself in the long run.

Every computer user should remember the following axiom -"Sooner or later you are going to lose data. The only question is how soon and how much." By taking proper precautions you can delay the day of reckoning and keep the loss to a minimum.



Washington Apple Pi, Ltd.  
12022 Parklawn Drive  
Rockville, MD USA 20852  
301-984-0300  
Contact: [webmaster@wap.org](mailto:webmaster@wap.org)  
©1978–2005 Washington Apple Pi, Ltd.



## How A Mac Veteran Spent Veteran's Day

### The Tale Of Moving Friends from Windows 98 To A G5 iMac Revision 3 (iSight)

by Bill Davies

[bdavies@macnexus.org](mailto:bdavies@macnexus.org)

<http://www.macnexus.org>

© 2005 Bill Davies, MacNexus the Sacramento Macintosh User Group

[http://www.macnexus.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=394&Itemid=2](http://www.macnexus.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=394&Itemid=2)

Friends of ours recently decided to change from their Sony Vaio desktop computer running Windows 98 to a G5 iMac (Rev 3) running Tiger. Although I did not preach this change to them, I certainly wanted to do everything I could do to facilitate it. And so I thought it would be interesting to write an article about what I went through trying to make it semi-painless for them.

First, let's talk scope. The lucky couple owned a Sony Vaio desktop PC and wanted to move to a Mac-based laptop with a wireless network in their house. After reviewing what they wanted and what Apple currently had to sell, I convinced them to wait on the laptop and start with the new iMac G5 revision 3 (iSight). The husband owned an HP-branded iPod but had never put music on the Sony Vaio computer. Instead he would go to his brother's house and buy his music on his brother's Powerbook, so I did not have to worry about getting his iTunes library off the Sony computer, because it wasn't there.

These folks have a fairly tall stack of receivers, Tivos, DVD players, speakers, etc., and so knowing that they wanted to be able to use their future laptop in their back yard, and that they would have digital music, I made a shopping list for them that consisted of the following items:

- iMac G5 20" screen
- Revision 3 with 1GB of RAM
- Apple Airport Extreme Base Station
- Apple Airport Express Base Station
- Airport Express stereo connection kit
- AppleCare
- Canon Pixma 5200 printer

If you're considering the iMac G5 Rev 3, I would echo other sentiments that I've seen which state that this is not a revolutionary machine, but for those who need to conserve space or who may be young at heart, the machine is a lot of fun. The screen real estate is utterly gorgeous, and the machine seems plenty speedy for web browsing and e-mail tasks. The white plastic that surrounds the machine is somewhat more pliable than I would like, and smelled like plastic. The Mighty Mouse drove me crazy, although Stan Lunetta tells me that if I had one, I'd love it. I do not like that all the ports are on the back of the machine, and I do not like that this machine is not user serviceable like previous iMac G5 models. So if you're considering this machine, my advice is to load it up the way you'll want it two years from now, because it is going to be a royal hassle to add RAM or a larger hard disk later. This machine does not cry out "professional" to me, nor does Apple intend it to be professional. It's basically a \$2,000 consumer machine, which remains at the high end of the margin, but if you figure the display is worth \$700 of that, it is not too bad of a deal. And, I might add, the little remote control that is the size of an iPod shuffle was just a boatload of fun.

(A comparable Sony Vaio desktop, which included a printer, 17" monitor, a built-in TV tuner allowing the user to watch TV, and a full remote control, was in today's BestBuy advertisement for \$1,559.

It's not nearly as elegant as the G5 iMac, and takes up more space. I priced a 17" G5 iMac at Apple's online store, and it came out to \$1474 without a printer, and no TV tuner is available pre-installed.)

Heat may be an issue. The machine vents a constant stream of warm air out of the top. On a sixty-five degree fall day in Davis, we had to open a window after being in the computer den for a couple of hours. If you have a drafty room that needs a space heater, this computer may be the perfect addition!

Enough about the machine. How did the setup go? For those of you who don't want all the bloody details, suffice it to say I arrived at 10am, the Airport base station was connected to their SBC-Yahoo DSL account by 10:30, the new iMac was connected wirelessly by 11:00 (I could not plug it into the Airport base station because the Sony Vaio was connected into that), and I spent roughly the next 4 hours trying to get the Vaio and the iMac to connect to one another. If you care how I finally got it to work, read on.

Initially I figured that since Macs can connect to Windows shares easily on most networks, I would turn on file sharing on the Windows machine and see if it showed up over on the Mac. I set the workgroup name on both the PC and the Mac to the same name, knowing that Windows likes that. I should add that the reason the people were dumping this machine was that it was randomly crashing, would not recognize its own CD drive, and would not recognize a thumb drive. So let's just say it was messed up before I got there. The Network Properties box appeared to have lots of duplicate stuff there (left over from several Windows installs, Enternet DSL software [‘software SBC uses to install PPPoE on people's computers that don't have the operating system support PPPoE natively, as OS X does’ [http://ask.sbc.com/aitdsl/FAQ\\_23\\_79.shtm](http://ask.sbc.com/aitdsl/FAQ_23_79.shtm), etc.) so it was not entirely clear whether I was even working on the correct adapter or port. To make this long story short, the Windows computer could not see the Mac (with file sharing enabled on the Mac), and the Mac could not see the Windows computer.

We decided to run over to OfficeMax and buy a little Ethernet switch, so that both computers would literally be plugged in next to each other and not have to send packets through the Airport base station to see one another. That didn't help.

While we were getting ready to go, and while we were at OfficeMax, I set the Mac to go about importing two years of digital pictures that our friends had never been able to import onto their Windows PC. So I went through three 512MB SD cards and just let iPhoto import away. The pictures looked gorgeous on the screen, and even more amazing was how nicely one of them printed on the new printer. We easily used the little remote control to start up a slide show from across the room.

Back to moving the data from the old computer. Getting desperate, I went back to the Mac's sharing control panel and enabled FTP access. I then launched Internet Explorer on the Sony Vaio, and presto, I was told that anonymous login was not allowed. I then researched the property syntax for formatting an FTP connection with an embedded user name (<ftp://user@192.168.1.5> if you care), and once I did that, a box popped up asking for a password. I typed in the password for the Mac home directory I was trying to get to, and the next thing I knew, Internet Explorer on the Sony was displaying a web page with links for Desktop, Documents, Movies, Pictures, and Music. So I was in!

Now I had to actually try to move some data. The problem with Windows is that you won't really know where it all is. I launched their Outlook Express and saw a ton of mail there, but these people said they didn't care if I got their mail to move across. That was probably a stroke of luck most installers won't get. I then went to their contact list and they had 133 e-mail addresses there. I tried to export them as a group as vCards, but Windows popped up a dialog box telling me I had to do one at a time. I did not bring my sleeping bag with me, so I had to find a better way. Finally what I did was to compose a blank message in their Windows Outlook Express program, address it to their account on the new computer, and dragged the 133 contact names into the message body. That worked, and seconds later, the Mac had an Email from the Sony containing 133 vCards. I then did "Save all" from the little pop up in the Apple Mail program and saved them onto the desktop. Finally, I launched OS X Address Book and dragged them into the window, and they instantly imported into the Mac's address book.

The remaining data to be copied was some MP3 files (not from the iTunes store) and some old tax returns and book lists. Fortunately for me, these people did not keep their entire life on the computer, or else they have no life! It was not clear to me whether I could upload to the Mac via the Internet Explorer FTP web page showing the Mac directories, but I clicked on Desktop and Internet Explorer re-drew the screen and showed me the desktop. I then opened a second window behind using the Windows desktop file manager, found a folder of old tax documents, and dragged the entire folder onto Internet Explorer's window. I was nothing short of amazed when the contents of the folder began transferring via FTP and a progress box appeared on the Sony Vaio's screen. Once I determined that this could work, I repeated this process for the remaining tax folders and the MP3 folders. And I wrote down what I did, so that if they found more things to transfer after I left, they might actually be able to do it themselves.

Now, you might ask, could they open their Word and Excel documents once I got it across? I didn't really get into that. I had suggested they buy Office 2004 for the Mac, but they had declined due to the large purchase they were already making, and said that if they needed to edit one of their Word or Excel docs, they would just e-mail it to work and do it there. But watching how foreign this machine was to these refugees from Windows, it occurred to me that if they did have Word or Excel installed, they would have something on the computer that was at least *familiar* to them. Say what you will about Microsoft, but I think when you're going to a totally foreign operating system there is going to be something comforting about seeing Word or Excel on your screen, because you know how those program work, and you know where to find things. Obviously Apple is not going to give away free Microsoft software on their machines, but I think there is a compelling reason to suggest that "switchers" buy some software on the machine that will be least be vaguely familiar to them.

On the iMac itself, I made a few other observations. First of all, if Apple expects a non-techie person to accomplish something like this themselves, they're woefully mistaken. Given the very messed up condition of the Windows installation on the Sony Vaio, in my opinion it was a crapshoot at best to wonder if I would ever get the two systems to talk, and I wasn't going to sit there and reinstall Windows 98 for them. I could not connect a USB drive, because the computer was so messed up it wouldn't recognize one. My point is that the documentation provided by Apple to do this sort of thing is wholly inadequate, not to mention that the documentation provided with the new iMac for these people, who had not touched a Mac since 1992, was also completely inadequate. Literally everything on the screen was unfamiliar to these Windows refugees.

On the software side of the Mac, I was interested to note that Apple no longer preinstalls Stuffit Expander or the now-discontinued Internet Explorer. So when I went to download Firefox or some other application that I wanted to add, I found the Microsoft Word Trial Run launching when I had a .sit file that needed to open, because Stuffit Expander was not on the machine. Shades of DOS! So if someone were really green and trying to figure out how to decompress some .sit file they just downloaded, they would have a hard time unless they had someone knowledgeable to call. Perhaps Apple's model customer is one who just runs Software Update and doesn't install a bunch of non-Apple stuff on their beautiful new machine?

The Canon Pixma 5200 printer was a breeze to set up and printed beautifully the first time. Much better than my old Epson 980N. The only glitch with the Canon printer is that no USB cable was provided, but we had purchased one of those on our trip to OfficeMax, so I was ready.

I ended up installing Firefox 1.5 on the machine and making it the default browser, as I like the way that Firefox can now update itself and the end-user doesn't have to do anything except click the button that says, "let Firefox update itself" and the rest is automatic. I also found a little RealBasic program that puts the current IP address in the menu bar. Most people would have no use for this, but as these people may shut down or reboot their two machines, my instructions on how to send files from the Windows machine to the Mac were dependent on the customer knowing the Mac's IP address, so this was why I took that precaution. I also installed Acrobat Reader 7.05 since there is some stuff out there that won't open in Apple's Preview application, but will open with Acrobat Reader. It also gives you the ability to fill out PDF forms embedded in web pages, such as many online job applications.

The iTunes integration with Airport Express was pretty much flawless. I was expecting the Airport Admin utility to detect the Airport Express and ask me if I wanted it to join an existing network, but to my dismay, the Airport Express added itself as a new, randomly named menu in the Airport menu bar icon, and I couldn't find it until I switched to that network, at which time I could tell it to merge itself with the existing airport network. Nothing terribly hard to do, but if a person weren't paying attention they could have futzed with that setup for a couple of hours. I was also annoyed, and this is something that appears limited to Tiger, that every time I rebooted the G5 iMac, I would need to manually go to the Airport icon in the menu bar and re-join the wireless network. This was after I had typed in the WPA password and told the Mac to remember the password in its keychain. So when I get a call asking me why iTunes can't send music over to the home stereo, the first question I'm going to ask these folks is whether the Airport icon in the menu bar is black or grey. I think Apple has dropped the ball a bit on this one.

The standout program on the new iMac is Photo Booth, which is a completely silly little application that simulates one of those photo booths at the carnival. A person could easily waste several hours a day screwing around with this photo-morphing program. Photos are somewhat grainy, and of marginal quality for enlargement, but even a complete novice will be able to sit in front of the computer, activate the iSight, and shoot a bunch of silly photos of themselves.

All this work left me about 15 minutes to give the happy couple a quick tour, and I felt a little guilty that there wasn't a DVD or something in the box they could watch to find their way around the system. It has been thirteen years since they had a Mac. These are forty-somethings, so they'll figure it out, eventually, but I still think Apple doesn't do much to facilitate switching. I'll probably need to give these folks a Missing Manual book as a homecoming present.

At the end of it all, I asked these people why they had switched back to the Mac, and was told that husband's brother had a Powerbook and an iPod, and the combination was just too irresistible. Husband wanted to be like his brother and join the clan, and sit on the couch with a glass of scotch and a small laptop and surf the web. Which is where it will all end up, although I have recommended waiting until after January 2006 to get a laptop since there's fairly good intelligence that the Apple laptops will be getting slimmer and cooler by February of next year.

How has it gone since I walked out the door? Apparently the Sony Vaio shut down completely and they haven't turned it back on. The Mac locked up once when they launched FrontRow when iTunes was already playing, and they didn't even know where the reset button was. They called AppleCare, only to find it wasn't a 24-hour operation. They agreed with me that the lack of documentation or getting started tutorials was rather glaring. Other than that, they've already sent me distorted pictures of their faces taken with Photo Booth, and an Amazon gift certificate as a thank-you present. On the whole, not a bad way for a Mac veteran to put his skills to work.



## **The Mac Attack: Mac Tips, Tricks, and Hints**

<http://themacattack.us>

<http://www.stevecom.com>

[sstanger@maccompanion.com](mailto:sstanger@maccompanion.com)

### **Firewalls, An Introduction**

by Steve Stanger

Should you be using some type of firewall on your Mac? Yes. Are Macs a target of hackers? No, well at least not yet. But keep in mind if you are on the Internet you are a target no matter what operating system you use.

A firewall blocks unwanted network communication with your computer. Using a firewall protects your computer from users on other networks or the Internet. If the firewall is configured correctly it can also keep your computer invisible (a.k.a. STEALTH) and hide you from people who are snooping on the Internet.

All firewalls work by using sets of rules and filters for specific ports or services that either allows or denies access to your computer. An Internet port acts like a doorway or connection point between your computer and somebody else's. Examples of Mac OS X services would be personal file sharing, Windows sharing, or FTP access, you need to open ports in the firewall to allow traffic for that service to and from your computer.

There are two main types of firewalls - software firewalls and hardware walls.

An example of a software firewall is the Mac OS X built in firewall, which you can find in the Sharing preference pane. Examples of hardware firewalls would be broadband routers made by Linksys, D-Link, and Apple's Airport Extreme and Airport Express wireless base stations.

The firewall that comes built in to Mac OS X is easy to configure and you should have it turned on all the time if you are not using any other kind of firewall. To access the Mac OS X firewall:

1. Open System Preferences and click Sharing.
2. Click the Firewall tab and make sure the window says Firewall On. If it is not on, click Start to turn it on.
3. You can now close the Sharing window.

In addition to the basic firewall service settings you can set additional, advanced firewall settings to further protect your computer.

The advanced firewall features include:

- Blocking UDP traffic (User Datagram Protocol) - Blocking UDP traffic can help secure your computer. If you happen to use peer-2-peer software or other specific Internet applications you may have to set up a rule to allow UDP on specific ports.
- Using firewall logging - A firewall log is a record of the your computer's activity and the data traffic into and out of your computer through the firewall. Keeping a firewall log can be helpful if you are tracking where network data is coming from and where it is going. A firewall log can also be helpful in troubleshooting some networking issues.

- Stealth mode - When you enable stealth mode, all uninvited data traffic receives no response from your computer. Stealth mode hides your computer behind your firewall. Other computers sending traffic to your computer receive no information about your computer.

To set advanced firewall options:

1. Open System Preferences and click Sharing.
2. Click Firewall, and then click Advanced.

Note: Apple's built in help system has step-by-step directions for setting up the firewall. Just click on the question mark in the lower right corner of the firewall window.

Another way to configure the Mac OSX built in Firewall is to use the shareware application [BrickHouse](#). I only recommend BrickHouse to users who are very familiar with firewalls and would like to get into some more advanced settings and handcrafting your own rules. Just because you can handcraft rules does not mean that you should. If you get it wrong, you could stop our computer from functioning properly and create security holes. In most cases just let the Mac OS X firewall take care of things.

If you happen to be a Unix geek (or guru) you can also configure the built in firewall from the command line in terminal.

Consumer-grade hardware firewalls usually found as part of a broadband router do the same thing as software firewalls, but have an added benefit of NAT (network address translation). You may also see NAT referred to as network masquerading or IP-masquerading. NAT is a technique in which the source and/or destination addresses of IP data packets are rewritten as they pass through a router or firewall. It is most commonly used to allow multiple computers on a private network to access the Internet using a single public IP address.

Note: A router is used to bridge two networks. Your private or in house network to the Internet (the big network) would be an example. Consumer-grade routers also include a multi-port switch, which allows you to connect multiple computers or network devices using Ethernet and allows you to share a single Internet connection.

I personally prefer using a router or hardware firewall as opposed a software firewall. It is just one more device and one more level of security between my computers and the Internet. Routers have come down and price and you can usually get a brand name consumer router for around \$50 US.

If you are interested in seeing how secure your computer or network is from the Internet, I would suggest surfing over to [grc.com](#) and running [ShieldsUP!](#)

If you have any questions or comments about this Article please feel free to email me at [sstanger@maccompanion.com](mailto:sstanger@maccompanion.com)

Happy Holidays & Click away. Be safe. Have fun!

For more information about this topic and other Mac tips I invite you to listen to my weekly podcast - "[The Mac Attack](#)"

## Practical Strategies

### Get Dinner or Be Dinner

by Christopher Duncan

<http://www.PracticalStrategyConsulting.com>

The business world is a highly competitive place. For companies who go toe to toe in their quest for the almighty dollar, it's literally a life or death struggle.

Those of us who work for these competitors should care a great deal about this, since companies who go out of business have an annoying tendency of taking your paycheck with them. Curiously, however, even though logic indicates that we would care passionately about anything that could affect our income, very few people care about the massive, clash of the titans struggle going on between their employer and the competition. But then, human nature often presents itself as one of the greatest mysteries of the world.

Out on the mean streets of the African plains, where lions are hungry and zebras are dinner, the importance of being an effective competitor is taken much more seriously. But then, you'd probably expect that, at least from the zebras. Anyone who sports racing stripes as their daily attire is a force to be reckoned with. In fact, not content with the strategic defense tactics of yelling, "Lion!" and running like crazy, these four legged Ferraris got together one night over drinks and decided that there had to be a better way.

In the business world, your competitors attack you relentlessly and would like nothing better than to see you out of action so that they can take over your turf. Buying out your crippled company and selling off the resources is the modern day equivalent of gnawing on the bones.

The zebras, who like their bones just where they are, thank you very much, concluded that the best way to avoid becoming a mid morning snack was to turn the tables on the food chain and conquer the lions, thus dominating the plains and gaining the right to stay up late and play all the really fun zebra games without having to constantly look over their shoulders.

They decided that the way to do this was to make a pact and pursue excellence, both as a group and with each individual zebra becoming the best it could be. And so, late at night, by candlelight so as not to tip off the competition, the zebras gathered to pump iron, do stampede drills, and study strategy. They knew the lions were overconfident. This could be used against them.

One morning, a lone zebra nibbled aimlessly on a bit of grass as a passing lion sensed opportunity and leapt into action. Before he was halfway to his prey, a pack of zebras stampeded over the top of the hill that had been their cover. It wasn't pretty. Hoof prints and flying fur were everywhere. Several other lions, seeing the trouble, jumped in to help but the zebras were ready for them. From behind a group of trees, two more packs of zebras stampeded out and encircled the lions. Outflanked and outgunned, the lions never had a chance.

After months of similar encounters, the lions finally raised the white flag and became vegetarians. The zebras, ever the gracious victors, wished the lions health and prosperity, shared a few grazing tips with them, and ultimately banished them from the plains.

Competition, when directed at your company's adversaries, can actually be quite invigorating, especially when you win. Once you realize that you have a very personal stake in the fate of your company, you can help stave off the predators who would love to have your employer for dinner. Foster a sense of conquest in all the people you work with, directing their energies away from internal struggles and toward your common enemy.

Like the zebras, once you realize that any adversary can be overcome through strategy, teamwork and the pursuit of excellence, you'll become a powerful force for change within your company. Best of all, you won't have to worry about those unsightly teeth marks on your ankles.

Christopher Duncan is the best selling author of *Unite the Tribes* and *The Career Programmer*. In addition to his seminars, he's a popular speaker and frequent guest on radio shows across the country. He's currently working to improve companies and careers nationwide through his work with the *Campaign for American Excellence*.

## Introduction to doc\_Babad's Software and Shareware Reviews

### Some Great Software Tools for you and yours

by Harry {doc} Babad



All software was tested on a 1 GHz dual processor PowerPC G4 Macintosh with 2 GB DDR SDRAM running under OS X 10.4.3.

[Product and company names and logos in this review may be registered trademarks of their respective companies.](#)

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. 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.

This month I am fortunate to have a copy of *TheRecipeManager* version 2 to review. You may remember that I reviewed version 1.1.1 (June 2005) previously for macC. Dr. Eric Flesher and I also submitted an article on *In Search of Perfect Recipe and Cooking Software* (macC March 2005) that laid the basis for my approach to the features and function I found valuable in cooking-related software.

#### The List of Items Reviewed For December

- **EasyFind 3.8.1** — A flexible and powerful way to expand Spotlight's functionality.
- **Folder Contents CM 1.5.9** — A contextual menu addition to allow you to check out the contents of your folders.
- **N Commander 0.1** — Stamp out the *New Folder* Command-Shift N sequence.
- **SmartWrap 2.5.3** — The only way to rewrap your text!
- **The Recipe Manager 2.0** — The best cooking software program I've yet found.
- **XMenu 1.7** — A way to bring back the *lost* features of the Apple Menu used in the more recent Classic operating system.



#### Why and how I review as I do

Note, for shorter reviews 2-4 pages in length... sans graphics, I at the very least, spend several hours on test runs of the usually shareware or freeware items I review in for macC.

Since I am professionally an ex-academic and retired scientist, I like to check out what others thought about the products I am reviewing. Indeed, for many software and shareware reviews, where I agree with the developers' description and other's comments (stripped of all adjectives) I unabashedly use and reference them in my reviews. If I don't agree with PR blurbs or find the supplied user support documents less than helpful, you'll read about it, loud and clear! [Aren't mixed metaphors wonderful?]

I may at times, even for simple programs, contact the developer when things don't work out, as I believe they should. In addition, I always take the time to quickly read manuals, users guides, ReadMe files and the available help files. As a result, such shorter reviews are never as complete as the multipage individual in-depth reviews of the more complex software-shareware products I do for macC.

I take longer to review feature rich commercial and shareware software products. Most of such programs are more complex than their often simpler and more narrowly focused shareware counterparts. I now usually spend 2-5 days working with the product. In addition, I also take the time to study manuals, users guides, ReadMe files and the available help files. Sometimes I read before I test the product, but usually it's after I get just a bit stuck.

Harry {doc} Babad



## Mac Pro Podcast

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

### Intro to Video Codecs

by Joseph Nilo

There is a lot of talk about Codecs these days. We are viewing more and more video content every day . . . from the Tivo to the television, the DVD and digital cable, recently in iTunes and even on our iPods. But how is this content delivered to the end user?

The word CODEC is a shortening of COder/DECoder (some people say that it stands for COmpressor/DECompressor . . . that works, as well). A codec is how a piece of media is transferred from one medium to another (usually with the removal of bytes for a smaller file size -- *encoded*) and then *decoded* back to the end user for viewing or listening.

For experimentation with your video and encoding using different codecs, I recommend purchasing QuickTime Pro. As of my writing this article, QuickTime Pro version 7 costs \$29.99 US. The Pro upgrade will allow you to export your video and audio using different codecs, as well as do some simple editing.

Let's discuss some of the most popular flavors of video content these days:

**MPEG-2** is the codec most commonly used for standard DVDs. Some other uses for MPEG-2 include digital cable, satellite, and Digital Video Recorders (DVR's). MPEG-2 delivers high-quality video with a notable reduction in data size. The MPEG acronym stands for Moving Pictures Experts Group-- the folks who decide on standards for media codecs.

**MPEG-4** was debuted to all of us Apple users with the release of QuickTime 6. This codec revolutionized the way we viewed and downloaded video content for the web. MPEG-4 boasts very good quality video with a substantial reduction in data size -- great for Internet delivery. The audio component of MPEG-4 video is AAC. You may recognize this as the method of delivery for music from the iTunes music store (delivered with the file extension .m4a). AAC audio is, pound-for-pound, smaller in file size than the uber-popular MP3 format, and significantly better in quality for the same data rate.

**H.264** took us all by storm with the release of QuickTime 7 and Mac OS X 10.4 Tiger. This codec is based on and an improvement upon the MPEG-4 codec. H.264 gives us arguably our best quality versus file size ratio. And, on top of that, it is very scalable-- it could become the de facto standard for delivery on tiny cell phone screens, to digital satellite programming, all the way up to the new HD DVDs.

Prior to the popularity of MPEG-4 and H.264, you probably viewed a lot of QuickTime content on the web encoded with **Sorenson 3**. This was (and still is) a wonderful-quality codec that was released with QuickTime 5. Before the switch to H.264, all of the movie trailers on Apple's QuickTime site were encoded this way.

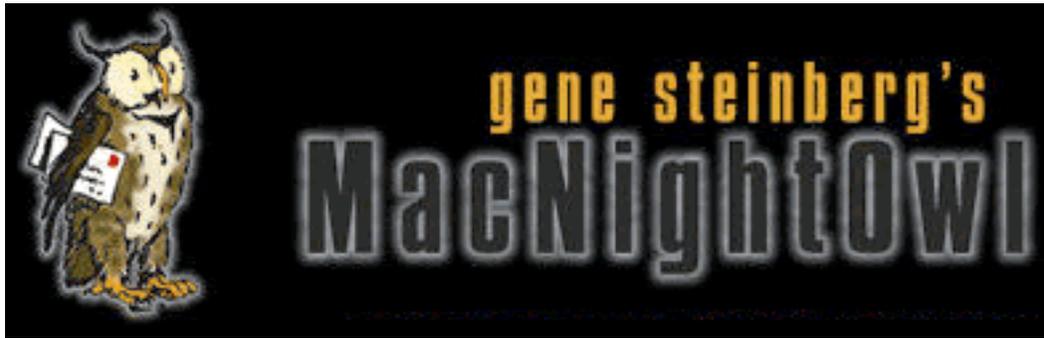
If you were to open a video in QuickTime Pro and choose *Export*, and then *Movie to QuickTime Movie*, you'd see a long list of available options. QuickTime is committed to being very backward compatible, and we'll probably never use most of those options except for in rare or specific situations. But here are some key choices that I haven't discussed yet:

**Animation** codec is a *lossless* codec -- it can compress without any loss in quality. As its title suggests, this codec is perfect for animation -- motion graphics, screen captures, etc. But once you try to throw actual video content into the mix, it will yield giant file sizes. **Motion JPEG** is another animation-related codec very useful for graphics. I often use the **DV/DVCPRO - NTSC** setting to encode content for editing in iMovie or Final Cut Pro.

Some notable third-party codecs that are worth mentioning are DivX and XViD-- both are MPEG-4-based and were designed to rival MPEG-2 in quality. A well-encoded DivX full-length movie can fit onto a standard CD-ROM and look quite good when played back on a television.

So that was a scratch of the surface of video codecs. You might ask why I did not mention the two big players in web-delivered video -- *Windows Media* and *Real Video*. Probably because neither run natively within the QuickTime environment, and, let's face it, we're all Mac geeks here. I want all my video QuickTime-compatible.

**You can hear more about audio and video production on Macs by subscribing to the Mac Pro Podcast at <http://www.macpropodcast.com>.**



## MacNight Owl

### Revisiting the Apple/Intel Connection

by Gene Steinberg

<http://www.macnighthowl.com> Making The Impossible, Inc.

When 2005 began, I doubt that many of you expected Apple would announce a switch to Intel processors by the middle of the year. At the time, the new products included a pair of product lines that Apple said it wouldn't produce: The Mac mini and the iPod shuffle. So you knew from the get-go to expect the unexpected, but did you ever believe that would include a switch to Intel processors?

The news came out of left field, and I scarcely believed the published reports in the mainstream press months later that it was about to happen. Yet when Steve Jobs explained the reasoning, it made perfect sense. Apple had fallen behind the curve with processor performance, particularly the PowerBook, and both Freescale Semiconductor and IBM had failed to deliver the goods. Yes, the rumors that Apple had been doing parallel development of Mac OS X for Intel were true. When Intel CEO Paul Otellini embraced Steve Jobs on the WWDC keynote stage, you could actually believe they had become close friends, though the cynics among you no doubt wonder how long that'll last.

In any case, you know that Intel has managed to make its processors better and better and deliver products essentially on schedule. You can't say that for Apple's existing chip suppliers. Yes, there's now a line of dual-core Power Macs, but like the older models, they can easily replace a space heater in a cold room with a huge network of cooling apparatus. Jobs said that Intel's roadmap includes both more power and reduced power requirements. And if you don't believe him, take the fastest Intel-equipped desktop, open the case, and count the number of cooling fans inside.

In any case, a surprising amount of misinformation arose over the move. Jobs was hiding some secret truth, some said, and the public pronouncements just couldn't be true. On the other hand, where's the G5 version of the PowerBook and that long-promised 3GHz Power Mac? When the latter comes, as it eventually will, the processor inside will be made by Intel.

At first, the skeptics claimed that people would stop buying new Macs in anticipation of the arrival of MacIntels in 2006 and 2007. In the real world, Mac sales hit record levels as more and more folks switched from the Windows platform. Not that sales increases will last forever, and as anticipation grows in the coming year, it may well be that sales of some models will stall. But reading the tealeaves about Apple is a frustrating practice. The company continues to do the unexpected, although examining the list of products it says it won't produce almost always yields an opposite result.

Now the other issue is just how many Mac OS X for Intel applications will be available. Depending on whom you ask, making Universal Binary versions, which run on both PowerPC and Intel, can be difficult or unexpectedly easy. It depends on a lot of complicated factors that are of interest strictly to programmers. Those huge productivity applications, such as Adobe Photoshop and Microsoft Word, will be among the last to switch, and you'll probably have to invest in paid upgrades to get them. Other software, such as games, is likely to arrive in Universal Binary form as free downloadable updates. In fact, a few applications for the new architecture are already present, but you'll never know without inspecting the Get Info window under Tiger. It's that transparent.

Older applications will continue to run pretty well under Rosetta, an emulation technology that Apple developed using resources licensed from Transitive Corporation. Supposedly it emulates a G3, which means that applications that take advantage of the enhancements available for the G4 and G5 may not run so well. Yes, there are rumors that Apple has managed to add G4 support to Rosetta, but there's no confirmation yet at Apple's site for developers, so time will tell.

There are also unconfirmed reports that Mac OS X and many applications actually fly along at incredible speeds on the Intel-based test computers Apple is leasing to developers. But since those very developers are prohibited by Apple's confidentiality agreement to talk about such things in public, you won't know for sure until the real MacIntels appear.

Speaking of which, anticipation is high that the first announcements of those computers will be made in January at the Macworld Expo in San Francisco. In fact, expectations are so high, that Apple may indeed be forced to deliver those products whether it wants too or not. To be sure, the Intel processor that supposedly will power those first MacIntels, which bears the nickname Yonah, will reportedly be in volume production early in 2006. If Apple can get the rest of the design elements in place, it could happen. If not, I can see where sales of some of Apple's products might stall because of the failure to satisfy the hopes and the dreams.

My emotional center believes it'll happen. The logical center of my mind recalls that Apple's only official pronouncement is that the initial run of Macs with Intel Inside will show up some time in the first half of 2006. I'm not a betting man, but I'm willing to consider bets that my emotions will win out, at least this time.



## Macsimum News

### Things are shaking up in the digital book world

Posted on Nov 23, 2005 at 6:26am by Dennis Sellers

Things are shaking up in the digital book world. Earlier this month Google Print went live, and Amazon.com, Microsoft and Random House each announced new programs. And as columnist Randal Picker pointed out in [CNET perspective piece](#), Amazon's announcement says a great deal about the important issue of how we will sell digital texts and what that means for copyright law.

Amazon announced Amazon Pages and Amazon Upgrade. Pages is a pay-per-page model. Buy a book from Amazon and the company will sell you the right to search that book online at its site.

"Sell when?" Price asks. "Just when I buy the book, as a bundle? Can I buy online access later? At the same price I could have paid at the time of purchase? Pay an annual fee and get access for all of my purchases through Amazon? The company hasn't said yet. But now we get to copyright and digital copies. Amazon doesn't seem to be selling digital offline copies with the paper copies. Instead, the company is selling a search service. Everything suggests that Amazon intends to do this with the consent of copyright holders, presumably for a split of the revenues."

And the difference between service and product is "substantial," he adds. If you downloaded a copy of a digital book, Amazon (and the copyright holder) would have to worry about what I do with it - such as making copies of the book. "The service model limits that possibility considerably," Price says. "Presumably, I will need to log on to Amazon as me to use the digital books that I have 'purchased.' For me to share my access with anyone else, I will have to give them full access to my Amazon account."

I understand the importance of protecting the digital rights of book authors, just as I realize the importance of protecting the makers of film and video. But none of the solutions introduced so far strike me as elegant and especially user-friendly. (And the Amazon solution certainly puts the pressure on independent booksellers).

Who knows? Perhaps Apple can give us a solution as it has with music—and is doing with video.

Thoughts? Write me at [dsellers@macsimumnews.com](mailto:dsellers@macsimumnews.com)

[**Editor:** Also check out the comments on Dennis Sellers' opinion-piece at the weblink posted above.]



## Surf-Bits

### Freeware for the Mac

by Tim Verpoorten

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

This month we looked at more great freeware for the Mac discussed on the *MacReviewCast*. As always, we found some utilities, graphic programs, games, audio and video programs. If you have a favorite freeware program of your own for the Mac, please drop us an Email and let us know what it is. You can contact me at [surfbits@gmail.com](mailto:surfbits@gmail.com).

**CLIX:** <http://rixstep.com/4/0/clix>

CLIX is a WYSIWYG command line interface for Mac OS X. RixStep explains the theory behind CLIX as this, Sell a man a fish when he really needs to know how to fish himself, and you're ripping him off. Then too, there are times when he needs you to throw him a line. CLIX ('command line interface for Mac OS X') makes it easier to harness the power of Unix. It becomes both a fish to buy and a series of lessons in how to fish, and ultimately can become a handy work of reference. The CLIX package includes a starter command database with over 800 (yes, you read that right) system commands for investigating your system status, for cleaning out your junk files, for getting at secret settings for the Dock, the Finder, and all of your most used applications - and all sorted for easy access, any way you wish. You also gain access for the first time to the tens of thousands of files in your BSD subsystem. If it can be done in Mac OS X, it can be done in CLIX - if it can't be done in CLIX, it can't be done.

**iSquint:** <http://homepage.mac.com/tylerl82>

This is for those of you with the new iPod with Video. iSquint is an iPod video conversion app. It's up to 5 times faster than Apple's method, works well with AVIs and MPEGs, and it's infinitely free-er. It's also rather easy. Give it your file, choose "TV screen" or "iPod screen" size, set your quality, and away you go. On a 1.5 GHz G4, iSquint can convert most video files to iPod-screen-sized videos in real time.

**Handbrake:** <http://handbrake.m0k.org/index.php>

This is another application that works well with your new video iPod. HandBrake is a multi-platform, multithreaded DVD to MPEG-4 ripper/converter. HandBrake was originally available on the BeOS, but now has been ported over to Mac OS X and to GNU/Linux. It supports any DVD-like source such as video\_TS folder, DVD image or real DVD, even encrypted. It outputs your video files to MPEG-4, H.264, and all the popular audio formats. It gives you chapter selection, subtitle support, and picture cropping and scaling. This seems to be the popular converter for all the video iPod owners out there. It's much faster than QuickTime™ Pro.

**iCooked:** <http://www.alxsoft.com/mac/icooked.html>

This one is for all the old G3 iBook owners out there. iCook is a small Mac OS X kernel extension that allows simple overclocking of the IBM 750FX processor, found in some of the iBooks (600 ... 900 MHz). I was unable to test it myself, but all the reports that I read on it from users said it worked and worked well.

**Wcalc:** <http://w-calc.sourceforge.net/index.php>

Do you need a better calculator than the one on Mac OS X? Then this application is for you. Wcalc is a very capable calculator. It supports arbitrary precision, has standard functions, many pre-defined constants (pi, e, c, etc.), support for using variables, "active" variables, a command history, hex/octal/binary input and output, unit conversions, embedded comments, and an expandable expression entry field. It evaluates expressions using the standard order of operations. All this and it's a very "Mac-Looking" application.

**GeoParty:** <http://homepage.mac.com/jonn8/as/html/GeoParty.html>

Here's a great game of Trivia and who doesn't like trivia? This is a fun and media rich application for testing your trivia knowledge. Not only can you use pre-built question & answer files, as well as retrieve questions & answers from an online repository, you can also create your own question & answer files to use with family, friends, and students. The game looks great, like a Jeopardy board on your screen that you just click and watch it toss you the question. For group games to play on your computer, this one is a must have.

**AcidSearch:** <http://www.pozytron.com/acidsearch>

AcidSearch is a search enhancement for Safari. It adds unlimited "Search Channels" to the Google search field. Channels can be customized in a nearly infinite variety of ways. AcidSearch also includes powerful features such as JavaScript support, the ability to import iSeek and Butler Search Sites, and the ability to search multiple search engines at the same time. AcidSearch also allows you to access your search channels with key equivalents, shortcuts (a la SafariKeywords), and a contextual menu. You can search International site, Mac related sites, News sites, shopping or reference websites besides all the major search engines. It replaces the search area in the toolbar of Safari with a great looking drop down menu. It's a great little freeware app to have in your Safari window.

**JAlbum:** <http://jalbum.net/history.jsp>

I know we mentioned it before, but it just got better and I think it's one of those applications that every Mac user needs on his computer. The great part is it's freeware to boot. This gallery software makes web albums of your digital images. JAlbum aims to be the easiest to use and most powerful tool in this category - and I think it is. With JAlbum, no extra software is needed to view the albums, just your web browser. Unlike "server side" album scripts, JAlbum albums can be served from a plain web server without scripting support. You can also share your albums on CD-ROM.

**Do Something When:** <http://www.azarhi.com>

Do Something When is a system preference pane that allows the user to watch for drives mounting and un-mounting, when that happens, it allows them to launch or quit applications. For example, you can launch iTunes when your music hard drive gets mounted, you can quit iTunes when you eject the drive. Maybe you have a back-up FireWire drive that whenever it loads, your backup program launches. I'm sure you can think of many more uses for it, but Do Something When is a handy little utility to have around.

**CyberDuck:** <http://cyberduck.ch>

Cyberduck is a open source FTP and SFTP (SSH Secure File Transfer) browser licensed under the GPL with an easy to use interface, integration with external editors and support for many Mac OS X system technologies such as Spotlight, Bonjour, the Keychain and AppleScript. Cyberduck is easy to use and has all the features you want in an FTP client, the best feature of course is that it's free. If you need an FTP client but don't want to spend money on a shareware program, CyberDuck is your best choice.

**Temperature Monitor:** <http://www.bresink.de/osx/TemperatureMonitor.html>

Temperature Monitor is an application to read out all available temperature sensors in Macintosh computers. The program can display and visualize measured values in a large variety of fashions. The application supports the following operations on the measured readings: display in a default window, output in a screen display in front or in the background of the screen, tabular display in an overview window, display in the menu-bar, display of a maximum of two readings in the Dock, graphical display of short-term and long-term history curves, speech output of readings, display of minimum and maximum values, export to text files

**1001:** A Desktop Flickr Client: <http://1001.kung-foo.tv/>

If the URL sounds familiar, it's because the application 1001 is from the author of a great Blog editor called Ecto. 1001 is a desktop client to be used in conjunction with Flickr, the online photo-sharing website. 1001 not only uploads photos to your Flickr account, it notifies you anytime new photos from either your contacts, everyone, or your favorite tags are uploaded. 1001 allows you to step into the stream of photos passing through Flickr and to quickly see what's new at the moment. Just run the app in the background and if triggered, 1001 pops up a small unobtrusive window to notify you of new photos. 1001 comes with a Flickr screensaver that will incrementally display the latest image from Flickr. You do not need to have 1001 installed to use this screensaver. If you have a Flickr account, you need to check out this great piece of freeware. 1001.

**Bitwise:** <http://www.bitwiseim.com/>

BitWise is the first cross platform, encrypted, direct-connect instant messenger offering the same features on Windows, Linux and Mac OS X. Bitwise can be used to text message, file sharing, whiteboarding, voice chats, conferencing, and direct connect, all encrypted for your security. If you are concerned about who's watching your online conversations, you need to use Bitwise and feel secure.

**Cocoa Cookies:** <http://ditchnet.org/wp>

Cocoa Cookies is a very simple Cocoa app that helps you to search for and delete HTTP cookies stored in the shared Cocoa cookies storage used by Safari, NetNewsWire, Shiira, and others. Safari's cookie-browsing UI does not currently include any way to search the stored cookies. Cocoa Cookies allows you to view the cookies that Safari, or any other Cocoa app, has stored in the share cookie storage. More importantly, Cocoa Cookies contains a search field that provides live 'search-as-you-type' searching on the domains (only the domains) of the cookies stored. Thus, making it much easier to find and delete the specific cookies you are looking for. Here's an extra bonus... NetNewsWire -- the popular RSS reader for Mac OS X -- is also a web browser that stores cookies in the shared Cocoa cookie storage. Additionally, NetNewsWire does not provide a UI for managing the cookies you amass while browsing. Use Cocoa Cookies to manage your NetNewsWire cookies!

**DreamCatcher:** <http://homepage.mac.com/jameshoward/dreamcatcher>

DreamCatcher is software that spellchecks web sites. A nightmare of both novice and advanced web developers is finding a misspelling in their work. What is worse is a client or an end user finding a misspelled word. You lose credibility and just generally look bad. The problem is that it is difficult to spell check a Web site -- that is where DreamCatcher comes in. DreamCatcher is a nifty utility to check for spelling errors on a Web site. DreamCatcher moves through the pages of a given site checking both the text on the site as well as the text of linked Microsoft Word and Adobe PDF documents. DreamCatcher makes it easy to find where the misspellings are located on your site by highlighting the words in a web viewer. So if you have a blog, website, or are in charge of the business site, you need to pick up Dreamcatcher.

**Namely:** <http://homepage.mac.com/asagoo/namely/index.html>

We all know about Launchbar and Quicksilver for launching applications. Both do a lot more, but what if you want a simple, easy to learn, fast, launch app? Namely is possibly the fastest way to open applications. And unlike some other launchers, it doesn't require any learning. You simply hit your preferred keyboard shortcut to show it and start typing part of an application's name. It shows you a list of matches and narrows it down as you type. Most of the time, one or two letters are enough, especially since Namely learns your habits and makes your most-used apps even quicker to access. It's basically Spotlight for applications, only much faster.

**Moodle:** <http://www.moodle.org>

Now this application may be a little complicated for most Mac user's needs, but hang in there for a minute and listen to what it does. Moodle is a PHP-based online classroom. If you have a website with PHP and a database like MySQL, you can install Moodle and you have a full featured, browser based online classroom with all the features of the commercial, high cost programs. In fact, there are many schools, universities, teachers, and companies that are using Moodle already. Here are some of the features built into this program. First off it's a secure program, safe to use in any environment, it has course listings and searching for courses built in. Plug in themes, Plug in Activity modules, Plug in Language packs with up to 42 languages available, Students and teachers can build their own online profiles with emails and a single log-on for the entire program. Flexible array of course activities - Forums, Quizzes, Resources, Choices, Surveys, Assignments, Chats, Workshops, Assignments can be specified with a due date and a maximum grade. Students can upload their assignments (any file format) to the server - they are date-stamped.

Late assignments are allowed, but the amount of lateness is shown clearly to the teacher. For each particular assignment, the whole class can be assessed (grade and comment) on one page in one form.

Chat module available, Forums, Polls and quiz modules. Anything you need in a school, classroom, or learning environment is here on Moodle. Just think about what you can do with this. If you or our business or club has a resource that you want to share with others, this program can let you set up an instructional environment to start your own online classroom. You normally see these types of specialized software programs for sale for thousands of dollars and here you have Moodle for free. This is an amazing piece of software.

**VirtuFrame:** <http://www.trilateralsystems.com/virtuframe>

VirtuFrame is the original virtual frame application for Mac OS X. The program supplies frames you can use for the photos on your Mac. VirtuFrame sports a clean user experience and refined interface for the photo aficionado. Every frame was designed with charm and craftsmanship in mind, attempting to replicate the quality of photo frames found in framing galleries. With each release, new frame styles are added, giving users the ability to match their computing environment with an appropriate frame. This is a very unique piece of software. Check it out for yourself.

**iTuneMyWalkman:** <http://ilari.scheinin.fidisk.fi/itunemywalkman>

iTuneMyWalkman is an iTunes script that will help you synchronize the contents of iTunes playlists with your mobile phone or other portable device. The purpose is to make this happen as automatically as possible, almost like it does with an iPod or an iTunes-compatible Motorola phone. The script can automatically detect when you connect your phone. Basically if you can mount your external device to your desktop, you can create a playlist to load MP3 or AAC files into it.

**Check Off:** <http://www.carpeaqua.com/software/checkoff>

Check Off is a to-do list that sits in your menu bar. Simply click the check mark and your personal to-do list will drop down. Easily accessible from the Mac OS X Menu Bar. Allows creation of groups of items. Each item can have its own note for more information. Finder-like Labels. iPod Synchronization so you can take your tasks on-the-go.

**iPodDisk:** <http://ipoddisk.ourbiti.com>

In short, it's just another tool that enables you to copy your own music from your iPod. iPodDisk is designed to make it easy and intuitive to copy music off iPod; it enables you to do so within the Finder. iPodDisk isn't a tool that copies songs from iPods; instead, it enables other applications to do so by emulating an iDisk drive. After iPodDisk starts, you just launch your favorite file-management tool and access your iPod as an iDisk.

**safeThis!** <http://www.jaanpatterson.com/safeThis.html>

The quick solution for creating customized Encrypted Disk Images, safeThis uses the in Mac OS X implemented AES 128Bit encryption engine. You name the image, choose the size in KB, MB, or GB and there you have it. A nice free solution to creating specific encrypted disk images that you can move to a DVD, CD, or flash card.

**MorphX:** <http://www.norrkross.com/>

MorphX is a simple free application for calculating images or movies where one image transforms into another. Just pick out points on one image and match it to the points on another image and MorphX will change one graphic to another before your eyes. The projects you can do with MorphX are limited to your imagination.

**NeoOffice:** <http://www.planamesa.com>

NeoOffice is a fully-featured set of office applications (including word processing, spreadsheet, presentation, and drawing programs) for Mac OS X. Based on the OpenOffice.org office suite, NeoOffice has integrated dozens of native Mac features and can import, edit, and exchange files with other popular office programs such as Microsoft Office™. Released as free, open-source software under the GNU General Public License (GPL), NeoOffice is fully functional and stable enough for everyday use. The software is actively developed, so improvements and small updates are made available on a regular basis. If you've had enough of Microsoft in your life, then this is the software for you.

**Azureus Bit Torrent:** <http://azureus.sourceforge.net>

Azureus implements the BitTorrent protocol using java language and comes bundled with many invaluable features for both beginners and advanced users. Azureus is a great bit torrent program.

## Mac OS X Tiger Switcher Contest Follow-up

The following folks participated in our macCompanion Tiger Switcher Contest we ran earlier in 2005. A few of these good folks may possibly be heard on Gene Steinberg's *The Tech Night Owl LIVE* program later at <http://www.techbroadcasting.com>.

We posted Colin Bartholomew's *Mac Switcher.mp3* entry online. He is British expatriate living in Germany and he won first prize (Roxio Toast 7).

<http://www.maccompanion.com/archives/december2005/Columns/Mac%20Switcher.mp3>

---

### Others provided written entries, which follow:

From Trent Armstrong in Allen Texas, who received one of the Xcode 2 Books from Wiley;

### Full Emotion Video

'Hi there! I listen to the Mac ReviewCast and have been trying to find the time to sit down and tell you our story. Yes, "our" story. I have been a Mac user for about 10 years and currently am a video producer and pro apps user. The most exciting thing is that we just had a kid. The least exciting thing is that my wife and I live in Dallas, TX and the rest of my family live in Alabama. Enter Mac OS X!

The day after my son was born my father was holding him and lamenting the fact that he and my mother live so far away. I had been pushing him to get a new computer (probably a Mac) but he was resisting with the idea that he wanted something that could go in their smallish bedroom so they would see it and want to use it. The outdated PC lives in another room downstairs and is out of sight, out of mind. So, as I was looking down at my son I told my dad that if he got a Mac and an iSight camera, he could see his grandson grow up from 12 hours away. He asked, "To whom do I give my credit card?"

Several months later I showed up at their house to install a brand new Mac Mini with accessories. It was not the easiest thing... (I am a little unsure about the Mac Mini and it's overall reliability), but after a bit of tough work and some driving, I got them up and running.

Fast forward to the week my son turned 6 months old...

It was time for him to start eating veggies and (being a softy) I wanted someone to experience it with us. We had done several video iChats over the months but when my mother and father got to see their grandson eat his first green beans... the look on his face and the looks on theirs (plus all the grandmotherly coo-ing and ahhh-ing) brought tears to my eyes. I couldn't stop there! We promptly headed outside to give our boy his first haircut, and then I proceeded to stream it moments later to my folks over iChat. My mother was beside herself and my father giggled like a school kid. They couldn't stop talking about it with their friends and the rest of my family.

Now, the switch has caused a few frustrations like freezing and apps not working periodically and the Apple -007 security update caused my mother to be afraid of the word "restart," but all in all it has lived up to what I was hoping for by connecting grandparents to grandchild with full motion and slightly compressed video. It has even made me think that it's "Full Emotion" video.'

[**Editor:** It is hard to keep emotions in check as we continue to try and keep the communication lines open with our extended families. Apple just makes that effort easier.]

---

Jon Biddell from Kurrajong Australia, also received an Xcode 2 Book from Wiley and he wrote;

## **Shame, Violence and Lust**

I have a story to tell - one of shame, violence and lust....

I used to be a Windows user - I had Windows XP t-shirts, Windows XP software, Windows XP CDs (LOTS of them!!!). I did almost everything in Windows, up to and including XP.

I managed many Windows servers for a living - I like to eat and pay the mortgage.

In short, I prostituted myself on the alter of that behemoth that is Microsoft.

Reboots were a common occurrence, we used to reboot our servers on a monthly basis, and the database servers were rebooted weekly. More than once, whilst in the server room alone, I had kicked a server in frustration and uttered such oaths that would make Steve Ballmer look almost sane by comparison (almost, but not quite!!), such was my level of stress and frustration with the Windows "OS".

I had always liked Unix/Linux, and started playing with it seriously about 5 years ago. As my experience grew and grew, I became more and more enthralled with this REAL Operating System and started to see Windows for the candy-encrusted piece of crud that it is.

I was content, happy even, running my Linux Operating System and my Linux Applications - oh, I slipped occasionally and ran some Windows applications via Crossover Office, a brilliant piece of software. They were sluggish, but like an addict trying to kick the habit, I just couldn't bring myself to reinstall Windows for that one or two apps. I had to be strong....

I had dabbled in Macs several years ago (System 7 days), but dismissed them as "toys", or for those people who didn't need a "real" computer.

Although I must shamefully admit that I lusted after the 17" Powerbook with its' industrial styling and fluid, even sexy, lines, but I still didn't know about OS/X.

Then, around middle of August 2005, in what I can only describe as a "complete fluke", a work colleague said he was having problems getting his 15" Powerbook to talk to one of my Windows servers. So I went to his office to take a look. The more I delved into the intricacies that are Mac OSX, the more I realized that this was, in fact, The One True Operating System shrouded in a pretty but very, VERY functional front end.

And, unlike Microsoft's offering, it didn't try to stop me from delving into that blackest of arts, the Command Line, should the desire descend upon me.

More than that - it was an Operating System that WORKED. It didn't Blue Screen, it didn't insist on a reboot every time you moved the mouse, it just WORKED.

An hour later I left that office far, far wiser, and financially poorer, than when I entered - having jumped onto Apple Australia's website and ordered myself a 17" Powerbook w. 2Gb RAM and a 60Gb iPod - thinking that SWMBO (She Who Must Be Obeyed - a.k.a. the Mrs.) would likely rend me limb from limb for this, I purchased her a 15" Powerbook at the same time.

All up, \$8500 hard earned Australian dollars made their way from my account to that of Steve Jobs and company... And I have never been so happy about a purchase in my life!!!

Yes, there have been a few hardware issues (SWMBO's 15" was replaced after two days with a faulty screen, my 17" had a logic board replaced due to USB ports going south), but that does not diminish from the beauty, the simplicity, the sheer rock-solid POWER that OS/X has provided me in the past 6 weeks, to the point where I do all my development work on the laptop in the office now and my P4 Wintendo machine sits idle 99% of the time.

Now, if I can just get rid of my Solaris server at home and get a Mac one installed, I will be as happy as the proverbial pig in sh... well, you get my meaning.'

**[Editor: Yes we do and you have nothing to be ashamed of.]**

---

Henry M. DeBardleben who lives in Marlborough, Maryland received one of the Shadow 2 Real-time backup CDs from NTI and he wrote;

### **Flying Pigs and Parkas in Hell**

I am a 40-year IT professional who started my career in IT when Windows 3.1 came out. I was giving seminars at a local college when I was contacted by IDG World Expo Corporation.

They had a job opening and needed someone with expert knowledge of Windows 3.1. The OS being new, there weren't many people around who could help the company with their transition from DOS to MS Windows 3.1.

I accepted the offer made and worked for IDG for several years, first transitioning them from DOS to Windows, then as an applications support specialist. I learned Windows inside and out. I was an original Beta tester of Windows 95, I was even flown out to Seattle for the official unveiling of Windows 95. I was one of those people who swore there was no better Operating System than that produced by Microsoft. I hated the idea of using a Mac. I later moved to Southern Maryland where I was able to work as a computer consultant for several large companies including; NASA, The Department of Justice and MCI. All this time I was touting the OS from Redmond, sharing the gospel of Bill.

Finally, after having gone from Windows 3.0- 3.1- 95 – 98 – 2000 – XP, I changed professions. I decided (after being laid-off from a lucrative web development position) that I wanted to be a Professional Photographer. I went to Photography school and started my own business. I had heard so much about how Apple had changed their OS and how it was built for creative professionals. I had family members telling me I had to try OS X. Well, I finally cracked, I gave in and bought an iBook.

This was during the time of Panther. I loved the OS from the moment it loaded. The ease of use was amazing, specially considering that I had been using Windows for ten –plus years. I loved the iCal, Mail, the task bar, everything. I knew when I opened iPhoto that I would not be going back to Windows. It was as if I had seen the light, an epiphany, I was born again. I now use a Powerbook G4 and am considering a Power Mac G5 I do all of my photographic work on my Powerbook. I still have a Windows machine around for those times I want to remember exactly why I love the Apple operating system. I will not be switching back. And that my friends, is my Mac switcher story.'

**[Editor: We like epiphanies.]**

---

Debbie T, who presides in Pinehurst, Maryland received a copy of GarageBand 2: The Missing Manual from O'Reilly for her efforts as she wrote;

## **The Halo Effect**

'I just heard Tim's latest podcast, and I can't believe that you don't have any switcher submits! I didn't submit, because I thought mine would get lost in all the many other submissions :)

Anyway, here is my story.

I started to look for a new Windows PC a few months ago, and after weeks of research, I decided to order a little Shuttle PC with an AMD processor.

In the meantime, everywhere I looked online, so many people were talking about Mac and how much they loved them. I started to feel the itch to look further into the whole Mac scene.

I started to read many Mac forums and web pages, and felt a yearning to convert. I figured maybe a little Mac Mini that could work along side the new PC.

But the further I researched the Mac, the more I regretted ordering the new PC. But the Shuttle PC order seemed to be taking a long time to process, so I called shuttle.com customer service to inquire about my order. Long story short, the order wasn't finalized yet, so I jumped at the chance to cancel the order.

Now the question was which Mac to purchase. I changed my mind so many times, my head was spinning. I was thinking about a Powerbook, a Mini, an iBook, and an iMac. I finally decided on the 15 inch Powerbook and haven't looked back yet. I love my Powerbook, and I use my Mac for approx 90% of my computer time! Converting to Mac OS X Tiger is one of the best decisions I have made!

And I remember your interview on his show. Your interview was the reason I listened to that show!

[Editor: We gladly accept all kinds of flattery...and figured she could use a prize she really wanted and could use.]

Ed Cooper of Indian Rocks Beach Florida, received one of the Shadow 2 CDs from NTI and this is his story;

## **Halo Effect II**

'I am probably one of the minority of switchers who didn't purchase an iPod as my first Apple product.

About a year ago, disgusted with the security holes and problems with my Internet Explorer and Microsoft Windows, I came across an Apple ad (I think it was in Wired magazine) for the G5 iMac. What a beautiful machine. It truly was love at first sight. I knew it would be such a good fit on my desk and the 20" flat screen would be tremendous. Of course, I had to sell my "better half" on this purchase. My tactic was to tell her it would be for her. I typically used my work-issued PC tablet at home while she used our old desktop Micron PC. After a great selling job convinced her of how easy it would be, the purchase was made.

The only problem was when I got it home and set up, I could hardly bear to part with it and give it to my wife. But she saw the pain in my eyes and graciously let me keep it for myself. No wonder we have been married for 37 years!! It really has been all I hoped it would be and even more. So easy to use. Such great software.

After using this, my first Apple product, for a few months, I went out and bought a 40GB iPod. I love it. I listen to very little music but always have a variety of podcasts loaded, particularly those like the *Mac ReviewCast* so I can keep learning about my new love.

I'm not sure whether my next Apple purchase will be a video iPod or a Mac Mini for my wife..... or maybe both!

Thanks for the *MacCompanion* too.'

**[Editor:** We aim to please! And hopefully we will continue to score points as we hit the target.]

---

John Denning, A+ MCSA MCSE, who works out of Roswell Georgia, also received one of the Shadow 2 CDs from NTI and he wrote;

## **Mac Snobbery**

I do have a switcher story.

First some background. I started with the Mac 128 in 84. Fell in love with it when I stumbled across it in a computer store. I later went to work for SuperMAC Technology in tech support.

Well then my eyesight started going bad. After surgery it was just so hard to use the Mac with no real support for visually impaired users. And there was support on Windows:-( I ended up moving to the PC. Now I work as a system administrator for the government on a large network.

But much to my delight Apple announced adaptive support in Tiger, Universal Access, (Zoom) for magnification, and VoiceOver for a Screen Reader. I was chomping at the bit to get a Mac. Finally couldn't wait and got an iMac G5 in March. Then Installed Tiger the day it came out. And I was actually able to install it sans any help, thanks Apple.

My wife decided she wanted her own Mac so we also got a Mini a month later.

So I am a very happy Tiger user. The Mac access isn't perfect. I'm looking to Apple for improvements. But it's darn good, and quite usable.

I'm glad to be a Mac snob again:-)'

**[Editor:** I'm delighted to know that even folks who work inside IT for the US government have "seen the light" and come home as Prodigal Sons. Aren't you?]

---

And we even gave Steve Marcuse, who lives in Santa Barbara, California a CD of *Mac OS X Training for Windows Users* by Terry White (see the review later in this issue of *macCompanion*) for his story;

## **Security Switch**

After more than a decade of using--and enjoying Windows in it's various forms I decided to find out what all the excitement about Macs was all about.

Now, mind you, my relationship with Windows was, as it is for many, rather a rocky one, filled with various problems associated with what amounted to, frequently, an incomplete operating system. As time went on, problems were increased by the advancing aggressiveness of "evil" types out to "attack" Microsoft and Windows with Spyware, Adware, Viruses and Trojans...etc.

Hearing so much about the advanced security of the Apple platform--and becoming ever curious about this "other" operating system...I decided to make the "jump"...made all the easier by the new offering of the Mac Mini...;

Well, two months later--lots of learning, exploring, studying and using of Tiger...and the new Mac Mini--which I purchased, configured with all of the bells and whistles--I am indeed having a terrific time!!!

I very much enjoy the differences of the "other" system...it's ease of use--and how wonderful it all looks...the only dilemma that I now face...is tearing myself away from the "Mini" and booting up Windows--so that all of the PCs that I have--won't feel neglected!!!'

**[Editor:** Hopefully with the training CD from Terry White, he can show others that switching isn't so hard after all. And there is nothing wrong with neglecting a non-Mac computer. ]

Anyway, this was a lot of fun and we hope you enjoyed these entries to our contest as much as we did. Yes, we gave out more prizes than we advertised, but hey, these folks deserved them, right?

More than 1 million folks moved to the Mac in the last few months and there is no sign that that growth will not continue. We rewarded a few of them as they shared their experiences with us. More will come this direction, where there is a Quality of Life that is ready for the taking from the sweet fruit from the Tree of Life we know as Apple Computer.

Perhaps we can do something like this again next year with Leopard and the MacTel systems.

## Views From the Ivory Tower

### Pet Peeves and Copy Protection

by Ted Bade

One of my pet peeves about digital music is copy protection. As with many means of “protection” they serve to annoy people who are being good citizens and are not doing anything wrong and usually have absolutely no effect on people who are willing to break the law or steal.

Sony Corporation has taken this to new heights of stupidity with their recent attempt at “Digital Rights Management”, (aka DRM). Apparently, to play one of the CDs you purchase from Sony on your computer, you need to install some software, software that hides itself in a fashion very similar to how a virus operates. More importantly, it appears (at least for Window’s users) removal of this software can cause some problems with one’s computer, for instance leaving a security hole open that provides an easy path for other malware affecting your computer and possibly preventing one’s CD player from playing any music CDs. (<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/technology/4400148.stm>).

Apparently the process works like this. You buy the copy protected CD. When you insert it in your computer, the computer needs to get onto the Internet and download a piece of software and some keys. ( - this means if you aren’t connected to the Internet you can’t play them on your computer). The DRM code attaches itself to parts of your computer’s OS and integrates itself with Windows Media Player, actually modifying the program. If you want to play the music on your computer, you can only play it through this infected version of Window’s Media Player!

You may ask, what happens 5 or 10 years down the road and you want to play this CD again? I bet you that the computer won’t be able to find the current DRM code! How is that for customer service?

Removal of this malware is dangerous to Window’s based machines. One article on the Internet reported that running Sony’s uninstaller leaves a Window’s based computer open to other malicious web sites (<http://www.freedom-to-tinker.com/?p=927>). In another web article, (a must read, just for fun), one person tells his tale of woe as he tries to remove this unwanted code. Apparently this person doesn’t use ActiveX and prefers FireFox to Internet Explorer or Explorer, decisions he has made for security reasons, but which prevent the uninstaller from working on his computer! In the end, he reformats his hard drive. (<http://www.michaelrighi.com/2005/06/20/use-sony-drm-format-your-hard-drive/>). Wow, to think, listening to music on your computer might require you to reformat one’s hard drive!

Because Sony’s software uses techniques very similar to a computer virus, even Microsoft has labeled it as Spyware! (<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/technology/4434852.stm>). At least one virus has been sending out to people that makes use of Sony’s copy protection scheme. The Stinx-E virus was emailed to many computer users in the UK. The person getting the email clicks on the attachment it takes advantage of the Sony software and installs a virus. ([http://www.computerworld.com/securitytopics/security/story/0,10801,106110,00.html?source=NLT\\_PM&nid=106110](http://www.computerworld.com/securitytopics/security/story/0,10801,106110,00.html?source=NLT_PM&nid=106110)). If that doesn’t teach people not to pirate software, nothing will ;-)

So what is Sony’s response to all this? Well they decided to recall all the CDs with the protection scheme on it. That’s fine, but they have already damaged many computers. I feel they should also be liable for the cost of clean up of these computers and any damage caused by other malicious software that takes advantage of the holes left after uninstalling it. One’s doesn’t typically buy a music CD expecting to need to modify their computer or to put it at risk on the Internet.

Stupid blunders like this just annoy people more and more. It wouldn’t be very hard for a person bit with this situation, to justify finding a free copy of the music on the Internet. It truly isn’t that hard to find music there. Actions like Soy’s Corporation’s make illegal downloads more and more appealing.

Now think about this: I am willing to bet that few (or perhaps even none) of the people who purchased these infected CDs were going to pirate copies of it. They just wanted to listen to music on their computers. For a long time now, I have refused to purchase CDs from the major music labels. I am happy to and often do purchase music from the iTunes Music Store and there are many excellent independent labels to choose from. I am glad to have avoided this event on my computer! I hope this event makes a few more people willing to stop supporting the RIAA and their affiliated music labels.

In case you do buy from Sony, visit the following link to learn which CDs were infected:  
<http://cp.sonybmg.com/xcp/english/titles.html>. And good luck getting the junk off your machine.

**Apple Stock still on the Rise** - In November of this year, Apple Stock's value continued to rise, reaching several new all time highs. I think this is cool, not only because I own Apple stock, but because it indicates the industry has confidence in what Apple is doing and thinks that owning its stock has value.

In late November, Apple announced that they had sold their 30 millionth iPod and have sold over 600 million songs through the iTunes Music Store. This probably has a lot to do with how well their stock prices have been rising.

**Intel forms an "Apple Group"** - Intel Corporation has formed a department that will be dedicated to working with Apple. While this isn't earth shattering news, it is just another indication along the way that Intel based Macs will soon be a reality.

Along the same line, an article found on the Mac News Network site (<http://www.macnn.com/articles/05/11/09/apple.assault.on.ms/>) has quoted Phil Schiller as saying that Apple won't prevent people from making a Macintosh boot multiple systems. They also pointed to an article on the Architosh site ([http://www.architosh.com/news/2005-11/2005a1108\\_tb-multi-os.html](http://www.architosh.com/news/2005-11/2005a1108_tb-multi-os.html)) that had found some reference to multi-booting the new Intel based Macs. Apparently Apple's has a patent, which was written to prevent people from putting Mac OS X on a non-Apple branded computer. When reading the information on this patent, the people at the Architosh site noticed that it also refers to the ability to load other operating systems on the Macintosh.

Who knows, the first PowerMac that hits the streets with an Intel chip just might have the ability to boot Linux for Intel, ore even, gulp, Windows!

## Books

### Advanced Mac OS X Programming

reviewed by Robert Pritchett



Authors: Mark Dalrymple

<http://borkware.com/>

Aaron Hillegass

[http://www.osnews.com/story.php?news\\_id=9666](http://www.osnews.com/story.php?news_id=9666)

Big Nerd Ranch

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

Atlas Books

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

Booksite: <http://www.bignerdranch.com/products/core.shtml>

**Released:** September 2005.

**Pages:** 646

\$70 USD, \$82 CND, £40 GBP, €63 Euro

ISBN: 0974078514

**Requirements:** A need to program in Mac OS X-mode. And some prior experience programming. After all, the title does say, “Advanced”, right?

**Strengths:** Covers just about everything missed in other Mac OS X programming books.

**Weaknesses:** The “about missed” is in regards to writing drivers. One or two errors are noted in the errata posted in **Code Used**. And there are a few typos in the book that somehow got past the editors.

**Code Used:** <http://borkware.com/corebook/>

**Other Reviews:** <http://www.friday.com/bbum/2005/11/03/advanced-mac-os-x-programming/>

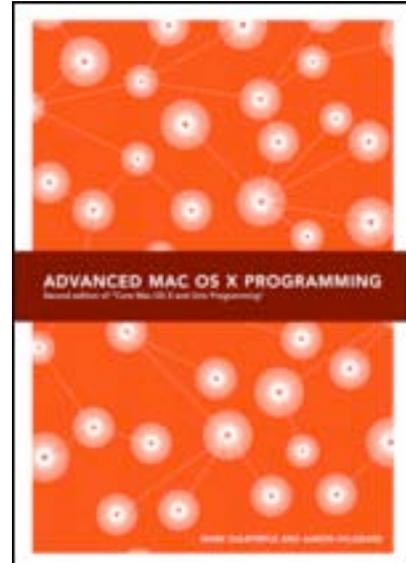
[http://osnews.com/story.php?news\\_id=12516](http://osnews.com/story.php?news_id=12516)

*Advanced Mac OS X Programming* by Mark Dalrymple and Aaron Hillegass is the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of the *Core Mac OS X and UNIX Programming* book. Apparently, there were enough changes, that the authors retitled the book.

If you’ve programmed for Mac OS X before, than this book will be a godsend. If you are new to programming in Mac OS X, you will need to go get other books for beginners first.

This book deals with tools and Application Programming Interfaces I have not been familiar with. It drives deeply into heretofore-unknown territory and amplifies and enhances ground covered in the previous edition. It is used as a training manual in coursework at the Big Nerd Ranch and it most definitely is a code book. Most chapters end with *For The More Curious* sections that give valuable information and a few even have *Challenge* sections for going further into applying what the chapters have presented.

The difference between this book and version one is that some things were dropped and others were added. A lot of information on C has disappeared, while C origins and variants are acknowledged, while more print went to GCC 4, IPv6 and DNS, a port from FreeBSD, CHUD, the replacement of CVS with Subversion, additions to information on multiprocessing (think dual quad), multi-threading, permissions, keychaining, Bonjour and coding comments.



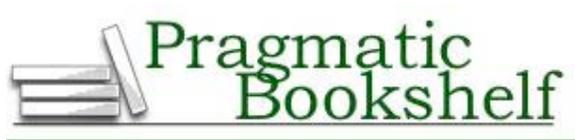
There are 25 chapters discussing the compiler, libraries, command line programs, memory, debugging with GDB, exceptions, error handling, signal issues, I/O and permissions, directories, files and links, NSFileManager, network programming with sockets, CFRunLoop, multiprocessing, using NSTask, kqueues, accessing the Keychain, authorization, distributing objects, Bonjour, Daemons and launchd, directory services, multithreading, using distributed objects between threads, Subversion (a whole chapter) and performance tuning. There are no appendices, but there is some mention of Shark (a sampling profiler for data mining and analysis) and Saturn (another profiler for building call graphs).

Perhaps for version 3 there could be some print dedicated to drivers, but probably by then we will be seeing Mac OS X Leopard and MacTel processors, so stay tuned. Meanwhile, get the best outside the Developer community on the Apple website by getting this book under your belt.

BTW, Aaron Hillegass signed my copy. Thanks Aaron!

## Agile Web Development with Rails First Edition

reviewed by Robert Pritchett



**Authors:** Dave Thomas and David Heinemeier Hansson with Leon Breedt, Mike Clark, Thomas Fuchs, and Andreas Schwarz

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](mailto:sales@pragmaticprogrammer.com)

[pragprog@pragmaticprogrammer.com](mailto:pragprog@pragmaticprogrammer.com)

**Booksite:** <http://www.pragmaticprogrammer.com/titles/rails/index.html>

**Released:** August 2005

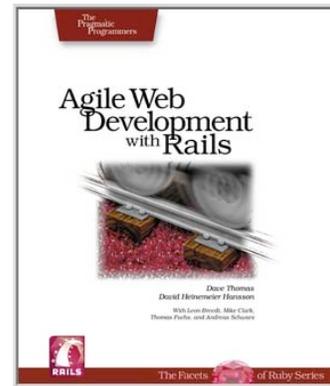
\$35 USD, \$49 CDN, £25 GBP €32 Euro

**Pages:** 570

**ISBN:** 097669400X

**Errata:** <http://books.pragprog.com/titles/rails/errata>

**Requirements:** A desire to know how to use Rails, Ruby, databases, and developing next-gen websites.



**Strengths:** One of the first books on detailing Open Sourced Rails under Ruby.

**Weaknesses:** As a first edition, there are a lot of printing errors. Sadly, some references are “broken” already.

*For programmers who want to automate the development process.*

### **Other Reviews:**

<http://www.pragmaticprogrammer.com/reviews.html>

**Ruby On Rails:** <http://www.rubyonrails.com/>

**RubyGems:** <http://docs.rubygems.org/>

**RealWorldUsage:** <http://wiki.rubyonrails.com/rails/pages/RealWorldUsage>

*Agile Web Development with Rails* by the authors listed above opens the eyes to using one of those hitherto unknown apps found in the Developer Tools found in Mac OS X – Ruby (an object-oriented scripting language). However, it goes further. It also shows how to use Ruby with Rails to do web development following Agile development principles (How DRY I am...Don't Repeat Yourself stuff and Convention over Configuration).

Welcome to the next-gen of dynamic web development beyond ASP and PHP. It had to happen sooner or later. Think “single framework”, if you are into web development.

This is a “How-To” book that shows how to develop an on-line store site with code formatting tutorials in Model Viewer Controller architecture (separating data, presentation and business logic), SQL connections, databasing, profiling, performance tracking.

Ruby isn't exactly "off-the-shelf" ready-to-eat" in Mac OS X and the book actually offers a way to make it so.

And you probably have heard of AJAX (asynchronous JavaScript) by now. Tim O'Reilly called Rails the "Perl of Web 2.0".

We also learn how to use ActiveRecord to connect business objects and database tables and use Action Pack framework to route incoming requests.

The book itself has 4 parts; getting started, building an app, Rails framework and Appendices. The first part discusses architecture and installation. The second part follows tasks for building an Ecommerce website. The 3<sup>rd</sup> part covers Rails configuration and tasks, Web 2.0, Email actions, web services, security and deployment and scaling. The last part covers four appendices on Ruby itself, parameters, source code and resources.

So it is time to begin anew and think differently about web development. This may very well be the "New Age" of using a full-stack, open-source web framework. Think, "No More XML".

Interested in learning web development all over again?

## C++ Common Knowledge: Essential Intermediate Programming

reviewed by Robert Pritchett



Author: Stephen C. Dewhurst

Addison-Wesley

<http://www.awprofessional.com>

Booksite: <http://www.awprofessional.com/title/0131855867>

**Published:** February 2005

\$30 USD, \$42 CND, £22 GBP, €26 Euro

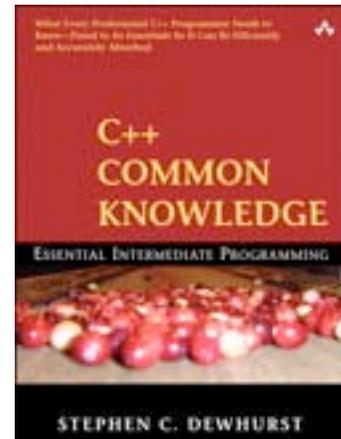
**Pages:** 272

**ISBN:** 0321321928

**Requirements:** Some knowledge of C++ already.

**Strengths:** Takes beginners to the next level.

**Weaknesses:** No mention of C++ on Macs.



*C++ Common Knowledge: Essential Intermediate Programming* by Stephen C. Dewhurst is a next-level book on C++, one of the most common object-oriented programming languages on the planet.

If you are interested in doing C++ on a Mac, you will need to go here instead: <http://developer.apple.com/> and do a search on C++ that brings up MPW (Macintosh Programmer's Workshop) or check out these links - <http://www.cyberdiem.com/vin/learn.html> and <http://www.faqs.org/faqs/macintosh/programming-faq/>.

This book has a list of 63 items inside the front and back covers and also as the list used as the table of contents that cover "issues" with C++.

I still have my copy of the Hands On Learning C++ object-oriented programming workbook from Unix Systems Laboratories from 1992 and there has been a few lessons learned in the language since then.

The intent of this book is to quickly guide beginners up through the intermediate level of understanding regarding the C++ language, so it kind of glosses over items, instead of going in-depth about them. Perhaps the author could have used the words "Absolutely Essential" in the subtitle of the book to describe the contents.

## The Career Programmer: Guerilla Tactics for the Imperfect World

reviewed by Robert Pritchett



**Author:** Christopher Duncan

<http://www.PracticalStrategyConsulting.com>

Apress

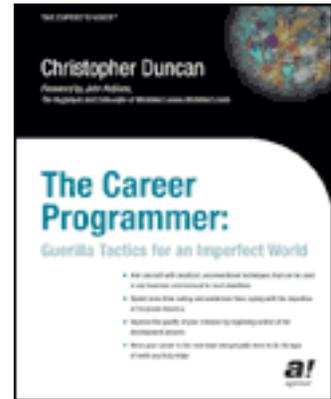
**Booksite:** <http://www.apress.com/book/bookDisplay.html?bID=13>

\$30 USD, \$45 CND, £21.50 GBP, €27 EU

**Published:** January, 2002

**Pages:** 240

**ISBN:** 1590590082



**Strengths:** Timeless lessons learned about corporate software development issues and ways to get around them.

**Weaknesses:** Somewhat dated regarding software development processes (check the published date). Some ideas and counsel get repeated.

*The Career Programmer: Guerilla Tactics for the Imperfect World* by Christopher Duncan seems to have found the Dilbertized manager more than once. The cynical humor shines through the occasional gems that seep out from the pages of this book and probably could be used as an incentive to unionize the software development industry.

Are you cursed with expected overtime without compensation? Do you work in a virtual sweatshop? DO you want to? Perhaps not after reading this book that shows the soft underbelly of corporate software development.

This book is colored with the experiences of the author – a diary of sorts that discusses unrealistic schedules and unstable releases – but it isn't so much a manifesto of the bad side, it also discusses a few strategies to being able to say “No” to marketing “promise-the-mooners” who get paid by commission for empty promises to unwitting customers – and leave the programmers to pick up the pieces.

I found myself nodding in agreement even at some areas in the book that not only sounded very familiar, but repeatable. The book is broad enough that it covers the issues without sugarcoating them, no matter what platform or operating system is being developed.

Hopefully by reading about the way Christopher Duncan handled uneasy situations, you too can defend yourself against the unrealistic pressures that occur in a corporate environment by learning how to “play the game” – and win.

There are two parts consisting of becoming painfully aware of corporate pressures, and the second part consists of 9 chapters deftly sidestepping arbitrary deadlines, getting requirements documented, working with effective design (Agile Manifesto precursors), estimating techniques (Scotty-like Star Trek stuff), fighting for quality assurance, struggling to keep projects under control, managing management, corporate self-defense and even how to possibly control your destiny.

The book is dated, but if you have been following the dollar-signs of software development, you might want to look at this book, before beginning a software consulting business or falling for the “security” of a corporate job in software development.

## Commercial Photoshop Retouching: In the Studio

reviewed by Victoria Maciulski

(c) copyright 2005 Victoria Maciulski

Reprinted with permission from the Conejo Ventura Mac User Group, Ventura, CA

[toriamac@mac.com](mailto:toriamac@mac.com) <http://cvmug.org/news.html>



**Author:** Glenn Honiball

<http://www.oreillynet.com/cs/catalog/view/au/2238>

<http://www.oreilly.com>

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

\$45 USD, \$63 CDN, £32 GBP, € EU

**Published:** August 2005

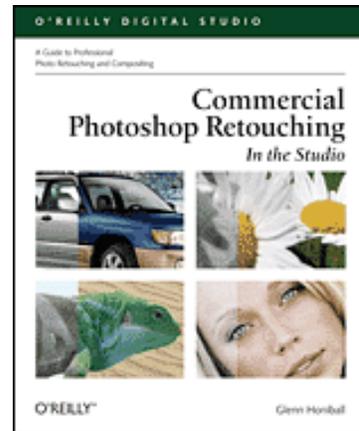
**Pages:** 270

**ISBN:** 059600849X

**Audience:** Intended for professionals.

**Strengths:** Touches creating touch plates.

**Weaknesses:** None found.



I have read a few Photoshop books on retouching and restoration and a lot of books, which included sections on retouching. Many of them cover the same issues over and over. They are very good, but this title is in a different league. It truly is for retouching and printing at the commercial, professional level!

This one covers issues I don't recall seeing before, such as how to trap color so it doesn't shift during printing (page 140), how to simulate a newspaper press (page 208), improving a file to help it survive magnification (page 187), tips to make the Vanishing Point feature work better (page 113), adding shadows and correcting them on multiplied layers (page 20), and a great section on "Shining Things Up" (page 114).

There is a great segment on Creating Touch Plates. I haven't seen this topic in any previous Photoshop book that I have reviewed. A Touch Plate adds a special color to an existing CMYK color of a particular item in an image, making it appear richer in color. Glenn Honiball gives you two different methods for doing this.

Everything in the book is well explained and accompanied by all of the photos and illustrations you need. This book is not for beginners, but anyone who is an intermediate user or above will find it can help you take your Photoshop work to the next level.

## Core Web Application Development with PHP and MySQL

reviewed by Robert Pritchett



**Author:** Marc Wandschneider

Prentice Hall PTR

<http://www.phptr.com>

**Booksite:** <http://www.phptr.com/title/0131867164>

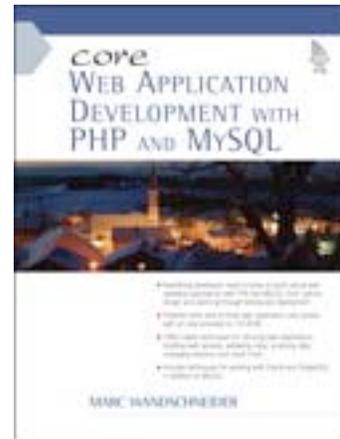
**Released:** September 26, 2005.

**Pages:** 915

\$50 USD, \$70 CND, £36 GBP €45 Euro with CD.

**ISDN:** 0131867164

**CD Contents:** Apache1.3.33, MySQL4.1.12 PHP5.0.4.



**Strengths:** Hits all the bases for both PHP and database development.

**Weaknesses:** None found so far.

Core Web Application Development with PHP and MySQL by Marc Wandschneider is a travel guide based on discoveries by the author as he learned how to use database apps and PHP.

In this instance, the database of choice is MySQL and is included along with PHP and Apache on the included CD. Along with the triumvirate of Apache/MySQL/PHP, there is even some mention of XML in the book. And there is plenty of well-placed white space.

The book is not published to be a compendium, but it is a great foundation book for those starting on PHP and building production-environment databases.

There are three apps to learn from and create; a calendaring system, weblog engine and an e-commerce store.

There are six parts consisting of 33 chapters and 3 Appendices that cover basics of PHP, language, code organization and reuse, object-oriented programming, working with arrays, strings and characters, interacting with servers, database basics and access, planning, securing and implementing web apps, debugging, handling cookies and sessions, user authentication, output, data validation, XML and XHTML, accessing and uploading files and directories, working with dates and times, XML web services and SOAP, using PEAR, coding standards and testing, sample projects, installing and running a blogging engine and even an Ecommerce app. The appendices cover installation and configuration, database function equivalents and recommended reading.

Oh, and there are lessons learned that are identified so we don't end up making the same mistakes.

## Take Control of Digital TV eBook

reviewed by Robert Pritchett



**Author:** Clark Humphrey

Take Control Ebooks

50 Hickory Road

Ithaca, NY 14850

[Tc-comments@tidbits.com](mailto:Tc-comments@tidbits.com)

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

**Booksite:** <http://www.takecontrolbooks.com/digital-tv.html>

\$10 USD, Euro 668K download.

**Published:** November 10, 2005

**Pages:** 72

**ISBN:** 193367105X

**Strengths:** Provides the latest information on Digital TV technologies.

**Weaknesses:** None found.

*Take Control of Digital TV* by Clark Humphrey is an eBook hosted by TidBITS Electronic Publishing. It covers the new wave on the way to High Definition TV as we migrate from analog to digital and is published to address a number of questions.

Clark Humphrey guides us through the inevitable acronyms of DTV, SDTV, EDTV, and HDTV and looks at the strengths of each as well as display types such as tube, projection or flatscreen (LCD and Plasma).

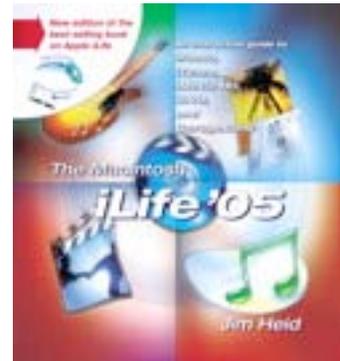
He also discusses signals, sources, where to have optimal viewing, where to get hardware, setting up the system, finding HDTV programming, adding any peripherals and even how to get rid of the old set. He even provides a list of resources and their websites and probably more importantly, a glossary of terms.

Probably the most interesting part of the book to me was the discussion between Interlaced and Progressive scanning technologies.



## The Macintosh iLife 05: An Interactive Guide to iTunes, iPhoto, iMovie, iDVD, and GarageBand Fourth Edition

reviewed by Dr. Eric Flescher



**Author:** Jim Heid

**Booksite:** <http://www.peachpit.com/title/0321335376>

**Released:** April 7, 2005.

**Pages:** 360

\$35 USD, \$49 CND, £25 GDP, €32 Euro with CD.

**ISBN:** 0321335376

**Requirements:** iLife '05.

**Strengths:** There is a wealth of information about the iLife Suite of software in this book. The book details not only using the software's set of tools and their operations but how to expand upon using the tools. There are valuable tips, insights, visual screenshots. The DVD tutorials are very well done and assist with the knowledge. The author examines lesser-known tips and not normally-known ideas that really can help working with Suite of software. The author does a great job with the visual layout and demonstrating all the facets of the Suite of software in a very information and visual way. A nice CD that goes along with the books has tutorials and much more.



**Weaknesses:** None found.

*This is the fourth edition of the book. The author is a contributing editor for Macworld magazine since 1984 and has taught each of the programs in the iLife suite since its inception. I had not heard about his book before. But I am glad that I found this book because of a variety of reasons.*

The Preface sets the stage for much of the book. On page viii and ix, the DVD laden tutorials match with the text on each two-page spread. And include new tutorials for the newest versions in the Suite (iPhoto, iMovie HD, and iDVD) while including the basics (but not new major segments) for iTunes and Garageband, for the solidly build but not revised since the last upgrades. What's New in iLife05 introduced the new features all of the software Suite's components. In addition, over 70 pages have been added to the previous edition, the author has added new insights in using the programs having learned in his various iLife workshops, what users need to know and learn. And the author demonstrates his insights with remarkable clarity.

The book has a very "fluid" like reading manner. Even though there is much of information, it is very easy to read because the text is in "manageable sections. Basically the book is divided into sections (not chapters) which include introduction to iLife; iTunes, iPod, and Digital Music; iPhoto and Digital Photography; iMovie HD: Making Movies; iDVD: Putting it All Together; Garageband: Making your Own Music. What I really like about this book, is the titles imply not only how to use the software but how to use the skills and information, so ably informed by the author, to upgrade your skills with the suite of software. The text goes "way beyond" the "just learning how to use the software." The author has visually captured, in many more ways, the great insights how to use the software Suite.

Each colorized page has a two-page spread, which includes tutorials, tips and useful insights. On the right side of the pages, the titles of the chapter are in blue on the left page as well as the on the right page side along with in white, the specific name of these pages and the topics. The page numbers are on the bottoms but I would rather have seen them on the top because that is where the “eyes” normally first looks for the page number. This is not a big deal; it’s just my view.

The pages include colorful screenshots (a nice feature is that several are zoomed in, showing the screenshots in a cleaner looking way and easy to see. This book is excellently illustrated. The visualization of the tutorials are further highlighted through the use of blue line-pointers and blue circles that illustrate which parts of the screenshots are being demonstrated and taught. Short light blue glossary footnotes are inset around pages (for example p. 256 on DVD terms). What is also noticed are open- book symbol icons on the right sided pages, at the top, some with brief information with a little arrow pointing to a DVD, which suggest additional information related to these pages can be found on the enclosed DVD.

There are valuable “gems” peppered throughout the book. Reading through the pages, there is a veritable “goldmine” of special and very specific tips and ideas that one would not normally know about if you tried to learn the iLife suite on your own or even used other books. Some of these include specific “nuggets of information” that found: advanced ken burns techniques (p.216); more internet sharing options (p.156); layout techniques (p.170); burning DVD tips and updating Superdrive drivers (p.278).

On page 2, there is an interesting chronological outline of Audio, Imaging, Video and Storage from the 1950-2 and 1960’s to the present/ Sampling of possibilities Where the Mac fit follow while an introduction how Media is integrated, is yet another introduction. This part ends with “putting the pieces together and “outfitting your Macintosh for Digital media. This lays the groundwork for those novices who are just now being introduced to iLife05. However this book is also a valuable resource for those computer users who have used various versions of the iLife Suite since the beginning.

The book starts with iTunes, iPod, and Digital Music. Importing to audio CD, browsing the Music Store and more information about iTunes are covered. Playlight, searching for songs, sharing music over a network, burning CD, synchronizing your iPod and much more give this chapter a good knowledge to anyone who is using iTunes or iPod.

This part brings you a wealth of information about iPhoto and Digital Photography. Not only is there information about iPhoto but excellent information cover hints and much more about photos, the keywords to finding and sorting your photos, batch change commands, transferring photos to iPod photos and more. Once again the author does an amazingly thorough job regarding the explaining of not only the software and how to use it but in depth approach concerning techniques that are not often found in a book that covers a range of software for this suite.

iPhoto can be a little confusing at first. Due to the fact the photos you see in iPhoto are actually “alias” of the real photos, the actual photos are stored somewhere else on your hard drive (usually in the library or pictures). Most helpful is how to burn your photos on a PC disc instead of storing your precious photos in an iPhoto Library CD that is Mac and PC compatible. There is a nice section on (p.182-3) on using old photos and placing them into our computer and using scanners.

The section about iMovie HD: Making Movies demonstrates step by step what iMovie HD can do for you. Here you learn how to import digital video, learn about video formats, using the Timeline, adding photos to Movies and using the Ken Burns effect and adding effects and transitions. One of the best new features is the Magic iMovie. For the first time, iMovie will import your digital video, as it is stream in from your camcorder and set up transitions and much more. What is nice is this magic video can be fine tuned and then adjusted with all the iMovie tools to make the iMovie you made even better. Or you can just leave it as and it will still be a pretty good product. Maybe not as you would have done yourself but still not bad for quick job, home movies and more. Then porting your digital video that you made to the

iDVD: Putting it All Together helps the learning and refining your skills as your movie then can ported to a DVD. This section is where learning how to handle and use sound, audio, Ken Burns effects, sharing movies and much more. There is a nice few pages dealing with making better movies and creating time-lapse movies and animation. Once again the author shows not only his wealth of knowledge but the breath of material he covers to show you how you can make your experience with iDVD a greater experience.

Garageband: Making your Own Music let's anyone learn how to create his or her own music with this wonderful music software. The color helps see the wealth of tools that you can use. Whether you are a novice, intermediate or advanced music user, Garageband and this chapter will show you the way. I found myself learning some new tricks. I played music with the Apple IIE but this software allowed me to really learn and make my own music, not just editing and saving music.

I really like this book. Not only is it comprehensive, the layout of the pages is well done and is easy to read. Many great tips, wealth of tips and information that I would not have found without this book. The CD can be used in many ways for your new or old projects, music, photos and more. I can't say enough about the way that the author has arranged and laid out the whole book and information about the suite of software. Novice and Intermediate users will find that this book will allow them to elevate their learning experience of each part of the iLife HD suite of software. Advanced users may learn a trick or two because of the extremely organized and visual manner in which the book is written. Try this book and learn to your hearts content. This best selling book is certainly a winner in my mind. Try it and find out for yourself.

## iMovie HD & iDVD 5: The Missing Manual

reviewed by Dr. Eric Flescher



**Author:** David Pogue <http://www.oreillynet.com/cs/catalog/view/au/347>

Pogue Press

O'Reilly Media, Inc.

1005 Gravenstein Highway North

Sebastopol, CA 95472

800-998-9938

<http://www.oreilly.com>

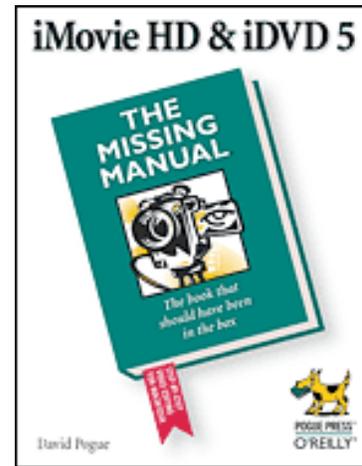
**Booksite:** <http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/imoviehdtmm/index.html>

\$30 USD, \$42 CND, £28.50 GBP, €26 Euro

**Published:** April 2005

**Pages:** 528

**ISBN:** 0596100337



**Strengths:** The Missing Manual website, which takes the place of a CD, gives you up to date and additional information about the applications. Tips, notes, nice screenshots and good tutorials give you a solid, in depth learning about each application. There are very specific and important tips in this Manual throughout all the applications that I have not seen in other books. These really help in learning and being up to date when it comes for using the applications. Great price for a wealth of knowledge to learn about all the iLife '05 applications. There is a new way to import digital video “on the fly” which will import all the video in an iDVD file where you can then change and modify the rest of the DVD, the transitions or leave as is.

**Weaknesses:** None found.

The iLife '05 series is a brilliant set of software applications that can be integrated to work with many forms of multimedia. Each can be integrated with the other packages, to produce a variety of creative multimedia products that even the novice user can use for their creative or artistic expression. The Missing Manual series (there is a whole series of books with Missing Manual concept) comes in and helps to provide assistance to this duo of software, iDVD 5 and iMovie HD. This assistance comes from a team that has decided to work together, to offer ways to learn how to use the iLife 05 suite of applications and targets the new upgraded versions of these two software packages that are part of the iLife '05 suite.

The author of the book is David Pogue, computer columnist for the New York Times, who has written for several books in the Dummies series. He is the author of several books concerning music and Macintosh books. Interestingly, he is a former Broadway show conductor/ pianist. He is also the creator of the Missing Manual series of which this book is included. I have met him twice at computer meetings and he does know music and “knows his stuff.” So it was with interest that I decided to review this book.

This 528-page book is jam-packed with solid, insightful and helpful hints and tips that will help anyone learn how to use the iDVD 5 and iMovie HD software. While the suite of software is meant to be easy to use, finding all that you need to know and utilizing the software to your best advantage and at the same time being efficient “may be easy said then done”, depending upon the complexity of the project and using all the tools within the two applications,

This edition of the book also includes three chapters concerning camcorders and film techniques.

Part 3, deals with iMovie, of which I have worked with quite extensively.

“Camcorder meets the Mac,” Chapter 13, looks different compared to the other applications so it takes awhile to learn the various facets. The beginning for video editing starts here in this part of the chapter and is followed by helpful advice. Caution windows, tips and different methods give a better understanding of the series of steps you need to go through. In many cases, depending upon the type of equipment, you will use different approaches. After you define your approach, “Building the Movie Track“, (Chapter 14), helps with added notes and a great series of techniques. “Transitions and Special Effects”, (Chapter 15), and “Titles, Captions, and the Credits,” (Chapter 16), offers multiple tips for making your video even better and is a lot of fun to work with. These chapters are followed by “Narrative, Music and Sound”, (Chapter 17), “Still pictures and QuickTime Movies”, (Chapter 18), and “Finding Your Audience”, (Chapter 19), really can save you a lot of time if video editing with iMovie is what you want to do.

iDVD, Part 4, is what I have been working with lately, but having the most trouble with. From “iMovie to iDVD”, (Chapter 20), is a section I looked at closely to see where my troubles are in terms of burning my iMovie-produced DVD. These pages are filled with many good ideas and tutorial like techniques to create your DVD. The section on using iMovie to port to iDVD (p. 413-414) is nicely set up. Working with chapter markers helps coordinate the making of a good DVD and this chapter visuals, good pointers and ideas help gain a better understanding of the integrating of all that is needed. Noteworthy are how themes and menu screens can be designed and used There are exceptional good examples of the use the screen buttons and working with the different designs. The details about working with best quality versus best performance DVD burning is the best yet I have seen about understanding which is the best method under the circumstances.

“iDVD Slideshow”, (Chapter 21), most rightly points out that a slideshow for your DVD is efficiently done while starting with iPhoto. The ideas are demonstrated and continue into “Advanced iDVD”, (Chapter 22). Here you learn how to design your own themes, editing and positioning text. There is a real nice section on reclaiming and using old themes that are still on your iDVD3 disc (if you have one). Customizing backgrounds and specific information is explicitly outlined and well done concerning the creation of DVD-ROM. It is always a necessity and archiving your DVD projects is warned and different ways to accomplish this through the creation of Disk Images provides an added way to accomplish this need.

The Troubleshooting section is a most valuable section to read. Troubleshooting iTunes warns to get version of iTunes 4.6. Good advice on backing up files playback problems and adjusting the music if too quite are helpful hints. Troubleshooting iPhoto gives advice about importing troubles, printing and editing problems and answers a host of insightful questions that might be on your mind or you are trying to deal with. Troubleshooting From iMovie to iDVD starts with three golden rules and then includes a great wealth of well-written and sensible iMovie and iDVD troubleshooting issues. Troubleshooting Garageband covers a series of problematic possibilities that can be corrected.

This book is jam-packed with a breadth and depth of information that will really help anyone who is interested in learning how to use iLife ‘05 from novice and possibly even advanced users. What is also nice is the Missing Manual website, which takes the place of a CD, and gives you up-to-date as well as more information about the applications. The author has really done a great job of not only covering information how to use each of the applications, but more importantly how to use them successfully. The wealth of tips and notes, some that I had not discovered by myself or using other iLife books and the applications, make this Manual book even more valuable. Try the iLife ‘05 Missing Manual if you need to discover new ways to tap into the knowledge of all the iLife ‘05 applications. You will save a lot of time and gain good solid advice concerning obtaining the most you can learn about your iLife ‘05 applications.

## Internet Forensics: Using Digital Evidence to Solve Computer Crime

reviewed by Robert Pritchett



**Author:** Robert Jones

<http://www.oreillynet.com/cs/catalog/view/au/1743>

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

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

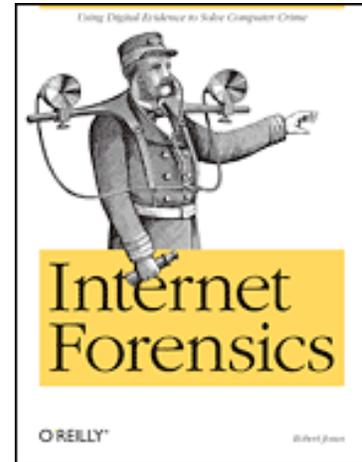
**Published:** October 2005

**Pages:** 238

**ISBN:** 059610006X

**Strengths:** Gets into the nuts and bolts of Internet Forensics.

**Weaknesses:** Minor typos.



*Internet Forensics: Using Digital Evidence to Solve Computer Crime* by Robert Jones approaches cross-platform processes and techniques using PERL and other tools to track down online malefactors and miscreants to help in creating an online neighborhood watch activity.

I've been scammed and my identity was robbed, so I have a special interest in this kind of research. We can't expect Interpol to do it all. Now we are given ways and means to do our own detective work so that when the time comes to turn the evidence over to security forces, we have a dossier worthy of being used in court against Internet Fraud and those who gain financially by it.

Find out how to get to the bottom of hidden email messages, rerouted web pages and web server using Internet Forensics and learn how the bad guys and gals operate.

Learn when to turn over evidence and also what areas not to explore so that you don't get caught in any honeypots and detract resources being used to inhibit the illegitimate commerce being practiced today online.

The book has 12 riveting chapters, but I probably learned the most from the chapter on Obfuscation - which is bait&switch tactics by Internet con artist that grab you from a legitimate Ecommerce site unbeknownst to you, to their pseudo-site and as you do financial transactions you get ripped off. The companies that make browsers are working on bettering tier obfuscation meters with plethora of add-on toolbars and such. As Robert Jones so succinctly indicates, a revision of the URL specification combined with a coordinated effort among browser developers is needed to implement that standard.

Get the book.

# Nessus, Snort, & Ethereal Power Tools: Customizing Open Source Security Applications

reviewed by Robert Pritchett



**Authors:** Brian Caswell, Gilbert Ramirez, Jay Beale, Noam Rathaus, Neil Archibald

<http://www.syngress.com>

**Booksite:** <http://www.syngress.com/catalog/?pid=3320>

**Code:** <http://www.syngress.com/solutions>

\$40 USD, \$56 CND, £23 GBP, €36 Euro

**Published:** September 2005

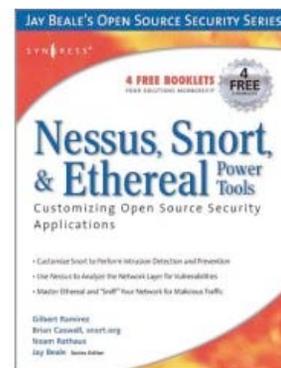
**Pages:** 450

**ISBN:** 1597490202

**Requirements:** Nessus - <http://www.nessus.org/>

Snort - <http://www.snort.org>

Ethereal - <http://www.ethereal.com/>



**Strengths:** Shows more “attachments” that work with these Open Source security tools.



**Weaknesses:** None found.

*Nessus, Snort, & Ethereal Power Tools: Customizing Open Source Security Applications* by the authors listed above is a toolkit kind of book.

Now we can move these three Open Source powerhouse security apps further along with “attachments”. Code can be downloaded from the Syngress website so manually entering the code is not necessary.

The book is divided up into 3 parts; Nessus tools, Snort tools and Ethereal tools.

NASL (Nessus Attack Scripting Language) isn't a spray for the sinuses (NASL Script instead of nasal drip, get it?), but rather a language for working with HTTP, vulnerability scanning, process launching and results analysis. Six chapters are dedicated to inner working and debugging NASL extensions and custom tests, understanding capabilities of Nessus, analyzing GetFileVision and MySQL Passwordless test and automating the creation of NASLs.

Snorting up is also not a nosey utility, but the code here allows for reading, writing and understanding IDS sensor rules and Berkeley Packet Filters. It also does special plug-in. Four chapters deal with inner workings of Snort, rules, plug-ins and preprocessors and modifying Snort.

Ethereal (not with it's nose in the air, but it does do sniffing) has been discussed before in these pages, but we will repeat again to write capture filters, work tcpdump and libpcap and pcap and work magic with protocols and work with tethereal. Three chapters discuss capturing file formats, working protocol dissectors, and reporting processes in Ethereal.

The Appendix is essentially a rewrite or excerpts from another Syngress book on Host Integrity Monitoring using Osiris and Samhain with their strengths and weaknesses duly noted.

So this book basically gives a nosejob to Open Source apps. If you deal with network security, this book may be a lot of help if you get the itch to modify, customize or work code and scripts dealing with these Open Source tools.

## No Nonsense XML Web Development With PHP: A Practical Step-by-Step Guide

reviewed by Robert Pritchett



**Author:** Thomas Myer

SitePoint Pty. Ltd.

<http://www.sitepoint.com>

**Booksite:** <http://www.sitepoint.com/books/xml1/>

**Released:** May 2005

Pages: 318

\$40 USD, \$56 CDN, £28 GBP, €35 Euro

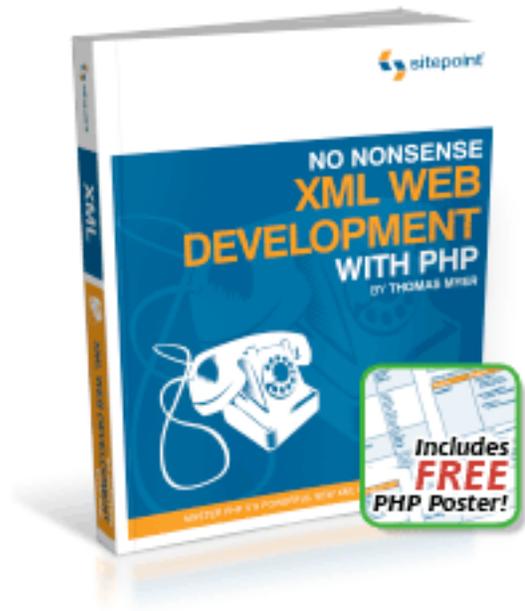
ISBN: 097524020X

**Requirements:** A desire to do web development and PHP 5.0

**Strengths:** PHP-based XML.

**Weaknesses:** A few typos in this edition – some captured -

<http://www.sitepoint.com/books/xml1/errata.php>



*No Nonsense XML Web Development With PHP: A Practical Step-by-Step Guide* by Thomas Myer does exactly as the title says. It really is a practical step-by-step guide for using XML.

And it walks us through building an XML-compliant Content Management System for creating dynamic websites.

It also shows us how to create a dynamic website map using XSLT and generating XML and RSS feeds using PHP 5.0.

And yes, some code didn't get through printing error-free- but that is why the errata link is posted.

There are 10 chapters that discuss XML, DTDs, XSLT, manipulating XML with JavaScript/DHTML and PHP, even discussion of RSS and RDF, Web services and Databases.

There are also two Appendices covering PHP XML functions and the CMS admin tool.

SitePoint has done an excellent job putting out great books that always give something immediately, once their pages are opened in their books.

## Practical Development Environments

reviewed by Jonathan Hoyle



**Author:** Matthew B. Doar

<http://www.oreillynet.com/cs/catalog/view/au/1866>

O'Reilly Media, Inc.

1005 Gravenstein Highway North

Sebastopol, CA 95472

800-998-9938

<http://www.oreilly.com>

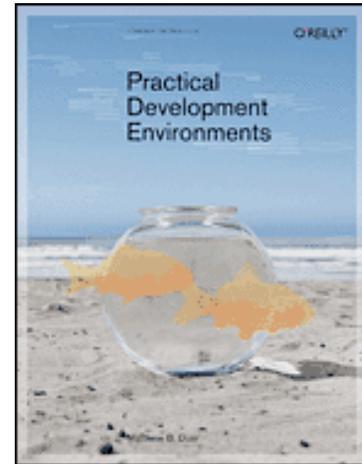
**Booksite:** <http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/practicalde/>

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

**Published:** September 2005.

**Pages:** 328

**ISBN:** 0596007965



**Audience:** Organizations interested in developing software.

**Strengths:** Good overall approach, grounded in practicality rather than ideology.



**Weakness:** Lacking illustrations and historic examples.

When a software engineer or manager hears the term *development environment*, he usually thinks of the compiler. Matthew Doar widens the term to cover the entire infrastructure of software creation, including bug tracking, QA testing, source control and much, much more. This books cover the aspects of software development aside from the compiler used to generate the application. As the author writes:

*This book doesn't tell you how to write faster code, how to write code with fewer memory leaks, or even how to debug code. It does tell you how to compile your product faster, how to keep track of all the code you write, and how to track the bugs in your code.*

One of the most important tools used by the software developer is source control: a repository used to save and back up the source code while development is under way. Doar explains the importance of source control and describes a number of solutions currently available, from *CVS* to *PerForce* to *SourceSafe*, and many others. Likewise, he describes the importance of build management, QA testing tools, bug tracking software, documentation environments, release management, and project communication. There is even a section on company politics and how it affects software product development.

What is most refreshing about this book is that it is very frank and practical in nature, not coming from a programming ideology. Pragmatic decisions are encouraged, rather than strict adherence to some engineering creed or manifesto. When offering solutions to a particular aspect of software development, the author lists a number of possibilities, from freeware to commercial. The author is also frank about the pro's and con's of the various tools, clearly showing his experience in the industry with them.

In conclusion, *Practical Development Environments* is a must read for any organization serious about developing software. It is not overly technical, approachable by QA and documentation writers, yet detailed enough to cover all aspect of the product cycle. Highly recommended.

## PC Pest Control: Protect Your Computers from Malicious Internet Invaders

reviewed by Robert Pritchett



**Author:** Preston Gralla

<http://www.oreilynet.com/cs/catalog/view/au/1202>

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

\$25 USD, \$35 CDN, £17.50 GBP, €23 Euro

**Published:** July 2005

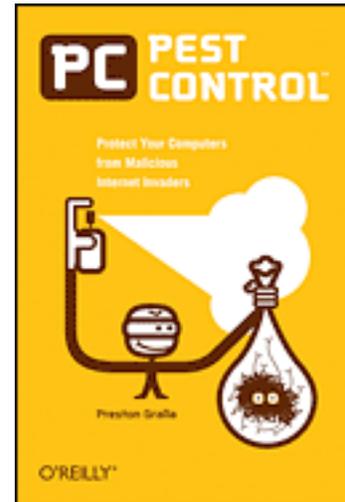
**Pages:** 284

**ISBN:** 0596009267

**Requirements:** A Windows Operating System and maybe a touch of masochism.

**Strengths:** Survival book for Windows environments.

**Weaknesses:** Of course, nothing about Macs.



*PC Pest Control: Protect Your Computers from Malicious Internet Invaders* by Preston Gralla is the quintessential bug-zapper book for systems that use the Windows operating system – which includes Macs running Virtual PC7 or earlier. That is why it is being reviewed here.

If you are an expert on malware, than the Field Guide to Pests in the Appendix is probably all you might be interested in.

Isn't it amazing that a book has to be written to not only explain all the malware that can occur with a Windows-based machine, but that a whole multi-billion dollar industry has been created to do the cleanup work because of the ease of compromise caused by such an operating system?

In typical warning color fashion, the cover is yellow –orange and the sidebars and other important highlights are in florescent chartreuse. The Table of Contents consists of one page.

I especially took interest in the Spam chapter, but the other chapters deal with showing vulnerabilities, pest prevention and monitoring and killing pests in the first section on overall protection. The second section identifies and categories specific pests with a whole chapter dedicated to removing Internet Explorer, than going i9nto later chapters on adware, spyware, home page hijacking, viruses, Trojans, bots, Email, phishing, pharming, worms, instant messaging, spam, protecting identities and kids, wireless and home networking dangers. It's enough that anyone who reads this book is going to throw their arms up in despair thinking there is no cure and the pain threshold is too great to have to get the Terminator to resolve the issue. Instead, the book shows various ways and means to continue to fight the loosing battle by avoiding certain things or by obtaining the "right" software for protection against such online pollution.

Face it, my attitude is that malware, in all its forms and functions, is all part of a larger racket and con. Preston Gralla points out who are a few of the bad guys and gals behind it.

A recent article in *NetworkWorld* shows that spyware and porn attacks are intertwined and we listed it in our Blog. No mention in the book shows that this is the elephant in the living room, but once again, Macs are mostly free and unaffected by such filth. That, sadly enough is not one of the options offered to those who probably will by this book out of frustration and a desire for self-preservation. But if everybody used Macs, who would buy the book?

## RT Essentials: Managing Your Team and Projects with Request Tracker

reviewed by Robert Pritchett



**Authors:** Darren Chamberlain

<http://www.oreillynet.com/cs/catalog/view/au/1225>

Richard Foley

<http://www.oreillynet.com/cs/catalog/view/au/1224>

Dave Rolsky

<http://www.oreillynet.com/cs/catalog/view/au/983>

Robert Spier

<http://www.oreillynet.com/cs/catalog/view/au/2252>

Jesse Vincent

<http://www.oreillynet.com/cs/catalog/view/au/2251>

**Best Practical Solutions:** <http://www.bestpractical.com/>

**RT Wiki:** <http://wiki.bestpractical.com/>

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

\$35 USD, \$49 CDN, £25 GBP, €32 Euro

**Published:** August 2005

**Pages:** 216

**ISBN:** 0596006683

**Requirements:** Perl 5.8.3 or later; MySQL, PostgreSQL, Oracle 9iR2 or SQLite; Apache; and of course, the app itself,

<http://www.bestpractical.com/rt/download.html> and a high-end server and maybe Mason.

**Strengths:** Open Source cross-platform, incident-response tracking system.

**Weaknesses:** None found.

*RT Essentials: Managing Your Team and Projects with Request Tracker* by the authors listed above is a User Guide for Request Tracker, a Perl-based Open Source issue-tracking system supported by Best Practical Solutions, LLC.

The requirements to use this tracking system are interesting. Instead of spending thousands of dollars on an off-the-shelf ticketing system, all that is needed here is a roll-your-own mentality, the RT tarball, Perl, Apache, and a relational database. Oh, and an enterprise environment where this would be appreciated for managing tasks, issues and requests.

Jesse Vincent is the main author of the book and gently guides us on how to turn an RT server into a tracking tool using Perl and another website development and delivery engine known as Mason <http://www.masonhq.com/>.

There are ten chapters covering ticketing systems, installation requirements, using RT, running it from a command-line interface, administrative tasks with day-to-day management, scripting, configuration setup, a review of architecture, the Application Programming Interface and development environments. There are also five appendices covering the glossary, command-line action reference, configuration, required Perl module dependencies and a configuration file reference.

Here is an example of successful Open Source software that apparently follows the principles discussed in the other book we reviewed this month in *macCompanion*: “Producing Open Source Software”.



# SPYCHiPS: How major corporations and government plan to track your every move with RFID

reviewed by Robert Pritchett



**Authors:** Katharine Albrecht;

<http://www.thomasnelson.com/consumer/AuthorDetail.asp?CreatorID=2828>

Liz McIntyre;

<http://www.thomasnelson.com/consumer/AuthorDetail.asp?CreatorID=2829>

**Nelson Current**

<http://www.nelsoncurrent.com>

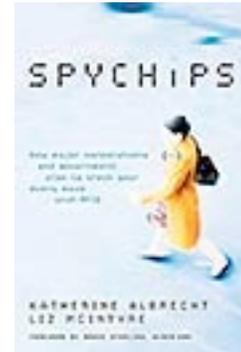
**Booksite:** <http://www.spychips.com>

\$25 USD, \$29 CDN, £14 GBP, €23 EU

**Published:** October 4, 2005

**Pages:** 288

**ISBN:** 1595550208



**Strengths:** Discusses how supposedly good technology can be used by the dark side.

**Weaknesses:** A couple of swearwords were located. Some issues were repeated more than once.

**Audio Interviews:**

[http://i.cmpnet.com/infoweek/blog/podcasts/Albrecht\\_part\\_1.mp3](http://i.cmpnet.com/infoweek/blog/podcasts/Albrecht_part_1.mp3)

[http://i.cmpnet.com/infoweek/blog/podcasts/Albrecht\\_part\\_2.mp3](http://i.cmpnet.com/infoweek/blog/podcasts/Albrecht_part_2.mp3)

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/antifluff/53648434/>

*SPYCHiPS: How major corporations and government plan to track your every move* by Katharine Albrecht and Liz McIntyre is a book you will either love or hate, depending on which side of the bread your career is buttered on. Either way, these gals not only suggest, but show, who is doing what with Radio Frequency Identification technologies with a book filled with hundreds of references and resources to back up their face-value-as-being-unbelievable claims that the Orwellian Big Brother is alive and well and that the 666 reference in the Book of Revelation in the New Testament is apparently being fulfilled.

I know something they do not. We had an IEEE meeting here a few years ago where the ID technology was being shown to work with bees and salmon and was at that time being intended for use in deactivation weapons on the battlefield as well as tracking “dog tags” that include a fallen warrior’s vital statistics that could be read by medics in the heat of battle. I facetiously asked the presenter, from the R&D firm I have tried to join over the years, if the ID tags had a part order number of 666. He said, “Yes”! Bees are tracked to see where they swarm and salmon returning from the world’s oceans are also tracked and counted as they go up fish ladders that have been thoughtfully placed in dams on rivers. Pets and prisoners, welfare recipients and high-society club attendees and government officials have RFID devices embedded in their bodies – so they can be tracked. Highways and roads have been reengineered to contain sensors to track radio frequency devices in tires. The US State Department attempted to get devices installed in US citizen passports. International corporations have these devices installed in their goods to track cradle-to-grave – and customer preferences. All the Sci-Fi stories written about loss of privacy and personal autonomy have been turned into fact. (Maybe you don’t remember the IBM “don’t fold spindle or mutilate” cards of the 1960s that were intended to track our buying and living preferences, usually with a possible chance at winning a million dollars by giving up our privacy?)

This is not lost on the sensitivities of the authors who don't care for feminine hygiene products that are in use to notify their users that they need to be replaced, or to be told by electronics that the soiled diapers of their babies need to be changed. And to have that recorded somewhere, somehow, such as was exhibited in a cosmetics department as an item was picked up off the shelf that triggered a camera to record the actions of the customer to a location 750 miles away in real time is real today. Or having the tracers hidden inside underwear? Does that bother you in any way? And with tracing technology already as it is, stalkers and predators can watch an individual's every move. Why make it even easier for them? It should bother you, if you have any sense at all about your rights as a citizen of this world. Really.

A scenario of Nazi Germany of WWII with this same technology (that originally was created by a Russian spy who was in the US and then hidden from view and later reappeared back to the US in 1991, who began the who radio frequency identification activity by creating a musical instrument called a theremin [not the vitamin theramin] at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theremin>) in use today by them should send shivers up and down your spine. Unless of course, you don't mind being tracked day and night your whole life. It would be so easy to put people away for being in the wrong place, at the wrong time due to extenuating circumstances, wouldn't it? The RFID of today is the same as the Yellow Star of David force by those of the Jewish faith to be used in Nazi Germany, circa 1942.

Now take the for-instance of the all-powerful governments and the democidal (killing of people by their own governments) history of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, let alone past civilizations since Adam. Excessive government power worldwide eliminated the lives of over 170 million people (that are known about) during the 20th century. Should either international, national corporations or governments have the power to track folks? Lions (predators) use RFID and Zebras (us) should try very, very hard not to be singled out for dinner. And that is what this book is trying to do, point out the awareness factor involved in keeping the human herd instinct from becoming extinct.

There are 17 riveting chapters that walk through the basics, show how the technology is currently being misused and abused, and what we can do about it. There is a little bit of duplication and a couple of instances of swearing found in the book. That is offset by excellent reference materials and a website dedicated to the issue of RFID getting in your shorts.

No matter which side of the fence you are on about privacy issues and tracking technologies, this book is a must-read. Learn what can be done to stop this kind of electronic snooping and pollution. Nobody can afford to be a fence sitter on this one. Nobody.

## Build Your Own Standards Compliant Website Using Dreamweaver 8

reviewed by Robert Pritchett



**Author:** Rachel Andrew

SitePoint Pty. Ltd.

**Australian Office:**

424 Smith Street

Collingwood VIC

Australia 3066

+61 3 9419 5200

Fax: +61 3 9419 3900

**US Office:**

2763 West Avenue L #277

Quartz Hill CA 93536

[books@sitepoint.com](mailto:books@sitepoint.com)

<http://www.sitepoint.com>

**Booksite:** <http://www.sitepoint.com/books/dreamweaver1/>

**Released:** September 28, 2005

**Pages:** 368

\$40 USD, \$56 CND, £28 GBP, €35 Euro

**ISBN:** 0975240234

**Requirements:** Macromedia Dreamweaver 8.

**Strengths:** Focuses on Web Content Accessibility.

**Weaknesses:** Errata

<http://www.sitepoint.com/books/dreamweaver1/errata.php>. Windows-focused.

*Build Your Own Standards Compliant Website Using Dreamweaver 8* by Rachel Andrew is a tutorial book on how to use XHTML and CSS using Dreamweaver 8.

If you use Macromedia Dreamweaver 8 on a Mac like I do, some of the exercises don't work as directed. If you use a Windows-based system than the procedures work.

The strength here is the ink devoted to Accessibility, Section 508 and WAI. Have I implemented it yet? Not yet...

And then there are the validators for standards compliance, both internal to Dreamweaver 8 and the 3<sup>rd</sup>-party options.

I'm still working on the time and productivity saving on our site and may be doing so for some time...

There are 10 chapters that cover web standards, site planning and development, XHTML and semantics, constructing documents, working with CSS and Dreamweaver, layout construction, accessibility and building the site, working with forms and 3<sup>rd</sup>-party services and alternate style sheets.



## Take Control of Switching to the Mac eBook

reviewed by Robert Pritchett



**Author:** Scott Knaster

Take Control Ebooks

50 Hickory Road

Ithaca, NY 14850

[Tc-comments@tidbits.com](mailto:Tc-comments@tidbits.com)

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

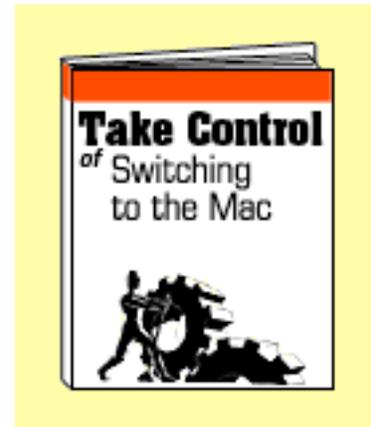
**Booksite:** <http://www.takecontrolbooks.com/switching.html>

\$10 USD, 1.3 MB download

**Published:** November 17, 2005

**Pages:** 93

**ISBN:** 1933671041



**Strengths:** Provides good information on moving to the Mac.

**Weaknesses:** No Table of Contents (Corrected – See Tonya Engst quote), but there is a Glossary and a Resources section at the end of the book.



*Take Control of Switching to the Mac* by Scott Knaster is a \$10 investment that puts what Terry White pretty much organized into video content (see the Training review section for December 2005) on his DVD. Scott Knaster is also a person conversant in both Windows and Apple-speak and approaches this move to the Mac from the perspective of the Windows user.

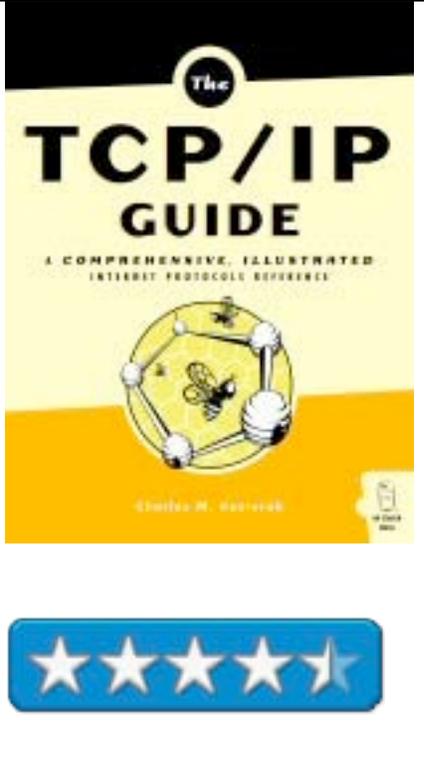
Scott Knaster walks through picking the right machine for the job, setting it up, looking at equivalent apps between platforms and moving documents, Emails, addresses and browser bookmarks from the Windows-platform to the Mac. Next up are the basics about user interfaces, using the Finder, Spotlight, the iApps, Exposé connecting to networks, downloading updates, sharing documents with Windows systems and run occasional Windows apps.

Of course, the Mac is not perfect, still being an electro-mechanical device, so Scott also has a Glitches and Gotchas section before he dies into five “must-learn” features for the Finder, keyboard shortcuts and PDFing. He then discusses five tips for working with websites, using Dashboard, opening recent items, password protection, and making smart folders. He finishes up with a nod towards Virtual PC and Remote Desktop Connections. After all, we still have to deal with non-Mac environments, don't we?

Tonya Engst wrote, “The first page of all our ebooks has a TOC on it (hot-linked to the appropriate sections), plus the Check for Updates button, which lets you check for and download any updates. If you read it online, you'll also see that the TOC is duplicated (and with more level of detail) in the Bookmarks. Further, The Quick Start page provides an alternate TOC - instead of showing the strict linearity in a traditional TOC, it lists out the main topics in terms of how they fit into the context of the process described in the ebook. The Quick Start page is most useful to online readers, since the links are followed by clicking.

## TCP/IP Guide: A Comprehensive, Illustrated Internet Protocols Reference

reviewed by Jonathan Hoyle and Robert Pritchett

<p> <b>NO STARCH PRESS</b> "the finest in geek entertainment"™</p> <p><b>Author:</b> Charles M. Kozierok <a href="http://www.pcguides.com/">http://www.pcguides.com/</a> No Starch Press <a href="http://www.nostarch.com">http://www.nostarch.com</a> <b>Book Sites:</b> <a href="http://www.nostarch.com/tcpip.htm">http://www.nostarch.com/tcpip.htm</a> <a href="http://www.TCPIPGuide.com">http://www.TCPIPGuide.com</a> <b>Released:</b> September 2005. <b>Pages:</b> 1,616 \$80 USD, \$108 CDN, £55 GBP, €72 Euro <b>ISBN:</b> 159327047X</p> <p><b>Audience:</b> Software developers interested in programming to the TCP/IP specification.</p> <p><b>Strengths:</b> Clearly written and well organized, breaking down many difficult concepts into manageable pieces.</p> <p><b>Weakness:</b> It is not always obvious what portions of TCP were the important parts and which were minor.</p>	
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

*TCP/IP Guide: A Comprehensive, Illustrated Internet Protocols Reference* by Charles M. Kozierok took a lot of research and time getting here, but it really is what the title says; comprehensive and illustrated. And with 1,616 pages, did you expect anything less? If my calculations are correct it took no less than 4 years for Charles Kozierok to put this intensive tome together.

(by Jonathan)

This is one of the most comprehensive references available on the subject of TCP/IP. At over 1,600 pages, author Charles Kozierok succeeds in organizing this involved subject into an introductory section, a general section for application developers, and one for low-level programmers who need detailed access to the protocol. Key concepts are sectioned off in bolded text on a gray background as a visual cue. The many diagrams and illustrations are welcome in helping to explain the most complicated concepts. Kozierok's writing style is engaging and informative, especially in the introductory chapters.

In Part I, Kozierok gives an overview of the TCP protocol and background information. In addition to giving an overview and history on the protocol itself, the author also takes the time to explain the rationale behind the various decisions made in the evolution of this standard. In this section, Chapter 2 is particularly interesting, covering general concepts and even performance issues associated with TCP/IP. Part II covers the Lower-Layer protocols, such as the IPV4 and IPV6 standards. Gateway protocols are the covered, and most especially Transport Layer protocols. A well-explained comparison between TCP and UDP is made, going into detail on the addressing of ports and sockets. Part III covers Application Layer protocols, useful for web programmers and developers for FTP, email and host configuration.

The book is not meant to be read sequentially (at least after Part I), as it is a reference source for all aspects of TCP/IP. Each chapter introduces the main concepts used within, and information is often displayed in tabular form for easy digesting. The author likes to explain the "why's" along with the "what's", making each of the chapters easy to read, unlike the many dry tomes currently available. As a supplement to the book, Kozierok has a web site at <http://www.tcpipguide.com/> for continued learning of TCP/IP.

Overall, the TCP/IP Guide will be a must-have for any serious software developer interesting in writing to this protocol. Although the beginner might be a better served with a lighter volume, not weighed down with the details found herein, any moderate to advanced developer will want to keep a copy of this on his or her desk.

(by Robert)

Now I can retire all my other TCP/IP books I have gathering dust on my bookshelves. Oh, wait, I guess I can keep them as relics from times past and perhaps become collector's items. No, I looked at Amazon.com and they hold little value today. This book however may become timeless, because it not only talks about, but also shows "everything".

Once, while I was in a telecommunications-engineering group we had the opportunity to buy a bunch of plastic-coated strips that showed each protocol ad nauseum, and if memory serves me right, each one cost upwards of \$30 USD. We picked and chose the ones we actually used or knew something about at the time. Here is a book that costs \$80 that not only shows what those cheat sheets had, but much, much more.

The Table of Contents, List of Figures, List of Tables go on for nearly 70 pages. There are over 350+ illustrations, 500 tables and something about every single network protocol acronym known to man – including IPv6. And beyond the 40-page Index there is a 3-page list of the Requests For Comments (RFCs) by Number. And Charles Kozierok made the text readable. Maybe that is why the book took over 4 years to complete. No assumptions are made about what you may or may not already know about networking, but he is kind enough to point out that certain parts can be skipped if you “know something already”. The book could have been broken out into three sections, much like Douglas Comer and David Stevens did with their 3-volume set of “Internetworking with TCP/IP” that was published way back in the early 1990s. Instead, the three sections are all bound together so they don’t get lost or misplaced. And the hardcover binding lays out the pages nicely so the spine can’t be broken. Section I covers an overview and background information in eight chapters. Part II handles the lower layer core protocols, including IPv6, and all the familiar (to IT network types) acronyms I’m not going to repeat here in no less than 40 chapters. Part III finishes up the book from chapters 50 to 88 on everything you ever wanted to know about Application Layer Protocols.

You know, I wished I’d had this book way back when I got certified as a LAN specialist. And I don’t think this book is going to collect dust on any network engineer’s desktop anytime soon. And as big and heavy as this book is, I don’t think it will take 4 years to get through it – unless you are a really slow reader.

Probably one of the best ideas that are in this book is the short *Key Concept* paragraphs interspersed liberally throughout the book. These obviously help with reading comprehension and aid in understanding.

And if the pages in the book become obsolete, there is always the TCPIPGuide website posted above to turn to.

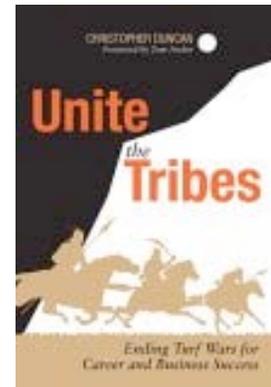
Anybody responsible for network management are going to want to get this book, so they can gain a full understanding of just how far we have come over the last 40 or so years.

And I like the cover; bees going back and forth between interlinked honey hives instead of spiders spinning webs.

If you are into learning TCP/IP, get your knowledge here.

## Unite the Tribes: Ending Turf Wars for Career and Business Success

reviewed by Robert Pritchett



**Author:** Christopher Duncan

<http://www.PracticalStrategyConsulting.com>

Apress

**Booksite:** <http://www.apress.com/book/bookDisplay.html?bID=238>

\$25 USD, \$35 CND, £14 GBP, €17 Euro

**Published:** November, 2003

**Pages:** 344

**ISBN:** 1590592409

**Strengths:** Quickie lists of to-do items that can build both individuals and companies into successful “tribes”.



**Weaknesses:** None found – and is one reason he is now a member of the *macCompanion* staff. Perhaps with his help we can unite the disparate tribes that make up the computer industry.

*Unite the Tribes: Ending Turf Wars for Career and Business Success* by Christopher Duncan is all about learning to work outside the box. The box being the current state of affairs in the corporate dog-eat-dog environment where the 9-to-5ers are disincentivised into being clockwatchers instead of being enabled to “own the business” and have an interest in making the business thrive.

Machiavellian middle ages? Is that your work environment? What can you do about it to help everyone be on the same team and perhaps look at the whole system instead of pursuing his or her hidden agendas? Gee, maybe unite the tribes?

Christopher Duncan had this book published in 2003. Perhaps a lot of what is written is just plain good old horse sense, but it needs to be said, explained – and followed. When businesses thrive, so do the employees. It’s win-win. Maybe you don’t agree with the war-footing approach, but there is nothing like a good war to get the adrenaline flowing and competition speeds up progress and innovation, doesn’t it?

Christopher Duncan pulls it all together in three parts on defining the problem and than providing 10 possible solutions (okay, “pillars” as in Pillars of the Empire) and then making it work in a short Field Manual. (Field Manuals are used in military education processes.)

At the end of each Pillar chapter there is a one-page summary list of the headings listed (10 stones that build each Pillar). This is the kind of thing we used to paste to our bathroom mirrors as to-do items. Maybe the reason I like the book is because I was trained in many leadership courses to do much of what he proposes. Leadership, not Management – there is a difference, you know... And some things bear repeating. Apathy does not breed success. This book is where rubber meets the road and shows that individual goals and “company” goals can coexist – in spite of “Mission Statements”.

Christopher Duncan also has a free audio CD that he distributes from his website that he gives out to folks who hopefully buy his book.

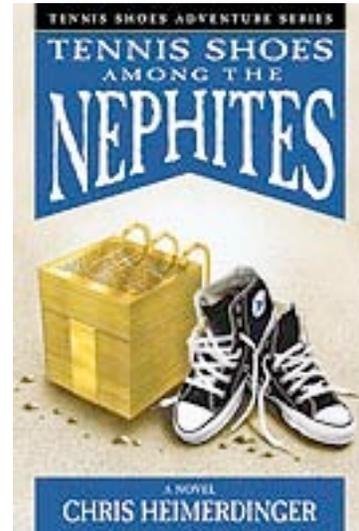
“Unite and be invincible!”

## Tennis Shoes Among the Nephites

reviewed by Robert Pritchett



**Author:** Chris Heimerdinger  
<http://www.cheimerdinger.com>  
[http://deseretmail.com/authors/author-info?author\\_id=8222](http://deseretmail.com/authors/author-info?author_id=8222)  
Covenant Communications, Inc. <http://www.covenant-lds.com>  
Tennis Shoes Adventure Series  
**Booksite:** <http://deseretmail.com/store/product?sku=3828537>  
**Released:** 1989  
**Pages:** 229  
\$12 Book (by Covenant Books), \$22 CD  
Books on CD \$88 USD (ISBN: 159156798X Volumes 1-4).  
Books on CD \$116 USD (ISBN: 1591567998 Volumes 5-9).  
**ISBN:** 1555031315



**Strengths:** Rapid-fire action through and through with a morality tale here and there. And the series should become a movie or two or three...

**Weaknesses:** Plays much better on a Mac with iTunes than on a Windows-based system.



Tennis Shoes Among the Nephites by Chris Heimerdinger is the first of an adventure series that involves time travel back to ancient America and also the ancient Middle East. Think of the series as scriptural Sci-Fi and then sit back and enjoy. I bought the CD sets last year for CHRIST-mas and decided this past month to actually listen to the 9-volume 49 CDs two-box sets as released in 2004. They play out to 60 hours overall.

I dig Sci-Fi. I dig scriptures. When scriptural chocolate gets mixed with the sci-fi peanut butter things can get infinitely interesting quickly and can turn into Reeses Pieces - or they can become an unappetizing messy mix of chocolate and peanut butter or worse. The Tennis Shoes Series is more the former and not the latter. If you've never read either the Bible or the Book of Mormon, than this series may appear to be just another messy mix. For me, the series turned out to be really interesting Reeses Pieces. What a fun listen!

This book apparently was interesting enough that there was a book review done of it by Eloise Bell for FARMS at <http://farms.byu.edu/display.php?table=review&id=33> (a special-study interest group in archeological and scriptural forensics) back in 1990 and by Evelyn C. Leeper (a self-professed middle-age Jewish gal) for a new science fiction outfit at <http://www.nesfa.org/reviews/Leeper/tennissh.html>.

Chris Heimerdinger knows his stuff. Origination site: Cody, Wyoming and a cave that turns out to be a wet time-traveling tunnel. (Remember, this was pre-StarGate SG-1 stuff back in 1989.) This first book drops the kids (Garth Plimpton as a youthful, but nerdy [well-educated] scribe, Jim Hawkins as the youthful 13-year-old, yet always questioning, "main" character, and his younger sister, Jennifer Hawkins as Christianity-professing modern-day Mormons) smack dab into the laps of Meso-American Helaman, Teancum and Captain Moroni times (descendents from 600 BC Jerusalem refugees) and brings realism and life to part of the Book of Mormon that could have been another adventure for Indiana Jones or a "tropical version of Star Wars". If you never ever read [past tense] the Book of Mormon, this is a fun way to look at a small part of it and the way Garth does it, makes it become even truer than it already is.

Yes, Chris Heimdinger stays close and true to scripture, with just the right pinch of poetic license without being offensive. What a balancing act!

One thing he does is convince us that those who go through the time portal obtain a kind of gift of tongues capability so that communicating with a wide diversity of people is a non-issue.

Like Reeses Pieces, there are no mixed nuts, just lots of good taste. And once started, it is hard to not just eat the whole thing in one sitting. And that was just the 5 CDs for this book (we have a hard copy kicking around here somewhere...).

Next - *Gadantons and the Silver Sword*.

## Gadiantons and the Silver Sword

reviewed by Robert Pritchett



**Author:** Chris Heimerdinger

<http://www.cheimerdinger.com>

[http://deseretmail.com/authors/author-info?author\\_id=8222](http://deseretmail.com/authors/author-info?author_id=8222)

Covenant Communications, Inc. <http://www.covenant-lds.com>

Tennis Shoes Adventure Series

**Booksite:** <http://deseretmail.com/store/product?sku=4633863>

**Released:** March 2000

**Pages:** 314

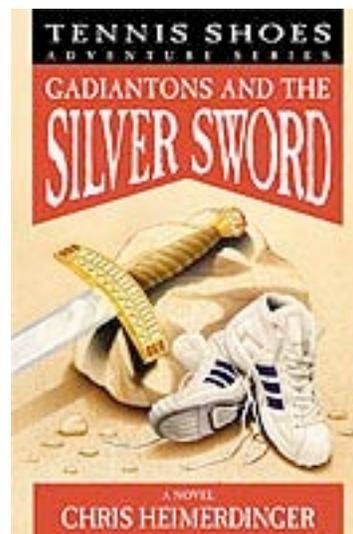
\$14 Book (by Covenant Books), \$20 cassette, \$22 CD by Books on CD \$88 USD (ISBN: 159156798X Volumes 1-4).

Books on CD \$116 USD (ISBN: 1591567998 Volumes 5-9).

**ISBN:** 1577346122

**Strengths:** Rapid-fire action through and through with a morality tale here and there. And the series should become a movie or two or three...

**Weaknesses:** Plays much better on a Mac with iTunes than on a Windows-based system.



Gadiantons and the Silver Sword by Chris Heimerdinger is the 2<sup>nd</sup> book of the Tennis Shoes Series. This time Jim Hawkins is a BYU student who doesn't remember the past, until almost too late, a love interest, Renee Fenimore, his sister Jennifer and his old friend Garth Plimpton end up being chased and nearly killed a few times as they attempt to take the evil sword of Gadianton back to a hill in southern Mexico to be destroyed in a box built by a Book of Mormon Jaredite prophet named Ether. The bad guys are the Gadianton Band (not a musical group) hell-bent for leather – and an ex-cop (Todd Finley- and he pops up in later books - so watch this guy like a hawk!) who also can't live without the sword, to get it at all costs, so they can build their secret combination and bend the world (pre, modern and post) to their wishes.

And we meet someone (a close family friend named Muleki) from the Book of Mormon past, who also comes into the future to warn the good guys and gals about the bad guys, be their body guard and nearly gets killed in the process. It is a lot of fun watching him get acclimatized to the present.

The baddies come in from the past by way of - you guessed it - the time tunnel near Cody Wyoming. The young-adult team work their way down through the southwestern US and into Mexico to try and finish what they start. Along the way Jim's love interest becomes a real help because of her command of the Spanish language and her time spent as a sister missionary there.

The moral tale is about not falling for belief systems that purport to speak truth with just a twist of the absurd (the episodes on the off-world scam – also by Todd Finley - he's a real bad egg).

The real battle begins on the Hill Rama (last battleground of the Jaredites), as the sword sought by the Gadiantons takes on a life of its own.

You are going to sooo like the ending!

## The Feathered Serpent, Part 1

reviewed by Robert Pritchett



**Author:** Chris Heimerdinger

<http://www.cheimerdinger.com>

[http://deseretmail.com/authors/author-info?author\\_id=8222](http://deseretmail.com/authors/author-info?author_id=8222)

Covenant Communications, Inc. <http://www.covenant-lds.com>

Tennis Shoes Adventure Series

**Booksite:** <http://deseretmail.com/store/product?sku=4086079>

**Released:** March 1995 Book; August 2003 CD

\$12 Book (by Covenant Books), \$20 cassette, \$22 CD

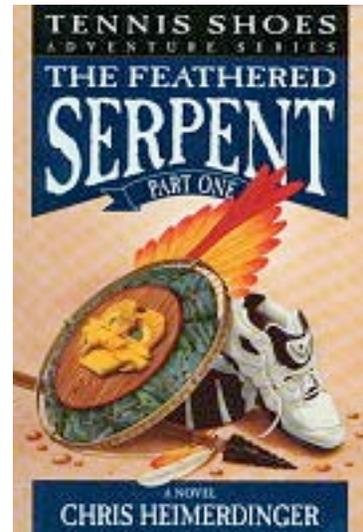
Books on CD \$88 USD (ISBN: 159156798X Volumes 1-4).

Books on CD \$116 USD (ISBN: 1591567998 Volumes 5-9).

ISBN: 1555038050

**Strengths:** Rapid-fire action through and through with a morality tale here and there. And the series should become a movie or two or three...

**Weaknesses:** Plays much better on a Mac with iTunes than on a Windows-based system. Parts One and Two should be combined.



*The Feathered Serpent, Part 1* by Chris Heimerdinger takes broken-hearted Jim Hawkins as widowed father of two teenage daughters (Melody, 16 and Stephanie), a son (Harry) who is ten on a quest to find his sister Jennifer and his old friend Garth Plimpton through the time-tunnel vortex in Frost Cave and the Rainbow room back to Meso-America prior to the appearance of the Savior to the Americas. They head back as Jim is framed for murder by the bad guys, in Salt Lake City - both present and from the Meso-American past.

Meet the city of Zarahemla in all its glory – and the wickedness of its people who are decimating the refugeeed Christians as fast as they can. Watch the Hawkins family meet Lamanite prophets – and another person who plays important roles in later books – Marcos. And some long-distance slave-traders who also get in the way along the way who “sell” them to the Prophet Nephi in Zarahemla.

Learn the political mob situation prior to the escape of the Christians from Zarahemla including a rising of one disciple from the dead shortly after he is stoned by a mob by Nephi. Also learn how they listen to the spirit to protect their families.

Next: *The Feathered Serpent Part 2*.

## The Feathered Serpent, Part 2

reviewed by Robert Pritchett



**Author:** Chris Heimerdinger

<http://www.cheimerdinger.com>

[http://deseretmail.com/authors/author-info?author\\_id=8222](http://deseretmail.com/authors/author-info?author_id=8222)

Covenant Communications, Inc. <http://www.covenant-lds.com>

Tennis Shoes Adventure Series

**Booksite:** <http://deseretmail.com/store/product?sku=4086079>

**Released:** October 1999 Book; August 2003 CD

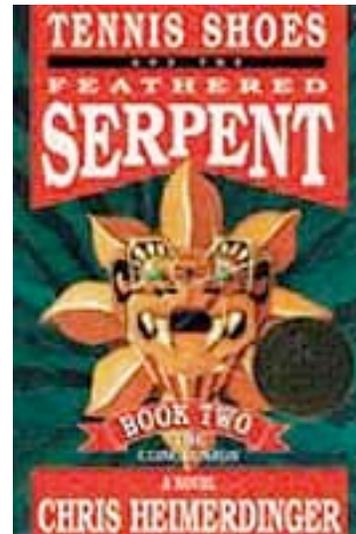
**Pages:** 330

\$14 Book (by Covenant Books), \$20 cassette, \$22 CD

Books on CD \$88 USD (ISBN: 159156798X Volumes 1-4).

Books on CD \$116 USD (ISBN: 1591567998 Volumes 5-9).

**ISBN:** 1577344898



**Strengths:** Rapid-fire action through and through with a morality tale here and there. And the series should become a movie or two or three...

**Weaknesses:** Plays much better on a Mac with iTunes than on a Windows-based system. Parts One and Two should be one book.



The Feathered Serpent, Part 2 by Chris Heimerdinger, master storyteller, obviously continues where Part 1 leaves off.

The Hawkins continue their quest to find Garth Plimpton and company. They end up following a path to the wickedest city Jacobugath, and worst vile King Jacob, on earth. They team up with a few interesting companions along the way including Mammoths. Heart-rending. Something even more vivid than *Lord of the Rings*.

Take an up-front seat as they watch the hand of God destroy the wicked in the Americas during the crucifixion of the Messiah in Jerusalem and His eventual visit to the Americas in the Land of Bountiful, where the remaining few Saints gather at the Temple. Heart-warming, as we see and feel him heal the sick and fix the crushed, broken legs of Jim's son before they return to face prison in the present for a murder he didn't commit.

Should I reveal the ending? No, that would spoil this touching story.

## The Sacred Quest

reviewed by Robert Pritchett



**Author:** Chris Heimerdinger

<http://www.cheimerdinger.com>

[http://deseretmail.com/authors/author-info?author\\_id=8222](http://deseretmail.com/authors/author-info?author_id=8222)

Covenant Communications, Inc. <http://www.covenant-lds.com>

Tennis Shoes Adventure Series

**Booksite:** <http://deseretmail.com/store/product?sku=4296093>

**Released:** June 2001, Book; October 2003 CD

**Pages:** 329

\$14 Book (by Covenant Books), \$20 cassette, \$22 CD

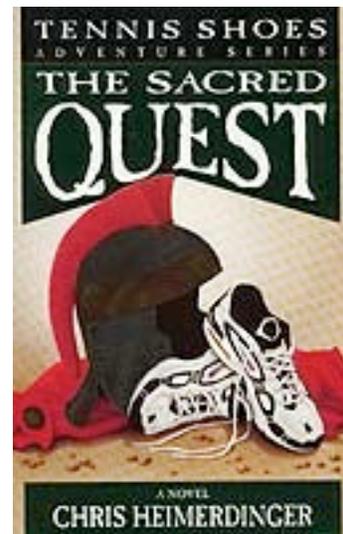
Books on CD \$88 USD (ISBN: 159156798X Volumes 1-4).

Books on CD \$116 USD (ISBN: 1591567998 Volumes 5-9).

**ISBN:** 157734491X

**Strengths:** Rapid-fire action through and through with a morality tale here and there. And the series should become a movie or two or three...

**Weaknesses:** Plays much better on a Mac with iTunes than on a Windows-based system.



Renamed from *Tennis Shoes and the Seven Churches*



*The Sacred Quest* by Chris Heimerdinger takes the 15-year old Harry Hawkins (son of Jim Hawkins) on a quest to find his dying sister's love, only to end up going through the time-tunnel in Frost Cave and ending in First Century A.D., Masada, and ravenous wolves among the fledgling flock of the Risen Messiah. Oh, and he brings along a future stepsister, Meagan Sorenson.

Meanwhile, back home, Melody suffers from the same cancer that took her mother and Harry's quest is to go get Marcos from the past before she goes the way of all the earth.

Harry and Meagan end up with some sacred scrolls (including the triple-sealed Scroll of Knowledge that had only read by the Apostles) and try to keep them out of the hands of certain Zealots – rather unsuccessfully as others destroy some of what they saved, because the writings had been re-written and twisted and the original text had to be destroyed. Sad, very sad. But wait! Sleight of hand saves the sacred text.

They end up facing an anti-Christ named Simon Magus (a very, very bad man), who says he is a resurrected being and yet they go on to try and get the sacred scrolls to Apostle John in Asia Minor. Simon Magus kidnaps Meagan and another person, Jesse and Harry has 10 days to get the scrolls to Simon at Mt. Garazim or they will be put to death.

Jerusalem 70 A.D. is being destroyed by the Romans.

Marcos shows up and ends up in the gladiator pit. So does Gidgidonnihah, the warrior Nephite. Yep, a Nephite in Ancient Israel. Marcos gets back to the present while Harry and Gidgidonnihah go on to *The Lost Scrolls*.

## The Lost Scrolls

reviewed by Robert Pritchett



**Author:** Chris Heimerdinger

<http://www.cheimerdinger.com>

[http://deseretmail.com/authors/author-info?author\\_id=8222](http://deseretmail.com/authors/author-info?author_id=8222)

Covenant Communications, Inc. <http://www.covenant-lds.com>

Tennis Shoes Adventure Series

**Booksite:** <http://deseretmail.com/store/product?sku=3773402>

**Released:** November 1999, Book; October 2003 CD

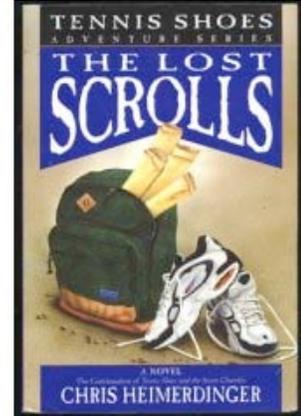
**Pages:** 279

\$15 Book (by Covenant Books), \$20 cassette, \$22 CD

Books on CD \$88 USD (ISBN: 159156798X Volumes 1-4).

Books on CD \$116 USD (ISBN: 1591567998 Volumes 5-9).

**ISBN:** 1577344189



**Strengths:** Rapid-fire action through and through with a morality tale here and there. And the series should become a movie or two or three...



**Weaknesses:** Plays much better on a Mac with iTunes than on a Windows-based system.

*The Lost Scrolls* by Chris Heimerdinger throws Harry Hawkins and Gidgidonihah the warrior Nephite into the besieged Jerusalem of 70 A.D. that is being attacked by the Romans as they attempt to rescue the sacred scrolls from a hiding place that Harry envisioned. Meanwhile Simon Magus keeps tabs on Meagan Sorenson, Harry's future step-sister and an orphaned Jewish child named Jesse, who helps her escape the cancerous clutches of the so-called resurrected being known as Simon Magus.

They watch the temple walls of Jerusalem fall into flames.

Apollus Brutus Severilus the Centurion joins the adventure and learns about the Messiah and Christianity. Mary also joins the team and Garth comes to the rescue and saves the Scrolls of Knowledge – which contain the temple ordinance prayers known by those who have been endowed with sacred covenants between earth and heaven.

And we move on to the next adventure with *The Golden Crown*.

## The Golden Crown

reviewed by Robert Pritchett



**Author:** Chris Heimerdinger

<http://www.cheimerdinger.com>

[http://deseretmail.com/authors/author-info?author\\_id=8222](http://deseretmail.com/authors/author-info?author_id=8222)

Covenant Communications, Inc. <http://www.covenant-lds.com>

Tennis Shoes Adventure Series

**Booksite:** <http://deseretmail.com/store/product?sku=3907882>

**Released:** October 1999, Book; October 2003 CD

**Pages:** 338

\$15 Book (by Covenant Books), \$20 cassette, \$22 CD

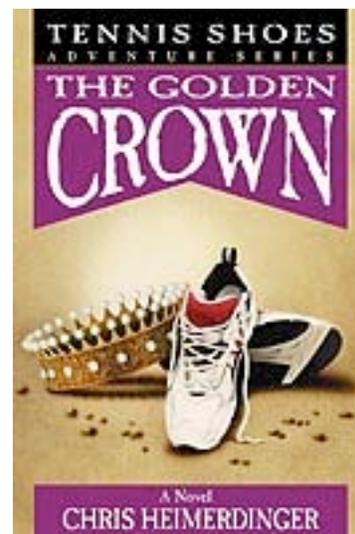
Books on CD \$88 USD (ISBN: 159156798X Volumes 1-4).

Books on CD \$116 USD (ISBN: 1591567998 Volumes 5-9).

**ISBN:** 157734987

**Strengths:** Rapid-fire action through and through with a morality tale here and there. And the series should become a movie or two or three...

**Weaknesses:** Plays much better on a Mac with iTunes than on a Windows-based system.



*The Golden Crown* by Chris Heimerdinger still has us in the Middle East, circa 70 A.D. Harry Hawkins ends up on a ship, listens to more weird religious zealotry and not only befriends one, but after saving the rowers on board, helps them survive on a desolate island for three years and teaches them the gospel before they are taken to another island of Christian refugees and eventually to see that the scrolls did indeed get to their destination with one of the last living apostles of the First Century – Luke.

Harry's father had his future stepmother also join in the search for him. Apollus and others get involved with once again, trying to save the sacred scrolls from fiery destruction in Athens and loses 4 Nephite warriors (yep, they came to the rescue too) but also lost a few scrolls in the process.

Ephesus and Saints of the 7 churches are brought to our attention and the Apostle John's life is also discussed and leaves a blessing upon the adventurers in time. Once back home in our century, a double wedding occurs. And Apollus gets acclimatized to our time as the Meridian of Times adventures come to a close – at least for now.

## Warriors of Cumorah

reviewed by Robert Pritchett



**Author:** Chris Heimerdinger

<http://www.cheimerdinger.com>

[http://deseretmail.com/authors/author-info?author\\_id=8222](http://deseretmail.com/authors/author-info?author_id=8222)

Covenant Communications, Inc. <http://www.covenant-lds.com>

Tennis Shoes Adventure Series

**Booksite:** <http://deseretmail.com/store/product?sku=4293154>

**Released:** December 2001, Book; October 2003 CD

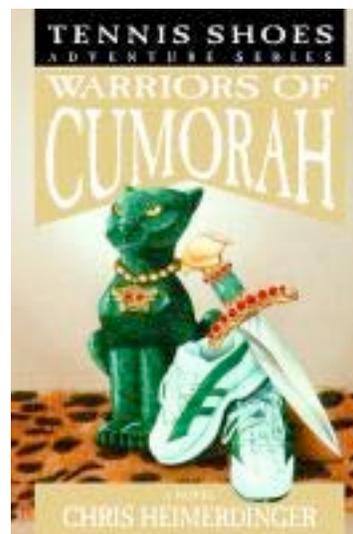
**Pages:** 394

\$15 Book (by Covenant Books), \$20 cassette, \$22 CD

Books on CD \$88 USD (ISBN: 159156798X Volumes 1-4).

Books on CD \$116 USD (ISBN: 1591567998 Volumes 5-9).

**ISBN:** 1577349229



**Strengths:** Rapid-fire action through and through with a morality tale here and there. And the series should become a movie or two or three...

**Weaknesses:** Plays much better on a Mac with iTunes than on a Windows-based system.



Warriors of Cumorah by Chris Heimerdinger reintroduces us to Todd Finley (very bad ex-cop who wants to go back in time and resurrect the destroyed evil Jaredite sword) who steals Becky and Josh Plimpton (Garth's kids) from young Mary (remember her from the First Century A.D.?) in Salt Lake. A chase ensues back to Cody, Wyoming with Megan, unbelieving and incredulous Ryan and Apollus (the Roman Centurion) who are love interests of Megan and the Rainbow Room in that good 'ole Time Tunnel. However, this time things happen to split folks up into 19<sup>th</sup> Century Jerusalem and a few hundred years after the Messiah visits the Americas.

Boy, do things get interesting in a hurry! Ryan and Apollus both learn to use priesthood powers to heal sick Lamanites (with coaching from Megan) as Ryan is mistaken for Kukulcan and they manage to get Nephites and Lamanites working in harmony again for a little time around Tikal and save Moroni. Yep, a Roman in Meso-America. And a look at Cumorah.

We also are introduced to seer stones and how they are used and watch as Orson Hyde leaves a blessing on the land of Jerusalem. And we see the city of Petra as children try to get back to their own time through the time tunnel located in the tombs of Petra. And there is this dude Shika...er Akish the Jaredite, who created the sword – waiting to be completed by being baptized in the blood of an innocent - Becky. We learn that the source of evil's strength is fear. And fear is overcome with the knowledge that we are children of God.

The time tunnel also changes into a pillar pulsar that requires timing into the river of time and we learn about leaps of faith.

And the next adventure moves us on to the *Tower of Thunder*.

## Tower of Thunder

reviewed by Robert Pritchett



**Author:** Chris Heimerdinger

<http://www.cheimerdinger.com>

[http://deseretmail.com/authors/author-info?author\\_id=8222](http://deseretmail.com/authors/author-info?author_id=8222)

Covenant Communications, Inc. <http://www.covenant-lds.com>

Tennis Shoes Adventure Series

**Booksite:** <http://deseretmail.com/store/product?sku=4584561>

**Released:** April 2003, Book; October 2003 CD

**Pages:** 406

\$15 Book (by Covenant Books), \$25 cassette, \$25 CD

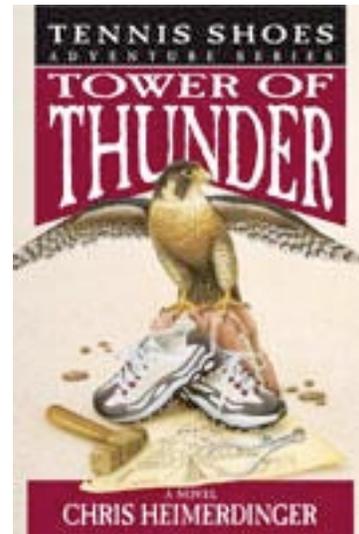
Books on CD \$88 USD (ISBN: 159156798X Volumes 1-4).

Books on CD \$116 USD (ISBN: 1591567998 Volumes 5-9).

**ISBN:** 1591561779

**Strengths:** Rapid-fire action through and through with a morality tale here and there. And the series should become a movie or two or three...

**Weaknesses:** Plays much better on a Mac with iTunes than on a Windows-based system.



Tower of Thunder by Chris Heimerdinger takes us back to the time of the Tower of Babel with Mary, Joshua and Becky Plimpton who happen upon a dying woman who hands them a baby with the admonition to take him to Shem.

Akish shows up trying to get his evil sword back, that happens to be in Mary's care now.

Harry and Meagan show up and get captured and are accused of being angels sent from the floating city of God (Enoch) that King Nimrod has spent hundreds of years building to reach with his tower. We also meet Noah, Melchizedek, as Harry and Stephanie Hawkins square off against the warriors of Shinar.

There is non-stop excitement as we look at multi-generation family reunions, attacks of earth against heaven and a battle royale that is truly out-of-this world. Oh, and that blasted evil sword of Akish sneaks off to begin another adventure with one of the children who asked at the beginning if historical events at Cumorah could be changed.

## Hardware

### IoGear FireWire MiniHub GFH610

reviewed by Robert Pritchett



23 Hubble Drive  
Irvine, CA 92618  
1- 866-9-IOGEAR (866-946-4327)  
949-453-8782  
FAX: 949-453-8785  
<http://www.iogear.com>

#### Product Page:

<http://www.iogear.com/main.php?loc=product&Item=GFH610>

\$50 USD.

**Requirements:** FireWire port, Mac or Windows PC.

**Contains:** FireWire Hub, 6-pin to 6-pin FireWire cable, Power Adapter, 3-year warranty card, User's Guide.

**Size:** Approximately 3"x3"x1".

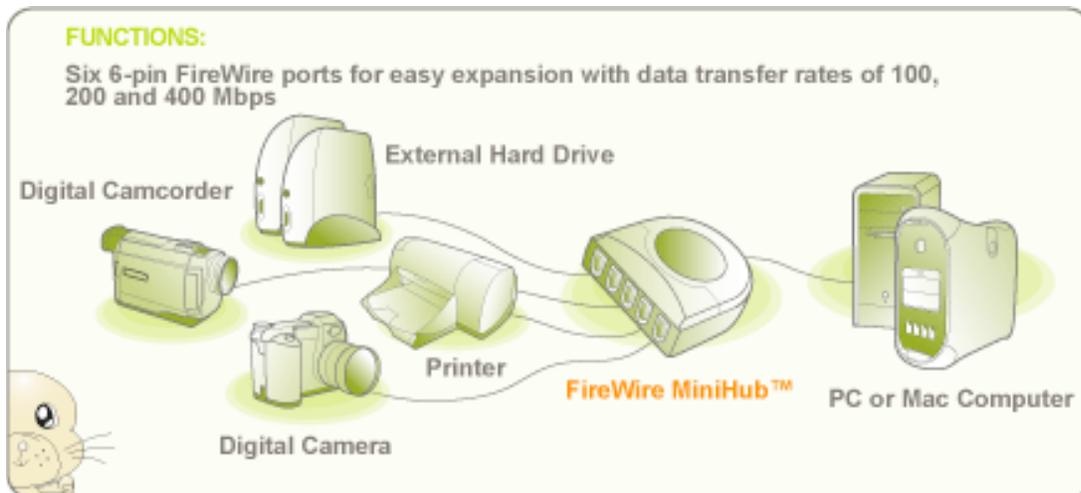
**Strengths:** 5 ports in, one out. 100, 200 and 400 Mbps transfer rates. Bus or self-powered.

**Weaknesses:** No way to anchor it down after cables are attached.

IoGear's 6-port FireWire MiniHub GFH610 is a petite little device that can easily fall behind a desk and be forgotten once cables are installed. There is one port out the back next to the power port with five ports out the front.

There isn't much weight to this 6-port FireWire MiniHub, with the emphasis on "Mini". It fits in the palm. There are no mounting pieces. When cables are installed, there isn't anything to keep the cables from pulling the unit off the table.

Apparently IoGear doesn't expect this device to give much trouble and have provided a 3-year warranty for it.



If you want a small out-of-the-way no-problem device for expanding your FireWire capabilities, check this one out.

## iMac G5 (20") – First Impressions

reviewed by Robert Pritchett



Apple

### Product Site:

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

**QuickTime VR:** <http://www.apple.com/hardware/gallery/imac/>

**Released:** October 2005

<http://www.apple.com/pr/library/2005/oct/12imac.html>

\$1,700 USD (and options add up).

### Tech Specs:

<http://www.apple.com/imac/specs.html>

**Hardware:** 2.1 GHz PowerPC G5 processor; 512 MB 533 MHz SRAM (upgraded to 1 GB in our configuration); 250 GB Serial ATA hard drive (7200 rpm); Built-in iSight camera; 20" screen; Photo Booth; 8X SuperDrive (DVD+R, DVD±RW/CD-RW); ATI Radeon X600 XT PCI Express graphics card with 128MB video RAM; AirPort Extreme (54 Mbps); Mighty Mouse (not in our configuration); three USB 2.0 ports; two FireWire 400 ports; VGA video output; audio for headphone; optical audio out ports; stereo speakers; 10/100/1000 Gigabit Ethernet.

**Weight:** 22 pounds or 10 kilograms.

**Software:** Mac OS X 10.4.x Tiger; Bluetooth 2.0 + Enhanced Data Rate; Address Book; Apple Hardware Test, AppleWorks; Classic Mac OS 9 environment; Dashboard; DVD Player; Front Row (with infrared Apple Remote device); iCal; iChat; iLife '05 (includes GarageBand, iDVD, iMovie HD, iPhoto, iTunes); iSync; iWork (30-day trial); Mail; Marble Blast Gold; Microsoft Office 2004 for Mac Test Drive; Nanosaur 2; Photo Booth; QuickTime; Quicken 2006 for Mac; Safari; Sherlock; Spotlight; 2006 World Book; XCode Developer Tools and Zinio Reader.

**Strengths:** Highest-end iMac currently available.

**Weaknesses:** None found. (Well okay, I haven't been able to get the internal iSight camera to read barcodes with *Delicious Library* yet.)

**Video Podcast:** TUAW November 9, 2005; <http://www.tuaw.com/>

So what is really different between this iMac G5 and "last year's model"? Plenty.

The new G5 has the on/off switch back behind the left side instead of back behind the right. The five communication ports (three USB 2.0 and two FireWire 400) are lined up horizontally instead of vertically. The bezel is about ½" narrower around the edge than the earlier iMac G5, but flairs out in the middle in the back to give it the concave look.



**Note:** This configuration (M8851LL/A) uses a Bluetooth mouse (instead of the Mighty Mouse), Bluetooth Western Spanish extended keyboard, 1 GB RAM and the AppleCare package, Airport Express Base Station (M9470LL/A) and state tax, costing us around \$2,300 USD.

More breakthroughs per square inch.



On the front side above the 20" screen, there is a pinhole mic just to the left of the mini chicklets-sized imbedded iSight camera and a small green indicator light to the right that turns on when using the video portion of iChat. See <http://www.apple.com/imac/isight.html> and <http://www.apple.com/macosx/features/ichat/>.

The unit comes with Airport built-in and since we purchased the extended Western Spanish keyboard and mouse option Bluetooth is also enabled. Because we opted for that configuration we did not get the Mighty Mouse and US extended USB keyboard. The Bluetooth keyboard does not have USB ports.



And the SuperDrive slot is located further down on the right side than on the "older" iMac G5, which is nearer the top. It also doesn't shoot the CDs or DVDs flying out the slot like they did with the older iMac G5. This one is gentler and kinder.

### Shipping Observations

It was fun watching this ship FEDEX from Shanghai, China to Anchorage, Alaska, to Indianapolis, Indiana to Spokane, Washington to here in less than a week from time of shipping notification. The world is much smaller than it used to be. The shipping box for the new iMac G5 is beautiful and the 3 blocks of Styrofoam hold it perfectly with the keyboard, power cord and remote and mouse nestled in the top block. While the older unit came with a USB keyboard and mouse with an extension USB cable, Ethernet cable and telephone cable for the internal modem, this one did not. Modems are indeed an extra external unit now and maybe that is why the new system weighs less than the older one by about 3 pounds.

### Applications Transferal

Transfers of applications, etc. from the older iMac G5 unit to the new one was done via FireWire in a 4-step process that made the older iMac G5's fan go into hyperdrive the whole time it was under the FireWire transfer mode (accomplished by holding the T key down when turning on the machine). Everything transferred and for the most part stayed operational. (I had to reinstall a few apps registrations because they noticed they had moved from their original location.)

### Western Spanish Keyboard vocabulary

The Western Spanish Bluetooth keyboard is going to take a little while getting used to. It requires the Spanish ISO option turned on in the *International Preferences* for the extended keyboard keys to work. The Left shift key is smaller than the shift lock key and has a new key to the right of it that does > and <. The E key also has the € (Euro) sign on it and there is an Ñ key (N with a Tilde or swung dash) <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tilde> and Ç or C with a dangling cedilla key <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cedilla>. The upside down or inverted exclamation point ¡ and inverted ¿ have their own key too and there is a special ordinal indicator superscripts, underscore ª (Feminine Ordinal Number) and underscore º key (Masculine Ordinal Number) [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Feminine\\_ordinal](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Feminine_ordinal) up in the left hand corner.

Next to the 6 is a mathematical *Not* sign ¬ (Negation) <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/¬> and there is a diacritic mark ¨ called a dieresis (two small superscript dots) <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diaeresis> and accent mark key to the right of the Ñ key.

And of course, the *help* key is renamed as *ayuda*. For more information from Eric Rasmussen on International Keyboards, look here; <http://homepage.mac.com/chinesemac/LatinExtended/>.

### Bluetooth Keyboard and Mouse

The 2 AA-battery Bluetooth mouse that came with the Western Spanish keyboard is of the single-button variety. Both the keyboard and mouse have slide switches underneath to turn them off when not in use. Battery levels can be checked in *Keyboard and Mouse* preferences for Bluetooth devices. So maybe I should have gone ahead and got the extended keyboard so we could have the Mighty Mouse with the keyboard. After turning on the computer, it searches for the keyboard until it finds it before the unit can be used. The Bluetooth keyboard takes 4 AA batteries.

I've since turned off the Wireless Mouse and gone back to the unit that comes with the Wacom Intuos 3 Graphics Tablet. I need the extra buttons and scroll wheel.

### Apple Remote

This unit too takes a little getting used to. There is a *MENU* button to bring in or move out of the circle of options. At this time there are four; DVD, Music, Photos or Videos. Above it is a control wheel with +, - forward and backward options and a select button in the middle. To get to options I had to bounce back and forth between the *MENU* button and the select button.

The remote device really does look like 2 sticks of gum in size and it apparently does have a battery in it, just not user-accessible. It is used to operate Front Row. And now I know what is hanging on the right side of the iMac G5 in the picture up above.



Apparently there is a magnet inside the screen case that holds the Apple Remote device so it doesn't get lost. (Just one on the right side of the screen and not the left.) Don't put any floppy discs over there! (Some of us still use those with an external USB floppy drive for genealogy purposes. At least until we get everyone migrated to "Thumb drives".) See <http://www.apple.com/imac/frontrow.html> for more. And the TUAW video podcast from November 9, 2005 listed above, shows how to change the battery.

### **Software Included**

Mac OS X Tiger comes preinstalled. There are two DVDs that come with the machine. The 2<sup>nd</sup> one has Classic Mac OS 9 on it. *Xcode Tools* has to be installed off the first DVD since it does not come preinstalled. And *WebObjects* has to be installed by going to the *Custom Installs* option when installing *Xcode Tools* or loading it manually. *X11* also is an option on the first DVD. All language translations and printer drivers are already installed.

*Front Row* and *Photo Booth* are the new software gee-whiz toys with this release and we may talk more about them later. *AppleWorks*, *iLife '05* also came with the computer as well as the *2006 World Book Encyclopedia*, *Quicken 2006* and two games, *Nanosaur 2* and *Marble Blast Gold*, (added primarily to show off the graphics capability of the machine). *iWork* and *Microsoft Office 2004 Test Drive* are also included as try-before-you-buy apps. See <http://www.apple.com/imac/software.html> for more.

There will always be better systems later. That is the marvelous thing about technology. But why wait 6 months to a year for “the next best thing”, especially when you can get it now? I may eat my words after the MacWorld Expo in January, but I see WinTel chips starting in the portables, the mac Minis, and maybe an eMac equivalent for school district consumption. I “predict” that the high end will be a while before the G5s are replaced with Intel chips. The G5s are going to “linger longer”. Now we need to scrape up enough money to get another one. How about you?

## Speck Toughskin for iPod Video

reviewed by Dustin D'Andrea



Speck Products  
227 Forest Ave.  
Palo Alto, CA 94301  
650-463-8914

[info@speckproducts.com](mailto:info@speckproducts.com)

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

**Product site:** <http://www.speckproducts.com/vid-toughskin.html>

**Released:** November 2005

\$35 USD for either size.

**Requirements:** iPod with video.

**Strengths:** One-size-fits-all, includes belt clip and screen protector.

**Weaknesses:** One-size-fits-all, no protection for dock connector.



Like many people, the second I heard about the iPod video, I had to go out and try one. Which for me meant buying one. However, having owned an iPod nano, and scratched it to the point of returning it, I was a bit skeptical. I worried that the iPod video would have the same problem. Thankfully Apple included a case with the unit. Unfortunately, that case didn't last so long under heavy use. Speck was the first company to step in and get an iPod video case out the door.



The Speck Toughskin looks like many other iPod cases, with the exception of its unique outside treads. These help quite a bit with grip, as well as the rubbery material the case is made of. The case has openings for the screen, click wheel, hold button, dock connector, and headphone jack, as well as a clip attachment on the back of the case. The only one of these openings that gets protection is, of course, the screen. Speck includes a durable screen protector with rubberized sides that don't scratch the iPod.

The clip is the other useful inclusion, which I found to be more than adequate and durable in everyday use. This coming from someone who frequently doesn't use the included clips with most cases because he's too afraid they'll break. Speaking of breakage, I have, fortunately for me, yet to drop the iPod. Given the thickness of the material, and the amount of the iPod that is covered, I doubt a drop would do much damage inside this case.

The only two downsides I have yet to find in the case is part of its design – the first being that it fits both 30 and 60 GB iPods. This means that even if you have a 30 GB iPod in the case, it's still as thick as if you had a 60 GB iPod in it. Speck includes a rubber spacer with the case to make this possible. It's not a huge difference I'm sure, but still somewhat bothersome. The other quirk is that the dock connector has no cover or flap. This makes accessing the dock connector easier, but I worry about crumbs and other objects damaging the port.

If you use your iPod a lot, and you're one to beat it up and knock it around, the Speck Toughskin is a great choice. With its durable screen protector and thick, treaded exterior, I wouldn't worry about my iPod so much with it in this case.

## Speck Products' Grip•Skins for iPod and iPod Mini: Legendary Protection, Style & Comfort

reviewed by Mike Swope



Speck Products  
227 Forest Ave.  
Palo Alto, CA 94301  
1-650-463-8914

[info@speckproducts.com](mailto:info@speckproducts.com)

<http://www.speckproducts.com>

**Product Site:** <http://www.speckproducts.com/mini-grip.htm>

**Released:** October 2005

\$20 USD

**Target Audience:** iPod owners who wish to reasonably protect their iPod and prefer a belt clip (typically men)

**Strengths:** Superb quality, screen protection, convenient access to ports and scroll wheel, durable Kraton polymer construction, available in black and clear, removable swivel belt clip (like some cell phones), available for 20-60 GB iPods and all iPod Minis.

**Weaknesses:** Accessories that mate to the iPod surface, such as the iTrip FM Transmitter, cannot be attached while the Grip•Skin is in use. Grip•Skin must be removed or physically altered (cut) to allow for the connection. Belt clip is plastic, like standard cell phone belt clips.

### Get a Grip On Your Beautiful iPod

No one wants to drop his or her beautiful iPod or iPod Mini, or even scratch it. iPods are expensive, in any flavor, and their finish is easily scarred. Out of the box, no iPod is protected against even minor scratches or abrasions due to normal use. Enter a plethora of iPod accessories to protect your iPod, including Speck Products' near-perfect iPod Grip•Skin, in black or now clear Kraton. Speck Products has long set the standard for quality iPod accessories, and the Grip•Skin is no exception.

### Good Reason to Choose A Grip•Skin

With the arrival of the Grip•Skin, I was finally able to confiscate back my iPod Mini that my wife had been using at work with Speck Products' Portfolio Skin (LINK TO PREVIOUS REVIEW). (Of course, I had to replace it with an iPod Nano for her, but that's another story!) The Grip•Skin is made with users like me in mind: I wear a belt most of the time and prefer to wear my iPod next to my cell phone, for convenience. Before purchasing the Grip•Skin, I feared that my iPod Mini (which comes with a belt clip) would be inadvertently damaged during simple, every day use. Now, with the Grip•Skin, I can take it with me as I have always wanted, nearly worry-free.

Speck Products' Grip•Skin is of the highest quality, like all Speck's products. Made of Kraton, a super-tough, strong, stretchy and rubbery polymer, the Grip•Skin fits all 20 to 60 GB iPods and all iPod Minis like a second skin. The Grip•Skin must be stretched and pulled and coaxed onto the iPod, but once it is on, it looks as though it was part of the original product. All ports are exposed for standard connections, the screen is protected by a removable clear window, and the scroll wheel is recessed the depth of the skin (about 1/8") but still very much accessible. The soft ribbed sides also help the user grip their iPod by virtue of being ribbed and by changing the iPod's shape into a



contoured shape that's easier to hold onto. And more comfortable. Very nice!

The Grip•Skin also comes with a removable belt clip, but users aren't required to use it. This belt clip works like most cell phone belt clips – just press on the top of the belt clip to lift the iPod out of the clip. But with some work, the tab in the Grip•Skin that clips into the belt clip can also be removed, making the Grip•Skin 100% clip-free, and easier to tote along in purses, backpacks, and briefcases (like the Portfolio Skin).

#### **As Close to Perfect as You'll Find**

The Grip•Skin is as close to a perfect skin as one is likely to find. But it has two annoyances. Its belt clip is mostly plastic, the same stuff as most cell phone clips, and we all know these can be broken with some pressure. In fact, it almost feels out of place with the high quality Grip•Skin. The Grip•Skin is also plagued by the same problem that plagues the entire iPod skin industry. Users with add-ons that mount flush to the iPod -- such as the Griffin Technology iTrip FM Transmitter -- won't be able to use those add-ons with the Grip•Skin without removing the skin or modifying it to allow mounting. Though neither is a deal breaker, the latter is particularly disappointing. I have enjoyed the one-piece convenience of the iTrip while traveling.

#### **Get A Grip•Skin On Your iPod Today!**

When I reviewed Speck Products' Portfolio Skin, I said that I couldn't ask for anything more...except a belt clip. With Speck Products' Grip•Skin, I get the legendary protection of their Skins, and a belt clip, too! Though the belt clip could use some improvement, and there isn't any convenient way to connect my iTrip to my Grip•Skinned iPod, the Grip•Skin is still a smart purchase for any iPod owner. The style, quality and protection are perfect for Apple's groundbreaking iPods. Grip•Skins are available for all 20 to 60 GB iPods and all iPod Minis. (Even if you don't like the Grip•Skin, there just isn't any better iPod skin than a Speck Products' iPod skin!)

<http://www.swopedesign.com>

## Linksys EtherFastCable Modem BEFCMU10 version 3

reviewed by Robert Pritchett



Linksys, A Division of Cisco Systems, Inc.

18582 Teller Avenue

Irvine, CA 92612

1-800-546-7597 or 949-261-8868

[sales@linksys.com](mailto:sales@linksys.com)

<http://www.linksys.com>

**Product link:** <http://www.linksys.com/BEFCMU10>

\$100 USD

**Requirements:** Cable connection with DOCSIS 1.0, 1.1 or 2.0 cable service.

Comes with: Cable Modem, Power adapter, USB cable, and Ethernet cable.

Driver CD for Windows computers.

**Strengths:** Cisco Systems Cable Modem. 3-year warranty. Plug&Play for the Mac.

**Weaknesses:** None found.

I'm connected to Charter.net to the Internet. I have a Vonage unit that wouldn't stay "up" with the Motorola unit I had since August 2001 and so Charter Cable came by and replaced it with a unit from China that has no name. I bought the higher speed for throughput figuring that would help the Vonage unit to work better. It didn't.

The Charter tech that came by tested the line and it was "marginal". But working. He said the Vonage unit was the culprit and a few others in the neighborhood who had the same unit had the same problem. (Note that clue, won't you?)

So what I did was work with the Vonage techs and reduced the sampling rate so I could understand the folks who called me, because normally, when they called from either Europe or the African continents, the challenge was much more than just accents trying to understand them. By reducing the sampling rate, I could hear just fine. However, when I spoke more than 10 minutes, the VoIP link would flake and the green LED would be blinking as I continued to hear them but they could not hear me. Sometimes while working the Mac and my daughters working the other one, the line would go down. I would have to cycle off the Cable modem made in China and things would return to normal for a while. I could tell when the link was broken because the Vonage unit LED would start blinking. Thus my quest for a DOCSIS 2.0 (Data Over Cable Service Interface Specification) compliant Cable Modem that "just worked".

I scoured the Internet, googled the globe and landed on the LinkSys BEFCMU10 as the most likely candidate that I could experiment with to test the lines and possibly prove to Charter that once again, it isn't the computer or the equipment on this end of the cable, but their infrastructure that is iffy. If only I had fiber-to-the-home!

Anyhow, by buying the BEFCMU10, I will have zero-summed the cable company cable modem rental in about 14 months or so. Here are the front and back pictures of the unit I have now working on my network.





The good support folks in Vancouver, WA that provide Mac support for Charter.net agreed that the USB port wouldn't be as stable as the Ethernet port for router or Mac computer connectivity. I used the screw-on cable instead of the clip-on cable (being used with PVR) so signal strength would not be compromised.

I saw lots of "reviews" where folks complained about their flakey cable modems with this model number and I had to relate my experience with the cable modem from China. I don't think their problems were so much with the modem as with the line. Every time I've called the cable company, they have finally admitted that the issues were closer to their end than mine. In fact, when I first started using the cable instead of the old phone modem, I got a few month's credit by letting them know where the connectivity issues were, since I helped design the network for my city when I worked for an engineering firm and contracted with the cable company when we replaced the copper backbone with a fiber one.

Since then, I've been feeding Mac information to the Windows-centric folks in the support group at charter.net so they could get a little more comfortable with the Mac-based networking technology.

When the cable company product is replaced, you have to call in so that the new unit can be recognized with the MAC address. Not the address where I live and where my Mac resides, this is the code assigned to equipment with each MAC address hopefully unique enough that no other device has the numbers. The Linksys cable modem has two. One is assigned to the Ethernet port and another to the USB port. We used the Ethernet port one instead. In a matter of minutes everything was up. I didn't have to play plug&pray and use the CD to load Windows-based drivers to the Mac. It just worked. The User Guide that comes with the unit is an 8-page foldout that is Windows-centric. No mention of a Mac is discussed anywhere. Ditto with the 30-page downloadable User Guide.

Due to others who experimented with various cable modems, I knew this one would work with my Mac – and it does quite nicely, thank you. I listened to others who also mentioned that they bought cheap brand-named cable modems and had to replace them every few months because they failed. I figured I could go for the gold and get a unit that wasn't inexpensive and would be reliable.

If I pick up the handset to the phone, I want to hear a dial tone from the Vonage unit and not silence. Hey, it's my business that suffers if I can't call out and it is extremely embarrassing to have to use a landline to call back to let others know why they can't hear me.

Meanwhile, I can take back the no-name brand unit that has given me nothing but grief and get my monthly bill reduced.

And if you care, checkout why DOCSIS 2.0 is important. It's a throughput thing:

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

<http://www.cablemodem.com/specifications/specifications20.html>

## Watch this! Wireless Video Security Solution with Mac OS X

reviewed by Robert Pritchett

**BrickHouse Security**  
The Trusted Name In Home Security For Easy Installation

BrickHouse Electronics  
85 Fifth Avenue  
7th Floor  
New York City, New York, 10003  
[support@brickhousesecurity.com](mailto:support@brickhousesecurity.com)  
<http://www.brickhousesecurity.com/>

2.4 GHz Wireless Bullet Camera with 23 LEDs  
\$250 USD, \$45 USD for the base,

<http://store.brickhousesecurity.com/b041.html>

and a \$20 USD Power Supply.

<http://www.brickhousesecurity.com/about-wireless-video-security-cameras.html>

2.4 GHz Wireless 4-channel Audio/Video Receiver  
\$153 USD.

<http://www.brickhousesecurity.com/2400vr.html>

Canopus ADVC110 Portable Analog/Digital Advanced Video Converter  
\$350 USD.

**Released:** July 2004.

<http://www.brickhousesecurity.com/77010150100.html>

EvoCam 3.5.1 webcam software for Mac OS X

\$25 USD per single user, \$250 USD site license, \$500 USD worldwide license. (The review is located in the Software Review section this month [December 2005].)

**Requirements:** An itch to watch what can't normally be seen. Mac OS X 10.3 or later (in this case) or can be used with Windows-based systems using different software; FireWire port

**Strengths:** Works with Macs. (And of course, this can be used cross-platform.)

**Weaknesses:** Requires a "system solution" approach and is not "off the shelf" in the current configuration. The camera has no Zoom feature – something I should probably have speced.

Used with iMac G5 (internal iSight) and Mac OS X 10.4 Tiger.



How does the Mac handle a wireless security system? Nicely actually, but it requires a few OEM (Original Equipment Manufacturer) pieces we pulled together to make this happen - and they all don't come in the same package. We looked the world over and came up with this "secret combination". I figured this had been done before, but I was wrong. So you don't have to, we put this system together to see how it works.

Because we have been looking at security solutions using the Mac, the natural thing to do is extend the inherent security of the Mac and to ask if there are wireless surveillance solutions. This one comes in under \$800 USD and there may be discounts available. Perhaps you can negotiate a deal with BrickHouse Security. Even as we speak, more and more of them are moving to Macs too.

While doing research I confused BrickHouse Security for the well-known BrickHouse Firewall software. No, they are not the same. Not even close.

To glue one of these systems together, the first thing is to determine which kind of surveillance device to use. Our desire was for a wireless system and one that can be used to see in the night. The catch was in getting one that could be used to input information into a Mac. So join us in our quest.

Apparently, the manufacturer of the high resolution 2.4 GHz wireless audio video day-and-night weatherproof camera is Racewood Telecom, Taipei, Taiwan; <http://racewood.manufacturer.globalsources.com/si/6008812925298/Homepage.htm>. Why 2.4 GHz and not something that works with the included wireless solution that comes with the iMac G5? It's simply a security and video quality and performance issue.

The curious workmanship of this weatherproof high-resolution 1/3-inch CCD Sony sensor color DSP chip, with 23 Infrared LED's (850 nm) and built-in 2.4GHz wireless video transmitter module and phase lock 4-channel loop and built-in microphone includes a 6-mm/F1.5 lens. The 4-channel slide switch PLL control operates at the following frequencies: CH1 = 2413 MHz, CH2 = 2432 MHz, CH3 = 2451 MHz, CH4 = 2470 MHz and uses 100mW of power at either NTSC or PAL with effective pixels as follows: NTSC; 510 x 492, PAL; 500 x 582 and scanning frequencies: NTSC; 15.7343 KHz, 60 Hz; PAL: 15.625 KHz, 50Hz and a horizontal resolution of 420 TV lines of high-res video. It isn't just wireless either. It has a video output: 1.0 Volt Peak-to-Peak with 75 ohms using a BNC connector for a hard-wired solution, if needed. The wall-wart power source is 12 Volts DC and 250 milliamps.

The 2.4 GHz range goes out to 500 line-of-sight feet for transmission. With radio interference (RF) from microwaves ovens and other electronics such as cordless phones, there is good reason to have 4 channels to choose from. Other 2.4 GHz cameras can be found here; <http://store.brickhousesecurity.com/24ghz-wireless-cameras.html>.

The "night vision" red LEDs can see out to 60 feet. The light that comes from the LEDs makes it look like a high-lumen headlight is being used to look into the night. Using it inside forces a feedback issue with the reflection off glass or off window screens. Nothing should be between the camera lens and the outside - at least at night. For the geek set, the lux rating is zero. If there is any interference at one channel, there are three others to try for better video throughput.

To get to the channel switches, the rear-mounted section that holds the dipole antennae removed by slipping the screwed ring off to get at the switches inside.

To set the camera outside, it also requires a base that can be anchored to an eave, roof or out-of-the-way unobtrusive location. This unit has a few thumbable setscrews to adjust plus the wheelbase to hold the camera to the base.



In order for the wireless part of the camera to work, it is necessary to join the sender (the camera antennae) to a receiver. That is where the 2.4 GHz wireless 4-channel audio/video receiver from the same company comes into play. It comes with another dipole antennae and a duplex RCA cable. Whoops! What do they go to? A regular PVR doesn't seem to work, so a special analog/digital video converter needs to be obtained to do the job.

The ADVC110 from Canopus comes to the rescue. It is designed to work cross-platform bi-directionally, requires no software drivers and requires a FireWire port on a computer to communicate. This unit also supports NTSC (720 x 480 @ 29.97fps), PAL (720 x 576 @ 25 fps) and SECAM (input only) video standards. It also has composite and S-Video connectors as well as RCA analog connectors, both for input and output.

It has a four-pin FireWire interface on its front and a six-pin FireWire jack on its back, and the ADVC110 works without a power supply on Macs and other devices equipped with six-pin FireWire ports. It comes with the 6-pin FireWire cable so that no wall-wart is needed if the computer uses that kind of FireWire port. The Mac does. If the four-pin FireWire cable is used, then a wall-wart is needed too.

The ADVC110 has a switch to go between analog or digital. You would logically think that the camera-receiver Canopus chain would be digital, but since the RCA cables are analog, guess what the Canopus has to be set as? Yeah, analog. The digital video chipset inside preserves the conversion process. It also has an audio lock that is designed to handle audio nicely for 2-channel 48 KHz 16-bit and 2-channel 32 KHz 12-bit synchronization.

And of course, there are the stereo ports. To use this unit with a TV instead of a computer, a 5 Volt DC power supply would be needed – unless, of course the TV had FireWire port input. I haven't seen one of those yet. Have you?

Now we need to get this gittup going with a Mac. How do we do that? We use the EvoCam app from Evological and that review is over in the Software Review section for this month's *macCompanion*.

Shareware

## ClamXav 1.0.1 – Free Virus Scanner for Mac OS X

reviewed by Robert Pritchett

**Developer:** Mark John Allan

<http://www.markallan.co.uk/>

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

Released: Version 1.0.1, September 2005.

**Requirements:** Mac OS X; Clamav Scanning Engine.

**Donationware:** After using it, send a donation to Mark Allan!

**Documentation:** <http://www.clamxav.com/>

**FAQs:** <http://www.clamxav.com/index.php?page=FAQ>

**Tutorial:**

<http://osxguide.com/modules.php?op=modload&name=News&file=article&sid=173>

**ClamXav Forum:** <http://www.markallan.co.uk/BB/>

**More Screenshots:** <http://mac.softpedia.com/progScreenshots/ClamXav-Screenshot-6360.html>



**Strengths:** Free open-source, stable, unobtrusive virus scanner.

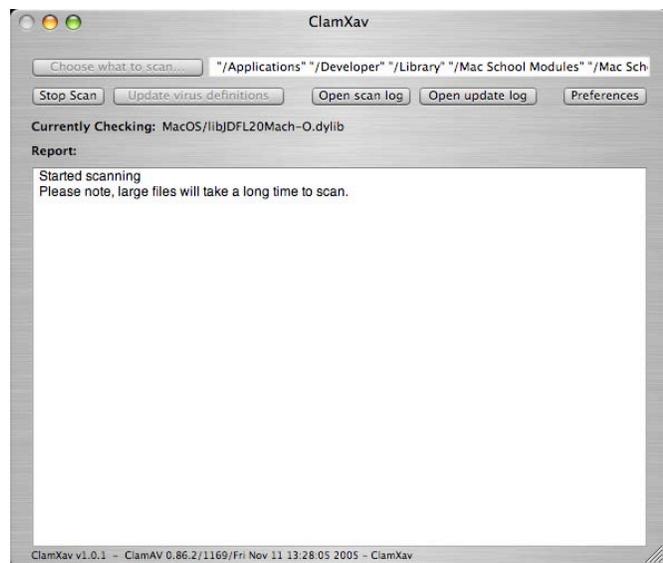
**Weaknesses:** Could use some Mail.app tweaks.

Running on an iMac G5 with Mac OS X Tiger.

*ClamXav* is what other paid-for virus software packages (i.e. Norton AntiVirus 10, Sophos, VirusBarrier, & Virex) for Mac OS X are competing against. Mark Allan has done an incredible job and continues to improve this product in anticipation of finding, quarantining and eradicating malware that may try to make Mac OS X its home.

I had a few rootkit apps I'd grabbed off BitTorrent as part of a security package I had discussed in our Blog much earlier as part of my research into Security on the Mac. *ClamXav* not only found the rootkits, but I let it remove them. They are not technically "viruses", however, *ClamXav* isn't apparently "just" an anti-virus app.

It requires the Clam Anti-Virus scanning engine to run.



I also use Virtual PC 7 every once in a while. (Hey, I'm masochistic, okay?) Sure enough, *ClamXav* finds and kills off PC malware on the Mac. I love it. Mark Allan, you do great work! In fact, *ClamXav* seems to even do a better job than the remaining paid-for anti-malware apps out there and it may be one of the reasons (besides the un-embarrassing fact that no malware has been discovered so far that directly affects Mac OS X if you continue keeping up with the latest versions from Apple) more of those companies are backing off further development of anti-malware apps for the Mac.

When macros are enabled in Microsoft Office, *ClamXav* finds and kills those too.

There is an excellent tutorial posted above over on *OSXGuide*.

I for one want to give Mark Allan a standing ovation for a job well done! It pays to be on guard and maybe just a little paranoid about keeping the Mac pristine, while the non-Mac environments continue to be hammered with malware of all kinds. Mark Allan continues to improve *ClamXav*, but he could use some coin to help him keep it up.

What needs some improvement is how to handle Mail.app bad-nasties, once found. And the documentation needs a little help with uninstalling the scan engine, if you so choose to want to uninstall all of the app, if it doesn't meet your particular needs, so here it is from VersionTracker; "To remove the clamav engine, double-click the REMOVE\_engine.command file located on the image file in the Documentation & Extras folder."

This is a Try-Before-You-Donate app that is a no-brainer, especially if you want to protect your Mac from possible compromise or violation. Just keep updating Virus Definitions to keep the guardrails in good working condition. You never know, one of these days...there really could be a direct hit on Mac OS X. Some day, so this app keeps on guard and stays out of the way while doing so.

**Digging Deeper:** Dr Smoke's older article on Macs and Malware, <http://www.thexlab.com/faqs/malspyware.html>

## EasyFind – A flexible and powerful way to expand Spotlight’s functionality

reviewed by Harry {doc} Babad

<p><b>EasyFind 3.8.1</b> [Freeware] <b>Developer:</b> Christian Grunenberg ©2001-2005 Devon Technologies <a href="mailto:info@devon-technologies.com">info@devon-technologies.com</a> <a href="http://www.devon-technologies.com/products/freeware/applications.php">http://www.devon-technologies.com/products/freeware/applications.php</a> <b>Released:</b> October 11, 2005      <b>Size:</b> 2 MB No Uninstaller provided.</p> <p><b>Requirements:</b> Mac OS X 10.3 or later including Tiger. Audience: All user levels</p> <p>This software was tested on a 1 GHz dual processor PowerPC G4 Macintosh with 2 GB DDR SDRAM running under Macintosh OS X 10.4.3.</p>	
	

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

### Introduction

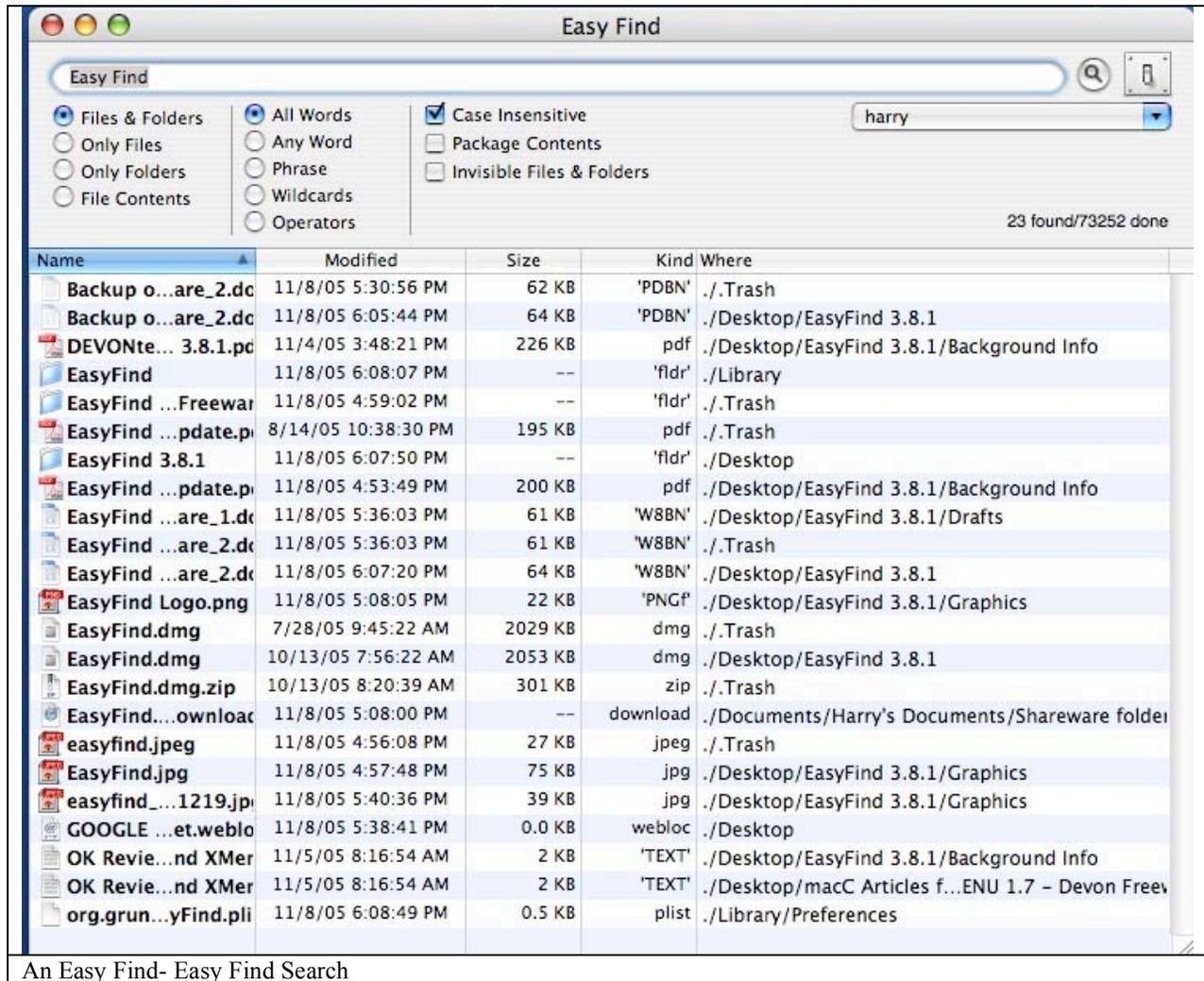
EasyFind is an alternative to or supplement of Spotlight and finds files, folders or contents in any file without the need for indexing. This is especially useful if you are tired of slow or impossible indexing, outdated or corrupted indices or if you are just looking for features missing in the Finder or Spotlight.

### Highlights

Installation and Using The Product — Copy EasyFind into the applications-folder or where ever you like if you don't need services. To activate by using services log out and in again after you have started EasyFind at least once. [Finder or Other Application Menu Icon > Services].

Start the easy EasyFind application using the dock (I put it there) or from the Finder’s Services-menu. Enter your keywords, select the desired volume or folder and click the search button or the Enter (return) key.

EasyFind displays all found items immediately so it's possible to drag & drop an item onto any Finder windows including your desktop, the dock or other application) even while the search is on going. Alternatively, select "Open" in the "File"-menu to open one or more files with the appropriate application. You can also use Mac OS X’s "Reveal In Finder" to open a found folder in the Finder. Using the product’s "Destroy" feature allows you to delete the items (after a warning) immediately while "Move To Trash" allows you to trash them (without a warning).



An Easy Find- Easy Find Search

**Features** — Unlike Spotlight, which Apple introduced with Mac OS X (Tiger) 10.4. EasyFind behaves in a manner comparable to that of a well-behaved search engine. However, it's your hard disk that becomes the search focus, not the Internet.

- Search using Boolean operators, wildcards, phrases
- No indexing required so you can search immediately
- Easy Find Finds invisible files and files inside packages (which Spotlight doesn't search)
- Displays the location of each file in a separate column rather than chasing the bath to the file by clicking the "information" icon.
- Provides contextual menus and services
- Supports drag-and-drop
- Makes excellent use of contextual menu features
- Uses little memory" The application is only 940 KB in size and search results are essentially "anchored" text files.
- Contains an Open With" submenu
- For users of earlier versions, Version 3.8.1 searches up to 2.3 times faster for files and folders due to multithreading capabilities. Way fast enough for me.
- An excellent, but difficult to quickly encompass, ReadMe file

A feature I did not find in the ReadMe documentation was the ability of the software to create an alias of the found file or folder. This is exceedingly helpful since by using the *Option-Command* keys and dragging the found item alias to my desktop, I had easy access to it. In addition, by using an alias, I would not disrupt my filing system in order to access to my selected files/folders. If for some reason you want to work on a copy of a found file (or folder) you can do that by dragging the found item to the desktop while holding down the *Option* key.

### A Few Gripes

**Language Localizations** — As noted by Jeremiah Issach (MacUpdate Review) “the product seems to have a big shortcoming for users who do not have English as their localized language. It is unable to properly search localized versions of Mac OS X other than English.” Therefore, if I were a user running a non-English or French version of Mac OS X the product’s fine features would do me no good.

**Help Files or Manual** — Although the product is freeware, it would have been helpful had the developer converted the detailed, but at time slightly linguistically cryptic, ReadMe file to either a *help file* or a mini-manual. This would have been most helpful in making the EasyFind *operators* and *wildcards* function easier for me to learn.

**Installer Log Needed** — After using both Apple’s Find feature and EasyFind the only installed files I could find were the applications itself, and the org.grunenberg.EasyFind.plist (Users > Harry > Library > Preferences Folder). I could not find the location from which EasyFind accessed the Mac OS X services menu, although it was indeed installed in the services *folder*.

**Summary** — Easy Find is very useful tool Finding files on your hard disk, even find system files, to delete hidden preferences; files that Spotlight and Find... can't find! I fully agree with a nameless MacUpdate reviewer who noted, “Apple must fire the madman who made Spotlight and hire this developer to fix Tiger crazy behavior (i.e., impossible to find a (related) system file)”.

If I could add only one feature to EasyFind, it would be to enable it to access its search features from within MS Word. That would allow searching for needed material on my hard disk while working on a review without having to access it from the finder or my dock. But then I’ve been accused of being too picky by some developers. *Bad Harry!*

Check it out, EasyFind a keeper for sure. It’s worth at least **4.5 macC’s**. It would score higher for those of you who are less picky than I am.

PS

Now if only I could install EasyFind in my Finder’s Menubar, I could free up one place on my dock.

Christian, I don’t know how one can search the contents of a database such as FileMaker Pro (v. 6 or 7) but that would also be helpful.



**Folder Contents CM — A contextual menu addition to allow you to check out the contents of your folders**  
reviewed by Harry {doc} Babad, edited by Julie M. Willingham

<p><b>Folder Contents CM 1.5.9</b> <b>Developer:</b> Narattaphol Charoenphandhu <a href="mailto:naratt@naratt.com">naratt@naratt.com</a> <a href="http://www.naratt.com/FolderContents.html">http://www.naratt.com/FolderContents.html</a></p> <p><b>Shareware Cost:</b> \$14 USD <b>File Size:</b> ca. 940 KB Published August 6<sup>th</sup> 2005 <b>Uninstaller:</b> Not Included. Note: An unregistered copy of Folder Contents CM can, in sequence, display the contents of only 5 folders.</p> <p><b>Requirements:</b> Mac OS X 10.3 or later, Tiger Ready</p> <p><b>Localized Versions:</b> English, Chinese, Dutch, French and Italian.</p> <p><b>Audience:</b> All user levels</p>	 
<p>Product and company names and logos in this review may be registered trademarks of their respective companies.</p>	
<p>The software was tested on a 1 GHz dual processor PowerPC G4 Macintosh with 2 GB DDR SDRAM running under OS X 10.4.3.</p>	

### Introduction

There are many tools available that enhance your abilities to find out the contents of your folders. I have long used the Unsanity Fruit Menu haxie, into which I can load my favorite folders, but the focus and feature set differ from Folder Contents. Of course, I can easily add a few selected folders either to my finder window tool bar or to the OX X Panther and Tiger sidebar, but this is a clutter making action. So is adding folders of interest to either the dock, or other dock enhancement software, some of which I've reviewed for macC. None of these allow facile and non-intrusive means of checking on the contents of any folder.

Few other tools, other than XMenu, that I know about allow you to see "invisible items. In this issue of macC, I review both Folder Contents (contextual menu) and XMenu 1.7 (Finder menu access). I will be reviewing the new version of Default Folder, 2.0.4, soon.

### About the Software

Folder Contents CM is a Mac OS X-compatible contextual menu plug-in (CM), which allows users to a folder's contents by control-clicking on that folder. The software's engine can also view the contents of application and other installation packages. Note: To access this any other contextual menu, hold down the Control key, and then click on the desktop. Users who have a two-buttons mouse can use right-click to show the contextual menu.

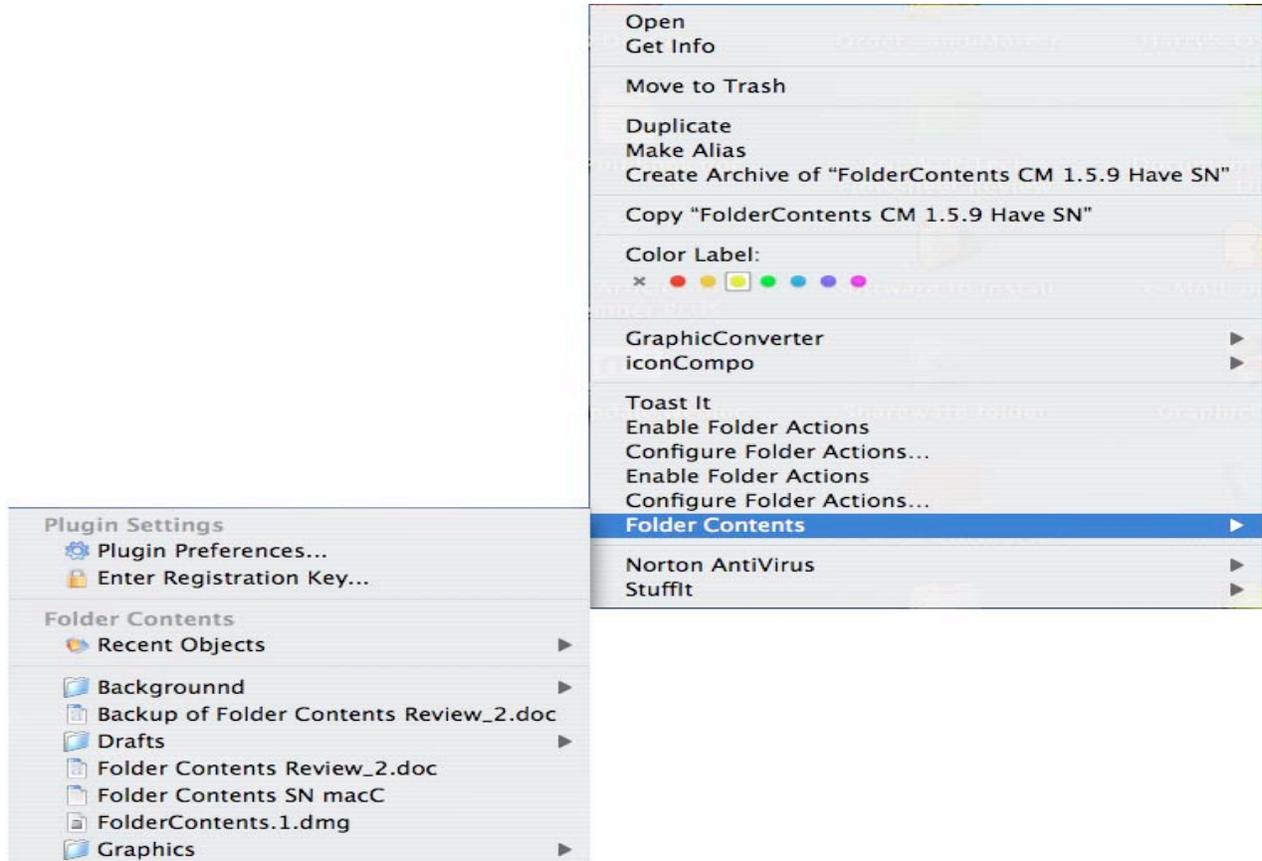
The contents of that folder or package are displayed in a hierarchical menu where users can browse that folder's contents to unlimited depth. Folder Contents CM has ability to handle disks, files, folders, and aliases. In addition it can routinely deal can deal with symbolic links, and invisible objects. The advanced features options, which I list below, are accessed from the Folder Contents CM preferences window.

Installing Folder Contents is easy. Using the software is intuitive as is shown below.

- 1) On the Finder, holding down the Control key while pressing the mouse on a target folder. Users can use Right-Click for two-buttons mouse.
- 2) The contextual menu will then be displayed.
- 3) Go to the Folder Contents menu, you will see the entire contents of the selected folder. The folders contents will be listed on hierarchical menu, so users can browse to unlimited level.

### Gaining access to Folder Contents Contextual Menus

Finding and working with the advanced features options by accessing the preference pane was initially less than obvious. It was particularly obscure on my system since I have the *Unsanity Fruit Menu* haxie installed. As a result, although I could access the contents of my chosen folder found near the top of the *selected* contextual menu, the folder content preferences and other features were buried at the bottom of a long Fruit Menu containing contextual menu list. To create the image below, I've turned off fruit menu contextual menu.



Accessing A Folder's Contents by Way of the Contextual menu

A subset of the product's features and advanced feature option are provided below.

Features	Advanced Features Options
<p>A fast way to browse the folder contents to unlimited level.</p> <p>A fast way to show the package contents.</p> <p>Provide an easy way to 'see' and deal with invisible objects.</p> <p>Provides an easy way to handle the symbolic link, a Unix-styled alias. [I don't know what this means... doc.]</p> <p>Provide an easy way to change an object's properties, such as type, creator and visibility.</p> <p>Can <i>remember</i> 20 recently used objects.</p> <p>The interface allow a user to set up the advanced features by way of its. Preferences window.</p>	<p>Ability to open the selected object with the Finder.</p> <p>Ability to show the selected object in the Finder.</p> <p>Ability to remove the resource fork of the selected file.</p> <p>Ability to delete the selected object without any warning message.</p> <p>Ability to rename the selected object. Users can edit the prohibited name, such as a name started with dot (.) character.</p> <p>Ability to ask a customized application to open the selected object.</p> <p>Ability to change type and creator of the selected object.</p> <p>Ability to lock and unlock files.</p> <p>Ability to change visibility of the object.</p> <p>Ability to show or hide file extensions.</p>

### One Gripe

I have a serious problem with the title of the *How to install Manual*. The PDF document proved by 'Naratt' not only tells you how to install the product but also contains a detailed and clearly written and well-illustrated user guide that most readers would find useful. In the next upgrade, please change the name of the document to *User's Manual*".

### Conclusions

Although some of the reviewers comments on the MacUpdate site have been hostile to this product, its unique features and general ease of use make in an excellent too to just that its name says find the contents of your folders (and disks. I rate this product **4.0 macC's**

## N Commander – Stamp out the *New Folder* Command-Shift F sequence

reviewed by Harry Babad

### N Commander 0.1

**Developer:** John Gamble

[john@djgamble.com](mailto:john@djgamble.com)

<http://www.djgamble.com/news.php>

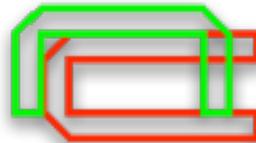
**Released:** May 10, 2004 **Size:** 104 KB

**Freeware**

**Requirements:** Mac OS X 10.2 or later including Tiger.

**Audience:** All user levels.

This software was tested on a 1 GHz dual processor PowerPC G4 Macintosh with 2 GB DDR SDRAM running under Macintosh OS X 10.4.3.



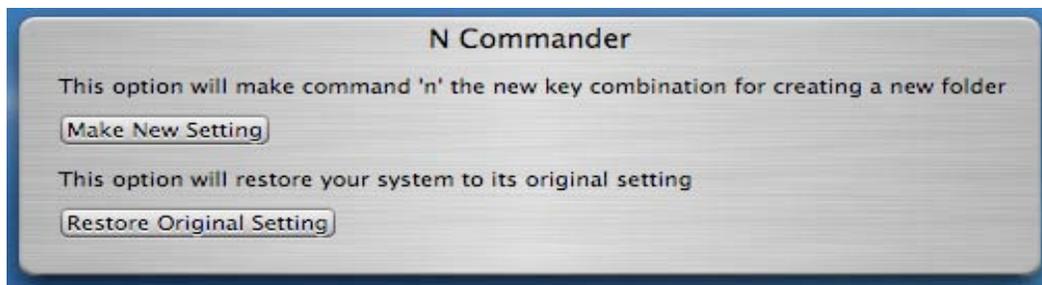
Product and company names and logos in this review may be registered trademarks of their respective companies

### The Software

I ran across N Commander 0.1 in the fine print of the August 2005 MacAddict. The software is a simpler and more elegant solution than the one proposed recently by Scott Kelby. I provide, for fairness, Scott's Killer Tip at the end of this article.

"In Mac OS 9 (and previous 'classic' versions of Mac OS) the key combination to create a new folder was 'Command N', however Apple changed this key combination to 'Command Shift N' and assigned 'Command N' to the action of creating a new finder Window. John Gamble, N Commander's developer noted, "I and others have never quite become used to this change, which is why I created 'N Commander'.

"The product is a simple application that changes the key combination 'Command N' in Apple's Finder so that it will create new folders. The Change remains permanent unless reversed using N Commander. That's all it takes!"



### Conclusions

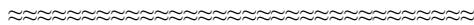
Well, after so much time using OS X, I've still not gotten used to the new "new folder" key sequences. It did not take me long to revert back to the old Command-N shortcut. I shall not change back. Try it John Gamble's way. If a simple download and a free product is too much trouble—you love to keyboard away, then approach the change the Kelby Way. N-Commander is well worth **5.0 macC's**.

***"Fixing The World's Worst Keyboard Shortcut***

From Scott Kelby - Killer Tips Page 13. (Peachpit Press)

“Prior to Mac OS X (and for all prior Macintosh history), to create a new folder you'd press Command-N. It was simple. It made sense. It was perfect. Obviously, it was too perfect, so when Mac OS X came along, Apple changed the shortcut to Command-Shift-N. I've never gotten over that. In Tiger, I (you, we) can bring back peace and Command-N harmony.

Here's how: Go under the System Preferences, and click on the Keyboard & Mouse icon. When the preferences appear, click the Keyboard Shortcut tab on the far right. Just under the shortcuts window on the left side, there's a plus (+) sign. Click on it and a dialog will drop down. For Application, choose Finder. In the Menu Title field, type "New Folder." Click in the Keyboard Shortcut field and press "Command-N," and then click Add. Now, do it all again-click the plus sign, choose Finder as your Application, but for Menu Title type "New Finder Window" and for Keyboard Shortcut enter "Command-Shift-N." Click Add, close the System Preferences, and restart your Mac. From now on, Command-N will create a new folder (hallelujah!) and Command-Shift-N will open the much more seldom-used New Finder Window."



## SmartWrap — The way to rewrap your text!

reviewed by Harry {doc} Babad

 <p><b>SmartWrap 2.5.3</b> <b>Publisher:</b> Selznick Scientific Software, LLC Support and updates are available free of charge from the developer's website or by email <a href="mailto:s3support@selznick.com">s3support@selznick.com</a>. <b>Publisher's Website:</b> <a href="http://www.selznick.com">http://www.selznick.com</a> Clear and complete Manual and FAQ available at the website. <b>Shareware Cost:</b> \$18 USD      <b>File Size:</b> ca. 2.9 GB <b>Requirements:</b> Mac OS X 10.2 or later including Tiger. A <i>Windows</i> version is available. <b>Audience:</b> All user levels.</p>	
	
<p>Product and company names and logos in this review may be registered trademarks of their respective companies.</p>	

The software was tested on a 1 GHz dual processor PowerPC G4 Macintosh with 2 GB DDR SDRAM running under OS X 10.4.3.

### Introduction

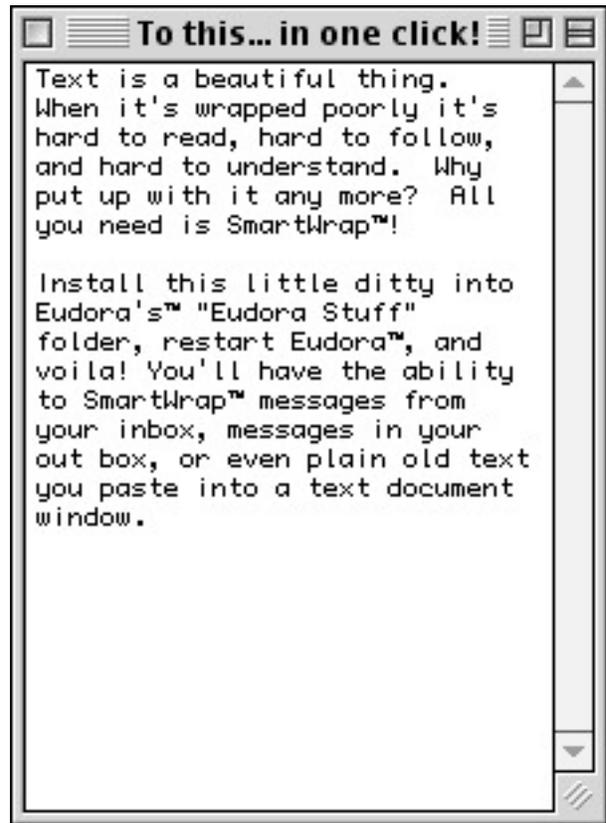
SmartWrap analyzes your text, detects paragraphs and lists within your text, and rewraps your text so it wraps naturally within your document or message. I've used *SmartWrap* for years, prior to upgrading to Mac OS X Panther and now Tiger for disciplining my at times unruly (Eudora) email messages. It's now time to use the software again.

Some of the ways I've used this product to minimize white space from text copied from Acrobat PDF files. I simply select text from a PDF with Acrobat Pro 7 [Note I have no idea whether this works when using *Acrobat Reader* which I've never installed on my hard disk.]

SmartWrap™ analyzes your text, detects paragraphs and lists within your text, and rewraps your text so it wraps naturally within your document or message. SmartWrap™ comes in lots of varieties so it's always available where you need it most by way of the OS X services menu. [Application-Name Menu (including finder) > Services > SmartWrap 2.x.] You can either SmartWrap as selection or SmartWrap your selected text to a new window.



Before Wrapping in Eudora



After Wrapping in Eudora

### The Software-Its Features

SmartWrap is a Eudora plug-in that analyzes the text of your hard-to-read email messages and re-wraps them perfectly by removing all unnecessary line breaks, quote characters, and excess formatting with just one click. SmartWrap is not a blind search and replace tool. SmartWrap uses combinations of four proprietary algorithms to determine the best way to wrap your text naturally within the Eudora window, unhindered by excess formatting. It can also, by means of the plug-ins listed below, work in other text applications such as BBEdit.

### Features

- The Software Analyzes and re-wraps your text.
- Removes all quote marks (">") from the beginnings of lines.
- Removes unwanted line breaks within paragraphs. (Paste text from e-mails perfectly into your word processor!)
- Re-Wraps your e-mails so they wrap naturally within the Eudora™ window.
- Works on In-Coming AND Out-Going e-mails!
- Works in both Eudora™ and Eudora™ Light!
- SmartWrap™ the Clipboard works on any text you can copy to the clipboard.
- The developer says that it works curiously well on text copied and from Web sites and PDFs! I agree
- SmartWrap numbered and lettered lists turning them into paragraphs.
- The software works great with sparse messages! (Messages that have lots of white space.)

SmartWrap 2.0 also includes a preferences panel that allows you to specify formatting options for text after it has been wrapped. For example, if you'd like you're wrapped text to be hard-wrapped to 40 characters per line and indented 10 spaces, no problem. Simply specify these options in the SmartWrap Preferences. Lots of other options are available too. Read the manual, it's quite easy to use the SmartWrap customization features.

### The SmartWrap Modules

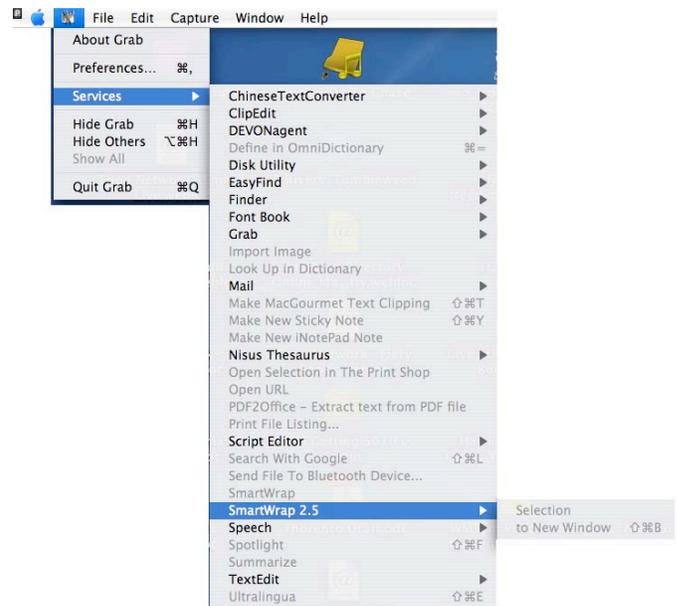
BEdit™ & MailSmith™ Plug-in (Mac OS 8, 9 and X) and via Services in Apple's Mail application.	Eudora (Mac OS 8, 9 and X) Plug-in
TextWrangler 2 Plug-in	REALbasic Plug-in (Mac OS 8, 9 and X)
SmartWrap from the Clipboard	Scripting Addition capabilities for use with AppleScript in Mac OS X
System Wide Services availability allows you to wrap text inside applications... and if that doesn't work, then to a new window instead.	Use SmartWrap references to set final formatting of your wrapped text.
Lots of plug-ins for older versions of these apps too!	

### SmartWrap the Clipboard for Mac OS X

Sometimes you want to copy text from a web page and paste it into your word processor. After the text is copied, you can actually have it SmartWrapped for you right from the clipboard before you paste. Note that SmartWrap the Clipboard is built into the SmartWrap application. It's easy. Copy the text to the clipboard. Run SmartWrap—you're done! Alternatively, to SmartWrap text into a new window, copy other text to the clipboard and select "New" from the "File" menu. You can open as many windows as you like.

### SmartWrap Text Using Services for Mac OS X

The SmartWrap Text Service for Mac OS X provides SmartWrap capability to any program that supports Apple's Text Services API. I've been able to use the software with MS Word and although it is available for Acrobat Pro, I haven't yet figured out to use in that program.



### Conclusions

I have, in the past, tediously cleaned up text within MS Word. Yup cleanup worked using brute repetitions of cutting out unwanted characters and paragraph marks. At times, I used the MSW find-replace features, but this didn't always work the way I want it too. Now, I love the ease of use of SmartWrap and time I save when using SmartWrap.

As I noted earlier in this review, I've been a long time fan of this program. I've made extensive use of SmartWrap in Eudora, which is still my favorite Email client. With the advent of Macintosh OS X, I've just begun to grasp all of the possibilities for its use in my applications such as MS Word. Since I can also access the program from services menu item in FileMaker Pro 6, I'll start exploring the SmartWrap features as the need arises.

Buy it, the time you save in unkinking your documents is well worth the cost. I rate this product **4.5 macC's**

## XMenu 1.7 – A way to bring back the *lost* features of the Apple Menu used in the more recent Classic operating system

reviewed by Harry {doc} Babad

<p>XMenu 1.7 <b>Developer:</b> Christian Grunenberg ©2001-2005 <a href="mailto:info@devon-technologies.com">info@devon-technologies.com</a> <a href="http://www.grunenberg.com/mainmenu.html">www.grunenberg.com/mainmenu.html</a> Devon Technologies <a href="http://www.devon-technologies.com/products/freeware/applications.php">http://www.devon-technologies.com/products/freeware/applications.php</a> <b>Released:</b> July 7, 2005    <b>Size:</b> 134 KB <b>Freeware</b> No Uninstaller provided. <b>Requirements:</b> Mac OS X 10.3 or later including Tiger. <b>Audience:</b> All user levels, but read the <a href="#">ReadMe</a> file!</p> <p>This software was tested on a 1 GHz dual processor PowerPC G4 Macintosh with 2 GB DDR SDRAM running under Macintosh OS X 10.4.3.</p>	 The image shows a screenshot of the XMenu 1.7 interface. At the top, there is a clock displaying 'Sun 11:30:15'. Below the clock is a menu structure with a blue header bar and a white body. At the bottom of the interface, there is a blue bar containing five white stars, which is a common visual element for freeware or shareware.
<p>Product and company names and logos in this review may be registered trademarks of their respective companies</p>	

### Introduction

Those of you who've read either my shareware columns are aware that there are a number of ways you can make it easier to access your applications, documents or project folders. Alternatively, you, of course can populate the Apple's dock, or add multiple docks by using third party software.

You can put frequently used files, using Apple's Mac OS X tools, onto your. I find that doing that is messy and creates their location becomes too crowded. Last but not least, you can check out the many menu based application launchers available on the MacUpdate or Version Tracker websites.

Prior to the advent of Mac OS X, I made good use of the utility ACTION Menus. Of course, for variety or redundancy, I also of course populated the Apple (Icon) pull down menu. Both approaches served me well, until Apple eliminated them in Mac OS X. To make up this loss, I continue to search for alternatives that functionally and esthetically meet my computing style to access my most often used tools and documents.

I've been a long time user of *FruitMenu*. The software allows me to customize my Apple and contextual menus. [FruitMenu is a well-behaved haxie from Unsanity.com.] When I read about XMenu, I decided to test XMenu whose description caught my eye. My goal was to see if this software tool would work for me both functionally and esthetically.

According to its publisher, "XMenu brings back the Apple Menu to Mac OS X and by doing so creates an alternate to the Mac OS X Dock as a place to launch applications." I was especially intrigued by the developer's statement that there was "no need to configure the application to utilize its features."

### Working with XMenu

Installation of XMenus is easy, just drag and drip the application into your Applications folder. Just double click and the launch the application. By default only the applications menu is activated. Then locate and set the XMenu preferences which is not an intuitive task (more about that later.)

By selecting them in XMenu preferences, you can immediately start to use the preconfigured global Applications, Developer Applications, Home or Documents folders. These folders exactly replicate (link to) the folders already installed by your operating system; making them available on the Finders menu bar.) You can select options for using and configuring the application in the software's preferences pane.

*In order to access the preference file I needed the information found only in the ReadMe file. "Press the command modifier while clicking on an XMenu item in the menu bar to access preferences."*



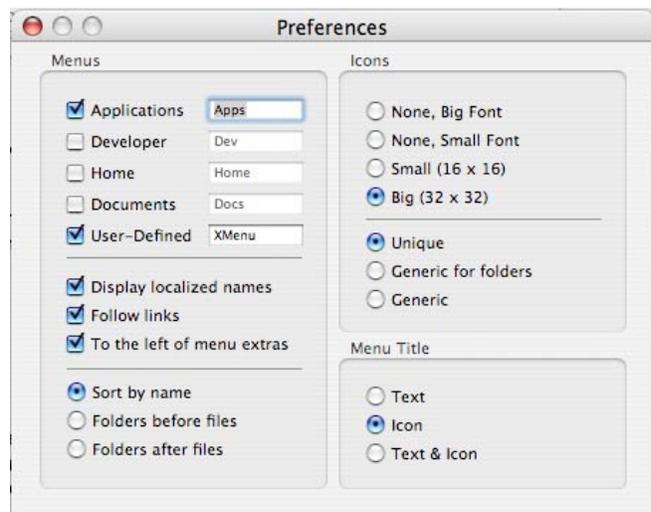
The developer notes that all menus and submenus update themselves automatically, preferring to but it's icon in the dock (in the preconfigured global folders) so it's not necessary to refresh them periodically. In addition, XMenu, as an option (preference) displays your "document" as either small or large icons (using custom or generic icons) The software can also sort menu contents by kind (folders or files) and can follow an aliases to its original or open an Internet link.

I found that I had little use for the Developer Applications, Home or Documents folders, so I didn't activate them. I also did not choose to make XMenu a startup item. You can do so [System Preferences -> Accounts -> My Account -> Startup Items.] if you like. Instead, I chose to concentrate my efforts on a customized *User Defined* XMenu folder into which, for simplicity of testing, I duplicated the contents of my FruitMenu Items folder.

### More About XMenu's Capabilities

From XMenu you can easily access preferred applications, project folders (and subfolders), or specific documents. To gain the most personalized control, you can, as I did, build your own *User-Defined* customized menu. If you remember, that was the way you populated the "classic" Apple Menu. Now by using XMenus you add your own specifically selected *goodies* to the *XMenu folder* [Users Library > XMenu.] I find this alternative more useful than relying on the system related folders that are provided in the application. [Note that the XMenus folder is created after you start XMenu for the first time.] Customization is easy. Simply copy the contents of your Favorites folder to the XMenu folder or individually add aliases of your favorite applications, folders and documents into that designated folder.

Note, for test purposes I turned off the FruitMenu haxie, as a precaution, although XMenu is a standalone application that does not modify the OS X System. After I completed my testing, I again turned FruitMenu on, and was able to access and use both utilities—no conflict. A "Hamlet" style question remains. Do I want to access the files I've mentioned from the Apple Menu or from the menu bar next to the Spotlight icon? You can also, from the preferences, move the XMenu icons to the left side of the 'menu extras' placing them in the middle of your screen. Decisions, decisions and more decisions. I found that I wanted to add two items to my menubar. First, as mentioned above, the contents of my FruitMenu Folder and secondly my applications folder which also resides in my dock.



## A Few Minor Gripes

**Link to the Preferences Panel** — Each of the XMenus access folders should allow accessing the products preferences, rather than requiring use of the counter intuitive command-click to change the software's preferences.

**A Partially True Assertion** — The statement that there is “no need to configure the application to utilize its features” only holds true for the global *Applications*, *Developer Applications*, *Home* or *Documents* folders. As I've mentioned previously, you must manually configure the User-Defined folder, an easy task.

**Help Files or Manual** — Although the product is freeware, it would have been helpful had the developer converted the detailed, but in part slightly cryptic, ReadMe file to either a *help file* or a mini-manual. This would have been most helpful in making the complete XMenu functions and extensive capabilities easier to learn. The problem is not with the documented technical details but rather with the fact that the developer uses English as a second or third language. As a result, I needed several readings to gain a complete understanding of this fine product.

**Closing XMenu from the Dock** — As part of my testing I added the XMenu to my dock. I was able to open XMenus, but the option to quit the program was not available. I could only quit the application from its “preferences menu.

**Installer Log Needed** — After using EasyFind (reviewed in this issue of MacC) the only installed files I could find for XMenu were the applications itself, the XMenu folder and the com.devon-technologies.XMenu.plist (Users > Harry > Library > Preferences Folder). I know, but new less experienced users may not, that preferences live in my preferences folder. Okay, the software's ReadMe file showed me the location of my *User Defined folder*, but...

## Summary

Although I enjoyed working with XMenu and found the interface easy to use and understand once I read the *ReadMe* file, I am not giving up my FruitMenu, after all its so *classic*. Since I am now able to access the contents of my “FruitMenu folder from XMenu, I'll keep both of these utilities installed.

Only time will tell which of these I use more often. For those of you who have not yet enhanced the launch and access of your Finder to find items on your hard disk, give XMenu a try. As noted in my review introduction, I've tested and even reviewed lots of other alternatives.

As I result, I today narrowed my choice to the two tools mentioned in the review. XMenu is stable, does not modify your operating system, and is an easy to use product. It is certainly worth **4.5 macC's** and the price is right—It's free.

PS

I've had occasional problems with other haxies messing with my system, but that is a tale for another day. In fairness, although they are all haxies, I've never had a problem with any of the Unsanity.com haxie products.

~~~~~

## Software

### ConceptDraw MINDMAP professional EDITION4

reviewed by Robert Pritchett



CS Odessa Corporation

Odessa

Ukraine

[info@conceptdraw.com](mailto:info@conceptdraw.com)

<http://www.conceptdraw.com/en/company/sales.php>

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

**Product Site:** <http://www.conceptdraw.com/en/products/mindmap/main.php>

\$200 USD or upgrade for earlier versions for \$100 USD. 30-day trial. -

<http://www.conceptdraw.com/en/resources/mindmap/trial.php>

**Released:** June 14, 2005.

<http://www.conceptdraw.com/en/products/cdsuite/>

**Languages:** English, German.

**Requirements:** Mac OS X 10.1.5 or later; G3 or later; 128 MB RAM; 150 MB hard drive space; CD-ROM drive. Windows systems – Win 98 or later; Pentium processor; 128 MB RAM; 150 MB hard drive space; CD-ROM drive.

**Strengths:** Cross-platform. Works hand-in-glove with other ConceptDraw apps and with MS Office apps.

**Weaknesses:** The default operating font is way too thin, but is changeable in *Preferences > Encoding*. No manual – accessible only through *Help > Content* folder.

**FAQs:** <http://www.conceptdraw.com/en/resources/faq/mindmap.php>

**More Resources:**

<http://www.conceptdraw.com/en/resources/supflowres.shtml#cd>

**Other Reviews:** <http://reviews.macnn.com/review.php?id=144>



You've probably been through brainstorming sessions before if you've ever worked in teams or had to deal with industry, but are you familiar with mind-mapping? The intent is usually to improve productivity and/or effectiveness. MINDMAP works with the Outline view (generated from multiple ideas garnered from brainstorming) and a Mind Map view (visual thinking using radiant diagramming [tree diagrams] that captures and organizes ideas) and produces the results.

The fun part is that we can do either/or and still come up with acceptable results. We are looking at the professional version. It works by creating multi-maps and exports to MS Word, Project, ConceptDraw Project, MS PowerPoint, PDF and importing MS tasks. It also adds floating topics and callouts (comments on-the-spot). This is something that goes much further than writing on large sheets of paper during a brainstorming session and replaces the smelly markers with mouse-clicks. It also uses project management techniques for dating, percentages, duration and resources.



So MINDMAP does a great job as a tool for capturing, managing and structuring ideas and information. It, combined with ConceptDraw V Pro and ConceptDraw Project unite into the ConceptDraw Business Suite to take ideas from concept to drawing to presentation to project completion.

The brainstorming mode has a timer to help limit duration of sessions and is captured in outline mode. When changes are made in either Outline or Mindmap modes, the changes are reflected in the other part. The multi-page function can be exported to HTML and the pages are hyperlinked to each other. Topics can also be added by mouseclicks and topics can be organized either alphabetically or by priority.

There are around 3,000 symbols that can be used from the MINDMAP symbol library. The other libraries are artwork, blocks, business diagram, computers, connections&callouts, geo maps, mindmapping and sign&symbols.

Sample templates are located in *Samples > MindMapping* and *Other*.

There are 6 lessons to Quick Mind Mapping accessible only through the *ConceptDraw MINDMAP Pro > Help* folder. These cover a mind map that describes mind mapping, organizing a business plan, a conference report, a picnic, project-oriented mind mapping and the use of graphics and drawing tools.

This app doesn't exhibit the fit and finish of such apps as ConceptDraw V Pro, and I say this because of the look and feel. The type looks too thin, but can be changed in Preferences. The icons appear hand-drawn and may be purposely created that way, since brainstorming is something done from hand writing and drawing, but since this is computer-generated, I expect something that looks a little more professional.

If that doesn't turn you off, than by all means, get this cross-platform app. It replaces versions we reviewed earlier.



## ConceptDraw Project 2 version 2.0.1

reviewed by Robert Pritchett



CS Odessa Corporation

Odessa

Ukraine

[info@conceptdraw.com](mailto:info@conceptdraw.com)

<http://www.conceptdraw.com/en/company/sales.php>

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

**Product Site:** <http://www.conceptdraw.com/en/products/project/main.php>

**Released:** September, 2005.

\$180 USD, or as part of the ConceptDraw Business Suite (\$500 USD). 30-day trial - <http://www.conceptdraw.com/en/resources/project/trial.php> or part of the Business Suite.

<http://www.conceptdraw.com/en/products/cdsuite/>

**Languages:** English, French, German, Spanish.

**Requirements:** Mac OS X 10.1.5 or later; G3 or later; 128 MB RAM; 40 MB hard drive space; CD-ROM drive. Windows systems – Win 98 or later; Pentium processor; 128 MB RAM; 40 MB hard drive space; CD-ROM drive.

**Strengths:** Cross-platform.

**Weaknesses:** Earlier issues having to do with Gantt chart stability have been overcome with this release. No manual – accessible documentation accessible through the HTMLHelp folder. Toolbar help does not work.

**FAQs:** <http://www.conceptdraw.com/en/support/project.php>

**More Resources:**

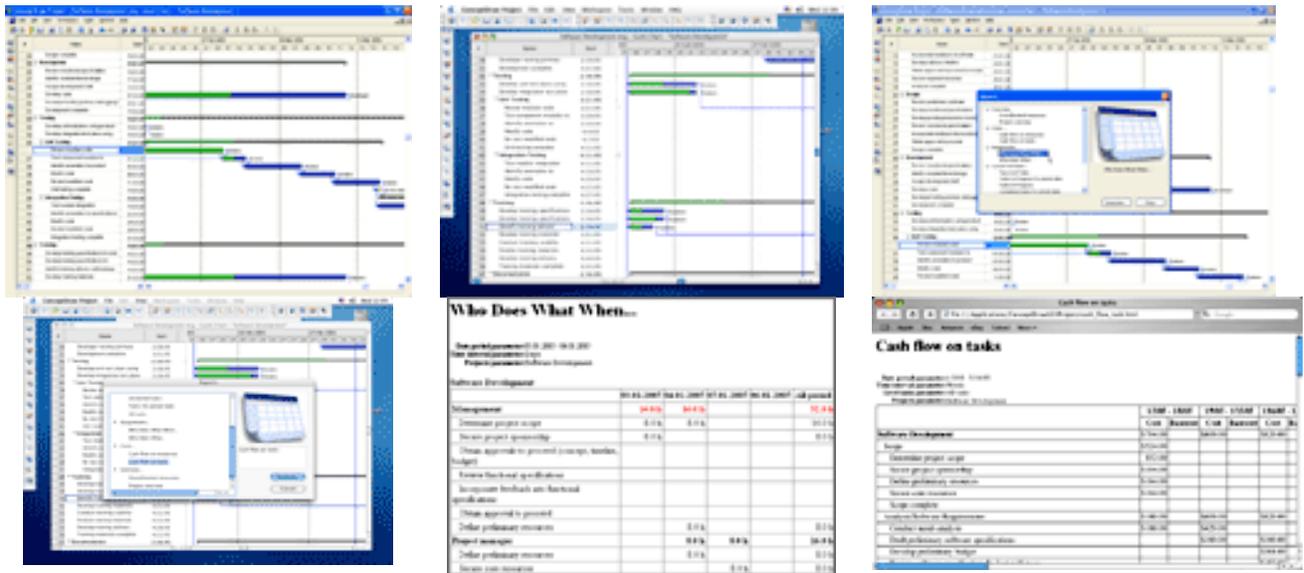
<http://www.conceptdraw.com/en/resources/suppflowres.shtml#project>

ConceptDraw Project 2 seems to be the second most polished app of the ConceptDraw Business Suite. It is designed to handle the process of planning, organizing and controlling activities known as project management. If you've used Projects for Windows, than this is easy enough to get up to speed with. The strength of this application is that it can handle multiple activities simultaneously.

Real-world projects dictate that there are finite resources in manpower, but that those resources can be used wisely as need dictates so there is little idle time involved.

The usual project management tools are available here, with an interactive Gantt chart, individual calendars, functions to work with HTML, RTF, MS Excel and MS Project and the ConceptDraw family of products. And of course, it works with both Macs and Windows-based systems.





The instructions come in four lessons, but are only accessible via the HTML Help folder. The toolbar Help does not function at least in Mac OS X 10.3.4 Tiger.

A number of samples are also available, but only by opening the *ConceptDraw Project* folder > *Samples*, where templates are provided for aerospace, construction, development, education, general, government and marketing.

This app appears to replace LeadingProject, but most files appear to be similar. If you need to provide project management, use this app along with those provided for in the ConceptDraw Business Suite.

## ConceptDraw V Professional version 5.2.8 - Business and Technical Drawing Tool

reviewed by Robert Pritchett



CS Odessa Corporation

Odessa

Ukraine

[info@conceptdraw.com](mailto:info@conceptdraw.com)

<http://www.conceptdraw.com/en/company/sales.php>

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

**Product Site:** <http://www.conceptdraw.com/en/products/cd5/main.php>

**Released:** June 14, 2005.

\$350 USD, 30-day trial;

<http://www.conceptdraw.com/en/resources/cd5/trial.php> or as part of the ConceptDraw Business Suite (\$500 USD).

<http://www.conceptdraw.com/en/products/cdsuite/>

**Languages:** English, French, German, Spanish.

**Requirements:** Mac OS X 10.1.5 or later; G3 or later; 128 MB RAM; 150 MB hard drive space; CD-ROM drive. Windows systems – Win 98 or later; Pentium processor; 128 MB RAM; 150 MB hard drive space; CD-ROM drive.

The boxed version comes with a 328-page User's Guide.

**Strengths:** Cross-platform.

**Weaknesses:** Still does not import/export to AutoCAD DWG files.

**FAQs:** <http://www.conceptdraw.com/en/resources/faq/cd5.php>

**More Resources:**

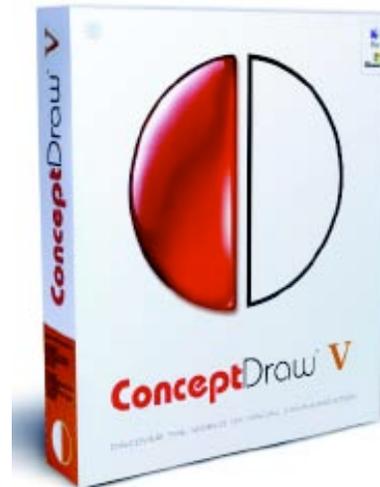
<http://www.conceptdraw.com/en/resources/suppflowres.shtml#cd>

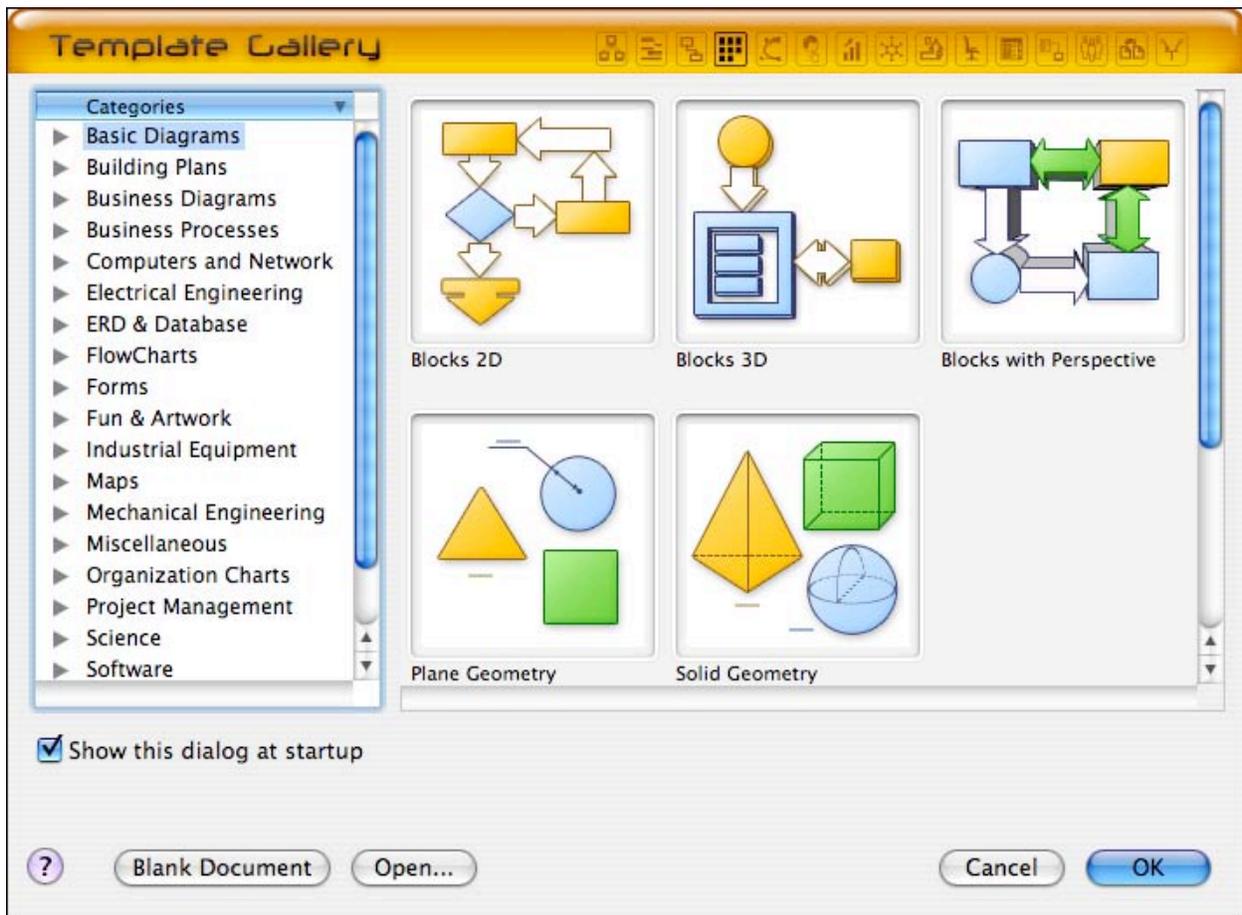
**Other Reviews:** <http://www.conceptdraw.com/en/products/cd5/reviews.php>

What? You still don't have Visio for your Mac? Me neither. So here is the next best thing; *ConceptDraw V Pro*.

Why choose the pro version over the standard version? Because the pro version not only does flowcharts, org charts, timelines and calendars, sales and marketing visuals, directional and geo maps, basic office layouts and website maps included in the standard version, but also does software and database diagramming, project management, mechanical and electrical engineering drawings, building, space and floor plans, computer network diagrams scientific illustrations and visualization solutions. These capabilities are included in the various categories as objects in *the Template Gallery*. And we can make our own libraries too. And it does all this in one of four languages; English, French German and Spanish.

The professional version also allows full support for the ConceptDraw Basic scripting language, support for AutoCAD DXF files up through version 13, (but not DWG files yet), and connectivity to ODC databases. It also imports and exports to other vector, raster, text and multimedia formats.

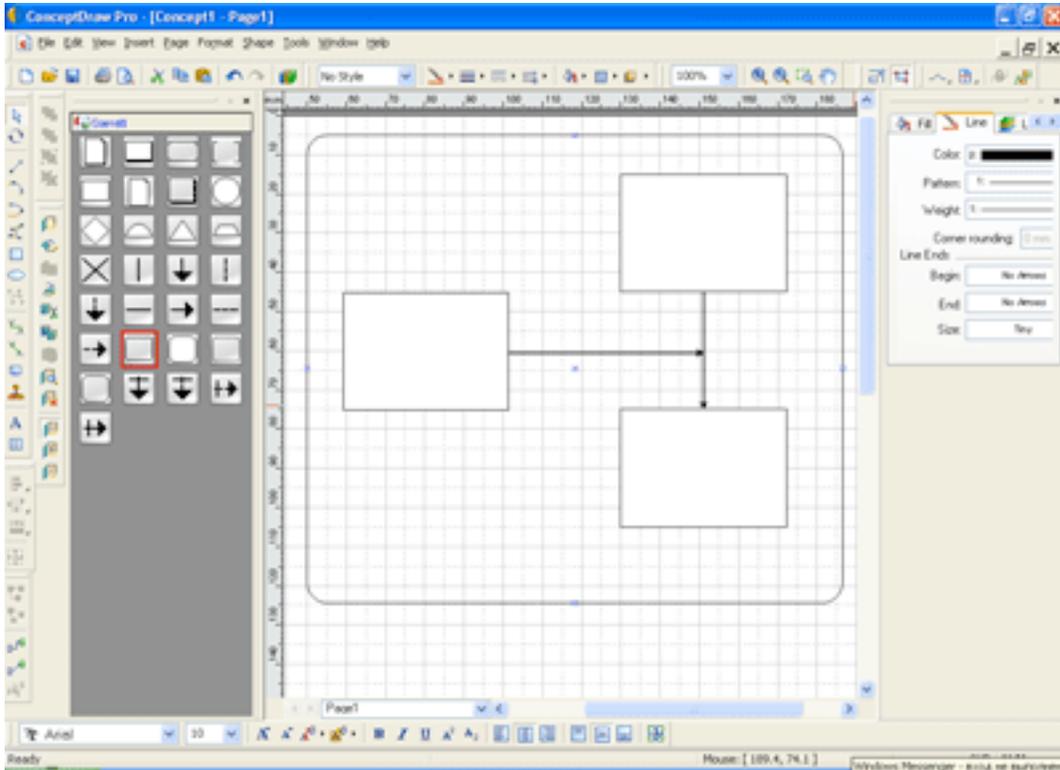




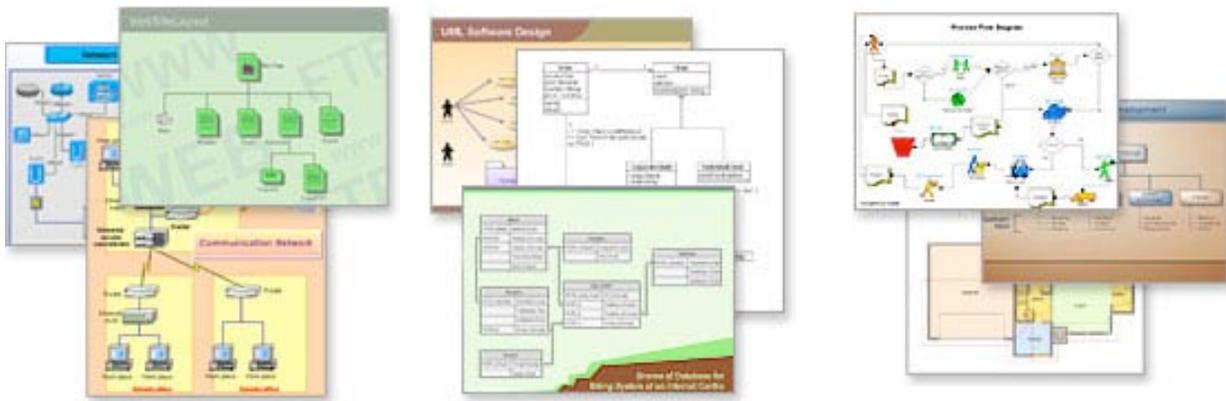
For the list price of \$350 USD, this vector-based program is available for both Mac and Windows-based systems. And it is backward-compatible with earlier versions of ConceptDraw we have reviewed here before, even though it has a new drawing engine, better text editor, built-in scripting and support for MS Visio XML (import/export) and the ability to save directly to an FTP server after exporting files to HTML. And it can also export to PDF and PowerPoint. It also interoperates with other ConceptDraw products, like MINDMAP and ConceptDraw Project.

One of the interesting things that *ConceptDraw V Pro* does is that it uses “Smart Connectors” that exhibit intelligent behavior that stay linked with their assigned shapes.

Here is what *ConceptDraw V Pro* looks like in XP Pro.



And here are screenshots of other aspects of *ConceptDraw V Pro*:



Now it's your turn to go try it and see if it meets or exceeds your needs.

# Default Folder — A full featured Finder enhancer focused on the open/save dialog boxes

reviewed by Harry {doc} Babad

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                         |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  <p><b>Default Folder 2.0.4</b><br/><b>Publisher:</b> St. Clair Software,<br/><b>Developer:</b> Jon Gotow<br/><a href="mailto:support@stclairsoft.com">support@stclairsoft.com</a><br/><a href="http://www.stclairsoft.com/DefaultFolderX/">www.stclairsoft.com/DefaultFolderX/</a></p> <p>\$35 USD Single user. Download allows a try to buy Demo. Released November 16, 2005</p> <p><b>File Size:</b> ca. 4.5 MB<br/><b>Uninstaller:</b> Provided</p> <p><b>Requirements:</b> Mac OS X 10.2 or later including Tiger.<br/>Well written Manual and ReadMe Files</p> <p><b>Audience:</b> All user levels.</p> |   |
| <p>Product and company names and logos in this review may be registered trademarks of their respective companies.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                         |

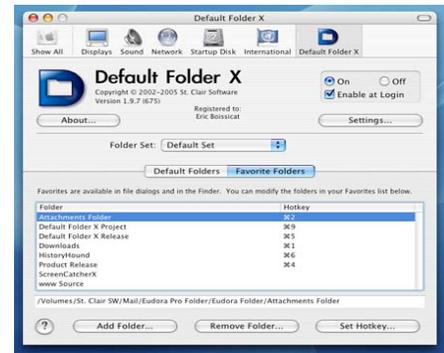
The software was tested on a 1 GHz dual processor PowerPC G4 Macintosh with 2 GB DDR SDRAM running under OS X 10.4.3.

## Software Overview

Default Folder X [DFX] is an application that enhances the Mac OS X Finder's *open* and *save* dialog windows by adding all sorts of features that enhance hard disk navigation. The software allows you to access your nested hierarchical menus in only one click. Accessing multiple sets of pre-selected favorite folders is a mouse click away. You can also quickly get to lists of your recently used folders. These features strengthen those provided by Apple in the *open* and *save or save as* dialog windows.

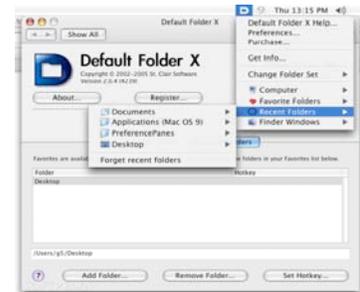
## Introduction

Tired of wasting time opening and saving files? By enhancing the Finder's Open and Save dialog boxes on your Macintosh, Default Folder makes managing your files an almost intuitive activity. After installing default folder and entering its registration, you can access the software from the dock, the open/save dialog boxes and from your systems preferences window.



The software provides many of the main features and functions of now discontinued Mac OS 9 commercial utilities such as *SuperBoomerang*, *Action Files*, and *Directory Assistance*. As a past user of both the Actions Utilities package and SuperBoomerang, I grieved at their demise. Then I discovered Default Folder.

In the Mac OS X, the familiar Open/Save (*Save As*) dialogs are limited in features a user might need. At times finders Open/Save dialog boxes have significant hard disk navigational limitations. Default Folder X enhances these dialog windows by adding convenient features to quickly get you where you want to go on your hard disk. Beyond accessing DFX from the open/save dialog boxes, you can also get to your defined sets of selected or recent folders from either the finder's menubar and dock.



Default Folder enhances file management by letting you:

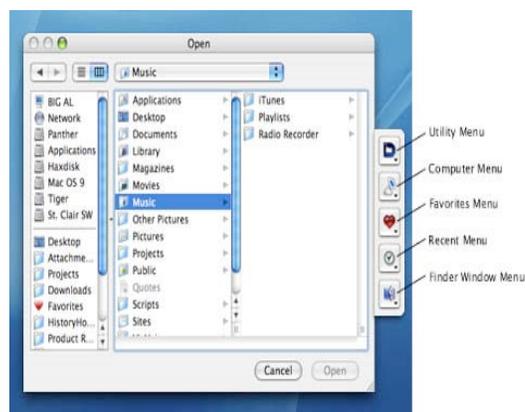
- Set up a default folder for any or all applications.
- Switch quickly among recently used folders.
- Easily navigate to your favorite folders.
- Share common sets of recent and favorite folders between all Open and Save dialogs, and more.

For years, Default Folder has helped speed other Macintosh users through the process of opening, saving, and managing files. Now it's my turn to work with the software. Unlike other products I've tested, DFX is well integrated with the Finder. By including providing system-wide menu navigation to accessing my frequently used files and folders, the software saves me both time and reduces my need to search dropdown menu lists.

### Working With the Product

Simply install Default Folder, set your preferences, and start using the software to save time when manipulating your files and folders. [You do pay shareware fees?] I have approximately 112,000 files on my machine so need all the help I can get (Right Now! On 11/23/05 6:02 PM and the list daily grows.)

Default Folder X attaches a toolbar to the right side of the Open and Save dialogs in any Mac OS X application. The toolbar gives you fast access to various folders and commands. You just click on the buttons to go to your favorite and recently used folders. From there, you can manage your folders and files, and make changes to the software's settings. For complete details about what's in each menu, check out the [Default Folder X in Open and Save Dialogs](#) chapter in the detailed website documentation.



However, for now just a summary works for me. The Default Folder X dock has five main buttons with well-defined and useful submenus. These *Buttons* include the Utility Menu, the Computer Menu, the Favorites Menu, the Recent (folders) Menu and the Finder Windows Menu. I found, despite doing some serious testing of the product, it will take a while more to learn the utilities' rich feature set. Nevertheless, I'm up to the goal of integrating most DFX's capabilities into my every day computing. I don't have space in this review to list these items and to describe their function, so read the manual or the ReadMe to explore the capabilities of this versatile utility.

One of my favorite features is DFX's ability to access my recent folders in a hieratical many giving me more control where to find just that document I need. [IO know I can also quickly find that document by using Spotlight, Apples Find, and better yet *EasyFind* (this issue). DFX can manage multiple groups of favorites and default folders by way of the OS X System Preferences. You can change any of Default Folder X's many settings as your needs evolve. Pictures and descriptions of all of the settings are included in the [Default Folder X Settings](#) chapter of the developer's documentation.

DFX provides many features that make it easier to work with open and save dialogs and more. The software is well designed and easy to learn. If used often, DFX can make your computing life even easier. Since it also functions outside of open/save file dialog boxes you gain a more universal access from either your dock or the Finder or an application's menu bar. For those of you who only want a functionally richer interface features in your open/save dialog boxes, never fear, DFX's more powerful features are not intrusive—you can grow into them.

## Software Limitations

From The WWW— I disagree with the unidentified author of the Softpedia product review of default folders.

[<http://www.softpedia.com/reviews/mac/Default-Folder-X-Review-12645.shtml>]

“If you have OS X 10.3 or better you don't really need this. But if you are running anything under, or if you use Classic, this really becomes a necessity.”

As noted in this issue of macCompanion the Apple OS Finder, as wonderful as it is, in reality an incomplete product. [E.g., EasyFind, Folder Contents and XMenu reviews]. In my other reviews of finder enhancement products, it is clear that many developers of haxies or OS X finder enhancements, many developers feel the same way. That's why there are so many developers creating enhancement programs that range for extension to the OS X dock, the finders search function or folder and file management.

## Conclusions

I fully agree with Brian G. Mason's review in the February 14, 2004 Issue of *Washington Apple Pi Journal*. The review comments I quote below still hold, and tells it better about DFX 2.0.4, than I can.

“Sometimes you find an application or a utility that eventually becomes such an integral part of how you work with your computer that you just wouldn't have the same experience with your computer if you didn't have it. This is the case with me and *Default Folder X*. Frankly, getting around my Mac when trying to open or save files, would be about twice as hard if I didn't have *Default Folder X*.”

“What *Default Folder X* provides me is the ability to find the files you want to open or find the places where you want to save your files very quickly and easily.”

I agree with Brian Mason, “You have a lot of flexibility with respect to how *Default Folder X* behaves. However, very simply, it attaches itself to the right side of your open or save dialog window and gives you several options for locating a folder or a file available to your computer. You can get where you want to go based on the drives available to your Mac, the favorite folders you have defined, the latest places you've visited on your Mac, or the folders you currently have sitting on your desktop.”

My only complaint about this product, or perhaps with me, is that despite seeing it demonstrated at a user group meeting, I didn't check it out sooner. I rate this product 4.5 macC's.

# DeltaGraph 5 version 5.6.1 – Premier Graphing Solution for the Mac

reviewed by Robert Pritchett



Red Rock Software, Inc.  
10 W Broadway Suite 850 Salt Lake City, UT 84101  
801-322-4322

<http://www.redrocksw.com>

\$300 USD, Academic License, \$200 USD.

**Demo:** <http://support.redrocksw.com/downloads/>

**Released:** May 15, 2005.

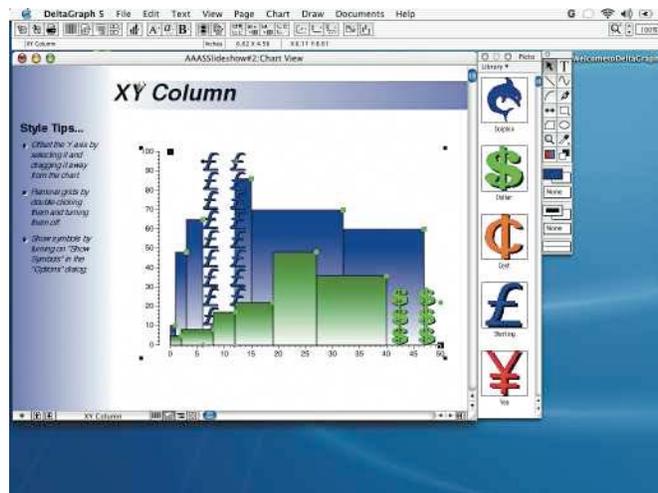
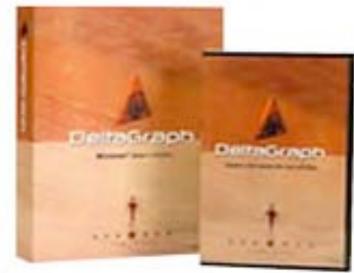
**Requirements:** Mac OS 9, Mac OS X 10.1.5 or later; G3 or later; 128 MB RAM; 50 MB Hard drive space; 256 colors, resolution 800 x 600 or higher. Comes with a thick User's Guide.

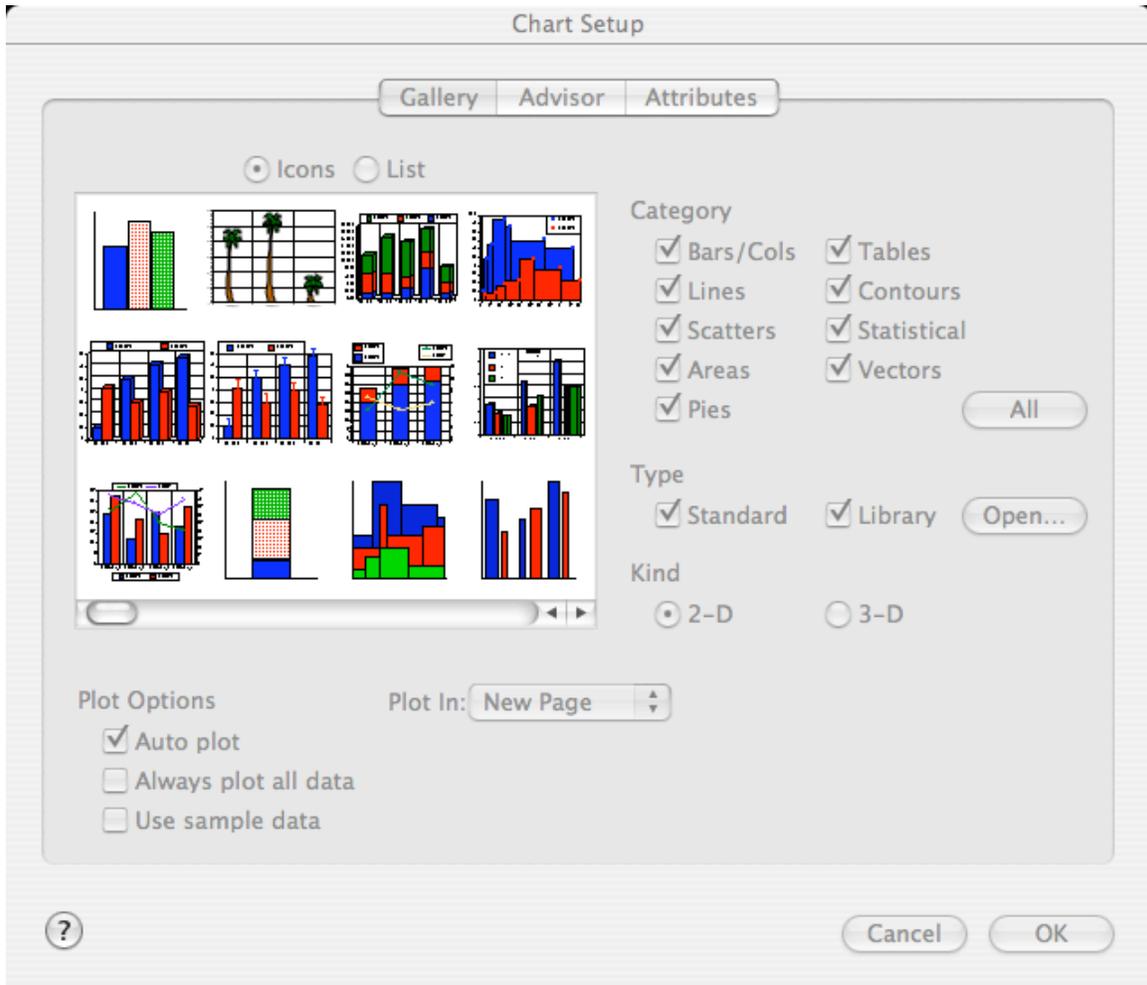
**Strengths:** Cross-platform.

**Weaknesses:** None found.

How would you like to take MS Excel graphing and charting even further than it is capable of doing today?

DeltaGraph 5 can use 84 different chart types to enable data visualization for business, technical data, statistics and quality control. This version also imports and exports 39 file types. Data analysis can be done using 25 mathematical functions using a built-in formula builder. And the graphing capabilities are also customizable. PDFing, transparency and Quartz shadowing are also capabilities using Mac OS X, as well as AppleScripting.





There are various 2D and 3D chart configurations, but there are 4 view types; Data View, Chart View, Sorter View and Outliner View.

One of the functions of DeltaGraph is a templating process using Smart layouts and backgrounds that automatically align and size elements on a page according to the attributes assigned to their corresponding placeholder. This helps with working the 84 chart types.

If you want to, you can turn charts inside out, upside down and even use them in slideshows. Along with the program there is a library of what is known as the *DeltaSymbol* font that can be used to represent data or data series that can be optioned from the *Symbols* command or pictographs from an open Custom Library.

And speaking of options, there seems to be nearly an infinite number of adjustments that can be accomplished with any of the chart types.

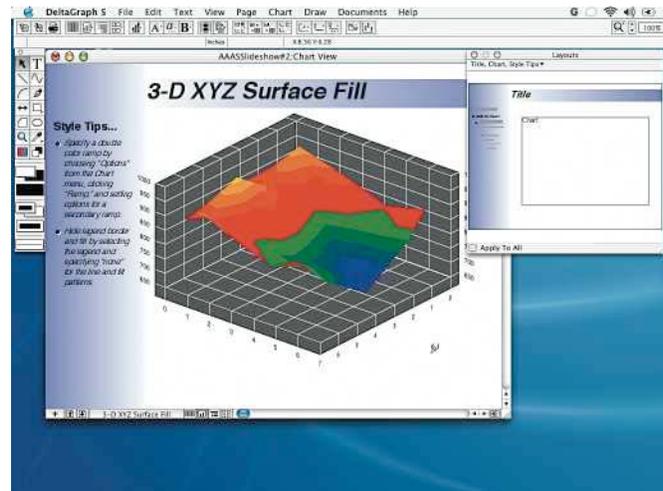
There is even a drawing program inside DeltaGraph in case existing objects are not to your liking. However, more importantly, there is a function perhaps not seen elsewhere and that is applying and defining Error Bars and Curve Fits. What these do is illustrate actual errors, statistical probability of errors and even general approximation of spread in data and appear as 2 short dashes for upper and lower values with a line connecting them at their centers, so standard deviation can actually have real meaning added to them. Curve fitting deals with power, exponential, logarithmic and polynomial curves. The point being, that as an equation represents data being fit, the better the fit, the smaller the distances are from the curve to the actual data points. And there are two types of curve fits; equations and splines.

The User's Guide has an Appendix that shows the chart types as a quick reference for both 2D and 3D business, technical, statistical and quality control and text charts. It doesn't actually show all 84 chart types, but it does provide pictures of the various types and descriptions. Of the 18 chapters in the User's Guide, Chapter 2 is a tutorial, so I won't provide a tutorial here.

And by the way, the Help menu covers the same ground as the hard-copy version of the User's Guide.

This is serious Enterprise-level software designed to provide visual stimulation in regards to takes graphing and charting much further than can be done using MS Excel by

making raw strategic data speak and dance in presentations. After all, isn't that what this is all about? Give meaning to data and use both sides of the brain to understand it.



## EvoCam 3.5.1

reviewed by Robert Pritchett



EvoLogical

[info@evological.com](mailto:info@evological.com)

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

**Product Site:** <http://www.evological.com/evocam.html>

**Released:** July 15, 2005

\$25 USD, Site License, \$250 <http://order.kagi.com/cgi-bin/store.cgi?storeID=S75&&>

**Download:** <http://www.evological.com/download.html>

**Requirements:** Mac OS X 10.3 or later, lots of hard drive space for recordings.

**Supported Servers and cameras:** <http://www.evological.com/cameras.html>

**FAQs:** <http://www.evological.com/evocamfaq.html>

**Forums:** <http://www.evological.com/forums.html>

**Strengths:** Works well with Macs and cameras locally, with LANS and WANS.

**Weaknesses:** Some setting changes cause EvoCam to go “poof” on this machine. Your mileage may vary.

**Using it:** [http://www.macmerc.com/articles/Mini\\_Media\\_Mac/288](http://www.macmerc.com/articles/Mini_Media_Mac/288)

In order to round out the Wireless Surveillance hardware for the Mac over in the Hardware Review section for this month’s *macCompanion*, there needs to be software to interoperate with it. EvoCam fits the bill nicely.

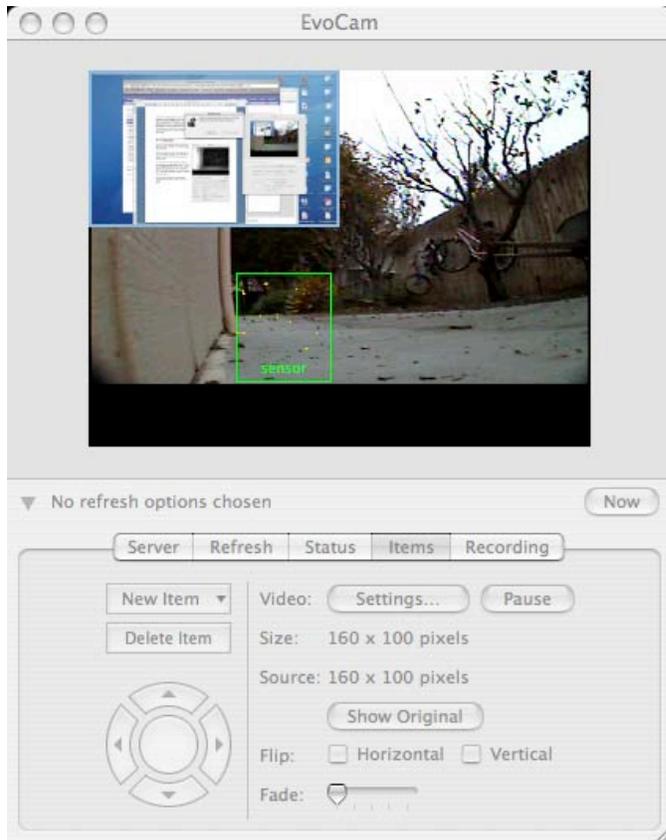
Webcam software for the Mac. Yes! Downloading and installing this was easy. With the iMac G5 with the internal iSight, you can get up-and-running in no time, assuming you want to post your mug online or use it as a network camera. Another option is to display the computer screen info to all the world or your network – or to QuickTime. Big Brother, anyone? In this case, we are using it for a home wireless surveillance security system.

There is a surprisingly large number of camera names used in a dropdown list, all QuickTime –compatible. There are also a large number of compression types as well.

Shots can be done real-time in streaming video or as time-released snapshots that can be sent to and FTP or SFTP server and the shots can be motion-sensored for capturing data (the sensor feature changes color between green, orange and red to indicate movement or not).

The fun part? It comes with a password-protected web-server of its own and others can connect to it using any Java-capable browser.





Oh, and multiple cameras can be independently run at the same time. And we should also state that it is AppleScriptable.

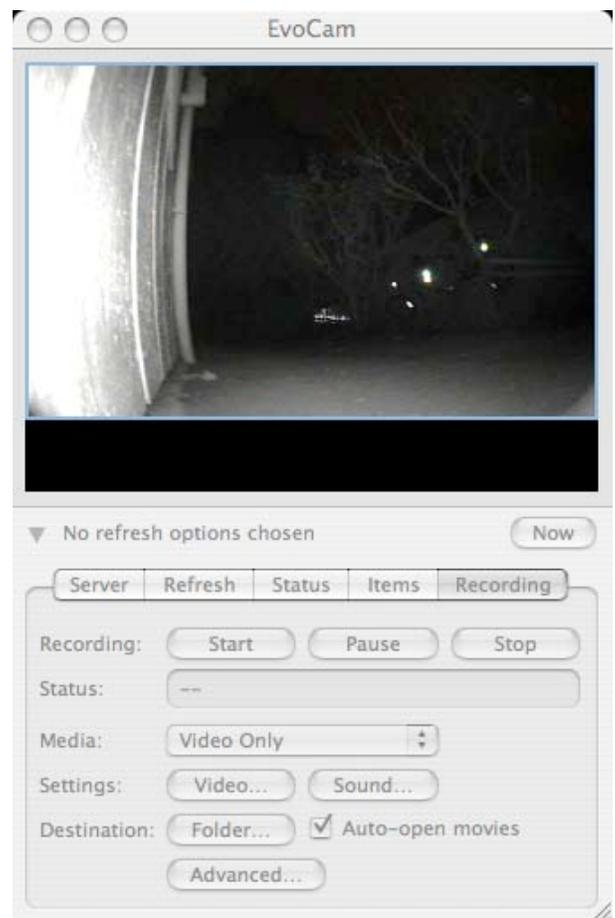
More? How about going online automatically anywhere from 1 minute to 1 hour? Or sound-only recording?

Here is a night view using the 23-LED night-vision surveillance camera. The wall really is straight, but the SONY CCD lens gives us a fish-eye view. And the input goes from color to black-and-white at night.

Am I going to put my iSight up so everyone can see me or my office online? Why? But if I show the blind spots out front so they are visible inside, either connected to a TV or the iMac G5 – or the other computer systems, to me that does make sense.

And marrying this app with the hardware configuration also makes sense, don't you think?

If that isn't enough, this also comes with a few other options for the screen such as text captioning, picture badging, time clocks and other QuickTime effects. Those would be such things as adjustments for alpha gain, brightness and contrast, color synch from source or destination profiles or a matching option for photos, graphics or logos, balance of hue saturation and lightness or red, green and blue, blurring, edge detection, embossing and general convolution kernel filtering, cloud and fire generation, ripple generation (gives the "looking underwater" effect), sharpening, color style, tint and film noise (scratch lines running through film) and lens flare effects.



## Mac School – Student Management

reviewed by Robert Pritchett



3001 Wayburne Drive

Suite 275

Burnaby, BC V56 4W3

Canada

1-800-999-9931

FAX: 1-604-294-2225

[info@chancery.com](mailto:info@chancery.com)

[http://www.chancery.com/cont\\_us.html](http://www.chancery.com/cont_us.html)

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

**Product Site:** [http://www.chancery.com/prod\\_macschool.html](http://www.chancery.com/prod_macschool.html)

**Released:** Mac OS X version - 2001.

Annual Contract from \$600.00 USD and up.

**Requirements:** Client; Mac OS 8.6 or later; PowerPC; 1 GB hard drive space, network connection. Server; Same as above, but t300-600 MB hard drive space and server software for Macs or a Windows PC Pentium II 266 MHz or later with Windows 2000, NT Server or later or Novell Netware 5.1 or later.

**MacSchool Demo:** Webex Player is required to view the 14MB WebEx file with 1024x768 resolution.

**Training:** [http://www.chancery.com/serv\\_train.html](http://www.chancery.com/serv_train.html)

**Demo:** <http://www.k12planet.com/demo.asp>

**In Use:** <http://www.k12planet.com/>

[http://www.chancery.com/press\\_case.html](http://www.chancery.com/press_case.html)



**Strengths:** Cross-platform. 15 years strong. Modular.

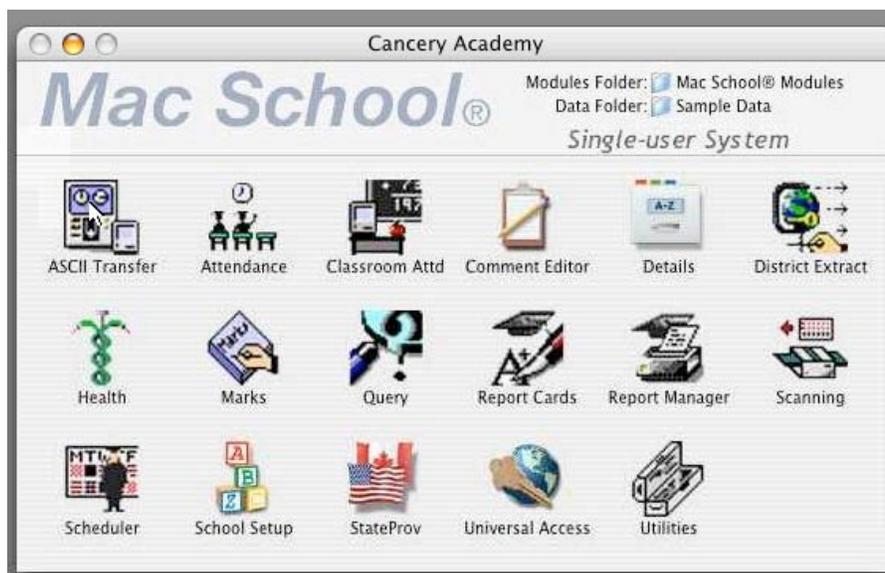
**Weaknesses:** Looks like early Mac software, but it does the job.

**Competitor:** PowerSchool

**Comparisons:**

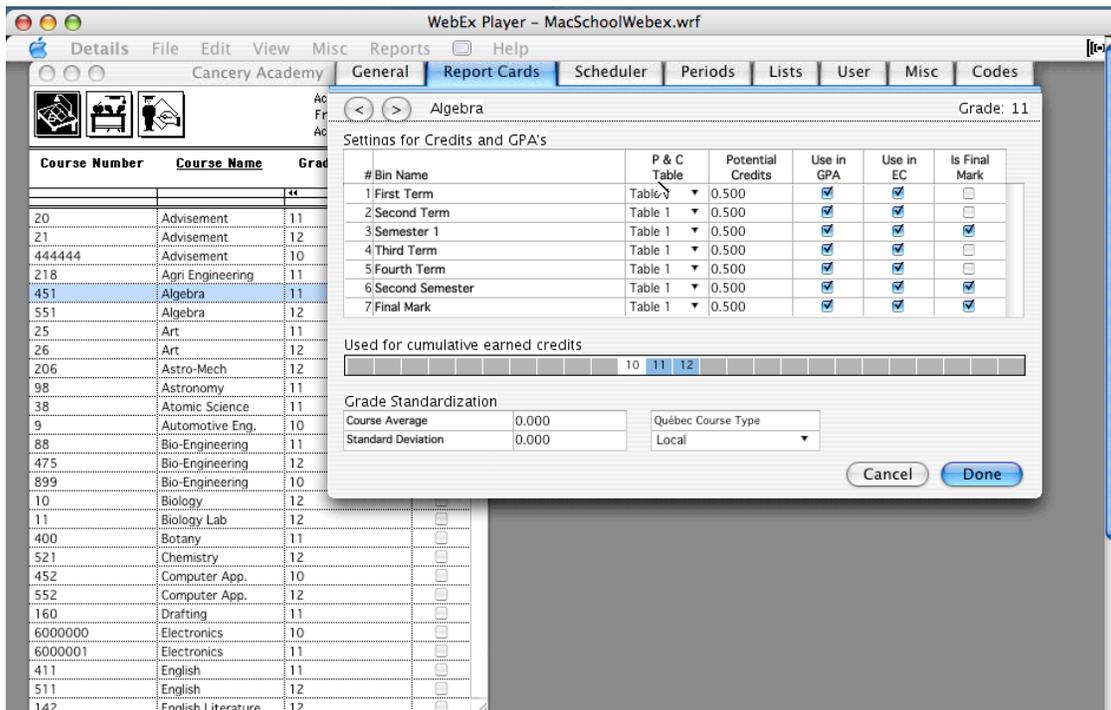
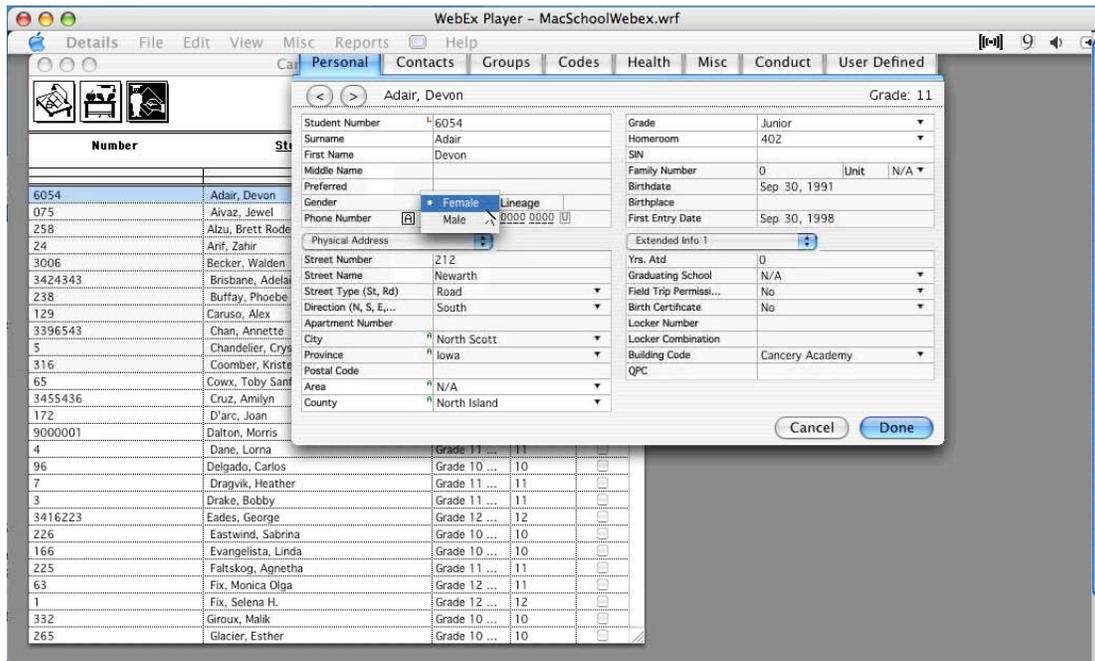
<http://www.mchs.net/technology/POWERSCHOOLFILES/PSvsMS.htm>

We are on a quest to find electronic grading software. Chancery has been around for about 15 years and started with Mac School. In 2005, the product has grown substantially to become a soup-to-nuts school-district-wide client-server, annual fee-based program. Lately, it has added Mac OS X aquification, but it still looks like something that came from Mac OS 8.6.



Check out the WebEx-based 45-minute presentation to see if it fits your school environment situation.

Our initial desire was to just be able to do simple report card automation. This is much, much more.



It still has the look and feel of 1980-1990 software, HyperCard-like, however. Just look at the graphics and the lists. And maybe that is all educators really care about. They must be doing something right, because, combined with the other Chancery Software products are in the hands of over ½ million folks who deal with students on a daily basis around the USA.

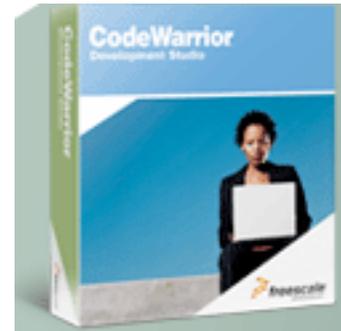
All the administrative drudgework can be captured here and hopefully is used in such a way that instructors can do what they are paid to do – teach.

What is captured here is student demographics, a place to record conduct and health information as well as gradebook organization, report carding, transcribing, attendance, master/student scheduling, relational database querying, managing reports and access by other apps.

So here is one app that works cross-platform and has been doing it for years, but provides much more than just “keeping classroom records” for educational institutions.

## ***Metrowerks' Swan Song: The Final Release of CodeWarrior for Macintosh***

reviewed by Jonathan Hoyle



Freescale Developer Technology Organization

<http://www.metrowerks.com>

### **Product Site:**

**Released:** October 31, 2005

Metrowerks CodeWarrior 10

\$99 for the Professional Edition, FREE for the Learning Edition. Available via

Download at: <http://www.metrowerks.com/MW/Develop/Desktop/Mac10.htm>

**Requirements:** Mac OS X 10.2.8 or later, a Macintosh with a PowerPC processor, G3 or faster (G4 recommended), 128 MB of RAM, 800 MB hard drive space.

**Audience:** Software developers still using Metrowerks CodeWarrior.

**Strengths:** Fast, easy to use, best PowerPC compiler.



**Weakness:** No 64-bit support, cannot debug on Intel-based Macintoshes.

Those who have been developing software for the Macintosh these past 12 years are already well familiar with Metrowerks CodeWarrior. CodeWarrior had been the dominant C/C++ compiler for Mac development until very recently, and there remains a large number of projects built with CodeWarrior even now. Due to extraordinary shortsightedness on the part of Freescale, Metrowerks' parent company, CodeWarrior has gone from dominant marketshare to product cancellation in only two short years. With this version, CodeWarrior 10 for Mac OS X will be the final release of this great product. Those still using CodeWarrior will find this upgrade to be one of the best values ever released by Metrowerks. Normally \$499, this final edition of CodeWarrior is being sold for an unbelievably low \$99. The Academic version, normally \$199, is being given away **free**.

However, this release is being made only for a limited time: Metrowerks plans to discontinue sales of CodeWarrior for the Mac in the spring of 2006.

### **The Good**

Despite Apple marketing on Xcode, CodeWarrior remains the fastest, most optimal C/C++ compiler available on the Mac. It is also the only viable compiler that can simultaneously target Mach-O, CFM/PEF and Classic. A number of welcome new features are available in version 10, including text-based XML projects, better Packager support, better C++ template specialization support and a number of MSL updates for cleaner development.

Some of the most exciting changes are with PowerPlant, Metrowerks' native application framework. With CodeWarrior 10, PowerPlant users will now be able to directly access .nib files created with *Interface Builder*. In addition, PowerPlant is now more HIV savvy, with wrappers available for more modern Carbon classes.

In one of their biggest announcements, Metrowerks will be releasing PowerPlant, PowerPlant X and Constructor into the Open Source community. This allows current users to take their PowerPlant projects with them if and when they emigrate to Xcode. With the huge number of PowerPlant projects in the Macintosh community, this announcement makes the future of these products much brighter.

### **The Bad**

Introduced with CodeWarrior 9, a copy protection file, named license.dat, is created whenever you install CodeWarrior 10. After installation, you are prompted to enter your registration number on Metrowerks' web site to obtain a license key, which in turn must be entered back into the application. Without this license key, CodeWarrior drops into demo mode. Problems appear when you try to do install CodeWarrior 10 a second time, say when on an upgraded machine or laptop. Entering your registration number on the Metrowerks web site a second time returns an error, telling you that this number has already been registered. You then have to go through Metrowerks support, and it becomes quite the hassle. Metrowerks' recommendation is to back up your license.dat file, and after each reinstall, copy this file back in manually, overwriting the installed license.dat.

Another disappointing aspect of CodeWarrior 10 is what it lacks: G5 and 64-bit support. This is probably a small matter, now that Apple has announced its decision to move to Intel processors. Since neither G5-specific nor 64-bit applications will run under Rosetta (the PowerPC emulator on the Intel-based Macintoshes), it seems a moot point now. However, it would have been a nice option to allow the PowerPC programmer to take full advantage of the G5, even if it meant it would not run on Intel.

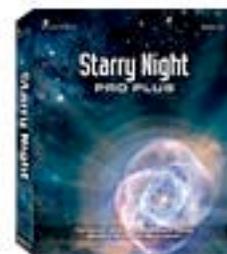
### **The Ugly**

Although CodeWarrior 10 does install and run on Intel-based Macintoshes (under Rosetta emulation), you cannot debug with it. This is primarily due to the fact that Rosetta applications cannot talk to Apple's Intel-based gdb debugger. This limitation is not specific to CodeWarrior, as it arises anytime you wish to debug Rosetta emulated apps (including Apple's own Xcode). This unfortunately narrows the usability of CodeWarrior. Developers will have no choice but to plan an emigration strategy to Xcode at some point.

### **Conclusion**

For those who still have CodeWarrior projects to maintain, this final release from Metrowerks is a must have. It is reasonably priced and will allow a smoother transition to Intel for when the time comes.

## Starry Night Pro Plus - through the eyes of an Astronomy Newbie reviewed by Ted Bade



Imaginova Canada Ltd.

284 Richmond Street East, Suite 300

Toronto Ontario,

CANADA, M5A 1P4

(800) 252-5417

**Fax:** (416) 603-8389

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

<http://store.starrynightstore.com/stniproplve5.html>

\$250 USD for full version. Less expensive version are available that don't include all the features of the Pro Plus version that was reviewed.



**Requirements:** Requires Mac OS X 10.3 or higher, G4 800 MHz or higher processor, 256 MB RAM (512 MB recommended) and 3.0 GB of hard disk space for full install. Will not run on Mac OS 9.x or earlier. OpenGL® support requires a 64 MB OpenGL® capable graphics card. Minimum recommended monitor resolution of 1024 x 768 pixels. DVD-ROM drive required for installation.

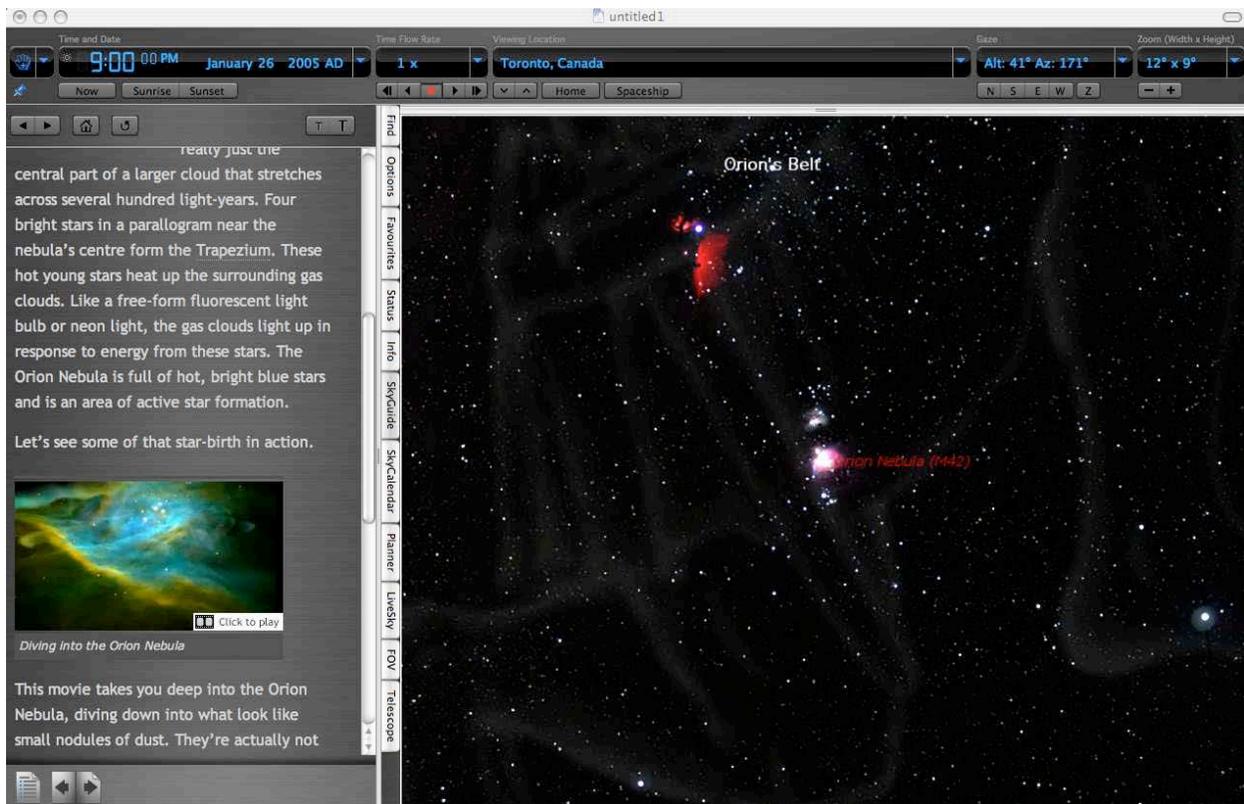
**Strengths:** Ton of information, great graphics, supports computerized telescopes. This program offers everything a person new to astronomy could ask for.

**Weaknesses:** Somewhat unrealistic magnified views. Web related information is not always available.

Recently I acquired an interest in Astronomy. It wasn't a sudden thing, it was more that I failed to act on this interest for most of my teen-then-adult life. When I decided to act on this interest, I began researching a variety of resources, equipment, and of course programs for my Mac that would be of use to this interest. My most recent acquisition has been the latest version of Starry Night Pro Plus (SNP) developed by Imaginova of Canada. There are a number of reasons why this program is what I would consider the primo tool for an Astronomy beginner and I would like to share these with you.

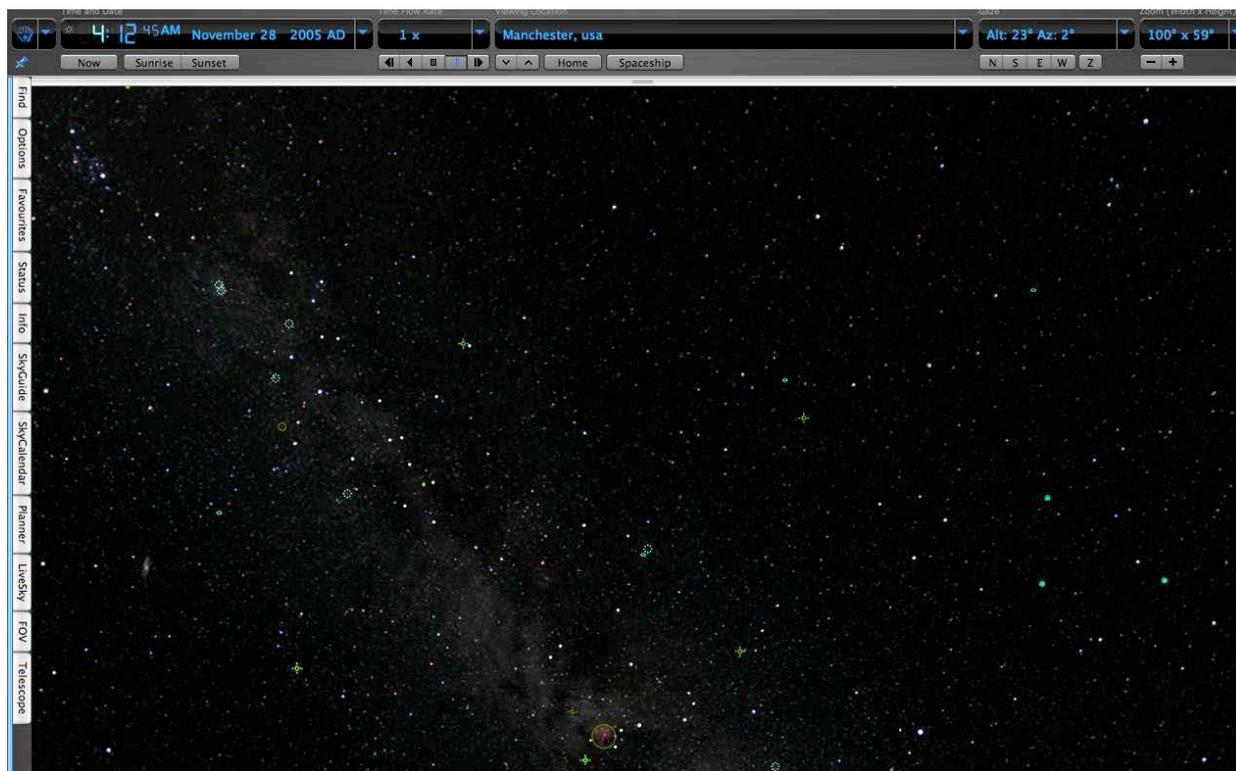
There are several aspects of SNP that I think are a real value for the beginner.

1. Realistic real time display of the skies at your location.
2. Heads up display of the real time sky.
3. The ability to simulate the magnified view of stellar objects using the abilities of the optical equipment you have (or would like to have).
4. Telescope control if you have a computerized telescope
5. A logbook feature to keep track of your personal observations.
6. Skyguide section offering a true wealth of astronomy related information.
7. Livesky feature that integrates information on the Internet into the program.



A realistic view of the sky is something I found essential to learning my way around the skies. Having almost no knowledge of what is up there, I stand in my backyard and see just so many pinpoints of light. Sure they form patterns. That is an aspect of the human imagination, but rarely do the patterns that I see have anything to do with the traditional astronomy figures.

A feature in SNP can be used to “Auto-identify” constellations, superimposing the dots of a constellation with the traditional figure it was named for as you center a section of the sky in the view window. You can also turn on the ”Stick figure” option, so that you see a line drawn through the major stars forming that constellation.



The heads up display aspect of SNP is a very useful tool. What this does is bring up a table of information about a stellar object as the cursor rests over the object. I can look at the sky on the screen, find a bright point, and when I move the cursor to it, learn about the object. This is even more useful when bringing SNP outside, actually finding a point in the sky, then moving the SNP view to the same point and learning what is there.

A *Ctrl* or right-click on an object in the sky brings up a menu of many things that the software can do with this object, such as centering or labeling it, and my favorite, magnifying it.

SNP options allow you to turn on symbols that indicate the location of a variety of deep space objects that might only be seen using a telescope. While this isn't realistic, I found it very useful to help locate them in the sky and to help me determine if my view would be blocked by the numerous terrestrial objects in my yard. I live in New England, there are lots of trees and houses that get in the way of a good view.



Another aspect of the heads up display is the use of standard colors and magnitudes of stars. If a star or planet has a more red hue, the program will show this, and brighter objects will appear larger and brighter. This makes the view of SNP more realistic so when you look at the actual sky, it is easier to compare and identify what you are seeing.

While looking at the night sky with your eyes can be a lot of fun and very beautiful, looking at certain aspects of the sky with binoculars or a telescope can be breathtaking. Here SNP can help as well. While viewing objects with a program will never be as spectacular as seeing them with your own eyes through your own equipment, this program offers some very tantalizing views!

If you own optical equipment such as a pair of binoculars or a telescope you can add their optical parameters to SNP. Then you can choose to have SNP show you what it would look like if viewed using your equipment. For a telescope you also provide information about the eyepieces you own (or hope to own), then select which eyepiece you want a simulation of when magnifying a view. A FOV (Field Of View) menu of the SNP allows you to apply various optical functions to the view of an object. If you don't happen to own any equipment yourself, you can put an imaginary one together or use the canned ones that come with the program. The selections to choose from include a good variety of current standard optical equipment.

While the program window shows an entire section of the sky, a FOV (Field of View) reticule delineates a circle of what would be seen through the eyepiece. Surely the view provided by SNP is that of perfect optics and sky conditions, but it does give one and idea of what to expect.

When I bought my telescope, I was excited that the onboard computer could direct me to a variety of interesting sights in the night sky. I have to admit that I was so new to this that I had little idea what to expect when I looked. I would let the telescope give me a tour of the sky, but had little idea of what I was looking at, often never really finding anything. Using the features of SNP I can not only get an idea how the sky looks with the object of interest centered, but also view a simulation of the object magnified as it would be with a telescope. Not to mention that a paragraph or more of information about most objects can be easily accessed as well.

The only failing point of this feature is that what you see using SNP is a timed image showing color and making the object brighter than through a telescope. When you view objects through a telescope, your eyes can collect only so much light. In these low light conditions, the part of your eyes that see color don't get enough light, so what you generally see is a grayscale image. So the SNP view is not totally realistic, but it is still a very useful feature.

While we are on the topic of using a telescope, I should mention that SNP can be used to control several computerized telescopes. This feature isn't available in all of the other versions of Starry Night.

SNP knows how to communicate with a variety of telescope controls through a variety of interfaces. If you have a particular telescope, check their web site to be sure it will work with your scope if you intend to use it for that.

I need to point out that my particular telescope, a Meade LXD75 with Autostar was not one of the options. However, it appears that one of the other Meade AutoStar options works with my telescope. I say appears, because, I haven't had a chance to bring the telescope outside connected to SNP yet, although I did manage to communicate and control it in the confines of my study. (This is not a real test because the telescope wasn't aligned nor was it looking at anything for real.

The telescope control interface is pretty nice and easy to use. Not only can you select an object in the SNP night sky and select to move the telescope to that object, but you can also manually control the scope movement as well as the all-important aspect of synchronizing the scope with reality.

When you slew the telescope to an object using SNP, it might not be exactly centered on the object. What you do is center the object manually, then click on the "Sync Gaze" button, giving SNP a more exact idea of where the telescope is really pointed. The more in synch your telescope is with the computer control, the better chance you will have of locating a faint object.

The Apple PowerBook is the perfect computer for using with a telescope. The lighted keyboard is bright enough to see, in the dark, but can be set dimly enough to not really affect your "night vision". SNP itself provides a "night vision aspect that illuminates the computer screen with a red light. As you might know, red light doesn't adversely affect your night vision, which is why Astronomers use red flashlight to read charts. Turning this on when using the PowerBook with a telescope is a must. The red illumination effect stays on even if you switch to another application.

Another aspect of amateur viewing is that of keeping a logbook. Previously I have opened a document in TextEdit and kept my notes in that. SNP offers a Log entry feature to keep your notes. When you click on the log entry button for an object, the current date, time, and place are attached to your comment. A text area is available to type in your personal thoughts on the viewing. The logbook feature also allows you to quickly select what equipment you used for your observation (if you added your equipment to SNP as described above). There are also pull down menus to quickly comment on sky and viewing conditions. An export log function allows you to export your log information to a text file you can later edit or add to a more permanent journal.

To set up for a viewing session, you can advance the time on SNP and poke around the evening sky, adding any objects of interest to your planner. Then when you are out at night, you can use the planner side panel as a guide for the evening rather than trying to figure out what to view while you are outside. Using the planner can really help with a night of observations. You can spend all the time you need during the daylight hours deciding what would be best viewed in the evening, and can apply the various features of SNP to educate yourself on the objects and what they will look like. When the evening comes you will be ready to enjoy the evening of observation.

If you have a high-speed connection to the Internet, you can use SNP to access a variety of information related to astronomy and viewing the heavens. The :“Sky Guide” side tab lists events happening in the current month that would be interesting to view if local. Items not local can be simulated with SNP. The information provided includes information on moon, planets, and other interesting sky events. As mentioned, the listing shows the current month, not what is happening in the next 30 days. As I look at it at the end of November, I can see all the things I missed early in the month! There is also a link to astronomy news related items.

Hidden in this area is a wealth of educational guides that can be found by clicking on the table of contents icon at the bottom of the side panel. Doing this brings up a huge collection of topics covering just about anything a beginner could imagine to ask about! A good place to start would be the sub-category titled, “Your First Night out.” Or you can move to more complex topics such as coordinate systems, Astrophotography 101, and Night sky tours. One could easily spend months running through the information contained here. What makes this aspect of SNP a lot better than a textbook is the fact that SNP offers a planetarium like show to demonstrate various concepts. Where appropriate, QuickTime movies are used as well. For those interested in a little armchair astronomy, SNP includes a tour of Hubble Space telescope images. While these aren’t images you will get with any terrestrial based telescope, the tour is definitely worth a visit or two. There is even a dictionary of Astronomy terms included in this section.

I should also note that there are many more features in this program, most of which I haven’t yet learned to use. At a Astronomy course I took at a local community college, SNP was used to help the students learn several different aspects of astronomy, from observing the behavior of constellations to learning about double stars, and much, much more.

Not everyone will want to pay for the full version. There are several versions of Starry Night, set at different levels of cost and information. The Imaginova web site lists what each version includes. It would make a lot of sense to check out this web site to decide which version is best for you or the person you intend to buy it for.

Starry Night Pro Plus is a wonderful tool for any astronomer. It is rich with information and features. It is a must have for anyone truly interested in astronomy. I give this program top ratings!

## TheRecipeManager 2.0

reviewed by Harry {doc} Babad

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                            |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>Publisher:</b> TheDataManager, Inc.<br/><a href="mailto:support@TheRecipeManager.com">support@TheRecipeManager.com</a><br/><a href="mailto:theChef@TheRecipeManager.com">theChef@TheRecipeManager.com</a><br/><a href="http://www.therecipeanager.com">www.therecipeanager.com</a></p> <p><b>Released:</b> November 2005.<br/>\$40 USD [Available as a download or as a physical product.]<br/><b>File Size:</b> about 20.6 MB</p> <p><b>Requirements:</b><br/>Macintosh; G3 or higher with 256 MB RAM (512 MB RAM recommended.)<br/>Mac OS X 10.2 or later; CD-ROM Drive; 60 MB free hard disk space; monitor resolution of 1024 x 768 dpi.<br/>Windows; Pentium with 128 MB RAM (256 MB RAM recommended)<br/>Windows 2000 or Windows XP; CD-ROM drive; 60 MB free hard disk space;<br/>Monitor resolution of 1024 x 768 dpi.</p> <p><b>Audience:</b> Any and all recipe collectors who want to manager their recipe collections to optimize their usefulness.</p> <p><b>Strengths:</b> It's the best cooking software program I've yet found. <i>TRM 2.0</i> is the first recipe software package that lives up to the claim that it makes it easy to add and organize <i>all</i> my recipes in one place. Its powerful search capabilities make it a trivial task to find just the right recipe quickly, based on single or multiple criteria. The software includes 740 recipes that are both great to cook and good examples of how <i>TRM 2.0</i> functions. An excellent FAQ is also included. Although adding new recipes from my collection is not yet an automatic process, it is now easier to carry out. This is in part due to the fact that my collection is formatted in about a dozen different ways that don't fit the <i>TRM 2.0's data formatting</i> template, depending on the recipe source. However, new enhanced import function allows you to more easily capture and format recipes from web pages, text files, Adobe PDF files and more.</p> <p><b>Weaknesses:</b> Nothing significant. Some of the items on my wish list cannot be implemented (yet), because of limitations of the Omnis database engine.</p> <p>The well-drafted 33-page Users Guide provided is in searchable PDF format.</p> | <br> |
| <p>Product and company names and logos in this review may be registered trademarks of their respective companies.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <p><i>The software was tested on a 1 GHz dual processor PowerPC G4 Macintosh with 2 GB DDR SDRAM running under OS X 10.4.3.</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                            |

**Review Support** - I've worked with three members of the TRM development staff: Larry, Barcot, Kelly Burgess, and Jeff Eckert. They remain the most responsive folks of any team I've interacted with while testing software for macC.

## Developers Overview

“*TheRecipeManager* [TRM] is a robust recipe organization tool, for novices or chefs. It is capable of handling thousands of recipes. Each recipe can contain multiple layers of pertinent information like staging (preparing a recipe over several days), variations on the basic recipe, and the ability to add background information about the recipes. The application also has a complete *Kitchen Helper* section, which allows you to add *Cooking Tips* and *Measure(s) Conversion* information, and often offers ingredient substitution, as well as cooking and serving suggestions.



“The product has a large capacity for adding your own favorite recipes. Its publisher notes that the number of recipes you will be able to add depends on the size of your hard disk, as well as the number and resolution of photos you add to your recipes. If your photos are very large, it will reduce the number that your computer can handle comfortably. The developers have run TRM *comfortably* with as many as 30,000 recipes, a significantly greater number than my modest now 7,000 item collection.”

## Introduction

In this review, I've compared the current product features with that of *TRM 1.1.1*, described the new and enhanced features and software attributes and shamelessly adopted and edited the information provided by the developers that says what I want to share more clearly than I can. [Oh, of course such use of copy written material is by permission of the developers.]

*TRM 2.0*, built on the powerful and flexible Omnis Database engine, provides searchable access to almost all of a recipe's contents from key ingredients to preparation hints so beats the heck out of searching your individual collection item-by-item to find just the right recipe for dinner or... I'm less familiar with Omnis' capabilities than those of FileMaker Pro. But that is not an issue since all database engines serve as a tool for you to gain control of your data, in this case a recipe collection. The product is capable of looking at a recipe or recipe collection in a multidimensional fashion enhancing the chance you will find it again. It's just what you need to fully index a large recipe collection. *TRM 2.0* makes finding just the one or three you want to cook easy and accurate.

This is the first recipe software package that lives up to the claim that it makes it easy to add and organize *all my* recipes in one place. Its powerful search capabilities make it a trivial task to find just the right recipe quickly, based on single or multiple criteria. Although adding new recipes from my collection is not yet an automatic process, it is now easier to carry out. This is in part due to the fact that my collection is formatted in about a dozen different ways that don't fit the *TRM 2.0's data formatting* template, depending on the recipe source. However, new enhanced import function allows you to more easily capture and format recipes from web pages, text files, Adobe PDF files and more.

Feel free to check out both my June 2005 review of version 1.x of *TheRecipeManager* and my 3RFS column, [*In Search of Perfect Recipe and Cooking Software*, macC March 2005, Volume 3, Issue 3]. My present review of *TRM 2.0* builds on those articles.

## Working With the Product

**Getting Started** - Installation is very straightforward both for new users and those who've enjoyed using version 1.1.1. Double-click the icon and follow the installation instructions. On a multi-user Macintosh, the application will work for everyone on your computer. Each different account user will have his or her own recipe data. The first time the owner of an account launches *TheRecipeManager* on your computer, a copy of all the included recipes and a user preferences file are created in that user's directory. Each user will then have their own settings and their own recipes.



**User Preferences** - The user preferences tracks where your recipe data is and what locations windows were in the last time you closed them. Some windows (like the Cooking View) allow you to make the font size smaller or larger, column make widths either wider or narrower and chose how the ingredients and instructions are displayed. The preferences track that information and more for you as well. If you ever want to go back to default settings, just throw away your preferences file - a new one will be created the next time you open the application.

**Updating TRM 2.0** - If you are installing this as an update from a previous version you do not need to remove the old version first – this installation will replace the first one. Though your 'old' recipe data will be automatically modified to work with this new Version, you should first backup your existing recipe data.”

**Backup Your Recipes Before Installing TRM 2.0** - The *Readme* file warns, “If you have not done that yet, please stop this installation now and run your version 1.x first. The File menu contains a "Back Up My Data..." choice - select that line and follow the prompts. This will allow you to save a copy of the recipe data just in case something goes wrong.” Then keep backing up your database in version 2.x as your collection grows.

**Installed Files** - *TheRecipeManager* installs 3 notable files on your system: the application, the recipe data, and the preferences file. A folder named 'TheRecipeManager' is created in your Applications folder at system level. The application and a 'TRM\_Help' folder are placed in this folder, along with an empty 'Recipe Exports' folder. The recipe data is placed in a folder named 'TheRecipeManager User Data', located inside the Documents folder in your user directory. Your user preferences file is named 'TheRecipeManager Prefs' and is located in your *user directory* > *Library* > *Preferences*.

*TheRecipeManager* includes a full manual (PDF) and has a built in FAQ system that details all the features of the product. You can access this by selecting 'FAQ' from the 'TheRecipeManager Help' from the 'Help' menu” when you are run the application. Alternately, you gain smartness pills by reviewing the manual that is installed in *TheRecipeManager* application folder on your computer.

There are many routine tasks associated with accessing and using your collection, which *TRM 2.0* makes painless. I've listed a few of my favorites. Check out the manual and learn all about the rest of them.

- Find a vaguely remembered recipe, searching for its characteristics by doing either a simple or advanced search.
- Search for a recipe to cook with the items available in your kitchen. Sorry, corn flakes and milk don't make an exciting basis.
- As your palate changes, *modify a recipe*. After all, hot and spicy is an acquired taste.

**More Program Features and Attributes** - Here are a few of the program's many easy-to-use features:

**TRM 2.0's Database System Flexibility** - You can modify or remove any of the included 740 recipes, as well as add your own. *TheRecipeManager* allows you to input recipes individually or import them in groups from other programs and formats.

**Importing Your Own Recipes** - *TheRecipeManager* allows you to input recipes individually or import them in groups from other recipe organizer programs and file formats that are supported by the product's API filters. The enhanced import mode makes this task easier than in a beta of version 1.1.1 that the developers provided for my June 2005 *macCompanion* review. Recipes can be imported directly from the web by copying them to your clipboard and then applying the heading supplied by *TRM 2.0's* import feature functions. It sounds more complex than it really is.



I have been able to import recipes; both from downloaded print-to-PDF files (Acrobat 7.0) and from MS Word documents I've created. To do so I'm using the import from clipboard (copy/paste) feature into the TRM 2.0 import template. Then I identify recipe parts to fit the *TRM 2.0* API. Recipe parts include the recipe name, background, ingredients, preparation method, general description and more.

The API-based template does not care whether the data with which you fill the template came from a formatted source. Once entered into the template, it's all text. You can either import recipes from the clipboard or by cutting and pasting the recipe into the import function.

**Vary the Number of Servings** [New in Version 2] -When one enters recipes into either a database a collection of individual recipes, the number served is limited by the amount of ingredients used. No More! With *TRM 2.0*, you can change the number served and your ingredients will be pro-rated accordingly. As a result, you're only one click away from cooking for a party or just an extra four guests. *TRM 2.0* lets you know you've rescaled the recipe by coloring the ingredient amounts in red.

**Find a Recipe Using the TRM 2.0 search Function** -The main Recipe Browser window has a quick search function that allows you to type a word or phrase and search the database for any Name, Source, Category, Type, or Origin that matches. The program is also equipped with advanced search features that I mention below.

**Enhanced Advanced Searching** - Find recipes fast. Search by classification, source, category, type, origin, and even individual ingredients! In addition, the product's rich *indexing* feature allows you to find recipes fast. Search by classification, source, category, type, origin, and even individual ingredients! I've had troubles distinguishing in my own mind, the differences between category and type; but more about that later in the review. This is my favorite *TRM 2.0* feature, an essential capability when you have more than 1000-2000 recipes. It's a powerful, multidimensional recipe attribute index. Version 2 now has the ability to deal with selecting recipes that do not contain an ingredient as well as ingredients you want to use. This is a new ability which allows you to exclude ingredients in a search, e.g. "-egg" implies 'but does not contain egg.

Advanced searching is now more effective because of the way the developers make it easy to add or delete categories and subcategories with which to flag recipes. Customization, what a way to go! It's all done with the *Administration* function where you can add additional data that differentiates your individual recipe from others with similar ingredients. One of my favorite uses for *advanced search* is to lookup the ingredients in my refrigerator and pantry to find recipes I can cook without needing to go shopping.

**An Enhanced Ability to Modify Recipes** - *TRM 2.0* makes it easier to either add an ingredient to a current recipe or to modify an ingredient.

**Automatically Type in Your Ingredients** - If you select Ingredients auto fill from the *TRM 2.0* preference pane, you can have the software auto complete ingredients by typing just a few letters. You then select the correct item from a short list of alternatives provided. The software creates the ingredients lists automatically from those in all the recipes in your database.

**Preparing a Shopping List Has Been Enhanced** - Select a recipe and then send all ingredients for that recipe to your shopping list in one step. Then, add the rest of your grocery items, and print the list to take with you. The printed list contains check boxes... need I say more. One feature I especially liked was the ability to transform the quantities given in the recipe to the sizes one can buy in a market. After all, if I'm out of oregano or fresh garlic, I'm not going to find either a pinch or a single clove in the store. The developers have added a new pantry items category so you don't forget to buy toilet paper or laundry detergent.

**More Powerful Kitchen Helpers** - This useful feature gives you access to a wealth of information. These include suggestions for ingredient substitution, conversions for units of measurement, cooking temperatures, recommendations for cooking temperature and tips, and more. One example. If you need a sugar-based syrup for making a home made Margarita you learn that all it takes is dissolving 1 cup of sugar in ¼ cup of hot water.

**Nutritional Value Lookup Tables (New)** - With the new USDA Nutritional Data Browser table you can estimate the nutritional values for any recipe. Although this is not an automatic feature, you can gather all the information you need from the tables of data provided, and by doing bit of simple arithmetic, can determine the nutritional values for a serving of your favorite dish.

Don't worry, a good and healthy diet allows you to just plain enjoy treats, at least occasionally. Although *TheRecipeManager* allows you to store nutritional information with your recipes, you will need to manually type these in, since the software doesn't yet automatically calculate nutritional information. The software has the capability to look up for information on individual ingredients. The developers are considering working on automating this feature in a future update. [This isn't a feature that I care to use, but I'm not you. I'm not compulsive about nutrition except for keeping count of carbs and fats.]

Over 90% of the recipes I download (Hurrah) don't contain nutritional information. I am never inclined to add such data. Considering the wide diversity of quantities found in ingredients list, I would rather the developers focus their limited resources elsewhere. I know conversions of weight are easy but converting liquid measure to the weight related measures found in most nutritional guides, would be a real pain to do. Densities, densities—does any one have the density for an average cup of drained corn?

**Print Options** - In addition to printing in full-page mode, there is a new option for printing on 4x6 cards. In addition, you can now print photos with recipes. In v2 you no longer need to go to Preferences to change a printing option – they're all available to change each time you print, with the *TRM 2.0* Preferences controlling the defaults.

**Active URLs** - New fields have been added for tracking and linking to websites where your recipe originated.

**Recipe Sharing** - *TheRecipeManager's* architecture allows you to import, export, backup and print your recipes. Share your recipes with any of thousands of other owners of our software. You can also export your shopping list to your iPod, eventually saving a tree or two.

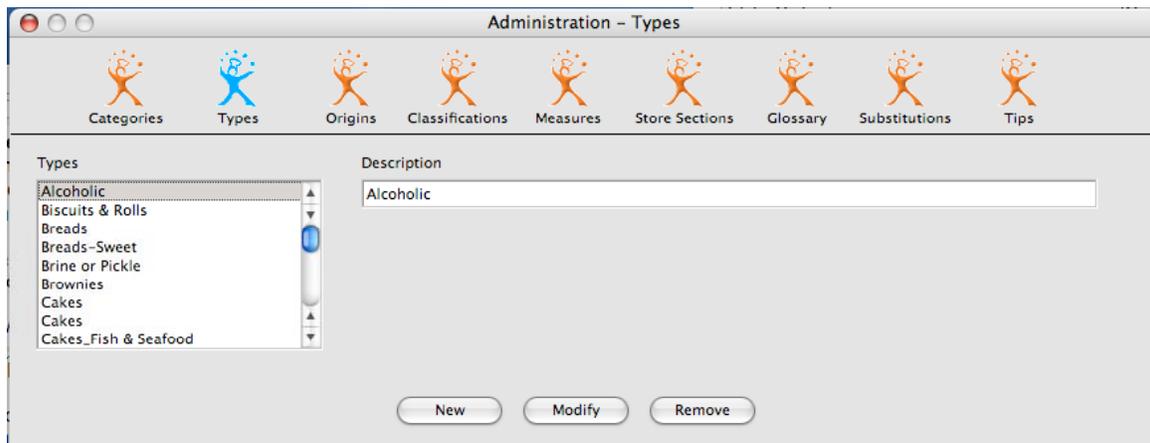
**Use of Contextual Menus** - Many of the enhanced features of *TRM 2.0* are made more accessible by means of contextual menus. You know, using the control-click on a one-button mouse or the right hand button on a 3-button mouse. For example, you can add ingredients when editing by selecting add a new line by control clicking on the item. Rather than list all of the places that you access features of the software when either editing ingredients or cooking instructions— Play around, can do no harm. Better yet, just read the manual.

**Advanced Users' Needs** - Some serious recipe collectors might like the ability to further separate the variable of the terms, items that characterize a recipe. I specifically would have liked the new version to have a separate 'administrator function' for cooking methods and for general nutrition (e.g., diabetic, low fat, vegetarian or vegetable) instead of lumping such items under Administration > Classification). I would have liked the new version to have a 'a separate 'tagging function for cooking methods and general nutrition based information or 'some way I could create custom tagging lists.

Alternatively, if practical, for some way I could create one or three added Administration buttons for uniquely tagging recipe attributes. Alas, I suspect that is likely to make my customized information incompatible with the information I share back and forth with other *TRM 2.0* users.

**Administration Window, Definitions, and Examples** – *My semantics dilemma.*

I'm still having trouble distinguishing between the *classification* of category, type and classification in the administrator function. The present version allows for multiple entries (selections) in the classification list, but only one selection in the others. The items I discuss below may not create problems for the usual recipe collector, but it does for me—a person who is both a database junkie and a recipe collector.



The developers, their manual, of *TheRecipeManager* have defined, in their manual, a number of the Administration related terms as follows.

**Categories** - “As the developers note: “You can assign **one** category to each recipe. You can see from the provided list that you can put in almost anything. Our biggest challenge has been trying to tell the difference between Categories and Types - different web sites use the terms differently.” [I agree.] “It is for you to decide how you want to file your recipes—you have such total flexibility. The application uses the categories field to describe the dish function (e.g., appetizer, breakfast dinner, entrée.)” I also use it to list Holidays by name and have added *quick entrée* and *side dish* to the list.

**Types** - “You can assign **one** type to each recipe. The functionality is the same as Categories, above. Some people will believe that these types should really be categories and the categories are really types. You decide what works best for you”. I’ve modified this field that so I can include a general classification such as seafood, beef mostly, or chicken.

**Classifications** - “This will be your generic - or catch all - way of marking recipes for later searching. [You can choose multiple classification entries, to more readily characterize a recipe. Doing so also enhances your ability to more narrowly focus recipe searches when you’ve added several thousand recipes to your *TRM 2.0* collection.] You have already been able to assign a source, category, type and origin to a recipe. How many more ‘tags’ do you need? Well, good question. *Classifications* give you the most flexibility for searching recipes to get just the ones you want. As you find recipes you like, mark them as ‘My Favorites’, or ‘Holiday’, or ‘Quick Fix’, or ‘Healthy Heart’... You get the idea. You can add, modify or remove any label you want so play with the software to customize it to your needs.”

I did not find the developer's list of *classifications* useful so I extensively modified them. I'm now starting to use this field to focus on ingredients sets. For example, for the Type "Mostly Vegetables." I've created a set of alternative classification alternatives classifications that include sub-categories (types) of them. [E.g., beans and legumes, green beans, mushrooms, onions, garlic, asparagus, potatoes, cauliflower, eggplant, mixed vegetable etc.] An example of the changes I made was in deleting Filipino from the *Type* list, which I had added to *Type* in version 1.1.1, and now have moved to where it belongs in the *Origin* list.

Less easily achievable is my goal of finding a way to subdivide recipes based on beef as the main ingredient. My folder based collection of recipes that are mostly made of beef as the primary ingredient, is subdivided into *steaks* (and further by name-kind) *roasts* (by name-kind), burgers, casseroles or stews, meat loafs, cutlets or Pot Roasts. Obviously many of these classifications can also be used for chicken or lamb, but that's not a problem as long as the naming conventions remain consistent.

If I could even separate out cooking methods from ingredients, life would be easier. Then a search could be made on beef recipes that were stir-fried and contained asparagus. Kelly Burgess noted that "by adding more Classifications, you can address that problem to a degree, until such time as we add other tagging groups. Even though it's a one-dimensional list and not hierarchical in and of itself, checking both beef AND stir fried classifications, or beef and roast, or pork and cutlets, etc. does produce search results that would fit into that kind of hierarchy."

My problem is that I likely want to assign more than one type to a recipe that makes personalizing my 7,000+ recipes an interesting problem. However, that only becomes an issue when I import more of them into *TRM 2.0*. Alas, it still is easier for me to accumulate, yeah collect, recipes than to import them.

#### **A Few Software Limitations and a Wish or Three**

**Wishes-Wishes, Two More Buttons in the Administration Window** - Cooking Methods [e.g., Bake, BBQ, Boil, Braise, Broil, Caramelize, Fry, Grill, Parboil, Poach, Pressure Cook, Roast, Smoke, Steam, Stir Fry.] Also, General Nutrition & Health [e.g., Low Fat, Diabetic-Low Carb, Healthy Heart, High Protein, Low Calorie, Vegan.]

The software developers and I talked about this feature. I think they now understand why separation of variables would make the software, for a recipe large collection, more search capable. I really do want an easier way to keep such information more uniquely organized under uniquely separate Administer function(s) buttons.

**Limitations on Editing Recipes (Import Mode)** - Unfortunately many of the simple editing tools that even TextEdit makes available can not be used in *TRM 2.0*. This is a limitation of the database engine that powers *TRM 2.0*. I know that the developers are working with Omnis to implement features in that software that they'd like to see added.

- Enabling cut and paste in edit mode and text style changes. This need evolves around being able to be able to cut in ingredient items that crept in when we added ingredient auto fill. The developer, should have that fixed for 2.1.
- Allowing multiple line drag and drop operation for individual ingredient lines would save much mousing around. In *TRM 2.0*, you I only drag one line at a time. Also, allowing option-drag and drop to move a copy of a given line would also be a real time saver. Larry agrees with this need and hopes to be able to incorporate in a future update.
- Allow the text in any line to allow me to change its text attributes. Alas, when editing my pizza recipe, I could not change the formatting of new text to either bold or italic. Text attributes are not a feature supported by the Omnis database engine.

**Spell Checker, Spell Checker** - I would welcome a spell checker to deal with all the mistakes I make while two-finger typing. Note: I own Rainmaker's Spell Catcher X 10.1.3, but have not had time to install and test it with *TRM 2.0*.

**Entry Field Character Limits** - The allocation limit for characters in the recipe information fields still are not sufficient for my needs. I would prefer to set limits to alternate values, in the software's 'advanced' preferences, if the developers create an advanced preference pane in their next major update. A few of the items I'd identified in my June review have been expanded but I'd still like the ability to add more characters to the remaining fields identified below. The fields that have been either expanded or are adequate for my needs include *Recipe Name, Origin, Prep Time, Cook Time, and Total Time*. Larry acknowledges the letter limit and will make that happen. He has already increased the number of letters in a recipe title to 100 letters, based on user feedback

| <b>Character Limits — More Help Needed</b>                           |                                                                                                                           |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Source: source - 50 characters max                                   | Name of chef and the URL or other source (magazine) where the recipe was found does not fit here. 100 characters, please. |
| Type: Type - 20 characters max                                       | 50 characters better meets my needs                                                                                       |
| Category: Category - 20 characters max                               | 50 characters better meets my needs                                                                                       |
| Classifications [25 characters each max]: Classifications 1, 2, 3... | 50 characters better meets my needs                                                                                       |

### Conclusions

If you love cooking and collect or create recipes, this software is a must buy. It is robust, feature rich and easy to use after just a short leaning curve. Like any database application, I recommend at least skimming the excellent user guide to use it's more sophisticated but valuable advanced features.

In several detailed dialogues with the developers, as a more demanding user, about the things I'd like to have them add in *TRM 2.0*, I found that they are eager to receive feedback from users. They also continuously strive to make the product easier to use for all types of recipe collectors.

I have continuously tried a baker's half-dozen cooking/recipe software products since reviewing TRM in June. None pleased me as well as TheRecipeManager, and version two only strengthens my commitment to this outstanding program. I continue to check out new cooking software as such is posted to the shareware sites, but after brief flirtation with them, I remain devoted to TRM 2.0. Although there are tweaks that are still needed to satisfy my need as a recipe junkie, TRM 2.0 more than meets all of my core needs.



When I last reviewed *TheRecipeManager* [TRM] version 1.1.1, in the June 2005, Volume 3 Issue 6 of *macCompanion*, I gave the product a rating of 4.5 macC's. In version 2, the developers have enhanced the technique for importing recipes, and added additional features to make access to your collection both easier and more flexible. However, curmudgeon that I am I can't give the product more than a 4.5 macC's rating since the product's developers continue to work on enhancing it's capabilities with a fervor that comes from listening to users' feedback. Since some of the items I'd welcome fall into this category, despite a contrary suggestion from my editor, I'll keep dangling 0.5 macC as developer encouragement.

### PS

I still don't know where to put the information about a recipes difficulty of preparation for which I have no designated place. If the cooking methods tag allow selection of several attributes (e.g., as is done for classification) that's where I'd put ease of cooking.

Guys, it's a real pleasure working with you - I'm a recipe junkie and *TRM 2.0* will certainly make organizing and retrieving them easier.

## Visual Thesaurus 3.0.1

reviewed by Robert Pritchett



Thinkmap, Inc.  
157 Chambers Street  
New York, NY 10007

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

Product site: <http://www.visualthesaurus.com/>

**Released:** Mac OS X version 3; January 27, 2005. Originally released in 1998. \$30 USD Desktop (multilingual not available) or \$20 USD Online as annual subscription with French, German, Italian, Dutch, or Spanish in the beta online version. It can also be purchased online on a monthly basis for \$3 USD.

**Tour:** <http://www.visualthesaurus.com/overview.jsp>

**Try-Before-You-Buy:** <http://www.visualthesaurus.com/>

**Requirements:** A curiosity about wording and word associations. Mac OS X 10.1 or later; G3 or later; 128MB RAM; 100 MB Hard drive space; Video set to thousands of colors. Windows 98 system or later; Pentium 300 MHz or later; 128 MB RAM; 100 MB hard drive space; SVGA graphics card with 16-bit color.

**Strengths:** Visual organic eyecandy for exploring 145,000 of word meanings and options. This is cross-platform when using the CD version. Language options are either British or American English. Includes audible pronunciation.

**Weaknesses:** Some interface issues. Clicked on twice to get the window to appear using Mac OS X 10.4.3 Tiger.

**FAQs:** <http://www.visualthesaurus.com/faqs.jsp>

### Other Reviews:

[http://artnetweb.com/iola/journal/history/IA/IAsummer98\\_thesaurus.html](http://artnetweb.com/iola/journal/history/IA/IAsummer98_thesaurus.html)

<http://www.macaddict.com/issues/2005/7/reviews/thesaurus>

Reviewed on an iMac G5 with Mac OS X 10.4.3 Tiger

Perhaps now I can become linguistically adept as wordsmithing with the latest release of *Visual Thesaurus 3*.

Here is what Mathew Mirapaul wrote about it back in August, 2003 for smartkidssoftware.com:

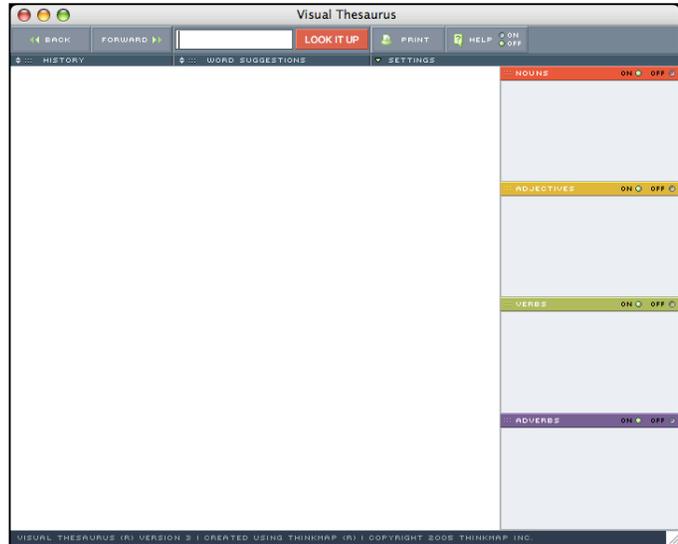
‘Search for the word "plain" in a conventional book-bound thesaurus, and you will find an unadorned and featureless list of synonyms on the printed page. Search for the same word with Visual Thesaurus 2.0, and the program generates an animated three-dimensional constellation in which "plain" is at the center, surrounded by synonyms and other related words. Click on the antonym "fancy" and that word drifts to middle of the screen, where synonyms rush to encircle it in an elaborate, showy and - the people who came up with it hope - thought-provoking display. A free version of the Visual Thesaurus was ... created by the New York software company Plumb Design and was put online in 1998. The new version, which works with Windows 98 and Mac OS X and later, can be purchased as a CD-ROM or downloaded for \$29.95 at [www.visualthesaurus.com](http://www.visualthesaurus.com).



A side panel adds brief definitions and color-coded entries (nouns are in the red category, verbs in green and so on). It also offers more kinds of connections between words. For instance, a solid line between words still denotes synonyms, but a dashed line may indicate that "tulip" is a type of liliaceous plant. The Visual Thesaurus was originally designed to demonstrate Plumb's 3-D graphical interface for exploring complex information. The data is provided by WordNet, an online relational database of more than 40,000 English-language words that was developed by Princeton University's Cognitive Science Library. Marc Tinkler, Plumb's president, described the Visual Thesaurus as both a tool and toy. "A thesaurus is pure navigation," he said. "The act of getting there is the whole idea."

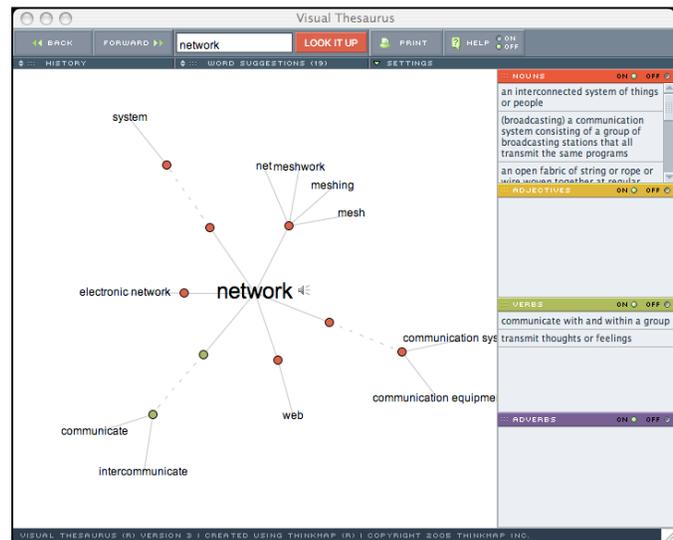
A few things have changed since then. The company is now Thinkmap, Inc, the database has over 145,000 word associations, the online version can access French, German, Italian, Dutch, or Spanish in the beta version, and the visualization engine used is Thinkmap's own software that can be purchased separately for software development.

After installing the app and opening it I first got a blank window. Closing and reopening I got this:

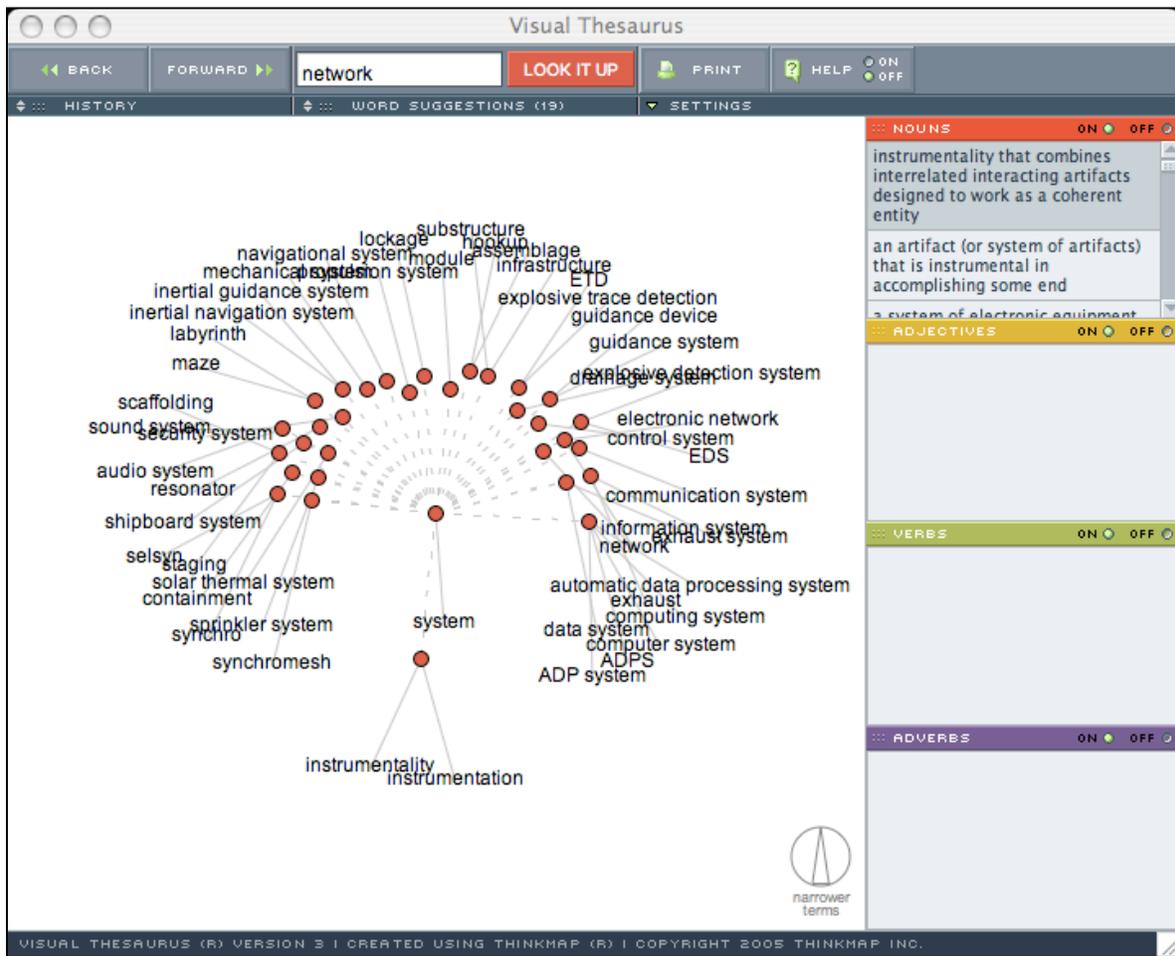


And I added the word, "networking", which did not take, so I changed to "network" instead and got this animated screen:

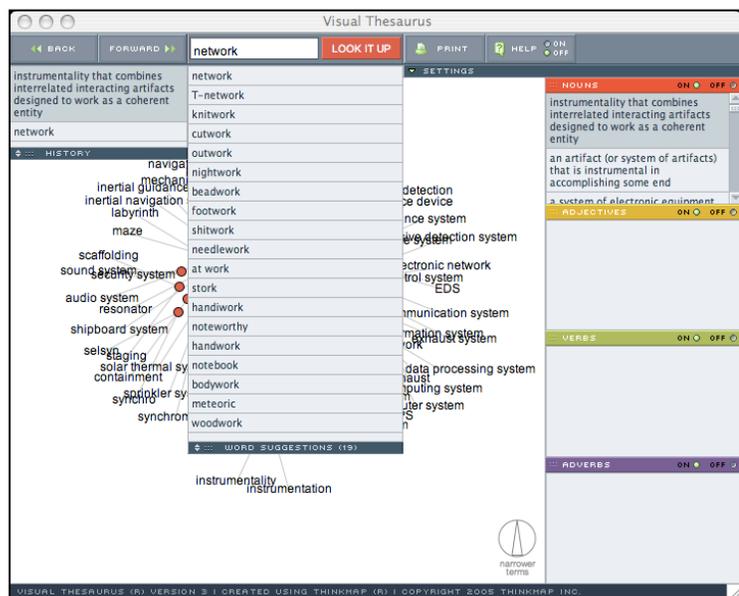
See, what happens is that the dots "float" and the extended word associations tend to waft initially wavelike, like ripples on a pond and then settle down.



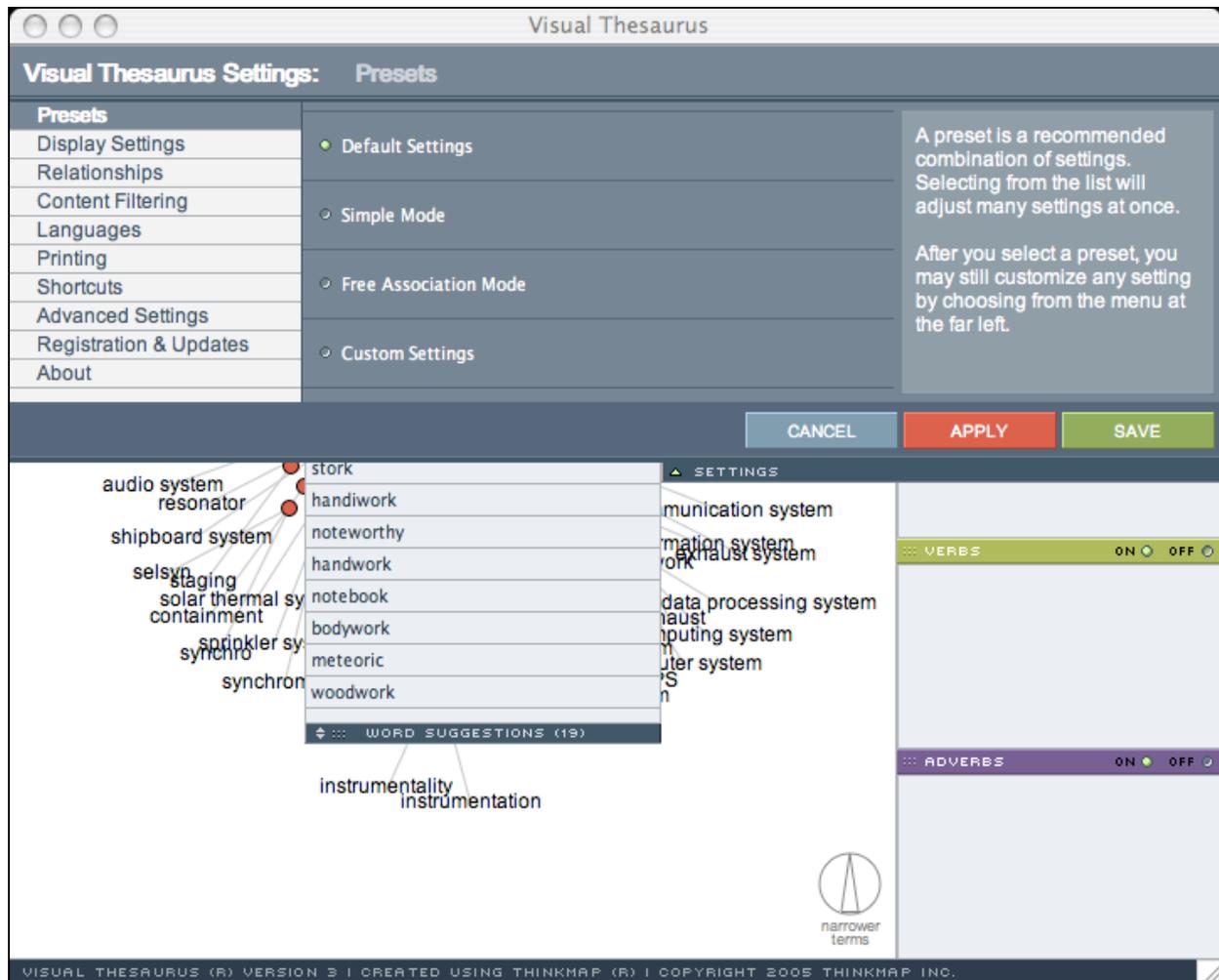
Clicking on the dot that led to “system” brought up this screen that took a while (a few seconds) to settle down as it moved more word associations around.



The pulldown menus for *History* and *Word Suggestions* looks like this:



And the *Settings* menu looks like this:



I haven't had much problem playing, er, working, with *Visual Thesaurus 3* in standalone mode, except that I have to open it twice (repeatable bug) to get the window to appear, instead of being a blank screen as I first open it. This could be an issue specific to my system, so your mileage may vary. I was unable to get the Internet search or search on images to work with the shortcuts. Again, it could be my Wacom mouse or Western Spanish keyboard, but than again...

Anyhow, I am very impressed with this way-cool app and I'm sure the developers will be able to smooth out the wrinkles as time goes on.

By all means, take the visual tour posted above to see how *Virtual Thesaurus 3* works. If you do any wordsmithing whatsoever and you have to reach for a thesaurus every once in a while, why not skip on over to using this app instead and enjoy a visual eyecandy tour of word associations?

## Training

### Mac OS X Training for Windows Users reviewed by Robert Pritchett



**Instructor:** Terry White

PO Box 760399

Lathrup Village, MI 48076

<http://terrywhite.tv>

**Released:** October 2005

\$35 USD, \$50 CND, £30 GBP, 2 hours 15 minutes training time.

**ISBN:** 0975583514

**Requirements:** DVD Player.

Beginner to Intermediate Level.

**Strengths:** Shows a few nuances and differences between Windows and Macs and a few tips and hints for transfer from the non-Mac environment.

**Weaknesses:** A few controls on the Mac OS X DVD Player are “not permitted”.

**Other Reviews:** <http://www.macnexus.org/>



Mac OS X Training for Windows Users by Terry White is an example of what can be done using the resources available on a Mac using Keynote and Garageband as he walks through what he considers to be the top 10 things a person coming from non-Mac environments needs to know to navigate around in Mac OS X Tiger.

He manages to accomplish all this in approximately 2 hours and 15 minutes in 31 chapters.

I like how he points out some of the nuances of Apple-speak and actions in Mac OS X such as the keyboard shortcuts, opening, closing and managing apps, files and saving documents and highlighting standout items in Mac OS X we have all grown to use and probably take for granted. He obviously knows Windows-speak and does a great job moving towards the Mac from the standpoint of a Windows-familiar environment.

After he quickly goes through the basics (don't skip those, because there are some things you may either have mislearned or forgotten), he also digs into the Finder, configuring Mail.app and transferring Email from MS Outlook, burning CDs and DVDs, and even shows how to use Virtual PC. Side-by-side comparisons between Windows XP and Mac OSX are also presented.

Terry White obviously loved putting this together. I think you will enjoy learning from his presentation.

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