

# macCompanion

YOUR GUIDE TO ALL THINGS MACINTOSH



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- iGlasses
- Mac Security 101
- and Much, More...

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## Masthead

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Application Service Provider for the *macCompanion* website:

<http://www.stephousehosting.com>

Thanks to Daniel Counsell of Realmac Software Development (<http://www.realmacsoftware.com>), who graced these pages and our website with newer rating stars.

Our special thanks to all those who have allowed us to review their products!

In addition, thanks to you, our readers, who make this effort all possible.

Please support this effort by going to the back of the magazine and to our website and clicking and purchasing from our affiliates and advertisers. THEY WILL APPRECIATE IT EVEN MORE THAN WE DO!

## Letter from the CEO

by Robert Pritchett

### The K.I.S.S. Principle

I like Wikipedia and really appreciate all who support it with their entries. Take this one for example - [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/KISS\\_Principle](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/KISS_Principle). The idea is to keep design functional. It is a variation on the theme of Ockham's Razor [http://searchsmb.techtarget.com/sDefinition/0,,sid44\\_gci212684,00.html](http://searchsmb.techtarget.com/sDefinition/0,,sid44_gci212684,00.html) on getting unnecessary information out of the way.

There is a whole generation of people that have videotape and DVD player displays showing a blinking "12:00 PM" on their units that are tired of resetting their machines each time there is a brownout or power failure. Consider it a design flaw that a battery-backup could have resolved or flash-memory electronics could have addressed.

Then there are the over-complicated cell phones that try to be geek-gadget delights that drive non-techy types crazy and almost require specialized training on how to get dial tone, make a call, disconnect or capture pictures. It doesn't seem that the telephony industry has settled on a standard, similarly to what the electrical industry generally did with wall outlets or power cord plugs.

One of the things I like about Apple products is that for the most part, they are easy enough to operate, without having to hire a tech to figure out or maintain on a daily basis. There is something intrinsically wrong with having to know your computer tech on a first-name basis. We don't do that for home appliances, homebuilders, car manufacturers, or power tools, so why do those who use computers, tolerate that kind of "service level"? We shouldn't.

### MacCasts

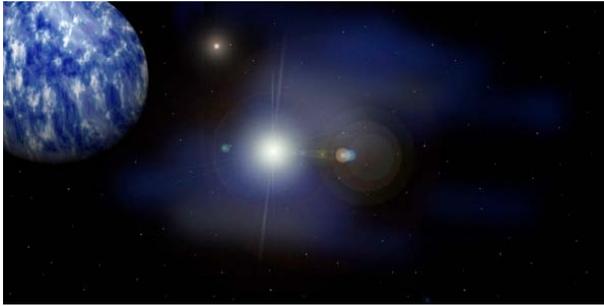
We here at *macCompanion*, will try to follow the productivity path that Apple has blazed for us. They tend to hide the geek-stuff and make using their systems drop-dead easy. We have been striving to do the same by creating options that make *macCompanion* easier to read and listen to.

One is that we have stopped distributing notification of each issue release via Email and have created the MagCast over on iTunes so those who wish to may subscribe to it there and download a PDFed version. We have added all issues back 2 years or so. It can be found by searching for "macCompanion" in iTunes, 1) follow the link on our home page at <http://www.maccompanion> or 2) click here - <http://phobos.apple.com/WebObjects/MZStore.woa/wa/viewPodcast?id=196926454>

Wayne Lefevre, our new Ad and Marketing Director is also experimenting with AudioCasting *macCompanion* so those who would rather listen to each section of the magazine rather than read it may do so. This will be especially helpful for those who may have physical challenges.

We want the deaf to hear and the blind to see *macCompanion* and those who would rather read print may do so too. Expect future announcements as we work on producing a subscription-based hard-copy quarterly magazine version.

Hopefully you won't mind if we KISS and make up this month.



## According to Hoyle...

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### Cross-Platform Software Development from a Macintosh Perspective: Basic Compilers (Part III)

by Jonathan Hoyle

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macCompanion

October 2006

Last year, we began a series of articles reviewing various cross-platform development environments and frameworks from a Macintosh perspective:

- **Intro:** [http://www.maccompanion.com/archives/september2005/Columns/According\\_to\\_Hoyle\\_1.htm](http://www.maccompanion.com/archives/september2005/Columns/According_to_Hoyle_1.htm)
- **Qt:** <http://www.maccompanion.com/archives/october2005/Columns/AccordingtoHoyle.htm>
- **wxWidgets:** <http://www.maccompanion.com/archives/november2005/Columns/AccordingtoHoyle.htm>
- **CPLAT:** <http://www.maccompanion.com/archives/december2005/Columns/AccordingtoHoyle.htm>
- **REALbasic:** <http://www.maccompanion.com/archives/january2006/Columns/AccordingtoHoyle.htm>
- **Runtime Revolution:** <http://www.maccompanion.com/archives/february2006/Columns/AccordingtoHoyle.htm>
- **AMPC:** <http://www.maccompanion.com/archives/march2006/Columns/AccordingtoHoyle.htm>
- **Java compilers:** <http://www.maccompanion.com/archives/april2006/Columns/AccordingtoHoyle.htm>
- **Basic compilers (Part I):** <http://www.maccompanion.com/archives/may2006/Columns/AccordingtoHoyle.htm>
- **Basic compilers (Part II):** <http://www.maccompanion.com/archives/june2006/Columns/AccordingtoHoyle.htm>
- **Converting Legacy Frameworks:**  
<http://www.maccompanion.com/archives/july2006/Columns/AccordingtoHoyle.htm>

The largest amount of email feedback I have received has been from the two articles on Basic compilers, prompting me to add another installment. Basic's popularity remains extremely high, thanks in large part to the success of *Microsoft Visual Basic for Windows* and *Visual Basic .NET* development environments. They have helped to dispel the myth that Basic cannot be used for professional software development. *REALbasic*, by REAL Software, has furthered this by becoming the "cross-platform version of Visual Basic". A detailed review of *REALbasic* can be found in the January 2006 column shown above.

In May & June of this year, we examined the general state of Basic development environments on the Macintosh. Part I was a history of Basic on the Macintosh, from the ill-fated *MacBasic* up to the beginnings of *REALbasic*. Part II summarized some of the more popular products available today, including *REALbasic*, *Future BASIC*, *True BASIC* and *ChipmunkBasic*. I also quickly touch upon some Basic environments showing promise for the future: *ExtremeBasic*, *wxBasic* and *KBasic*.

Despite the many products we covered, there were a number, by necessity, missed. In addition, users of legacy Basic products were curious as to the current status of their products. So as to answer the many questions I have received, we continue now with more Basic development environments...

## **KBasic (update)**

<http://www.kbasic.com>

Price: 24.95 Euro (~\$35) Professional Edition, Free Personal Edition (not available for the Mac).

In the June article, *KBasic* was referred to as a "future" product; however, *KBasic* has made many inroads toward the Mac in the past few months, that an update was warranted. A new Mac version of *KBasic* is expected very soon and is completely revamped, written in Cocoa with Objective-C and C++. Cocoa API's will also be made available from within *KBasic*, giving a the power of Cocoa to Basic programmers (without having to learn Objective-C). And of course, it will be a Universal Binary, so as to support Intel-based Macintoshes.

*KBasic* is essentially a continuation of the Visual Basic 6 programming environment that was abandoned when Microsoft made the move to .NET. *KBasic* is 100% syntax compatible with VB 6, with an IDE very similar to it. Anyone with a VB 6 project who wishes to make it cross-platform will likely find the migration easier on *KBasic* than with *REALbasic*. The current version of *KBasic* is based upon Qt, a cross-platform C++ framework by Trolltech, so that Mac OS X was more easily achieved. However, due to inflexible licensing restrictions by Trolltech, *KBasic* is abandoning Qt and is using native Cocoa calls to develop the upcoming Macintosh release.

Although there is a free Personal Edition of *KBasic*, it is available only for Windows and Linux. Mac OS X users will have to purchase the Professional Edition, but given its extremely reasonable price, that is not a big imposition. The Mac user may however download a Trial version of the Professional edition to try it out prior to buying. *KBasic* is definitely becoming one of the most exciting new development products on the Mac, and may give *REALbasic* a run for its money.

## **PureBasic**

<http://www.purebasic.com>

Price: \$99, free upgrades from any version.

I received a great deal of email asking about various Basic products, with the #1 request being to review *PureBasic* by Fantaisie Software. Although I had researched *PureBasic* for the article, I did not include it simply because its web site (at the time) indicated that there was no support for the Macintosh. As it turned out, there had already been a preliminary Mac release, but apparently Fantaisie did not feel it important enough to mention it on the front page of their web site.

Fantaisie Software delivered this first - and only - Mac release with version 3.94 in October 2005. Unfortunately, there have been no updates since then, causing it to fall a version behind, as *PureBasic* 4.0 was released for Windows last May. Mac OS X is noticeably a second-class citizen in *PureBasic*, as its web site states that the only "fully supported" operating systems are: Windows, Linux and (bizarrely) Amiga OS. *PureBasic* on Mac OS X will run on the G3, G4 and G5 Power Macs but is incompatible with Intel-based Macs, even under Rosetta emulation. Even under PowerPC, there are still just too many bugs to have to get around.

Despite these negatives, *PureBasic* is a fairly nice development environment, allowing identical source code to be compiled on Mac, Windows, Linux and Amiga very easily. The \$99 price tag buys you a license to all platforms, with a lifetime free update guarantee. One of the most impressive qualities of this product is its highly optimized code generation. Most Basic compilers can be a bit fat and sluggish, but *PureBasic* does a nice job of tightening up its executables. Compilation is also pretty fast, nearly that which C programmers are accustomed to.

*PureBasic* is a very powerful development environment on Windows, but it still needs quite a bit of work before it is suitable for the Macintosh developer. *REALbasic* is the gold standard for any Basic development product, and *PureBasic* needs a lot more polish on that front. With the many bugs, Intel-incompatibility, and after a year with no updates (not even for simple bug-fixes), one wonders how committed Fantaisie Software really is to the Mac platform. At this point, I cannot recommend *PureBasic* to the Mac developer. However, this product shows a great deal of potential, and perhaps a future version will remove the critical errors, making it worth reviewing again.

## **CocoaBasic**

<http://www.dsitri.de/wiki.php?page=CocoaBasic>

Price: Free

Although not cross-platform, *CocoaBasic* make Mac OS X development both easy and powerful. *CocoaBasic* exposes the power of the Cocoa API for Mac OS X with a Basic interface. Thus serious developers who do not know (or wish to learn) Objective-C can still access the powerful API's. In addition to full integration with the Cocoa framework, *CocoaBasic* also has integrated editors for source code, instances, windows, etc.

Last year, *CocoaBasic* was released into the Open Source community and has somewhat stalled. Integration with *Interface Builder* is one of the most obvious areas needing improvement. If you are interested in giving back to the community, becoming involved with this project may be well worth your time.

## **Legacy Basic's**

There are a number of older Basic products that are still in use by the Mac community, so I cover them here for completeness' sake.

**TNT Basic** [<http://www.tntbasic.com>], Free: This is one product, which has beat the odds. *TNT Basic* started life as shareware, geared toward building games. As a Classic application, it began to fall out of favor as Mac OS X increased in popularity. *TNT Basic* was placed into SourceForge (where open source projects go to die), and it was soon forgotten. Only it wasn't. The developer community remained so passionate about it, that it inspired the organizers to return to update the product. *TNT Basic* was eventually updated to Mac OS X and as of this year is an Xcode project. Worth checking out just to see if it manages to crawl back to becoming a real product again!

**METAL Basic** [<http://www.iit.edu/~sarimar/GDS/metal.html>], Free: This "Meta-Language" compiler is supported on both Classic and OS X with very nice sprite capabilities and QuickTime integration. In addition to its extensive graphics capabilities, it excels in fast complex mathematical computations. The web site contains links to a number of programs created with METAL Basic, including some impressive 2D and 3D graphics.

**Omikron Basic** [[http://www.berkhan.de/basic/feat\\_e.htm](http://www.berkhan.de/basic/feat_e.htm)], \$143 Pro, \$72 Lite: If by "cross-platform" you mean Macintosh and Atari ST, then Omikron Basic by Berkhan Software may be for you. Berkhan finally released the Mac OS X-native version 8 in 2004, coming rather late to the party. Relying on EasyGEM for its graphics (from the GEM operating system used on the Atari ST), *Omikron* is an unusual basic environment. Editing is clunky, although compilation time is pretty good. However, its unrealistic price tag does not make it worth your consideration (especially since there are superior free ones).

**Visual MacStandardBasic** [<http://web.archive.org/web/20000818054019/www.squirrelsw.com/vmsb/>], Discontinued: Squirrel Software, creators of *Visual MacStandardBasic*, are no longer in business and their web site is gone. This Classic-only development environment showed a great deal of promise, it didn't survive long enough to deliver on them. Don't pay too much for this product, as in its prime it sold for only \$29.

**Next Time:** Another Cross-platform strategy. See you in 30!

## The European Perspective

<http://www.myapplestuff.com> Copyright ©2006 Chris Marshall

### September Purchases

by Chris Marshall

September gave us a couple of “treats” from Apple, and big hole in my bank account!

First, we had the Labor Day updates to the Mac Mini, iMac, etc.

Second, we had the press event on the 12<sup>th</sup> September, which I would rate as 6/10. It is always subjective to rate an event, and it is even harder when a lot of your expectation is based on rumor and personal desires!

So how did these affect me? I had been waiting until the Labor Day announcement before ordering my Mac Mini, so I have gone ahead and ordered that. I went for the 1.83 GHz Intel Core Duo, with 2GB RAM and the 160GB Hard Drive. At the same time, I bought the Wireless Keyboard and Mighty Mouse, and then to top it off, the [LaCie mini Hard Drive & Hub 300GB](#) external Hard Drive. Disappointingly, the Mac Mini quoted a 4-6 week delivery period, which is probably a combination of three factors: a) this is the Spanish site, b) the Mac Mini is “new” and c) it qualified as a custom order with the hard drive and the RAM. Whilst on the subject of RAM, it actually only worked out marginally more expensive to buy it pre-installed from Apple than to buy it for a US site and have it shipped over. My spending continued though, with an extra 1GB RAM stick for my PowerBook (I even managed to sell the spare 512MB that it is replacing.)

Finally, it was my wife’s birthday, so I bought her a 2GB iPod Nano, along with the Nike + sports kit and armband. Of course she fell in love with the new Shuffle as soon as she saw it, so I ordered a couple of those – although they aren’t even available here in Spain until October. Then to top that off, she decided that she actually liked the idea of having a Mac of her own, so we ordered a 20” iMac 2.16GHz Intel Core 2 Duo, with 2GB RAM, 256MB VRAM and a 250GB Hard Drive. Those sort of made me feel left out, so I picked up a 23” Cinema HD screen off eBay!!

At the moment none of this has arrived, so I can’t comment on it, but I will next month no doubt.

Although I live in Spain I tend to look at the UK and US for eBay and on-line purchases, at least as a comparison, and I have been intrigued by a number of things this month:

eBay – although I ended up buying my screen on eBay, I nearly didn’t, as it took a long time to find one that actually came in significantly cheaper than buying a new one. For several weeks the average price, by the time you had added postage costs, was only about £20 cheaper than buying a new one, and that just didn’t seem to make sense to me. Anything second hand off eBay has a number of risks associated with it and for me, I need a bigger saving than that. I eventually bought a 6-month-old screen for £150 less (including postage and insurance) than I would had to pay for a new one from Apple here in Spain. I had a similar experience with the iMac. Six-month-old iMacs were averaging out at £925, including postage. Now these generally included 1GB of RAM and some additional software (nearly always Boot Camp, Parallels, etc.). As a comparison, the standard new 20” iMac Core 2 Duo costs £985, so again the £60 just wasn’t really worth it – of course, having made the decision to buy my wife a new one, we of course added some extras to the order, so maybe I should have stuck with the eBay one!!

Believe it or not there are still a few things left on my wish list, but they will have to wait – my wife has hidden my credit cards!!! Never mind, the next month or so will be taken up with playing with the new stuff ☺

## My 'Casts

Books	Fun	General	Mac	News	Review	Sport	Technical
<a href="#">Fiddle &amp; Burn</a>	<a href="#">French Maid TV</a>	<a href="#">The Daily Mayo</a>	<a href="#">BRITISH MAC</a>		<a href="#">In Business</a>	<a href="#">The Football Phone-In 606</a>	<a href="#">AV Forums</a>
<a href="#">Lessons from a Geek Fu Master</a>		<a href="#">Daily Breakfast</a>	<a href="#">EuroMac</a>	<a href="#">Telegraph</a>	<a href="#">iTunes New Music Tuesday</a>	<a href="#">Nike Football</a>	<a href="#">commandN</a>
<a href="#">How to Disappear Completely</a>	<a href="#">The Daily Nut</a>		<a href="#">Mac Roundtable</a>	<a href="#">Today</a>	<a href="#">Mark Kermode's Film</a>	<a href="#">The Game</a>	<a href="#">Diggnation</a>
<a href="#">Earthcore</a>	<a href="#">Ricky Gervais</a>		<a href="#">MacCast</a>		<a href="#">NYT Book</a>		<a href="#">Engadget</a>
<a href="#">Nina Kimberly The Merciless</a>	<a href="#">Tiki Bar TV</a>		<a href="#">MacBreak Video</a>				<a href="#">Life on line with Bob Parsons</a>
<a href="#">Route 66 to Vietnam</a>			<a href="#">macTV</a>				<a href="#">Inside The Net</a>
<a href="#">Podiobooker</a>			<a href="#">Mac ReviewCast</a>				
<a href="#">Spherical Tomi</a>			<a href="#">Typical Mac User</a>				<a href="#">This week in TECH</a>
			<a href="#">Macnation</a>				

These are all available via the [iTunes Store](#). Note the new name change from Apple ☺

### Under Consideration

:MacBreak Video as I am just not getting anything that I am really that interested in watching.

: The Daily Nut. Am starting to find it all a bit irritating.

### Recently Deleted (a bit of a purge this month)

:BBC Radio Newspod

Absolutely nothing wrong with this podcast, it is just that by the time it is released (early evening) I have usually reached saturation on news for the day, and have exhausted my capabilities to listen to podcasts, so it has had to go. Without doubt, when I am next traveling I will resubscribe.

:TWiT Video

Simply put, I can't remember the last time they published anything, and I don't recall the ones that I watched been that interesting. The content is always solid, but watching a panel talk really doesn't carry enough interest, especially on an iPod screen.

:The Tech Night Owl LIVE

Hard decision this as I like Gene and usually enjoy the podcast when I do listen to it, but it is just too long for me. I don't like to not listen to a podcast all the way through when I start, and I just can't ever allocate 2 hours in one "sitting" to it.

I am not missing out totally, as I pick up a lot of Gene's stuff through other blogs, feeds etc.

:24 Cast

With no series showing at the moment it is interesting that they have done nothing to retain their audience, so are risking people like me remembering to re subscribe again in the future.

### **Just Added**

:Life on line with Bob Parsons

Early days yet, especially as Bob was on leave for the first couple that I listened to, but I am enjoying it.

:The Game

With the Soccer season back this is a new podcast from The Times in the UK. So far it has been really good.

### **Favourite ‘Casts – The Daily Breakfast**

Possibly a bit of a surprise this. It certainly has been to me, as I am not a very religious person at all. I love Father Roderick’s enthusiastic voice. Again he has a good structure that he adheres to, and I really like the way he mixes religion with his technology interests. The way they are building the SQL network is intriguing and I wish them well.

### ***European News***

Paris Expo??????? This didn’t really seem to register with me. I picked one interesting bit of information from it:

- analysts from PiperJaffray polled 50 European Apple customers about their interest in an iPhone that holds 1,000 songs and found that 74 percent indicated they have a highly likelihood of buying such a product.

Although if the rumors are true about the phone being linked to a Cingular contract are true, that will be huge disappointment! I think the US has to follow the European trend of selling handsets separately and letting people put their existing SIM cards into the phone.

I heard a couple of interesting facts this month from various podcasts:

- In the UK 70% of Internet access is now via broadband, with 43% of households having Internet access. At the same time the UK population has just passed 60m for the first time.
- I was listening to an interesting debate on piracy on the AVForums ‘cast and they made a number of interesting observations; that recently they raided 3 factories in the UK with a combined £9m a MONTH turnover of pirated material!; that piracy isn’t about not being able to afford the products, when you consider how much the typical pirate consumer spends on mobile phones, training shoes, etc, and about 80% of the individuals selling pirate material in the pubs and streets are part of Chinese organized crime. So by buying a cheap CD or DVD you are in all probability funding a drugs gang, or some other heavy organized crime!

It seems like the trend for iPod clothes is making a bit of a comeback. Two items caught my attention this month”

- M&S in the UK will be shipping a suit from [Bagir](#) from November onwards
- The \$300 Levi iPod Jeans got a poor review from [Gizmodo](#)

### ***Digital Media Solution***

I had hoped to have the Mac Mini this month, but found enough to keep me occupied due to a slight problem I had with my Sky +. Probably because of the atmospheric pressure during the summer, the signal seems to have dropped, so I was really struggling to pick up the movie channels, but for some strange reason, if I set the movie to record, the signal was fine. As a result, I ended up recording a lot more movies than I would have normally, and this in turn led

to a neat little workaround for my use of Sky + and the TVMax. Basically, I found that it is possible to playback a recorded movie from Sky + and record it onto the Mac via TVMax at the same time.

So at the moment I have I have settled on the following use of the Sky + and the TVMax:

In my experience, films fall into two categories, those that you know you want to save and watch again and those that you just want to see, but have no real desire to keep them. Of course this view can easily change once you have actually viewed them. As such, the technical restriction has forced me into a rather neat compromise ☺ First off with any movie, I record it to the Sky+ box, regardless of if it is one that I know I want to keep or just fancy watching. When I watch it, I record it onto my Mac, and then I delete it off Sky+ and if I don't want to keep it, I delete it off the Mac. From time to time, I free up space on the Sky+ by setting it to play a movie overnight and record it on my Mac. It is a little long winded but it is proving to be a really great workaround – I get benefits and ease of use of the Sky+ whilst at the same time getting the benefits of the TVMax/Mac in terms of storage capacity, editing facilities and multiple play back options.

I seem to have settled on an interesting ratio on the Sky+ of:

- 50% allocated to movies that I still have to watch,
- 25% allocated to TV series and programs that I want to watch at some stage, and
- 25% allocated for Work In Progress (WIP) stuff.

***And Finally ..... a rant or two!***

Maybe I am getting old, but this a month a couple of things have surfaced that really make me mad!!

1. Podcasters that promote their Skype, IM details, etc, but then don't accept your invitation to add them to your contact list and/or are never on line. What is the point of that?? I am getting close to implementing a "name and shame" policy for those that do this, and
2. Long Email thread, when options such as pbwiki, blogsen, etc. are available. What is the point of email when IM and Wiki's exist???? Email has it's place sure, but there are much more efficient and rewarding ways of communicating!

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## **About Chris Marshall**

Educated in the UK and USA, I have lived and worked in the UK, USA, and Spain. I currently live in Spain in a state of semi-retirement, where I spend most of my time developing my skills on the Mac and understanding the significance and opportunities of the "Web 2.0" explosion.

I have recently started writing reviews and articles for *macCompanion*<sup>1</sup> and for *The Mac ReviewCast*<sup>2</sup>.

From a "day job" perspective, I don't really have one at the moment. I am doing some PC training and support locally and have been advising a couple of small start-up businesses. When I do work, it is a business consultant<sup>3</sup> with an emphasis on small and start-up businesses and mentoring individuals. I am particular keen to help US organizations establish themselves in Europe. I am also keen to develop my writing skills.

Frappr: <http://www.frappr.com/myapplestuff>

MySpace: <http://www.myspace.com/myapplestuff>

Blog: <http://www.myapplestuff.com>

Digg: <http://www.digg.com/> (MyAppleStuff)

Flickr: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/chrismpics/>

Family: <http://web.mac.com/chris.marshall>

Personal: <http://www.chrismarshall.vox.com>

YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/myapplestuff>

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.maccompanion.com/>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.surfbits.com/>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.m2associates.info>











## Ivory Tower - October 2006

By Ted Bade

At the moment I am a bit miffed at Apple and its lack of useful customer support. I want to relate what happened not so much to complain about it, but as a warning. Don't let this happen to you...

I discovered a few minor hard drive problems on our soccer ball iMac, nothing major but something that should be repaired. I decided to use a copy of Tech Tools that I was given when I bought an Apple Care warranty on my G5 PowerMac. I ran the utility and it managed to completely destroy the directory of the hard drive it was repairing. Wow!

Although I was very upset at the time, I wanted to understand why this happened. I opened a support call on my Apple Care plan and sent an email to the Tech Tools people. The outsourced support person I got when I called Apple had no idea what the problem was. Additionally, since I used the copy of Tech Tools on an older Mac, not the one that the warranty was for, they wouldn't talk to me unless I paid. Although I was curious, I wasn't willing to spend a lot of money looking for the answers!

I tried Apple's discussion web site. Doing a search turned up nothing. But then I have always felt that support search sites are terrible for finding answers. The last person with a problem never phrases the question the same way you would, so important information is easily missed. Searches for too specific a item generally provide no information. If you search for too generic a term, you get so many hits that it would take weeks to read them all. So, I posted a new question on the Apple site, and waited.

The next day I got a nice reply from the Tech Tools people and on the Discussions web site. Both indicated the same thing. Apple had changed the file structure in the Tiger version of Mac OS X. Which means older version of Tech Tools will mangle the directory rather than repair it. This was what had happened with my machine.

I don't hold the Tech Tools company Micromat, responsible for this. Their product works as promised and when it was made they had no idea the file structures would change. However, Apple could have done more to alert me, their customer and loyal fan, to this issue. I am really miffed at Apple for not letting me know that a product they sold me, if used, would destroy the directory of any Mac OS X 10.4 drive I owned. What would it have taken Apple to send an email to AppleCare customers that said something like:

“Hi Apple Care customers,

The version of TechTools we sent you as part of your Apple Care package will not work if you upgrade your machine to Mac OS X 10.4. Please contact Micromat to upgrade your version of Tech Tools to a version that works with Mac OS X 10.4.”

I am not even asking for a discount on the new version! I would have been very happy with a simple notice. Instead, I have a mangled hard drive. The sad thing is that Apple often touts the fact that their customers hold onto their Macs longer than PC customers hold onto their Windows-based PCs. One would think that a company who is pleased with the longevity of their machines would think about things like this. We are not talking about a very old machine. We are talking about a single OS version change. It is stuff like this that will give Apple a bad reputation for support.

So to resolve my own issue I bought a copy of Data Rescue II from a company called Prosoft. This gem of a program was able to pull all the data from the drive (which by the way wouldn't even mount on the desktop), and move it to a folder. I was then able to extract those items I needed to get the machine back up and running with all the data and preferences intact. Data Rescue II recovered everything, even some files that had been deleted! Pretty cool. And yes, I did have backups of just about everything, except for a few recent photos. The funny thing is that one of the things that was almost lost in this catastrophe wasn't data specifically, but organization.

My wife had spent a bunch of time on vacation organizing files, removing unwanted items, and updating things on that machine. While not much of the data had been changed, but hours of time were spent reorganizing the data. Luckily for me, (since it was **my** idea to “fix” her computer's drive), Data Rescue II was able to keep things organized as they had been before the damage.

While we are talking about backing up data, we should consider where to back it up to. While you can backup to a CD or DVD, it is a lot faster both to backup and recover data with an external hard drive. There are a number of complete external drive packages that are available at reasonable prices. However, if you are even just a little handy

with some basic tools, you can generally save money by building your own.

I recently wanted a second backup drive. A local nationwide vendor had a very good deal on a 250GB Hitachi drive (around \$40 after rebates) and a FireWire/USB 2 enclosure for about the same. To build the drive, I needed to take out four screws to open the enclosure, four screws to secure the drive into the enclosure, plug two cables into the hard drive that were in the enclosure (power and data, which only go on one way and are so different its impossible to confuse which is which), push the enclosure back together, and finally replace the four enclosure screws. Five minutes maximum. Then I plugged it into my Mac's USB 2 port and turned it on. I used Apple's Disk Utility to format the drive (I thought about partitioning it, but didn't). Done!

I have been using one such system for about four years. I haven't had any problems with the drive or the data on it. Of course, I don't run the drives all the time. I turn it on when I need to use it and back off when I am done.

Next month we will look at a program for performing incremental data backups. There are a number of programs that can help. I tried one that I think is pretty cool. We should also consider a promised feature of the soon-to-be-released Mac OS X 10.5, called Time Machine. <http://www.apple.com/macosx/leopard/timemachine.html> We haven't heard all the details yet, but apparently this feature keeps track of your data and changes to your data, so you can roll back time and recover items you lost. We could have used that feature!

**When will the virus scams stop?** - Back in August you might have heard about a couple of people who said they could break into a MacBook Pro in a short time. They completed the attack, keeping their method secret, since they did not want this information to become easy to do.

As with most of the malicious deeds happening to Macs these days, it later came to light that the MacBookPro they were using was modified! According to one article I found, the company that performed this attack was forced to post a disclaimer that indicated that they had modified the machine. Apparently, they could not make the attack work using a stock MacBook Pro! Take a look at their page:

<http://www.secureworks.com/newsandevents/blackhatcoverage.html>

I am getting really, truly sick of companies spending all their time trying to "prove" that the Mac is as vulnerable as a Windows-based machine is. Heck they can't even prove that a Mac is even vulnerable at all. All they can prove is that, if you cut holes into the Mac OS or the machine, you can use these holes to attack it. Every piece of malicious code, every attack that has occurred to date on Mac OS X has been conceptual only. If you do this, and that, (usually stupid things no users would ever do), then it can be compromised.

When I first heard about this Wi-Fi break in, I expected it would only be short while before someone pointed out they were cheating. The bad thing is that people don't read detail, they read headlines. So these idiots managed to cause some negative PR to those people who only look at the headlines. I am afraid that eventually, without a real virus, Mac users will be scared into buying protective software. But that's what viruses are all about, selling antivirus applications. It's scary.

As always, I feel I must point out that I don't believe that Mac OS X is *not* vulnerable. Someday probably someone will figure out how to write a real piece of malicious code for it. However, I believe that Apple and Mac OS X has two things going for them. First, as so many people like to point out, since Macs aren't as popular as Windows machines, a malicious piece of code can cause a lot more trouble with a Windows virus. The other thing a lot of people don't point out is that there is a lot, lot less animosity toward the Macintosh and Apple than towards Windows and Microsoft. There are many people who feel that Microsoft's business model is not totally ethical. Not to mention hurting the goliath of the computer age is a sure way to get a feather in one's cap!

**Apple on the move** - In August, Apple released versions of both its server and pro desktop lines, which include an Intel CPU. Also at the WWDC keynote Steve and company provided a very nice early demonstration of Mac OS X 10.5.

This new OS has a few features that look like they might be very useful. If you want to learn about what's coming in 10.5, visit the Apple website: <http://www.apple.com/macosx/leopard/index.html>

There are a number of interesting items to learn about.

In mid September, barely a month later, Apple made another announcement. This time it was all about the iPod and the iTMS. You probably heard they released a new version of iTunes and are now making movies available through the iTMS.

I have never been a fan of squint graphics, those graphics that you need to squint at to see 'cause they are so small. Sure, it is cool that you can take a video or TV show with you on a small device, but I just never got into watching tiny graphics!

One of the better aspects of Apple making movies available, is they upped the size of the video to 640x480 video, much larger than the previous version. Of course, doing this meant that the iPods and iTunes, and QuickTime needed to be updated, which they were.

If you haven't tried the new version of iTunes yet, you might want to consider the upgrade. It is one of the most impressive versions I have seen. [Special note: at the end of September some issues with this new version of iTunes were popping up. I haven't experienced anything myself.]

The appearance of the program is a lot slicker. Apple modified iTunes to take advantage of album art. There are two views that let you search for music using it! I found this very fascinating. If you ripped your own CDs, iTunes will download the album art for them as well, as long as they have it.

The free album art works in theory, although, you might have to play with your MP3 tags to get it to work. A number of my own ripped albums came up blank. Of course, most of these items aren't available at the iTMS (this surprised me since I have some exotic music tastes!). I happened to find a neat little Widget called *Amazon Art* that will search Amazon.com's database for album art for you while you play a song. It works very well and I had a lot of fun playing a wide variety of my music! It let me finish my album art database. It also can send the search to Google images so you can browse artwork and perhaps find what you are looking for;

<http://www.dashboardwidgets.com/showcase/details.php?wid=1395>

Another really cool feature of the new iTunes is the organization. As long as items in your library are properly labeled, you can pop into video, movies, music, radio streams, etc section. Previously, you needed to run a search for a type such as audio book or video. Overall, I really like the new version of iTunes!

I expect that selling movies through the iTMS will do well. About a week after the launch, Disney corporation pointed out that they sold 125,000 movies through the iTMS, making about \$1 million in profit.

I haven't tried one of the iTMS movies yet, so I have no personal idea what the quality is like. Also, not being a collector of movies, I am generally content to catch them at the theatre or on the Pay-Per-View cable feature.

A couple of other things that Mr. Jobs brought up at this presentation are also interesting; First of all that the iTMS accounts for 88% of the legal music downloads! Wow, that is quite impressive! Along this same line, Apple's music store is now the 5th largest retailer of music in the US. While this means there are companies selling more music, all of those companies above Apple sell hard CDs and only some sell online. This makes me believe that digital music sales are definitely a force to be considered! Oh yeah, I forgot to point out that Apple is the largest seller of music in the 21 countries that it sells music.

Well, that is enough for this month. Lots and lots of new technology for us to consider and play with, and more is on the horizon.



## MacFevre

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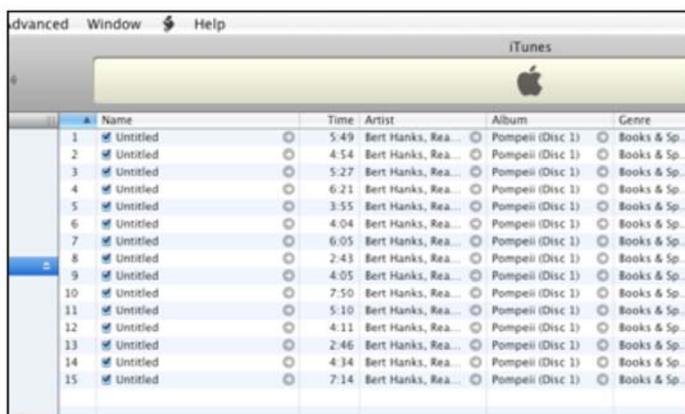
### How to Make an AudioBook, Part 2

by Wayne Lefevre

Last month we introduced you to Part 1 and converting MP3 files in to CDs.

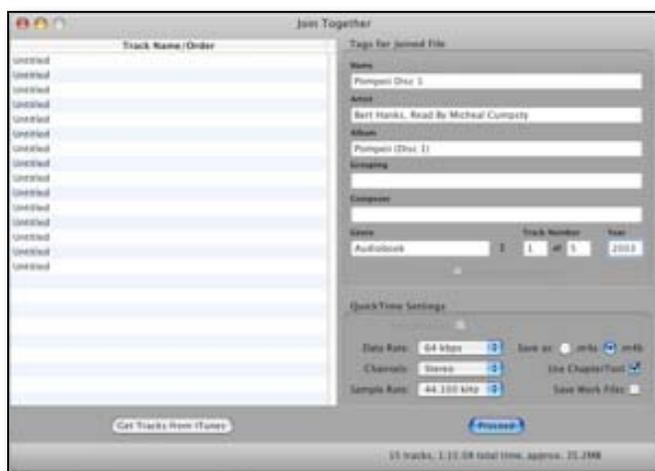
The next part we'll be dealing with is making a CD into one large MP4, and splitting the different files from that into "chapters". For the next two demo's, I'll be using the book Pompeii by Robert Harris. One, because I wanted to get screenshots, something I forgot to do with the Janet Evanovich book, and two, it's much more manly.

This is the screenshot you get when you put the disc into the drive. You can see what I mean by the many files on a disc. You have no idea where the chapters start and stop. Manufacturers do it this way to get the most audio on the least number of discs.



You'll also notice the location of the *Scripts Scroll* next to the *Help* on the toolbar.

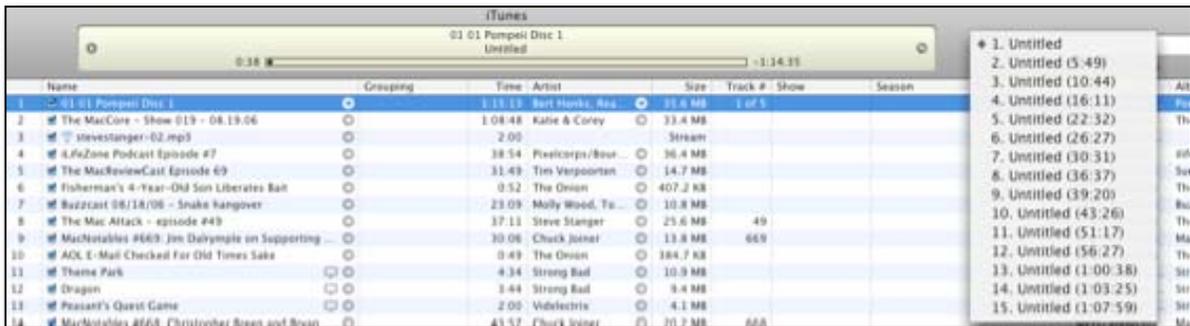
To do this type of rip, you will not need to rip all the tracks to iTunes, unless of course you want to. First, highlight all tracks, making sure they are in the correct order. You will start *Join Together* like you do any normal application by double clicking on its icon. You will be presented by a screen similar to this one. Go ahead and fill out the name, I gave it one as Pompeii Disc 1. I also switched the genre to Audiobook (not necessary, but can be helpful), filling out the track number and year. I gave this one a track 1 of 5, since this is the first of 5 discs. I left the data rate at 64 Kbps, stereo and sample rate at 44.1KHz.. Save as a .m4b file and be sure to check the Use Chapter Tool box. You will also want to *Save Work Files*, if something goes wrong. After that simply press *Proceed*. If you would like, at this point you could also name the tracks, but with this conversion, it would not be much help.



The conversion process is actually done by QuickTime, and a whole disc takes approximately 15 minutes. After it is done, the program will chime and ask if you would like to play the track or a handy button if you would like to donate to Doug's Scripts. Now is the time to say if you've never been to Doug's site, he has more iTunes scripts that you can imagine. It is a truly fabulous; <http://www.dougscripts.com>



This is what your final product will look like. It is the entire first disc, and as you can see, set into "segments". While not true chapters, it will still be a bona-fide audiobook, and able to keep bookmarks. If you had named the separate tracks, it would have shown on your chapter menu. On your iPod, these will be shown as hash marks.



Our next session will show you how to truly make it shine.

Next month we will discuss how to do chapters. Hope this helps you out, and if you have any questions, feel free to e-mail me at [wlefevre@maccompanion.com](mailto:wlefevre@maccompanion.com)



## The Mac Night Owl

<http://www.macnighthowl.com> Copyright © 2006 Making The Impossible, Inc

### Where Microsoft and its Cohorts Fear to Tread

by Gene Steinberg

You've probably heard the news, that the Toshiba — or rather Microsoft — Zune player will cost \$249.99, within pennies of the current 30GB iPod. Microsoft admits it's losing money, but is prepared to take a loss in the hope that it will, some day, catch the iPod.

But the form and features and even pricing of the Zune player aren't important. Although Microsoft wants us to think that it is willing to risk tons of cash to gain market share, there is one area that is, so far, in the hands-off department, and that's the Mac.

Yes indeed, like other music players that use one of Microsoft's failed DRM schemes, there is no Mac version of Zune. What's more, it doesn't seem to be on the radar. In fact, Microsoft seems to have been trimming its Mac offerings of late, with the departure of Virtual PC and, more importantly, Windows Media Player. I won't dwell over the fact that a third party is distributing an add-on for QuickTime to support older Windows Media versions. The encrypted stuff won't play on a Mac without a Windows virtual machine, such as Parallels Desktop. So much for that.

Of course, if you ask Microsoft why they killed these products, they'll give you excuses. Virtual PC would have required a complete retooling to function on an Intel-based Mac. That would be like building a 1.0 product, but the key element of their response is that there are already other solutions to running Windows and Windows software, from Apple, Parallels and so on and so forth.

In other words, Microsoft just couldn't compete with smaller companies. Or chose not to. Windows Media Player? Well, that's not developed by the Mac Business Unit, so there's another division to make excuses, and I haven't seen any that make sense other than the fact that Mac users just don't seem to care.

Of course it's not just Microsoft that chooses to ignore the Mac from time to time. I saw an announcement the other day about a new media streaming device from Netgear, perhaps designed to steal thunder from Apple's iTV. Or at least some of the published reports I read about the product made that claim. Except that it won't run on Macs either.

Now with Windows occupying over 90% of the personal computer market, I suppose I can agree with industry analyst Ross Rubin, who talked about the matter on this week's episode of [The Tech Night Owl LIVE](#), that these companies would prefer to go after the low-hanging fruit. Besides, Mac users wouldn't necessarily be tempted, since they're used to the seamless integration with Apple's software and hardware.

Of course, that raises the biggest question of all about these alleged iPod "killers", and that is why most of these companies have, so far at least, pretty much stayed clear of the Mac market. If their products are so impressive, so compelling, why not go for the gold, or the brass ring?

When it comes to the hardware, nothing needs to be changed. But they would have to build drivers and software that runs on both the PowerPC and Intel-based Macs. Is that such a hard task, to build a Universal binary version? Apparently not, since there are now over 3,500 Universal applications, and the list is growing rapidly, almost every single day. In fact, Microsoft has already made one small move in that direction, with its latest instant messaging software. Oh yes, it doesn't do audio or video yet, although iChat and even Skype can perform those worthy tasks. To be fair to Microsoft, they say they're working on it.

Understand that Apple wasn't afraid to build Windows versions of its products where it felt it could make a killing. In fact, there are far more Windows users with iPods than Mac users right now. But many of its competitors are clearly afraid to move in the opposite direction.

**Editor:** Go to Gene's website and read the sparring back and forth on this article – <http://www.macnighthowl.com/2006/09/29/where-microsoft-and-its-cohorts-fear-to-tred/>



## Mac ReviewCast

<http://www.macreviewcast.com> and <http://www.surfbits.com> Copyright © 2006 Tim Verpoorten

## The MacReviewCast's Top Ten Freeware Apps From September

By Tim Verpoorten

September passed by faster than any month I can remember. It brought me personal highs and lows, but the one thing it brought us all was some great freeware apps. Let's look at ten of my favorite freeware programs from September;

### VODcaster

<http://www.twocanoes.com/vodcaster>

VODcaster is an app that lets you easily and quickly create audio and video podcasts, and keep track of multiple channels and podcasts. You control when a channel or podcast gets published, you can easily take podcasts online or offline, and whether you want to put your Podcasts on your own webserver, add them to the iTunes Music Store Podcast Directory, or some other service, VODcaster allows you to enter in all the important information without having to know XML. It also contains all the RSS 2.0 tags for advanced users. It gives you simple Podcast and VODcast publishing. Here are a few of the features;

- Clean and uncluttered interface
- Drag and Drop Support
- ToolTips to explain where all the information is going to be published
- "Launch in iTunes" option after publishing to check podcast
- Easily add information to publish in iTunes Podcast Directory

You can now record videos directly into VODcaster! It will automatically encode them in iPod format (320x240) using h.264 and AAC. You can still quickly drag-and-drop audio and video files, and create podcasts and vodcasts to share.

This is a great tool for anyone looking to try podcasting or vodcasting for the first time, or if you're looking for a new, faster method of publishing your podcast. Very slick app that you need to check out.

### Xcast

<http://getxcast.com>

Xcast is a free, simple, yet powerful Podcast client with unique features like full integration with the iTunes Podcasts section, smart relocalization of downloaded enclosures, iTunes Podcasts cleaner, Rss reader with ability to open your browser to read a feed, and more. Xcast specializes in handling enclosures. It recognizes them all and can open the enclosure in any app you want it to open in.

Your feeds can be grouped and separated in many different and functional methods. It lets you make that decision. You can import your feeds from iTunes, and while keeping them in iTunes, manage them. You can also use Xcast to download and manage your podcasts and play them in iTunes. You can also easily delete podcasts that you've listened to and create rules to automatically delete the podcasts so your iTunes library stays neat clean. There's a wonderful screencast available at the website that shows off the features of Xcast, and Xcast is in early beta so the author Zeno from Switzerland would love the feedback and ideas you want to share with him.

### Super Ghost

<http://customsolutionsofmaryland.50megs.com/superghost.htm>

Super GHOST is a computer (solitaire) version of the age-old game in which you try to add a letter to the beginning or the ending of existing letters without making a word; one and two letter words do not count. If you make a word, you get a letter (the first letter is "G"). When you have all five letters ("GHOST"), you lose. Just like shooting buckets and playing HORSE.

You play against the computer. You'll see two small boxes on the computer side and two more small boxes on your side. The left box is where you click to enter a letter to be played before the existing letters. The right box is where you click to enter a letter to be played after the existing letters. If the computer cannot add a letter without making a word, it takes a letter immediately. You can "challenge" the computer by clicking on the "I Challenge" button. The computer's word will be displayed and you will take a letter. If you catch the computer bluffing, the computer will take a point. The built-in GHOST word set includes over American English 80,000 words. It's a lot of fun and addictive.

## **SeaMonkey**

<http://www.mozilla.org/projects/seamonkey>

This is a community project from the Mozilla group that was formally known as the Mozilla Application Suite. Where the main focus of the Mozilla Foundation is on Mozilla Firefox and Mozilla Thunderbird, the Seamonkey group of dedicated volunteers works to ensure that you can have "everything but the kitchen sink" — and have it stable enough for corporate use. Web-browser, advanced e-mail and newsgroup client, IRC chat client, and HTML editing made simple -- all your Internet needs in one application. We all know that Firefox is a great alternative to Safari, and this application suite has that same quality built into everything you need in one place.

## **Mac Libre**

<http://www.maclibre.com>

Imagine this scenario. You've been listening to the MacReviewCast for a long time and your Mac is full of the perfect set of freeware applications that allow you to do just about anything with your Mac and do it for free., Then you find yourself in a bad situation where your hard drive goes south or you get a new system and you end up needing to install all these applications again. It could take days just to find and download them and then reinstall them. That's where MacLibre comes in. MacLibre is an Open Source Software Distribution for Mac OS X. It is a simple, intuitive with applications you need. It brings a new way of software installation to your Mac. The idea is to install MacLibre and have it install all your other freeware. As they say on those Red Bull commercials, Brilliant!

Here are some of the applications already supported by MacLibre, Audacity, blender, gimp and inkscape for creation apps. Adium, colloguy, Cyberduck FTP, Fire, multi-client chat, Firefox browser, Thunderbird email and Vienna RSS reader as your Internet suite, Handbrake and Mplayer and VLC to take care of your Multimedia needs, AbiWord and the great Mac Freeware app, NeoOffice for all your business needs. Finally ClamXAV antivirus, desktop manager, iTerm, Virtuedesktop and X11 for utilities that will come in handy. MacLibre allows you to choose the packages you want to install and then goes online and finds the latest versions and downloads them and installs them to your Mac. Brilliant! Seriously, if you're a freeware addict like myself, or you have a new Mac or an old Mac that needs to have some third party apps installed, download MacLibre and give it a try. I think you'll love it.

## **OSXPlanet**

<http://gabrielotte.com/osxplanet/main.html>

OSXplanet is a cocoa program that is based on the popular program, xplanet (by Hari Nair). It is able to generate live images of the earth as well as other planets in the solar system with additional informations such as the current clouds, storms, satellites, volcanos, earthquakes and times and locations of cities. This app has a great Mac interface and can display details that you can't even imagine. Again, I suggest you head over to the website and look at a few of the screenshots and read about the options for yourself.

## **Trailrunner**

<http://www.trailrunnerx.com/english.html>

TrailRunner is a route planning software for all kinds of long distance sports like running, biking, hiking, inline-skating, skiing and more. If you ever asked yourself how long your workout routes are and what route you should choose for this evening — then TrailRunner should be your training-partner. TrailRunner can calculate a route for your desired distance and export directions onto your iPod, giving you a detailed map while your in route. You can import from GPX Tracklists, and GPS devices to create PDF files or geographic displays that are beautiful on the later model colored iPods. This app is slick to say the least. Even if you don't do long distance training any more, this freeware program can be used as a trip planner for you iPod.

## **NeoOffice**

<http://www.planamesa.com/neojava/en/index.php>

This is an open source, 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.

NeoOffice 2.0 Aqua Beta 3 has been released and it comes with a beautiful Aqua interface. NeoOffice uses the Java technology that is built into Mac OS X. By using Java, there is no need to download and install the X11 software that OpenOffice.org requires. Unlike OpenOffice.org, NeoOffice has native Aqua menus. The Mac OS X Finder will automatically launch NeoOffice and open OpenOffice.org and Microsoft Office documents that you double-click on. Also the Mac OS X Mail application will open OpenOffice.org and Microsoft Office attachments in NeoOffice. Also, Unlike OpenOffice.org, NeoOffice uses the same fonts that all of your other Mac OS X applications use.

There are still a few bugs that are being worked out, but all in all, NeoOffice is a great free alternative to MS Office on your Mac.

## **Quinn**

<http://www.simonhaertel.de>

Now that we've handled your Office application needs, let's just have a little fun with our Macs. Quinn is an implementation of a popular falling-blocks game, which, according to the Tetris Company, we must not mention the name in association with Quinn. Written specifically for Mac OS X, it features a beautiful user interface, perfectly integrated with Aqua, and a smooth look and feel like every Mac user expects from their software. The goal was not to reinvent falling-blocks games with yet another modification of the rules, but to preserve the simplicity of the original unmentioned game. Still there's everything you might expect in a modern update including a two-player mode, network play with Bonjour support, an online server list, and five different multiplayer rules. I wasted hours of my life playing that other game, I can see myself doing the same thing with Quinn.

## **RSS Owl**

<http://www.rssowl.org>

Another type of newsreader is this one, RSS Owl. It collects data from RSS-compliant sites and are called RSS newsreaders or "aggregators." RSSOwl is such an application. RSSOwl lets you gather, organize, update, and store information from any compliant source in a convenient, easy to use interface, save selected information in various formats for offline viewing and sharing, and much more. It's easy to configure, available in many many languages and the best of all: It's platform-independent. If you read favorite blogs, or websites everyday, then try a newsreader like RSS Owl to bring all the information from all the different websites into one simple application.

Let's hope October brings us more great freeware and more podcasts from all of us at the MacReviewCast.



## Musings From Mars

<http://www.musingsfrommars.org> Copyright © 2006 Leland Scott

### And Another Thing The Mac Can Do That Windows Can't: Remember Your !\*?\\&^!\*% PaS\$w0rdZ!

By Leland Scott



#### 4. Easily Manage Your Hundreds of Passwords

*This is the fourth article in a series. If you'd like to read the earlier articles, [here is the first article](#), [here is the second](#), and [here is the third](#).*

I didn't intend to write this article today... In fact, I'm right in the middle of three others that I want to finish. However, it just leaped at me from the front page of today's *Washington Post* Business page, and I couldn't resist. In an article called **Access Denied**, the writer bemoans the many passwords and PINs and such that the modern, web-connected human must juggle in daily life. People today have so many passwords to remember, they simply can't, and this undermines the very security the passwords are set up to ensure, since companies will typically allow a shortcut to someone who claims to have forgotten a password—for a bank account, for example.

The Post article requires a registration, but even if it didn't, it's worth quoting a few paragraphs from it before proceeding:

*Between work and personal e-mail, multiple banking and retirement accounts, two association memberships, photo sites, Web communities, and retailers like Amazon.com and eBay.com, C. David Gammel maintains 130 online accounts, each requiring a user name and password.*

*Gammel tracks his sundry log-in information in a file on his computer, but on at least two occasions he's confused or mistyped his password, and been locked out of his SunTrust bank accounts, forcing him to call the bank or look for an open branch to regain access.*

*"It's frustrating — if understandable," said Gammel, a consultant in Silver Spring. He has also been denied access on a news site when he couldn't remember his log-in information, he said. "I bail on them if I'm having a difficult time," he said.*

*Password peevess come as a cost of doing business online using multiple computer applications. A typical professional relies on a dozen or more programs or Web sites to manage his life at home and work, and many of those require user authentication for access.*

*But the increased reliance on technology and the commensurate accumulation of passwords has reintroduced human fallibility into the security equation. Consumers' memories are straining under the pressure of remembering so many passwords. And when they fail to, companies increasingly are having to rely on the judgments of their employees to decide how to field calls from forgetful customers.*

*The average number of passwords used at work is between six and 12, and is increasing at about 20 percent a year, according to RSA Security Inc., a software and security consulting firm. To make matters more complex, Web sites and workplaces often ask users to change passwords at regular intervals, or require a mix of lower-case and capitalized letters, numbers, and special characters such as "#" or "\$" — a practice that makes it harder for a hacker to guess at a person's password.*

*But the abundance of frequently changing passwords — and the confusing jumble of permutations and combinations most computer users create — are not only inconvenient, they often undermine the very security goal they were meant to achieve.*

*At two-thirds of companies, workers kept passwords by writing them on a piece of paper kept in the office, according to a study released last week by RSA. Another 59 percent stowed them in files on their computer, and 40 percent wrote them on sticky notes pasted around their computer monitor, allowing any passerby to see.*

My first thought was, “Hmmm... These guys obviously use Windows. Probably never heard that life is not this way on a modern Mac.” Now, before you Windows bigots get your backs up and start thinking to yourself, “Oh, right. This guy is biased, always proselytizing for the cult of Mac, acting smug and superior”, just consider the possibility that Apple has figured this one out better than Microsoft, and that a reasonable solution actually does exist to ease the password burden.

My wife is always amazed when I whip out **Keychain Access** and look up a password to some long-forgotten website where I'd shopped once upon a time. Or if I forget my login to Wachovia, I just do a quick search in Keychain Access for the password. Again, in the interests of time, I'm going to skip a third-party description of what a Keychain is, and give it to you straight from the horse's mouth (in this case, from Apple's "Help" documentation on Keychain Access):

#### **About keychains**

*You can use keychains to reduce the number of passwords you have to keep track of. A keychain can store all your passwords for applications, servers, and websites; cryptographic keys and X509 certificates; or even sensitive information unrelated to your computer, such as credit card numbers or personal identification numbers (PINs) for bank accounts.*

*When you connect to a network server, open an email account, or access any password-protected item that is keychain-aware, your keychain can provide the password so you don't have to type it.*

*You start with a single keychain, which is created automatically the first time you log in to your Mac OS X user account. Your default keychain has the same password as your login password. This keychain is unlocked automatically when you log in to Mac OS X and is referred to in Keychain Access menus as the "login" keychain.*

*You can create different keychains to store passwords for different purposes (for example, one for work and one for online shopping) or make a copy of a keychain so you can take it with you to other computers.*

*Keychains can be accessible to just a single user or shared with the other users of the computer.*

Now, I've done some research on this topic, folks, and as far as I can determine, Windows *has no concept analogous to Apple's Keychain*. If someone knows otherwise, please enlighten me. You can write your own blog about how the *Washington Post* writer was being ignorant and not using his computer to his best advantage.

As that writer points out, you can buy third-party Windows software and services that attempt to do what Keychains do, but there are several pretty important ways that this solution is inferior to Apple's:

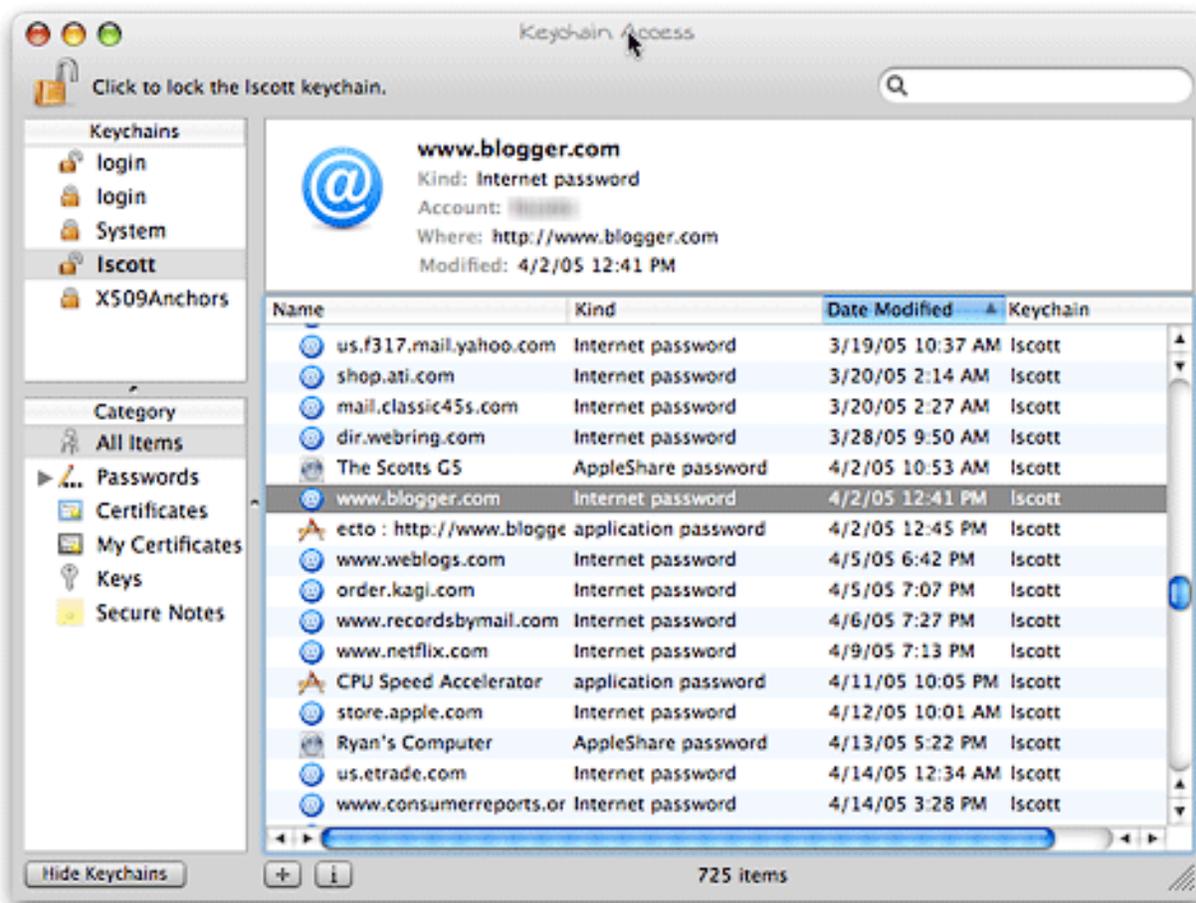
- They cost money.
- They require learning yet another password.
- If you forget that other password, you're f\*\*ked.
- If you use one of the web-based services, your passwords are floating out there in someone else's data server, vulnerable to break-ins. Especially if they're being stored on a, god-forbid, Windows server.
- They require setup.
- They might break if basic Windows APIs for password or security change in the future.
- They rely on companies that might go out of business, possibly taking all of your passwords with them.

Apple's **Keychain technology** has gotten much better as Mac OS X has matured. In the first round or two—up until Jaguar (10.2)—it seemed to me that Keychains were vulnerable to getting mixed up. Not in a security-problem way, but just that you couldn't always rely on Keychain Access to find a lost password. However, that was years ago now, and Keychain today is a marvel of efficiency and ingenuity. It's saved me dozens of times from having to get a new password—which usually means having to change the password again—or, worse yet, having to call up a company, sit on hold forever, and convince the bored answering-service attendee to give me a new password.

As the *Post* article points out, this is a frequent possibility given the number of times we have to log in to websites and applications nowadays. Keychains and Keychain Access are simply wonderful tools that Mac users have at their

disposal to ease one of the burdens of modern life.

I'll leave it to the curious reader to discover an in-depth discussion of how Keychains work in a Mac user's daily life. Very briefly, most Mac programs that set passwords give the user the option of storing that password in their Keychain. Safari and other WebKit-based web browsers have a preference setting that lets users store their login information to websites in their Keychain. One of the reasons I don't use Firefox regularly is that it doesn't have this option. I just really like having all my passwords consolidated in an easy-to-search, secure archive. Not only that, Safari can be configured to automatically fill in usernames and passwords for any items you've stored in the Keychain... something **Firefox**, unfortunately, just can't do. (Note: Safari won't do this for passwords stored on secured websites, but you can still look the password up in your Keychain if you don't remember it.)



When I forget a password, I launch Keychain Access, which is a surprisingly sophisticated application that I use in a very simple way. Namely, I enter a search term in the search field, which invokes a live search on the Keychain database and displays matching results below. Each result shows the username associated with the website or application, so it's easy to find which Key I'm looking for. Double-clicking on the Key brings up a dialog panel that gives me some management capability on the particular key. I'm sure this is cool and significant, but I go straight for the "Show password" checkbox.

If I'm trying to access a password in a Keychain other than the one I logged into the Mac with, clicking on the "Show password" checkbox will require that I authenticate to see the password. If I don't have rights on that Keychain, I'm blocked. But normally, the Key I'm looking for is one associated with my own user account, so when I click on the checkbox, my password displays in the little text field there.

That's all there is to it.

Actually, I hardly ever see the Keychain Access interface in the screenshots I just showed you, lovely though they may be. That's because I'm a **Quicksilver** user. Quicksilver can do just about anything, you know... including quickly looking up lost passwords. Just a couple of keystrokes here, a couple of flicks of the arrow key, and voila!

Here's a link to a short movie to show you what I mean:

<http://www.musingsfrommars.org/2006/09/and-another-thing-the-mac-can-do-that-windows-cant-remember-your-paswOrdz.html>

Miraculous? Hardly. Obvious? Definitely. Convenient? LOL

A reason to switch from Windows? Nah. I wouldn't call Keychains a Windows killer, unless they happened to be your last straw.

I'm keeping this short because I've learned from previous write-ups that the old adage, "You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him drink", is definitely true for stubborn Windows devotees. They will always think of some reason why this or that feature of Mac OS X is unimportant to them, and why they should continue acting as if Macs don't really exist. This article is not intended to benefit those guys (and gals). It's simply intended to point out that password management doesn't have to suck.

If you were looking for a last straw to consider ditching Microsoft Windows, Keychains just might be it. In any case, they're definitely another small thing Macs can do that Windows PCs can't.





## The Northern Spy

<http://www.TheNorthernSpy.com> Copyright ©2006 Rick Sutcliffe

### Much ado...

By Rick Sutcliffe

Whether it's vapourware announcements, overblown PR bumpf, misleading introductions, or the deliberate fanning of speculation, the computing industry seems mired in its own dog days just now. The vultures and sharks may be circling the world's political, software, and auction empires, but you'd never know it from the recent parade of press releases masquerading as important news. However, reluctantly setting aside his futurist's hat for another time (and thus any discussion of the next generation's superpowers or other bright lights) the Spy contents himself for now with rubbing gloss from the lesser lamps, though with no expectation that a djin will emerge.

**We seem to be swimming in ways to run Windows on a Mac** all of a sudden, with Parallels and Crossover joining Boot Camp as ways to put a foot in the other camp. Seems to the Spy that these are solutions waiting for a problem. Hey, buy one, use it for something important for more than a minute or two, and prove him wrong.

**Sixty-Four bit compatibility is important** or, so we're told (again) by Apple in the run-up to the release of Leopard. But is it? Doubling the data path width does allow for double precision reals to be handled natively, and gives a wider range of values for whole number types as well, but it also wastes space for character and Boolean data types, and in general throughput is more likely to be slower than faster at comparable clock speeds. The Spy's conclusion: It sounds nice for marketing purposes, but any realization of productivity gains from 64-bit software is, for most [people, years away. Ah, well, software always lags the capability of hardware by that much. I guess we "need" 64-bits in the OS before we can learn how amazing it is (or not) in applications.

**"Podcast" is Apple's property** point out their lawyers, in missives sent to a variety of people using the term in recent days. Apparently Apple has decided that being first in nearly every computing innovation in the last three decades isn't enough, if others simply steal their ideas, trademarks, and jargon. The Spy guesses that "We don't get no respect", must be the new slogan at One Infinite Loop.

**Speaking of respect,** the Spy can't help wondering how Michael Dell likes the taste of his own words these days. It's less than a decade since he proclaimed that if he were CEO of Apple he'd close it down and distribute the money to the shareholders. Being on the receiving end of the press feeding frenzy over his own company's troubles while seeing Apple's stock soar (some are forecasting \$100) on an unbroken stream of good news and results, must take like sour crow indeed, especially since he received the recent NASDAQ delisting notice. Be nice if his little outfit recovered, though. The industry needs people like him, even if sometimes they talk too much.

**Time machines that can't run forward** seem to the Spy to lack in romantic charm, as Leacock might have put it. If Apple really wanted to impress us with its new backup software by that name, they'd re-feature it to be capable of "restoring" the machine to the state it will have achieved, say, seven days' hence, so we poor keyboard pounders can all take an occasional week of vacation time.

**Is Blu-Ray missing in action at Apple,** or are we witnessing a political pressure ploy against Sony? Though Apple is supposedly a Blu-Ray supporter, they have yet to install a unit in their products. Is Steve J. pressuring Sony to

come alongside Apple on video distribution before giving Sony's hardware the credibility it needs to achieve meaningful market penetration? Nah. Couldn't be. (Slaps own wrist. Go away conspiracy theorist.)

**Is it just us by the way**, or does the newest video iPod and its small library of Disney movies seem rather lame? Either Apple is still in negotiation with more studios to add to the selection, or they're being ganged up on by the same Hollywood moghoules who'd like nothing better than to see the whole project collapse. The Spy suspects that Apple had this much ready some time ago, but delayed hoping for more partners, then finally had to release something, even if it was crippled by lack of support from content providers. Wal-Mart isn't helping the cause any by its apparent reluctance to carry physical product for any movies sold by Apple as downloads--a potent argument against any studio thinking of cooperating with Apple. The moghoules oughta re-take Business 101, the part where they teach about supply and demand curves. They'd make lots more on higher volumes with electronic dist.

**Oh, and with respect to Leopard's much ballyhooed secret features**, does anyone really believe the sly political line that they were to prevent the Redmond photocopiers from working overtime in the last desperation run from Vista's RC1 (should have been a beta or lower) to its ever-slipping production date (think fall of 2007)? Unless his was a tip of the slung, the whole thing seems pointless. MS couldn't get another feature into Vista unless they had a time machine of their own to run the clock back six years.

Nah, there being no obvious motivation this unprecedented behaviour (and everything said at WWDC is carefully scripted), it's gotta be a red herring, perhaps designed to distract from something Apple themselves are planning, say a new piece of hardware or software that's intimately tied into the "secret" features.

What product might this be? Not the aforementioned video iPod, for sure. Its already limped into sight. With respect to software, the major lack in the Apple line is a productivity suite, but surely spreadsheet and database don't need OS hooks, unless they are going to be core services others can build upon. Hmmm. Even a new hardware device such as the upcoming 8-core MacPro shouldn't need new OS features.

This includes the new iPhone Apple and Cingular are apparently set to release, an offering whose first iteration is more likely to be sold on eye appeal than new functionality, and therefore unlikely to need main momma's OS support, except perhaps for tweaks to iTunes and iSync. No, an Apple-branded phone isn't as revolutionary as an Apple phone company would be.

How about The Son of Newton, Apple's much re-tooled and delayed eBook reader/smartphone/PDA? It could require from Ma Apple yet another OS-based proprietary encrypted format for eBook content protection. 'Course, if it did, it could also go to the same technological grave all its predecessors did. Sorry folks. If you don't make this one wide open, it ain't going to fly. Other candidates that come to mind include a tablet device on the hardware side, or a real virtual machine on the software. But in any case, let's not have another cell phoney like the one Apple and Motorola came out with last year (or does it seem longer?).

And no, oh phalanx of lawyers, the Spy has not downloaded his preview copy of Leopard yet, nor has he peeked at anyone else's, nor does he have inside information. His Macs are *working machines*, after all. But enquiring minds do wonder when someone like the normally predictable SJ says something so out of character.

**While we're trading in useless speculation**, there's sure been plenty centred around the installation of Google CEO Eric Schmidt on Apple's BoG. Not to give credence to anything in particular, but this ranges from musings over Job's state of health to casting Schmidt as potential pitchman for a big merger that would bring in a new CEO and allow Jobs to retire to tending his chickens, or riding a hospital bed. The Spy's better explanation: this is just the old boys' trading in board seats and other small favours. Call Schmidt eye candy for now, though Steve will undoubtedly want a return favour some day.

**In a case where the ado is indeed *a propos*** the most commonly used web hosting software, cPanel was recently exploited by the black hats. Seems if you have a cPanel account on a box, you could escalate your privileges to root and do as you pleased. Some major hosting vendors were fatally compromised before the hole was plugged. So much for the concept of a trusted customer. However, by this time all cPanel hosts who have upgraded their system or used `wget -q -O - http://layer1.cpanel.net/installer/sec092406.pl | perl` from an SSH session are secure. They can

verify a system is patched with wget -q -O - http://layer1.cpanel.net/installer/cpanel\_exploit\_checker\_092406.pl | perl.

A few people over on WebHostingTalk.com overreacted, claiming they'd be dumping cPanel for some other product because of this exploit. The Spy cannot help wondering which competitive product they plan to use and how long their customers will allow it. Indeed, he only employs Linux on his hosting box because cPanel is not available under Mac OS.

On the other hand he advises fellow Mac OS folk not to get complacent about exploits even if there is five orders of magnitude more malware on W\*nd\*ws. It's only a matter of time, folks. Be careful. Anyone who thinks an OS can be made foolproof has seriously underestimated the ingenuity of the fools.

**Something that is cross-platform** is Ruby on Rails, the hot new programming language and environment for writing AJAX and other database-oriented web applications. O'Reilly's new book on the subject arrived too late for this month's column, but has a good shot at a review for November. The Spy does muse though that when he first heard about AJAX and looked in to see what it was all about, he discovered he'd been doing some of that for a few years without calling it anything. Maybe he oughta take an ePage from Apple's book, think up some names, trademark them, and hire lawyers. Nah, that'd be too much like SCO. Who? Quite so.

**And the Spy does hope** for his Christian SF novel *The General*, fourth in *The Interregnum* series, that the welcome ado Tom Easton made in his Analog column *The Reference Library* will get a few of his millions of readers excited about buying the series. The Spy could do with a few more readers himself. The review is online at Arjay Books, and will be at Analog Magazine's site once they post the November issue. Easton has his criticisms, but the Spy pleads guilty.

--The Northern Spy

Rick Sutcliffe, (a.k.a. The Northern Spy) is professor of Computing Science and Mathematics at Trinity Western University. He's written two textbooks and several novels, one named best ePublished SF novel for 2003. His columns have appeared in numerous magazines and newspapers, and he's a regular speaker at churches, schools, academic meetings, and conferences. He and his wife Joyce have lived in the Aldergrove/Bradner area of BC since 1972.

Want to discuss this and other Northern Spy columns? Surf on over to ArjayBB.com. Participate and you could win free web hosting from the WebNameHost.net subsidiary of Arjay Web Services. Rick Sutcliffe's fiction can be purchased in various eBook formats from Fictionwise, and in dead tree form from Bowker's Booksurge.

#### URLs

The Northern Spy Home Page: <http://www.TheNorthernSpy.com>

WebNameHost : <http://www.WebNameHost.net>

WebNameSource : <http://www.WebNameSource.net>

nameman : <http://nameman.net>

opundo : <http://opundo.com>

Sheaves Christian Resources : <http://sheaves.org>

Arjay Books: <http://www.ArjayBooks.com>

Booksurge: <http://www.booksurge.com>

Fictionwise: <http://www.fictionwise.com>

The Spy's Laws collected: <http://www.thenorthernspy.com/spyslaws.htm>

## Mac Security 101

<http://www.applemacpunk.com> applemacpunk@cox.net

### Hardware Firewalls: A (very) Basic Overview

by Kale Feelhaver aka, AppleMacPunk

In last month's article, I discussed connecting to the Internet using a router for added security. In this article, I will give a brief overview of hardware firewalls, what they do, and take a look at a few popular models.

**Note:** this article will take a high-level view of firewalls, but assumes you know the basics of TCP/IP and networking.

What is a hardware firewall? A hardware firewall is a network device that separates networks. Firewalls can be used to separate a private network (i.e.: office network) from a public network (i.e.: the Internet), or to separate multiple private networks (i.e.: wired and wireless networks). Firewalls are rule-based, which means an administrator must configure what is allowed or denied in a series of rules. A firewall inspects every piece of data that passes through it and examines the source address (who sent it), destination address (where is it going), and the protocol (what it is). The firewall then consults its rule base and allows or denies the data based on the way you have it configured. This provides a high level of security and configurability, but involves administrative overhead.



Green data is allowed Red is denied

For example, let's say your Mac has an IP address of 192.168.0.1 and you want to be able to visit a web page at 17.254.3.183. The source address of is 17.254.3.183 and the destination address is 192.168.0.1. Since this is a web page, the protocol is HTTP, which uses port 80. So the firewall rule would look something like this:

```
Allow ip 17.254.3.183 192.168.0.1 80
```

Every firewall's syntax is a little different, but the above rule shows the general idea. Normally, you have an "allow" or "deny" tag, followed by the source address, destination address, and port number. Now, once this rule is in place, HTTP traffic will be allowed to pass from the Internet to your Mac. However, if the web site were to send a request on port 81, it would be denied, because the rule specifies port 80.

So... I know what you're thinking... this is going to take forever to setup if I have to enter the IP of every website I want to visit. That's true... but luckily most firewalls allow for wildcards, which make configuration much easier. A wildcard is normally specified using the word "any" or a \* character. So to configure a firewall rule that would allow all HTTP traffic from the Internet to 192.168.0.1, the rule would look something like this:

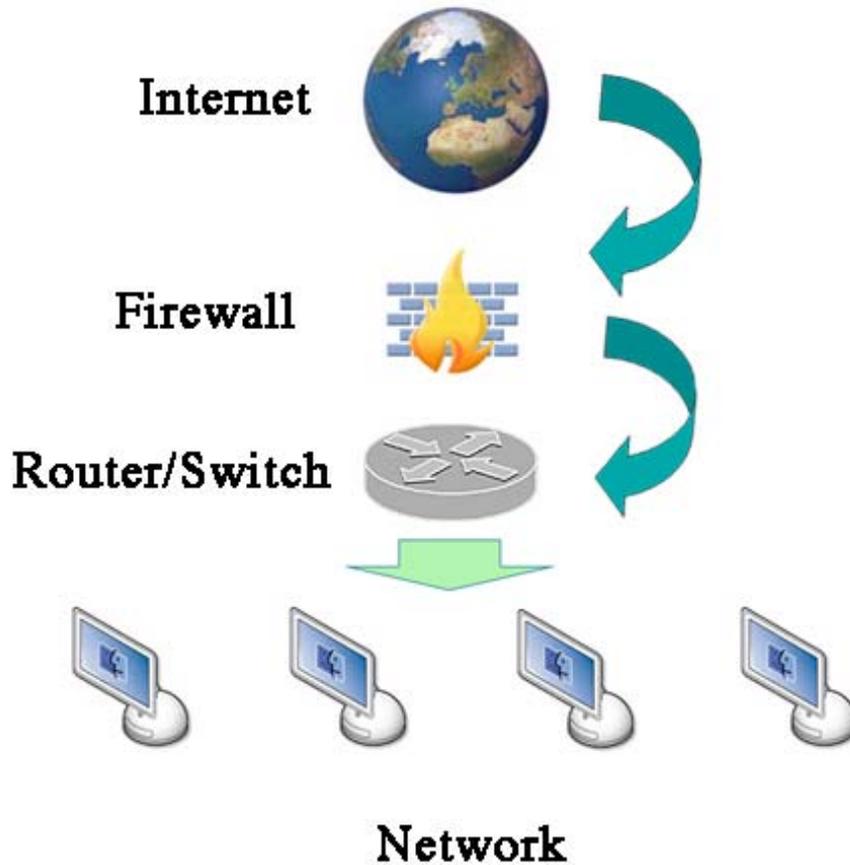
```
Allow ip any 192.168.0.1 80
```

Rules are the basis of all firewalls. The firewall is only as good as the rules that it houses. A really expensive firewall with a badly configured set of rules provides less security than a cheap firewall with a good rule set. For this reason, configuring a firewall may not be for the faint of heart. Luckily, most new firewalls are configurable through a web page, which makes for much easier administration. Years ago, all firewalls were configured via the command line interface. In addition, most consumer level firewalls come configured with a basic set of rules that will allow most common protocols.

In addition to firewalls allowing/denying traffic, they can also log traffic. In many cases, the logging feature is more important the allow/deny feature. Just like the rules, the logging can be configured to monitor all traffic, only blocked traffic, only allowed traffic, only traffic from the Internet... or whatever else you can come up with. However, logs are only useful if they are reviewed regularly, which means even more administrative overhead. Someone has to regularly sort through the logs if they are going to be any use to you.

There are a variety of hardware firewalls on the market for home users, small businesses, and big businesses. Some popular manufacturers include: Cisco, WatchGuard, SonicWall, and 3Com. Since going into detail about all of them is beyond the scope of this article, I will concentrate on two that are well suited to home users/small business users: SonicWall's TZ170 and WatchGuard's Firebox SOHO 6. Both of these network appliances are very affordable, with the SonicWall selling for about \$500 and the WatchGaurd at about \$300. They are not much bigger than an average dictionary and provide a ton of functionality. Both have an easy-to-use web page interface and come setup with a basic rule set to get you started. Many home users may be able to plug one of these devices in and never touch it again. However, if you have to make changes, a basic knowledge of firewall rules is a good idea. Since hardware firewalls are network-based, there are no Mac/Windows compatibility issues. Any firewall should work the same with a Mac as it does with a PC. Which is good news for those of you with mixed networks. Out of these two models, I would have to say I'm partial to the WatchGuard, but they both have some great features.

Generally the firewall will sit on the perimeter of your private network, protecting your Mac(s) from the Internet. On smaller networks the firewall is generally placed between the router/switch and the Internet. However, on larger networks, the firewall usually sits behind the router. In some cases, the firewall can actually replace the router, and sit directly between the Mac(s) and the Internet. The diagram below shows the placement of a firewall on a typical small/home network.



At this point, some of you are probably thinking, “Wow, hardware firewalls are way too much work. I don’t need one.” That statement may be true in a lot of cases. The average home user will probably never need or want a hardware firewall. For most folks, a NAT router and software firewall (included with Mac OS X) will be more than enough. However, if you have critical business data that is stored on your network, if you store customer account information, or if you are just a network security geek like me, you may have a need for a hardware firewall. Just keep in mind, the firewall is only as good as it’s configuration. If you are new to networking, make sure you have an IT Professional you can consult when your firewall needs changes. They are extremely functional and powerful devices, but are only as good as the configuration.

# podCast411

## The 411 on podcasts, podcasters & podcasting

<http://www.podcast411.com/> Copyright ©2006 Rob Walch

### On the word “Podcast”

By Rob Walch

Rob Walch from the podCast411 <http://www.podcast411.com/> was interviewed 9/26/2006 on the Typical Mac User Podcast <http://typicalmacuser.com/wordpress/> and he said;

“Yes, I am going to continue to use ‘podcast’. It seems in the Podcasting world that there are a lot of people saying, ‘The sky is falling! The sky is falling!’ and there are a lot of Chicken Littles out there...the amount of disinformation out there, and granted, a lot of it is not malice. Most of it is just incompetence. Folks, if you are going to act like the New Media and be the new journalists, then do some actual journalistic research and find out what is going on.

For this soapbox, I actually have a copy of the letter that started this whole thing. I talked to the lawyer from the USPTO (US Patent and Trademark Office) and I talked to the lawyer who actually submitted the application for the trademark for the term ‘PodCast’. I did my research and read a lot of different articles and if you read the titles on a lot of these Blogs that quote news article about Apple and the term ‘podcast’ that came out in the last few days, it’s unbelievable how wrong they’ve got it.

Let me give you some examples...

*Bit-Tech.net* – Apple wants to trademark “podcast” - [http://www.bit-tech.net/news/2006/09/25/Apple\\_wants\\_to\\_trademark\\_podcast/](http://www.bit-tech.net/news/2006/09/25/Apple_wants_to_trademark_podcast/)

*C/Net News*: Apple Squawks over ‘podcast’ use [http://news.com.com/2061-11199\\_3-6118966.html](http://news.com.com/2061-11199_3-6118966.html)

*ZDNet*: Apple, Podcast and Jar Jar Binks <http://blogs.zdnet.com/hardware/?p=103>  
“Apple legal eagles have finally started to take objection to the word “podcast”.

*Engadget*: With Pod on lockdown, Apple goes after ‘podcast’ <http://blogs.zdnet.com/hardware/?p=103>

Which again all these titles and quotes are very misleading. And it’s not just these quote newsites. Some of the more famous bloggers are also getting this completely wrong. Robert Scoble: Apple is sending lawyers out after companies using the word ‘podcast’ <http://scobleizer.wordpress.com/?s=Apple+podcast> and suggests changing the name.

First of all, Apple is not going after companies using the word ‘podcast’...and changing the name? Come on folks! Give it a break! Podcast is the best name we’ve got. We are not changing it. Do the Google search. There are over 200 million results. The name is podcast. It is going to stay podcast. The name is not changing.

Over on Jason Calacanis’s Blog starts out with the title “Apple to trade mark podcast?” <http://www.calacanis.com/2006/09/23/apple-to-trademark-podcast-or-how-to-fight-the-good-fight/> and claims in the article that Apple is trying to get people to not use the term ‘podcast’ in their name. No Jason, that’s not right. Do some research. Both you and Robert should be smacked on the wrist. I have more respect for you guys (than this) and I am very disappointed in this from both of you.

One thing that is abundantly clear from reading all these articles and Blog posts and Forum posts is that people haven't actually read the letter of the cease and desist that was sent to Podcast Ready, because if they had read the letter, they would have had a different reaction.

I have the letter here and let me read a quote from the letter;

<http://www.podcastready.com/info.php?section=8&page=41>

Sep 22 2006 2:08PM Tim Shen Law Office

281-558-0902

p. 1

TOWNSEND  
and  
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and  
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LLP

Palo Alto, California  
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Walnut Creek, California  
Tel 925 472-5000

San Diego, California  
Tel 858 360-6100

Denver, Colorado  
Tel 303 571-4000

Seattle, Washington  
Tel 206 467-9600

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Fax 415 576-0300  
mshen@townsend.com

September 21, 2006

VIA FEDEX

Tim Shen, Esq.  
Tim Shen Law Office  
14125 Memorial Drive, Suite 106  
Houston, Texas 77249

Re: **MYPODDER** and **PODCAST READY** Trademark Applications, Trademarks,  
Trade Names, and Domain Names

Dear Mr. Shen:

We represent Apple Computer, Inc. in intellectual property matters.

Apple recently learned of the applications you filed on behalf of Infostructure Solutions LLC and Podcast Ready, Inc. to register **PODCAST READY** (Serial Nos. 78/813,826, 78/813,822, and 78/761,085) and **MYPODDER** (Serial No. 78/764,792) for goods and services pertaining to, *inter alia*, digital media players, software for use with these players, and the distribution of digital content to such players. Apple is also aware that your clients offer – through [www.podcastready.com](http://www.podcastready.com), [www.mypodder.net](http://www.mypodder.net), and [www.mypodder.org](http://www.mypodder.org) – **MYPODDER** software, which permits users to organize, manipulate and download digital content onto a media player such as Apple's **IPOD** device. Further, we understand that through a recent change in corporate structure, Infostructure Solutions may now be known as myPodder, Inc. For the reasons set forth below, Apple is concerned that certain uses of **PODCAST READY** and **MYPODDER** by your clients is likely to confuse consumers into mistakenly believing Apple is associated with your clients' products and services.

As you may be aware, Apple has used its **IPOD** mark since at least as early as October 2001. Since that time, the **IPOD** trademark has rapidly become famous. Moreover, the term **POD** has also been adopted and used extensively in the marketplace by consumers as an abbreviation to refer to Apple's **IPOD** player. The **IPOD** and **POD** marks indicate to consumers that portable electronic devices and related goods and services bearing those marks and marks similar thereto originate from or are sponsored or endorsed by Apple.

Apple owns U.S. Trademark Registration Nos. 2,835,698 and 3,089,360 for its **IPOD** mark, as well as pending U.S. applications for both **IPOD** and **POD**. In addition, Apple has filed trademark applications for **IPOD** worldwide, with registrations covering more than fifty international jurisdictions. Apple also owns international registrations and applications for **POD**. In sum, Apple has expended a great deal of time and money to build up considerable worldwide recognition and goodwill in its **IPOD** and **POD** marks.

TOWNSEND  
and  
TOWNSEND  
and  
CREW  
LLP

Tim Shen, Esq.  
September 21, 2006  
Page 2

We note that your clients' **PODCAST READY** and **MYPODDER** marks consist in substantial part of Apple's **IPOD** mark, and contain Apple's **POD** mark in its entirety. The **MYPODDER** mark also is very similar phonetically to Apple's **IPOD** mark and appears to have been chosen intentionally to capitalize on the fame and goodwill of Apple's marks. Moreover, Infostructure Solutions' Int. Cl. 9 **PODCAST READY** application (Serial No. 78/761,085) covers "Portable listening devices," identical to the goods offered by Apple under the **IPOD** mark and covered by Apple's **IPOD** registrations. Similarly, Podcast Ready, Inc.'s Int. Cl. 9 **PODCAST READY** application (Serial No. 78/813,826) and the **MYPODDER** application cover software to manage digital content for portable media players, goods unquestionably related to media players such as Apple's **IPOD** device. We also have discovered that your clients are, or intend to, offer the **MYPODDER** software preloaded on **IPOD** devices, clearly highlighting the overlap in our clients' goods and services. Consumers, therefore, are likely to be confused and mistakenly believe your clients' products and services are associated with Apple, infringing Apple's trademark rights. Your clients' use of **PODCAST READY** and **MYPODDER** also would dilute the distinctive quality of Apple's **IPOD** mark, in contravention of Apple's rights under the Federal Trademark Dilution Act.

We imagine that it is not your clients' intent to create consumer confusion or otherwise affect Apple's trademark rights. However, as we are sure you can appreciate, Apple, as a trademark owner, has a duty to protect its valuable intellectual property. While Apple, of course, has no general objection to proper use of the descriptive term "podcast" as part of a trademark for goods and services offered in the podcasting field, it cannot allow marks that go beyond this legitimate use and infringe on Apple's rights in **POD** and **IPOD**. Based on the likelihood of confusion and dilution, therefore, we must insist that your clients withdraw both Int. Cl. 9 applications for **PODCAST READY** and limit all future use of the mark to goods and services relating to podcasting. Further, we ask that Infostructure Solutions abandon its application for **MYPODDER**, and that both companies abandon all use, and plans to use, the **MYPODDER** mark, including any use of the mypodder domains and myPodder, Inc. trade name. Please note that we have not requested abandonment of Podcast Ready, Inc.'s Int. Cl. 38 application for **PODCAST READY** because the services description indicates the mark will be used for podcasting-related services; if that assumption is incorrect, please let us know.

Apple hopes that this matter can be resolved amicably and expeditiously. We ask that you contact us by **October 5, 2006** to let us know whether your clients will comply with Apple's requests. Of course, nothing in this letter should be construed as limiting Apple's rights or remedies.

Very truly yours,

TOWNSEND AND TOWNSEND AND CREW LLP



Marie C. Seibel

MCS:ejf  
60859373 v1

Apple is saying right here that they have no objection to proper use of the descriptive term 'podcast'. It's in writing, right here. Not that Apple's going after the trademark.

Now all of these articles that I quoted all point back to the main article that started all of this off and that article is from Wired [http://blog.wired.com/music/index.blog?entry\\_id=1561308](http://blog.wired.com/music/index.blog?entry_id=1561308)  
Even Leo linked to this.

What is *really* interesting is that the Podcast Ready CEO Russell Holliman is considering dropping the name *myPodder* if he had to. So he even understands. Look, *myPodder* phonetically sounds like iPodder and we all know that iPodder and iPodderX and all those guys dropped the name because *iPod* is definitely a trademarkable name that does belong to Apple. And Russell understands that and he knows that when push comes to shove, he'd lose that battle. "Podcast Ready" as he does say in the article he is not sure why that is (that Apple is going after that name). I think it has more to do with the service of offering downloadable software services rather than as a podcast directory...

Another thing that is really interesting about all these articles is that they keep implying that Apple has trademarked, or has applied for or is trademarking the term "podcast". That is not true. The company that is trademarking the term 'podcast', and I talked to the lawyer that represents that company, and he claims unequivocally that it isn't Apple that he represents but Shae -Spencer Management, LLC. It's not Apple. That said, the US Trademark Office said they have refused the trademark for 'podcast';

'The examining attorney submits that the term 'podcast' may be unregistrable because it is generic and informational for applicant's services. Generic terms are terms that the relevant purchasing public understands primarily as the common or class name for goods or services. Generic terms are by definition, incapable of indicating a particular source of the goods or services and cannot be registered as trademarks. Doing so would grant the owner of the trademark a monopoly, since a competitor could not describe his goods as what they are.'

I talked to the Patent Attorney over at the US Trademark Office and we were talking about this and I can't quote him exactly, but I can give you the gist of what he was saying. First off, he said that basically, the company that registered the application for the trademark, the USPTO had to go through the motions and process the application, because, as he alluded to, no one else had had the cajones up to that point to actually try to trademark the term 'podcast'. In his first refusal for the term, he sent back the information from the Wikipedia post saying, hey, this is why it is public domain and you don't have the right to it. And then he said, while we were talking that podcasting is now in the ID manual of the USPTO, which means it is going to be very difficult, i.e, impossible, to get a trademark for the generic term 'podcast' or 'podcasting'.

So to make a long story short, they aren't getting a trademark on 'podcast', nor is anyone else....

I do have to agree wholeheartedly with Jason Calacanis at the end of his post that if you are a company and Apple does come after you, and you are a small guy, it is good for you. If you look at the Alexa rankings for Podcast Ready before this issue broke and today, they went from a 250,000 to a 25,000 and it will probably get down to a 10,000 ranking or better. If you are Russell Holliman, you love the fact that you got that letter. You got more PR than you could have ever paid for this past week...

So if you have podcast in your name, Apple is not going to come after you...

If you are not even applying for a trademark, forget it, they are not coming after you. Podcast Pickle, Podcast Alley, Podcast411, we are not going to be seeing letters from Apple. I would LOVE to get a letter from Apple. I would LOVE to be able to get the PR that Podcast Ready got. But the fact is, we're not going to see it...

## **Dig Deeper**

### **TARR Report on 'Podcast' Trademark submittals**

<http://tarr.uspto.gov/servlet/tarr?regser=serial&entry=78831795>

<http://tarr.uspto.gov/servlet/tarr?regser=serial&entry=78564869>

<http://www.paidcontent.org/apple-claiming-rights-to-podcast-terms>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Podcasting>

<http://www.scripting.com/2006/09/23.html#myTwoCentsOnPodcast>

On the Road Again (To Podcast Expo) 9/26/06 <http://typicalmacuser.com/wordpress/>

[http://www.twit.tv/2006/09/22/a\\_cast\\_by\\_any\\_other\\_name](http://www.twit.tv/2006/09/22/a_cast_by_any_other_name)

# Switch To A Mac

## Switch To A Mac

<http://switchtoamac.com> Switch To A Mac © 2005 - 2006

### Apple's Mac OS Market Share Rises 24 Percent Year Over Year

By Manjeet Dadyala

Several outlets this week have reported that Apple's market share is declining or has flattened out, especially when compared to December 2005 data. At first glance, it may appear so but there's more to the story and the data. This post will clear up the confusion by analyzing Apple's market share on a month-to-month basis during 2005 and 2006. We'll also extract relevant metrics from Apple's earnings reports and product launches over the past several quarters to provide further insight into the matter.

Here is the real story folks; Apple's market share is not declining. In fact, it's on a dramatic upswing! In fact, it's up 24.4% year-over-year from August 2005 to August 2006. Data used in this report has been obtained from Net Applications via [Market Share \(http://marketshare.hitslink.com/\)](http://marketshare.hitslink.com/).

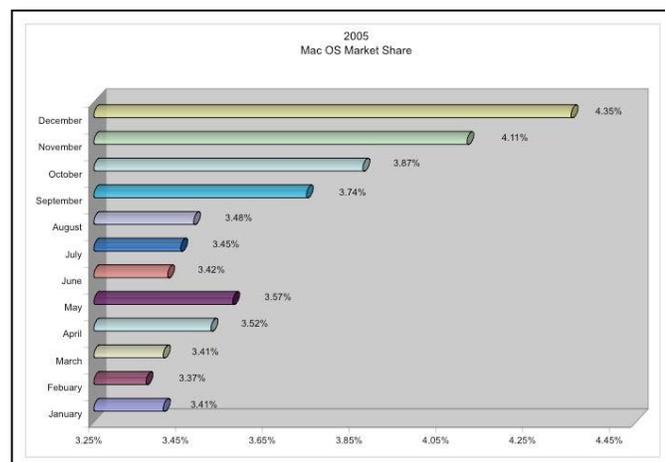
#### Key Percentages

- Up 27 percent since January 2005
- Up 23 percent since April 2005 (Mac OS X Tiger launched April 29, 2005)
- Up 2.9 percent January to August 2006 - despite Intel transition

#### 2005 Data

Let's start by looking at Apple's market share month by month for calendar year 2005.

As you can see, the data fluctuates. 2005 was a year of change for Apple as the company undertook two major transitions. The first occurred in April when Apple launched Mac OS X Tiger 10.4 on April 29, 2005. The event marked the company transitioning its operating system from Mac OS X Panther 10.3. Then came the shocker at the World Wide Developers Conference (WWDC) on June 6, 2005; Apple CEO Steve Jobs announced that the company would transition the company's Macintosh computers to Intel processors.



Despite those events, Apple continued to see market share gains from July to the end of the year. Apple released revised Macintosh computers in July and October 2005, more on those updates a bit later.

What I'd like to point out is that the November 2005 and December 2005 data appear to be anomalies. Let's delve into the data to see why. The data shows that Apple's operating system market share increased 6.2% between October and November and increased 5.84% November and December. This corresponds to a 12.4% increase from October 2005 to December 2005. The data points need to be questioned as we look at the January 2006 data. The January market share comes in at 4.21%. If true, that would represent a 3.22% decline from December 2005.

What? How could Apple's market share rise 12.4% in two months and then decline by 3.2% in the month after the conclusion of the 2005 holiday buying season? A bit strange, huh? The data doesn't appear logical because the majority of Macs purchased in December 2005 (during the 2005 holiday season) would ultimately show up in the January 2006 numbers.

As with all public companies, Apple operates on a quarterly basis, but note that Apple's fiscal quarters do not correspond to the four quarters in a given calendar year. Apple's fiscal quarters roughly run as follows:

Q1 - October, November, December

Q2 - January, February, March

Q3 - April, May, June

Q4 - July, August, September

Apple had a blowout December 2005 quarter (October, November, December). The quarter is referred to as Apple Q1 2006. Apple exceeded expectations set forth by numerous Wall Street analysts and investment firms. Here are some snips from posts on this site [SwitchtoMac.com] relating to the December 2005 quarter:

[Apple Sales Exceed Expectations](#) - Posted January 10, 2006 *Apple Computer Inc. Chief Executive Steve Jobs stated at Macworld 2006 that sales for Apple's December quarter exceeded expectations on strong demand for the company's iPod music players. Revenue for the quarter came in at \$5.7 billion, well above the \$5.04 billion average estimate of analysts. In addition, the company's retail stores posted revenue of more than \$1 billion for the first time in their history. Shares soared to a record high following the announcement.* Apple - Posted January 19, 2006 *Apple sold 1.24 million Macintosh computers during the quarter comprising 667,000 desktops and 587,000 notebooks/laptops, figures up 20 percent from the year earlier period. Notebook sales accounted for \$812M in revenue, up 34 percent from the same quarter last year. Desktop sales accounted for \$912M in revenue, down 9 percent. Overall, Macintosh computer sales accounted for 41 percent of the company's total revenue in the quarter.* The key statement from the first post is that Apple retail stores posted their highest ever revenue during that quarter. With respect to the second post, how can a 20 percent increase in Mac unit sales (when compared to Q1 2005) result in a net decline in market share in January 2006? If the data is accurate, that would mean that there was either a net decline in Mac units at the end of January 2006 when compared to the end of December 2005 or, other operating systems grew market share. It's already been shown that Mac unit sales grew by 20 percent for the December 2005 quarter. This can be explained by Macintosh updates that were [announced](http://www.apple.com/pr/library/2005/) during the 2005 December quarter:

#### **October 12, 2005**

[iMac G5](http://www.apple.com/pr/library/2005/oct/12imac.html)

#### **October 19, 2005**

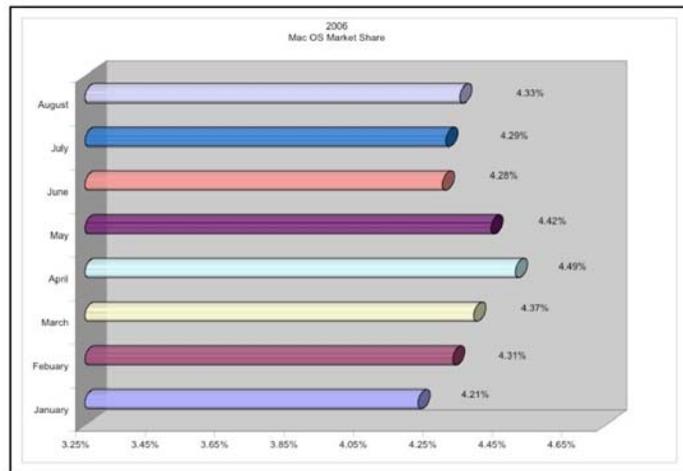
[Power Mac G5 Quad and Power Mac G5 Dual](http://www.apple.com/pr/library/2005/oct/19pmg5.html)  
[PowerBooks](http://www.apple.com/support/powerbook/)

Although the iMac was announced on October 12, they became available the following week. The 2.0 GHz and 2.3 GHz Power Mac G5 Dual were available on October 19 but the 2.5 GHz Power Mac G5 Quad became available in early November. The PowerBooks were available on October 19, the day they were announced. So there were updates to three of Apple's Mac lines, whereas the Mac mini and iBook models were last revised on July 26, 2005. Furthermore, we know that most holiday purchases are made in December, not October or November. Hence, it's logical to conclude that the majority of those 1.24 million Macs were likely sold starting at the end of November and throughout the month of December. Henceforth, a significant percentage of those systems should show up in the January 2006 numbers as many would have been opened after the holidays.

Overall, the January 2006 data doesn't stack up. To analyze it from a different perspective, let's look at the market share of other operating systems. Windows (XP, 2000, 98, ME, NT, 95) market share increased from 95.21% in December 2005 to 95.52% in January 2006, corresponding to a 0.32% increase over the period. All other operating systems (Linux, Web TV, CE, PSP, HipTop, Sun, FreeBSD) accounted for 0.39% in December 2005 and 0.39 percent in January 2006, no growth! Hence, the data that shows Mac OS decline between December 2005 and January 2006 is suspect. In my view, the Mac OS market share data for November 2005 and December 2005 data are probably overstated. Further insight is provided in the 2006 data.

## 2006 Data

The following is a look at Apple's Mac OS market share month by month for calendar year 2006 up to August 2006. **What many have missed in their reporting this week is that Market Share now reports Mac operating system stats into two groups, Mac OS and MacIntel.** For example, here's the Mac OS data for the month of [June 2006](#). Note the two listings, the first is Mac OS, and then a bit lower is MacIntel. When the numbers are combined, here's what we get:



Between January 2006 and April 2006, the Mac OS market share grew for three straight months. These increases occurred during a period of growing popularity, momentum, widening acceptance of the Macintosh and most importantly, the announcement of the first Intel-based Macintosh computers, the iMac and MacBook Pro on January 10, 2006. The iMac began shipping in January followed by February shipments of pre-orders of the MacBook Pro. There was pent-up demand followed by a buying frenzy for the Intel-based Macs. So, if the first Intel-based Macs began shipping in January (iMac) and there was a solid December 2005 quarter, how did the January 2006 market share decline? This places further questions on the accuracy of the December 2005 data.

2005	Total Market Share	2006	Total Market Share	Y-O-Y Increase
January	3.41%	Jan	4.21%	23.5
February	3.37%	February	4.31%	27.9
March	3.41%	March	4.37%	28.2
April	3.52%	April	4.49%	27.6
May	3.57%	May	4.42%	23.8
June	3.42%	June	4.28%	25.1
July	3.45%	July	4.29%	24.3
August	3.48%	August	4.33%	24.4
September	3.74%			
October	3.87%			
November	4.11%			
December	4.35%			

Y-O-Y = Year Over Year Increase

## The Important Metrics

What's more important is the year-over-year increase in Mac marketshare between 2006 and 2005. As you can see above, the Mac OS operating system has been experiencing at least a 23.5 % year-over-year growth each month for the past year. It peaked in March at 28.2 % and dipped to 23.8 % in May. The May comparison can be attributed to the late April 2005 release of Mac OS X Tiger. Without a comparable operating system launch for May 2006, the comparison appears below-trend.

February's market share increase can be attributed to strengthening iMac sales and MacBook Pro shipments that initiated on February 14, 2006 (note that Apple began accepting orders for the MacBook Pro in January). March's increase can be attributed to the iMac, MacBook Pro, and the February 28 release of the Intel-based Mac mini.

April's increase can be attributed to additional sales of Intel-based Macs and the April 5, 2006 announcement of Boot Camp, which ultimately made Intel-based Macs more appealing to Window users and potential switchers.

In my view, the decline in May's market share and year over year growth can be explained by two factors; the first factor is the May 16, 2006 announcement of the iBook replacement, the MacBook and the second, the April 29, 2005 launch of Mac OS Tiger. The fact that the MacBook was announced mid-month can help explain May's decline.

Ever since January 2006, many buyers held out on purchasing an iBook, because they anticipated an Intel-based replacement. iBook levels had diminished by April and rumors were rampant for several weeks that a "MacBook" replacement of the iBook was imminent. Hence, May Mac unit sales were affected. The May comparison can also be attributed to the late April 2005 release of Mac OS X Tiger. Without a comparable operating system launch for May 2006, the year-to-year comparison is below the trend average.

Although June's monthly market share change was negative, the year-over-year comparison was up 25.1 percent. July marked the return to market share growth. The true test will be the data for the remainder of 2006 and early into 2007. I'm eager to analyze the November 2006, December 2006, and January 2007 year-to-year comparison to determine how the data points compare to their corresponding prior year data.

The August 2006 announcements of the Mac Pro and Intel-based Xserve marked the completion of the Macintosh PowerPC to Intel transition. Since that time, buyers have been quick to purchase Mac Pro systems, a stark contrast to previous periods throughout 2006. The reluctance to purchase iBooks, Mac minis, and PowerMacs can help to explain the fluctuations in the 2006 data. What's more important is the data from the July 2006 period onward.

We can also gain insight into Apple's prior earning announcements this year.

- [Q2 2006](#) - April 20, 2006 Shipments of 1,112,000 Macintosh computers accounted for \$1.572B in revenue, a 4 percent increase in units and a 5 percent increase in revenue when compared to the year-ago quarter
- [Q3 2006](#) - July 19, 2006 Shipments of 1,327,000 Macintosh computers, a 12 percent increase in units compared to the year-ago quarter (2005) and up from the 1,112,000 sold last quarter (Q2 2006)

I expect the Q4 2006 earnings to demonstrate further Macintosh unit sale growth but to an extent that will blow away market and analysts expectations. Throughout various posts on this site, I have stated that I expect Apple to expand its market share. In a January 11, 2006 article titled "Apple Intel and Increased Market Share", I stated that the Apple's switch to Intel processors would ultimately result in market share gains for Apple. I also stated: *"The new Macs will usher in a new wave of Switchers. I predict that Apple will gain significant market share on a percentage basis in 2006 whereas Microsoft will see a slight decline."*

Use the following to view the market share for all tracked browsers:

- [January 2006](#) (<http://marketshare.hitslink.com/>)
- [August 2006](#) (<http://marketshare.hitslink.com/report.aspx?qprid=2>)

Up to the August 2006 data, the prediction has come true:

Apple has experienced a 2.9% market share growth during 2006.

Microsoft has experienced a decline of 0.3% (95.38 percent in January 2006 versus 95.08% in August 2006).

Furthermore, I've stated that 2007 will be a year to remember for Apple. In a post on April 7, 2006 titled "[Macs - Boot Camp - Market Share - Switchers](#)", I predicted that Apple would have an 8% market share in the personal computer market by the end of the Mac OS X 10.5 Leopard lifecycle. We'll just have to wait until the successor to Leopard is released to see if the prediction comes true.

## Closing

This post demonstrated that Apple's market share is on a dramatic upswing with growth of greater than 23.5% each month over the past year. Apple will continue to experience market share gains for the remainder of 2006 and beyond. The future is bright for the Apple's Macintosh and the Mac OS X operating system. Apple has just embarked on a multi-year expansion that will see the company continue to grab market share.

## Updates

For those who doubt the analysis presented in the article, be sure to read some supporting evidence from W3C. According to their data, Mac OS X is indeed posting huge gains in market share. Furthermore, their August year-over-year data for 2005 and 2006 also shows an increase of 24%. Although the data varies with respect the Net Applications/Market Share, the percent increases are in agreement. This provides validation to the data and analysis presented in our article. According to the W3C data, Mac OS had a market share of 2.9% in August 2005, whereas in August 2006 the percentage was 3.6%. The math to determine the year-over-year growth comes to 24.1%. Furthermore, their September 2006 to 2005 comparison comes in with growth of 22.6%. Look at the section "[OS Platform Statistics](#)" at [http://www.w3schools.com/browsers/browsers\\_stats.asp](http://www.w3schools.com/browsers/browsers_stats.asp).

## Books

### 40 iPod Techniques

reviewed by Dr. Eric Flescher



**Author:** C.Youngjin

<http://www.youngjin.com>

Sybex

<http://www.sybex.com/WileyCDA/SybexTitle/productCd-9810537212.html>

**Released:** June 2006

**Pages:** 164

\$17 USD, \$22 CDN, £10 GBP, 15.69€ Euro

**ISBN:** 9810537212

Novice/Intermediate/Advanced



**Strengths:** Colorful and great screenshots. Embedded within orange circles are alphabetized letters which help locate the specific information. Good helpful techniques.



**Weaknesses:** None found.

The multifaceted iPod is fairly easy to use. However users may desire step-by-step instructions to discover more secrets about the iPod. Users also might want to know how to uncover more about the potential uses of the device instead of learning from a friend. A great book for learning more and now, for students and children to adults, is the book, *40 iPod Techniques*.

Written for iPod users of all levels, this colorful book provides an easy to understand way to use the digital and video player. This 164 page covers nine chapters, covers the history of the iPod and past the iPod Nano, Shuffle, and the Mini. The shortcuts and tips explain how to utilize the iPod to its greater advantage. The explanation are easy to understand and provide helpful learning experience. Nicely written are the directions specific for Mac or Windows operating systems.

What I also like are the extremely well designed screenshots and visual aids. The iTunes menu (p. 16) also has orange icons embedded within alphabetized letters (as well as screenshots throughout the book), to show the placements of the specific parts of the iTunes utilities within the interface. No guessing where these utilities are.

Learn to accessorize your iPod and transfer and view photos and videos. Using an iPod with a digital camera (#27) takes your iPod to another level with the right extra equipment. Troubleshooting a variety of problems, caring for your iPod and learning to back up your iPod are also included in this book.

Technique #11 takes you through steps for transcoding (converting one format to another) audio. Other techniques show how organize your music library navigate the iTunes Music Store, using audio books and podcasts. There is good information about using the iPod, above and beyond a music player with PDA functions. Transferring photos to and from your iPod (#24) and connecting your iPod to your TV (#26). But there is more. Learn to use the Shuffle as a flash drive (#30), learning about cases, headphones, stereo docks, car stereo hookups, and physical care of the iPod are also included.

The price is right for **40 iPod Techniques**. **It is a slick and well designed book** for learning about your iPod and using it in many ways. This nicely formatted techniques can help you learn more quickly about the device and much more. There is always more information to learn but this book gives an iPod user a great start.

## Ajax Design Patterns: Creating Web 2.0 Sites with Programming and Usability Patterns

reviewed by Daniel MacKenzie



**Author:** Michael Mahemoff

O'Reilly Books

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

\$45 USD, \$59 CDN, £32 GBP, 37,57€ Euro

**Published:** July 2006

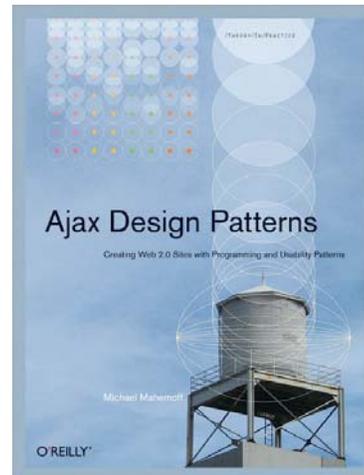
**Pages:** 635

**ISBN:** 0596101805

**Requirements:** Knowledge of basic HTML and JavaScript.

**Strengths:** Easy to use, very good content.

**Weaknesses:** Not for beginners.



I'll say this from the start, *Ajax Design Patterns: Creating Web 2.0 Sites with Programming and Usability Patterns* is not a book for beginners. You need at least some previous experience in JavaScript, HTML, PHP and other Internet scripts. There isn't any beginner tutorials, so if you are interested in using Ajax, I would recommend you look into other beginner's books, because this is hard-core programmer stuff.

Now, for the hard-core people; this book is all about how to use Ajax. It gives you walkthroughs of how to develop Ajax web applications with straight code and explains what is happening and when it's happening. It goes through all of the components of Ajax and basically teaches you how to improve your web sites in various different ways. I'm not a programmer, but it seemed pretty easy and I liked the way they had it all laid out. From HTTP streaming to Live Searching, it's all in this book.

There isn't much else to say, because basically the book does what it is suppose to and it does it well. You learn how to use Ajax through a simple and effective way. Remember: Only suggested for more advanced Internet programmers.

Good job, Michael!

## Google Hacks: 3rd Edition

reviewed by Dr. Eric Flescher



**Authors:** Rael Dornfest, Paul Bausch & Tara Calishain  
O'Reilly Media, Inc.  
.1005 Gravenstein Highway North, Sebastopol, CA 95472  
<http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/googlehks3/>

**Released:** August 2006

**Pages:** 543

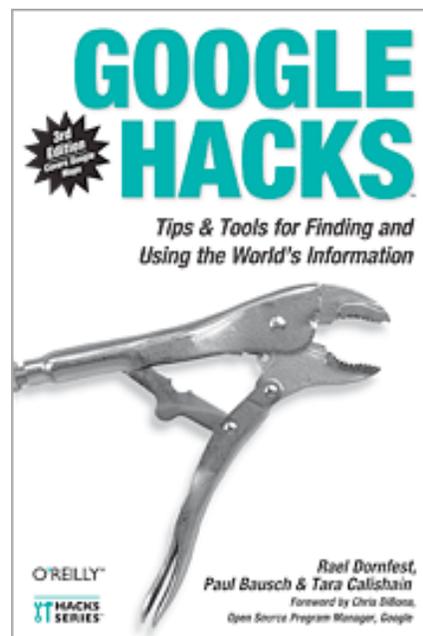
\$25 USD, \$35 CND, £12 GBP, 20.87€ Euro

**ISBN:** 0596527063

Intermediate/Advanced

**Strengths:** Authors have created a number of good exercises. Good information to start out for those who don't know much about Google and API and mastering search engines. Good ideas and concepts. Thermometer like icons, indicate beginner, moderate or expert hack complexities so you can have a better idea of which expertise to choose based on your stage of learning.

**Weaknesses:** Not many illustrations or visuals. May be a little difficult for non programmers and non-Google savvy users.



Google has made a name for itself for the computer and Internet industry. Making itself as the premier search engine on the web, Google gradually made searching a better tool for finding and using information through its unique characteristics. Games were created with it (ex. "Google watching" ); vocabulary was invented to define methods and activities (ex."Googling") and more uses abound.

In April 2002, Google API was created giving programmers a way to access the Google Search results with automatic tool queries. The computers were more able to create further instant made opportunities for organizing and visually demonstrating what the information could show. In that way, these new Google Api tools helped people in the way they approached, observed and utilized information.

The authors have combined forces to write a well written book. Dornfest is a Chief Technology Officer at O'Reilly media and has contributed or co-authored many technology books. Bausch is an independent web developer and helped to create the very popular weblog application Blogger while Calishain is a magazine writer, editor of ResearchBuzz and has been writing about search engines since 1996. There are also a host of other authors who have contributed their hacks and writings to produce interesting exercises for those interested in doing more with Google. They obviously have a great background and are passionate about their Googling and application usage.

The 100 exercises, written throughout the chapters, apply to many mapping situations and Google oriented endeavors. These include examples as each shows the code and additional information. The eight chapters are nicely organized. The first chapter starts with the Web and describes the fundamentals. There are tips and tricks for searching all sorts of specific hard to find information with proven solid techniques. Advanced Web (chapter 2) demonstrates advanced web techniques to deepen your searches. News and Blogs (chapter 3) are the emphasis here for gathering more information with new Google tools. Chapter 5, Google Maps, helps learning about Google Maps while it's web mail service, Gmail (chapter 6) explores the web mail service. With Webmastering (chapter 7), user learn further about the web ranking of webpages. Learn about API (Google Search's Application Programming Interface) used in the hacks in this chapter. Finally the Appendix assists with tracking news about Google.

The instructions and information are clearly written, informative and understandable. There are few illustrations and the chapters mostly include text and scripts. But the authors try to ease you into the use of various programming languages and using the codes needed . It can be a little daunting. Even the "Hack" related information using perl language and the scripts for the application hacks are defined in a a very understandable manner. The book details how to "hack the scripts" but also gives information about the alternative method of downloading the codes for all of the hacks at an online site area (I am thankful for that ). I really liked that there was little guesswork where to find the information and what to do, unlike another book I found. While it still takes some programming and understanding, the guided step-by-steps help in making the concepts and the tutorials manageable. Even though I am a novice, in time I think I can proceed through some of the chapter. Some with more expertise may have an easier time.

Googling with code is new territory for me and many others. So I was glad to so see that these authors have done a great job in integrating a lot of information while simplifying the process and starting out with the basics. The book and the authors did not leave me "stranded". While I am still trying in the learning phase, I can "see" the possibilities for applying Google, the API related information and Hacks. You have to start somewhere and this book has some good places to start.

This book has given me a better understanding how to advanced my skills with mapping and Google. It did not leave me "stranded" like another book. It is only a matter of time before I take more time to sit down with the information and try to absorb and apply the information. The same may be for you and your needs. At least it will give you more information about Google, search engines and better internet search techniques. The book may help you start you on the road to advanced Googling. Give it a try and see what you can do.

## The Macintosh iLife 06

reviewed by Dr. Eric Flescher



**Author:** Jim Heid

<http://www.macilife.com>

Peachpit Press

1249 Eighth Street

Berkeley, CA 94710

<http://www.peachpit.com>

800-283-9444

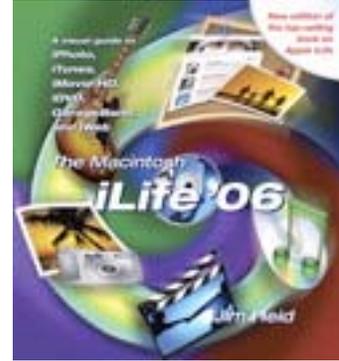
**Released:** May 23, 2006

**Pages:** 408

\$35 USD, \$47 CND, £25 GBP, 29,22€ Euro

**ISBN:** 0-321-42654-1

Novice/Intermediate/Advanced



**Strengths:** Immaculately written. Excellent tips, step-by-step instructions, easy to read. Covers all iLife06 applications in depth.

**Weaknesses:** None found.



Suppose you are upgrading or buying the iLife 06 package suite. You either want to update or learn new information about the new features concerning iPhoto, iTunes, the iMovie HD, iDVD, Garageband and the new iWeb applications within the suite. You would like to find a more efficient way "jump starting" the learning process about one or more of these applications. Gaining some immediate new knowledge in the way of tips, hints and techniques would be good. Also learning from in-depth tutorials, using screenshots and visuals assisted by precise step-by-step, easily readable instructions would be good as well. Well if your aim is one or more of these ideas, *The Macintosh iLife 06* by Jim Heid is the book you should buy.

Mr. Heid picks up where he left off with the previous version iLife 05. A contributing editor to *MacWorld* magazine, he not only shows you how to use the software but how to use the applications in so many ways. With brilliant clarity, using an intuitive explanations, Heid sifts through a myriad of techniques that can be used by all level of users. Novice users can start "fresh" and learn from a beginning point of view. Intermediate or advanced users will gain practical and perspectives and additional learning ideas to use with any of the applications. As novice users progress, they will be able to gain a better appreciation of using the applications in more advanced ways and utilize the tools in an ever expanding way.

The 408-page book uses a very authoritative style but a style that is very easy to learn and understand. Seven chapter encompass the use of the iLife applications, while integrating and demonstrating the new enhancements of version '06. The author does not "pull any punches" because he does mention that the iLife applications are always evolving. To catch up you can look at updates in his companion website <http://www.macilife.com>. This is a nice touch for being an informed user of the book and iLife 06.

While all the applications are relatively easy to use, the book helps any user learn more about the applications in the suite, in so many ways. The author explain with the clarity of words but visuals also helps to clarify the understand. Line pointers show where parts of the full color screenshots are positioned so there is no guesswork. Examples photos, color screenshots windows of the applications and other visuals make reading a very pleasurable instructional experience.

Mr. Heid outdoes himself by including remarkable little known tips and ideas concerning all the applications found in the chapters. These are very insightful and will help any users to become more efficient and productive. By reading the book, you will have more fun with all the applications. You can also learn more about blogs, using raw images, using HD videos and for your DVD, expanding your knowledge with Garageband, mastering your digital camera, using audio and visual filters and effects and much more.

This book is exceptional in many ways. I can't say enough about the breadth and depth in which the book is written but also the intuitive feelings he brings to each chapter that makes the step-by-step instructions understandable. It is not only a joy to read but makes your mind think about other ways to use iLife. In that ways it will help you go beyond just learning about the applications advanced your thinking about integrating all the applications as well. By reading a book, like this, you can gain a better appreciation of using computer tools and being more creative yourself. I recommend this book for those just starting out on iLife, updating from earlier versions of iLife and going beyond iLife 06 itself. "The sky is the limit" when you read this book. Read it and see how high you can soar.

# The Internet: The Missing Manual: Taming the Jungles of the Internet

A Book Review by Harry {doc} Babad and Ted Bade



**POGUE PRESS™**  
**O'REILLY®**

Authors: By David Pogue and J.D. Biersdorfer  
Pogue Press, O'Reilly  
<http://www.missingmanuals.com>  
Series: Pogue's Missing Manuals

Pages: 460  
ISBN: 059652742X

\$25 USD, \$33 CAD, £17.50 GBP, 20,87€ Euro

Audience — All but the most advanced users or the books authors.

**Strengths** — This utterly current book covers getting online, searching/finding information, downloading and sharing movies, music, and photos, and the latest ways to keep in touch. A book almost everyone can learn from.

**Weakness** — Nothing worth mentioning

Where appropriate the methods and hints in the book were tested on a 1 GHz dual processor PowerPC G4 Macintosh with 2 GB DDR SDRAM running under OS X 10.4.7.

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## Publisher's Overview

About MissingManuals.com (Excerpts quoted from the book Introduction)

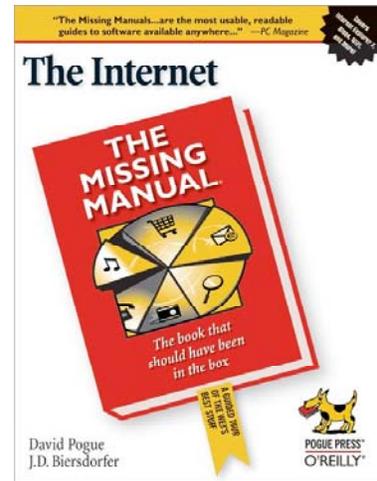
“*The Internet: The Missing Manual* is designed to accommodate readers at every technical level. If you're just getting into this whole Internet thing, great; you'll find the introductory material at the beginning of each discussion will help you along from square one.

“But even if you're already online and comfortable with the Net, you'll find useful tips not to mention a world of wisdom in capsule summaries of the Internet's most useful websites.

“Here in one tidy atlas of the Web, is a summary of the very best ways to find stuff on the Web; do research; shop; manage stocks and finances; make travel reservations; play games and place bets; find and buy music, movies, and TV; post digital photos (or look at other people's); find love on the worlds biggest personal-ad matchmaking services; and lots more.

## Review Introduction

Now Ted and I have been long time Internet users, initially using Microsoft's Internet Explorer and at times, Netscape Navigator and now on our Tiger-equipped Macintoshes, both Safari and Firefox. As sophisticated users of



the Internet, it of course piqued our curiosity to see what David Pogue, one of the Macintosh saints, had to say about the subject. Thus this joint review was born.

### The Book Itself

Divided into five parts and 21 chapters, the book covers the Internet in all of its possible myriad uses. In keeping with the style of previous Missing Manuals, authors J.D. Biersdorfer and David Pogue take a humorous yet objective look at the Internet. The author's aim of course is to help you *tame the beast* that is the Internet.

As noted in the recent *New Tech Review* article,  
<http://www.newtechreview.com/newtechreview/newsinfo.asp?NewsID=3141>

“Famous for making incomprehensible technical subjects easy to master, and entertaining their readers in the process, the authors will help people cut through all the technical jargon and teach them not only how to connect to the Internet, but to eliminate the confusion of search engines, downloadable music and movies, multi-user games, podcasts, instant messaging programs, and more.”

The book includes tips on how to:

- Getting Online. Readers will have all the information they need to decide what kind of broadband connection works best for them, which browser they should use, and what kind of spyware-fighting and virus-and spam-protection measures they need to protect themselves.
- Finding Information. Google may be the leading search site, but it's certainly not the only game in town. This book introduces a diverse and useful collection of sites that help uncover everything from health care information, to shopping, travel and finance, to dependable reviews and ratings.
- Movies, music, and photos. The Web's teeming with entertainment--and not just the sort of postage-stamp sized videos that only a geek could love. Learn where to download movies, watch TV online, listen to music, play games, and post and share photos with friends.
- Keeping in touch. Email's only the beginning. This book introduces readers to the many tools that make the modern Internet such a great way to stay connected. From Web-based discussion groups to instant messaging programs, and from blogs and podcasts to Internet-based phone calls, this book will help you join the conversation.

“Whether you're an Internet novice or an experienced user, this book will provide you with helpful information and useful tips to make the most of everything the Internet has to offer.”

In the table below we list a few items that either especially caught our attention or which were minor omissions. For the complete Table of Contents, check out <http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/internetmm/toc.html>

<b>An Annotated Table of Contents</b>	
Introduction	Sets the tone and focus in an easy to read manner.
Part One: Getting Online	
Chapter 1. Getting Online	Its nice to know how much easier it is to set up a DSL box on a Macintosh then on a PC (Page 17). Surely the MacUpdate site is worth a mention. (Page 37)
Chapter 2. Surfing the Web	The material on personalizing Google was particularly interesting (Page 54) as was the role of plug-in software (page 67)
Part Two: Finding Information	
Chapter 3. How to Search the Web	Next month doc will be reviewing the <i>Google, The Missing Manual</i> – a must for folks who need to do advanced searches using that tool. Meanwhile this book provides an excellent foundation for such efforts  For those of breath and us who live documents and facts and relationships, check out the <i>Vivisimo</i> clustering engine. <a href="http://vivisimo.com/">http://vivisimo.com/</a> Never heard of it, neither had I? It is a high-powered search service used by a variety of folks and organizations that are knowledge workers. I doubt I can afford such a service but beggars can be dreamers.
Chapter 4. Searching by Information Type	This is very good material but for the only thing I really need to learn now to do, there was no information. Now where is the information to find out the email address of your

<b>An Annotated Table of Contents</b>	
	<p>long lost buddy? The author's information was too limited to help me on this satisfy need.</p> <p>For health related information, one of the best lists is published by Consumer reports – Check it out.</p>
Chapter 5. News and Blogs	A good and well-focused introduction on what type of news and information serviced there are out there. The section includes using blogs as a source of information
Chapter 6. Reviews and Ratings	<p>This is a great place to start to become aware the broad resources available to help you make buying decisions.</p> <p>Surely Consumer Reports is worth a mention as a source for reliable product advice. Remember, as consumer, you must be cautions. A product's manufacturer or provider often sponsors many reviews, and review sites. Medical site are perhaps the worst at painting rosy pictures, but only by a small difference. <i>Caveat emptor</i> or let the buyer beware!</p> <p>But that why you read macCompanion — we lay it out as it is.</p>
<b>Part Three: Shopping, Travel, and Finance</b>	
Chapter 7. Shopping	The usual sites and more and more and ...
Chapter 8. Planning Trips	An introduction on web sites that can be used to help plan a trip It includes generic sites as well as ones designed to find the best prices.
Chapter 9. Finance	Gives some details on online banking, stock trading and tracking, and using the Internet as a financial resource. Using such sites requires that you carefully evaluate the tradeoffs between security and the usefulness of the tools provided.
Chapter 10. Games and Gambling	A brief introduction on using the Internet to play games. Everything from online shooters to card games, and even real online gambling are discussed. It's amazing what offshore sites can offer.
Chapter 11. Music and Audio	If you want to find music or video on the Internet, check out this chapter, which covers various sources—means and methods. Sources for free and not so free music keep growing in an exponential fashion, so keep on browsing.
Chapter 12. Videos, Movies, and TV	I found, as a person who goes to film festivals and non-mainline movie house, the <a href="http://www.greencine.com">http://www.greencine.com</a> site very interesting. Indeed the scariest move I've ever seen is called <i>The Wages of Fear</i> (French with English subtitles) I saw at a film festival. It was about two guys driving dynamite filled truck across the Algerian bumpy desert.
<b>Part Five: Communicating with Others</b>	
Chapter 14. Email	<p>I (doc) especially liked the section on Email Etiquette (Pg. 275) something I've both written about and attempted to implement in the various organization for which I work or volunteer.</p> <p>On the other hand, the focus of setting up your online email was mostly PC centric (pages 267-270.)</p> <p>I was also surprised at the recommendation for Eudora (which I use) since there has been no Macintosh upgrade of the product in years.</p> <p>The section on filters and message rules (Pages 282-284) was interesting but since few spammers use easy to identify subject tags, this is relatively useless information.</p>
Chapter 15. Instant Messages and Chat	An introduction to various applications for text chatting with your friends. Good information for anyone interested or a parent who wants to learn what their kids are up to!
Chapter 16. Discussion Groups	According to Ted, discussion groups are a great way to share information on a topic with a lot of people. This section gives the basics on what services are available and how to use them. Again remember to maintain your privacy while sharing your views.
Chapter 17. Social Networking	This section covers both social and professional networking, and even finding or refining a friend or finding a job!
Chapter 18. Skype & VoIP: Internet Phones	A brief introduction to using the Internet as a voice telephone [VoIP] and the applications you will need to do this.
<b>Part Six: Internet Power and Protection</b>	
Chapter 19. Your Own	Basic introduction to building your own stuff on the internet for sharing with others. A

<b>An Annotated Table of Contents</b>	
Blogs, Web Sites, and Podcasts	good place to start to learn if you are interested such information and web interaction modes.
Chapter 20. Living on the Web	See the above
Chapter 21. Staying Safe	A must read section on protecting yourself and your family when using the Internet. They explain what various unsafe traps can be encountered and gives some straightforward and focused information on how to protect your self and your family. As noted earlier in the review, we would have like the author to emphasize staying safe more heavily in earlier parts of this otherwise <i>grrreat</i> book.
Index:	We found everything I searched for, which is what a good index provides.

**The Virtual CD** – To get the most out of this book, also visit <http://www.missingmanuals.com>. Click the “Missing CD-ROM” link to reveal a neat, organized, chapter-by-chapter list of the shareware and freeware mentioned in this book.” The website will also allow you to both post corrections for inclusion in the next printing, and to read what other have found in the way of errors in book.

In addition, I {doc} also appreciated the authors balanced inclusion Macintosh and PC treatment of both the provided information and in the illustrations provided.

### **Discomforts**

Chapter 21. Based on my review of *Steal this Book ...* too little too late in the book on Internet security. What is there is excellent, but the FUD factor is too low for the intended audience. Those of you who have read my review *Steal this Computer Book 4.0 – What They won't Tell You About the Internet* (macC August 2006) will understand what I mean. To the rest of you, please take Internet security, even on a Macintosh very seriously. Paranoia can also reflect actual reality.

I also would have appreciated it, if the authors have shared the fact that by using Internet (only) specific sites in searching for products, users have the advantage of virtual warehouses and the “long-tail” effect. Virtual warehouses have no physical space limitations, so catalogs contain less popular, but more interesting (to you) materials. Such virtual warehouses are one of the best things that have happened to collectors. Those of us who appreciate and at times want to buy items that never makes the top 10 or hundred or thousand lists. Horray!

### **In Closing**

The Internet is almost synonymous with change--that's one of its charms, and one of its headaches. You may think you know the Internet, but are you really up to speed on Internet telephones, movie and TV downloading, blogging, gaming, online banking, dating, and photo sharing? You're likely not up to speed. This book is ideal for anyone just venturing into cyberspace. This book is also perfect for more experienced users who could use an update to today's most exciting Internet applications. Don't forget the virtual CD that *accompanies* this book; it has more relevant toys and tools than you could possibly use, well, all at once.

Overall, between the interesting and useful new links we found, and shareware doc\_Babad previously missed, this review was a fun and useful experience that reminded us of all the aspects of the Internet we so routinely take for granted. **Rating: 5.0 macCs**

### **Author BIOS**

*David Pogue*, Yale '85, is the personal-technology columnist for the New York Times. With nearly 3 million books in print, he is also one of the world's bestselling how-to authors, having written or co-written seven books in the "for Dummies" series (including Macs, Magic, Opera, and Classical Music), along with several computer-humor books and a technothriller, "Hard Drive" (a New York Times "notable book of the year").

Pogue is also the creator and primary author of the Missing Manual series of complete, funny computer books, a joint venture with O'Reilly Media, Inc. Titles in the series include Mac OS X, Windows XP, iPod, Microsoft Office, iPhoto, Dreamweaver, iMovie 2, and many others. His Web page is [www.davidpogue.com](http://www.davidpogue.com), and his email address is

[david@poguman.com](mailto:david@poguman.com). [I rarely come across an article by Dave Pogue that I don't stop and read, despite often otherwise pressing priorities – HB]

*Jude Biersdorfer* has been writing the weekly Q&A column for the Circuits section of The New York Times since 1998, and she occasionally writes feature stories and how-to articles for the same section. She has written for Rolling Stone, The New York Times Book Review and the AIGA Journal of Graphic Design, among other publications, and has contributed essays on the collision of pop culture and technology for the books *The Education of the E-Designer* (2001) and *Sex Appeal* (2000), both published by Allworth Press. In her limited spare time, she likes to watch documentaries and torture the neighbors with her clawhammer banjo playing. She lives in New York City.

## MusicTech Magazine Ten Minute Masters

reviewed by Daphne Kalfon



**Author:** Staff of *MusicTechnology* Magazine

<http://www.pc-publishing.com>

<http://www.pc-publishing.com/tmm.html>

**US distribution:**

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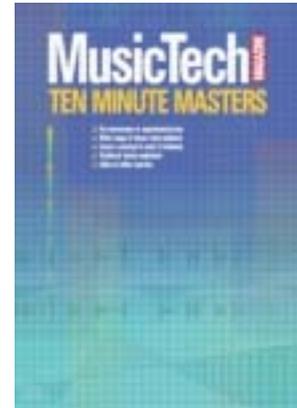
**Released:** August 2006

**Pages:** 160

\$18 USD, \$24 CND, £10 GBP, 14€ Euro

**ISBN:** 187077504X

Newcomer/Experienced



**Strengths:** This book provides brief explanations of various music technology concepts and is useful as a quick reference guide mostly geared for those working in studio environments.



**Weaknesses:** Although interesting concepts are introduced, they soon become bogged down by unnecessary detail. Many unfamiliar terms are referenced with insufficient explanation. Contrary to what is stated, this book is not suitable for most newcomers, but rather better suited to those already armed with some knowledge of the concepts covered.

MusicTech Magazine Ten Minute Masters consists of 36 chapters which are basically arranged in alphabetical order, starting with chapter 1, "Analogue Synthesis", and going all the way through until the last chapter, "Wireless".

I started off by reading the first chapter - "Analogue Synthesis" - and I have to say that even though I already know something about it, I found that the language and explanations in general were not straightforward and easy to follow. The book cover does state that this book is for the newcomer as well, but I would say that if one were truly a newcomer to analogue synthesis for example, they probably wouldn't understand some of the concepts introduced. For example, ADSR comes up in the chapter discussion, but no description of what it means is provided in the text until later on down the page, by way of a diagram. Even so, to those who have not played a musical instrument - even just the very basics of depressing a key on a keyboard - it may be a mystery as to what ADSR really means.

[<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ADSR>]

As I read further on to other chapters, I was surprised to find a more detailed description of ADSR in chapter 13, "Envelopes". The book seems rather disjointed to me, to have that explanation featured so many chapters further on, instead of including it in the chapter where the concept of ADSR was first introduced.

Also, chapter 1 mentions sawtooth and square waves, yet offers no explanation as to what they are. However, once again, similar to the issue with ADSR, I did find an explanation of those items much further on, in chapter 25, "Oscillators". I think it would make more sense to have incorporated chapter 25 into chapter 1 in this case, or at least to let the reader know which chapter to refer to for more information on waveforms at the time those particular concepts are first introduced.

Chapter 2, "Arranging rhythm", introduces and explains the concept of the rhythm section. Halfway down the page is a drum score. If one doesn't know the basic notation concepts of quarter note, eighth note, sixteenth note and time signatures, the diagram offered by way of explanation may not be of much help. Such notation is also found in chapter 21, "Harmonics" and again may not be of much use to the reader.

Also in chapter 2, although some helpful tips and pointers on arranging are given, arranging is much more than just a concept, and as such, the “how-to’s” would rather be best left to an entire book on the subject. The inclusion of something as complex as how to go about arranging, in a few pages in this kind of book, is misplaced. It would have been preferable and more appropriate to simply discuss what an arrangement is, and its purpose, instead of going as it does, into an overly simplistic explanation of how to actually go about creating one. As an analogy, a similar style book on carpentry would explain woodworking terms and concepts, but not go into how to actually build something.

Also, and this may not be the fault of MusicTech, page 7 in this chapter simply drops off mid-sentence, with no continuation on the following page.

Other chapters however, because of their very nature, such as the chapters on “MIDI” and “Microphones” are more straightforward and informative.

My understanding about this book is that each chapter is actually an article taken from the magazine itself. It is my feeling that some editing should have been done for this particular book form. Rather than trying to go briefly into the “how to’s”, as may be expected in a magazine article, it would have been more effective for this kind of book to just provide a straightforward explanation of each concept along with relevant examples. The how-to’s should be left to the books and websites that are mentioned at the end of the chapter, for those who are interested.

Furthermore, I found that as I read the book, there were many chapters discussing audio and various audio concepts, and I feel that in addition to the diagrams provided, that actual audio examples of such concepts would have been very useful and a welcome addition in helping to better explain some of the not-so-simple concepts presented. This could have been supplied either by means of an accompanying CD-ROM or Internet access to a website containing such audio examples.

On the plus side, several chapters provided interesting historical background, many provide screen shots and/or diagrams of what is being discussed, and all have interesting side notes along the margins. At the end of many chapters, additional references, in the form of books and websites, are listed.

## **Conclusion**

This book will certainly whet the appetite for those wanting to know about certain concepts and is handy as a quick reference on the studio bookshelf.

## Teach Yourself VISUALLY Adobe Photoshop Elements 4

Reviewed by Dr. Eric Flescher



**Authors:** Mike and Linda Wooldridge

Wiley Publishing, Inc.

111 River Street

Hoboken, NJ 07030-5774

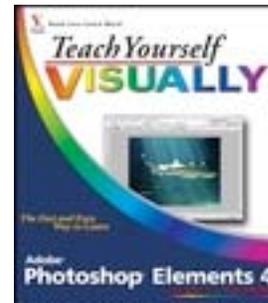
<http://www.wiley.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd-0471777978.html>

**Released:** December 5, 2005

Pages: 324

\$25 USD, \$32 CND, £17 GBP, 20,87€ Euro

**ISBN:** 0471777978



**Strengths:** Highly visual oriented text for teaching and learning about Photoshop Elements 4. Great graphics, screenshots and examples. This book can be used even if you don't have version 4 of Photoshop Elements. Step-by-step instructions are well done. Good for beginning graphic users and beyond.



**Weaknesses:** None.

Much that is communicated is verbal. Written material usually comes in the way of writing. However much of the world and communication is visual based. While many people are visual learners sometimes there is not enough for these types of learners. To truly bring out a teaching and learning experience, visual and spatial experiences are needed. In addition, to truly appreciate the visual experience, a writer must provide additional information that is like looking through the "Mind's Eye" of the author. Too many times, instruction takes place, but the learner can't "see the steps". This book, *Teach Yourself VISUALLY Adobe PhotoShop Elements 4*, is the exception with all these "rules". The authors, Mike and Linda Wooldridge, do an excellent job in this regard to bringing out the best in learning how to use Photoshop Elements 4 through a brilliant set of visually pleasing and instructive techniques.

This series of book and the authors try to bring you this experience through their "eyes" and what they express and demonstrate. Some books only walk the user through parts of the instructional process. Many times details are lost or not used to give the user better directions. Here, highlighted visual cues help every step of the way. These two authors however do a magnificent job when it comes to demonstrating how the application can be used but the underlying step-by-step instructions that will deliver useful graphic tasks to completion.

Within this 324-page book is a series of sixteen chapters, The series of chapters and exercise take you through the visual but simplified learning of Adobe Photoshop Elements 4. Mike is a technology writer and has authored many books in the Visual series. Linda is a former senior editor of MacWorld and authors of *Teach Yourself Adobe Photoshop CS2*. The authors both have ample experience for expressing learning and teaching visually and this shows itself in the many chapters. And the book shows their expertise in graphics as well as demonstrating how the computer can learn visually and comprehensively.

Colored arrows point out different toolbox items so the user does not have to guess where these items are. Full color screenshots are well displayed. Prominent red numbers buttons point out each part of the specific procedures, for every clear step. Real photos are also used as examples. Most activities span two pages as a mini- lesson. Tips are also mentioned in the side bar. Here is a short review of what each chapter does to help the user.

Chapter 1, "Getting Started", starts the user off from the beginning. The directions for novice graphic users are clear and concise.

Chapter 2, “Acquiring and Storing Digital Images”, helps the learning about importing images from a scanner, digital cameras, video are all here. Getting organized using the organizer part of the program, is also part of this chapter along with saving and

With “Image Basics”, Chapter 3, working with images conveys information about changing, working, adjusting, reverting and adjusting an image.

Chapter 4, “Selection Techniques”, deals with selection off a range of different tools as well selecting, adding and saving selection

Chapter 5, “Manipulating Selections”, communicated about copy, moving and controlling the sharpness of the image (called feathering.)

Chapter 6, “Layer Basics”, is a great chapter as it is one that is easily misunderstood and difficult to utilize. Includes a topic, which is usually for most, difficult to understand, layers. These authors do a great job of simplifying the tasks needed to work with layers and using the basics for many tasks.

In, Chapter 7, “Fast Retouching Techniques”, a set of worthwhile tasks are highlighted which include straightening, cropping, removing, sharpening images.

Chapter 8, “Enhancing Contrast and Exposure”, focuses upon working with shadows, brightness, contrast and ways to fix, add and sharpen your images.

Chapter 9, “Enhancing Colors”, allows the working with colors in different ways. Replacing, adjusting, posterizing are just a few.

Chapter 10, “Painting and Drawing on Photos”, focuses with the changing of brush sty. Applying a gradient is a worthwhile part of this chapter and is explained well (page 192-3.)

Chapter 11, “Applying Filters”, allows the manipulating of images through distortion, painting, sketching, adding noise and additional tasks.

Many novice and even intermediate users, will find this Chapter 12, “Adding text Elements”, most interesting. Adding text to your pictures will give new emphasis to your images. Here you will also learn how to create and change color in text, applying filters, warping text

Chapter 13, “Applying Style and Effects”, allows new effects through the use of shadows, frames, drop shadows, outer glows and even fancy covering to a layer which can add many different types of appeal to your images.

Chapter 14, “Automating Your Work”, has information on working with image sizes, adding watermarks for copyrighting purposes and printing a contact sheet (set of all images) and printing and converting files.

Chapter 15, “Organize Photos with Organizer”, adds details about the tool with the program that lets users organize their photos.

Chapter 16, “Outputting, Files”, shows how to save images in various formats, creating a gallery, and exporting images

I really like this book. It is a great step-by-step guide, resource and instruction aid to using graphics. The visual delivery of the tasks and the step-by-step information provides lessons that are not only most helpful but insightful. The instructions are straightforward, clear and concise and very informative. Novice graphic users will find the book and the tasks easy enough to start from the beginning and understand but also to use as they progress in learning how to use graphics, images and the applications.

If you have dabbled with graphics the methods in the chapters, this book will allow you to go further. Many tasks that I learned on my own or took longer to complete over the years are highlighted in this book. Along the way while looking through the exercises, I thought of new and different ways for working with graphics for my websites, photographs, images and more. It is a great buy for what is delivered. This text will be used for many graphic endeavors and will be a handy resource now and the future. Look it over and think about buying it whether you are using *Photoshop Elements* (version 4 or less) or the bigger brother, *Photoshop*.

## Photoshop Elements 4: Top 100 Simplified Tips and Tricks

reviewed by *Dr. Eric Flescher*



**Authors:** Mike Woolridge, Linda Woolridge

<http://www.wiley.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd-0471777986.html>

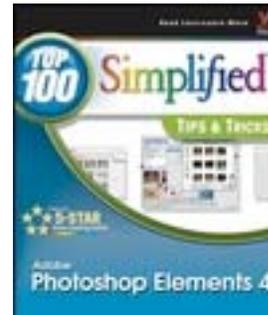
**Released:** November 2005

**Pages:** 229

\$20 USD, \$26 CND, £14 GBP, 16.69€ Euro

**ISBN:** 0471777986

Novice/Intermediate/Advanced



**Strengths:** Visually well done, informative and helpful in many ways. Step by step instruction, screenshots and additional information provide a wealth of information. Color bars, indicate the difficulty level of the exercises and help organize the tasks. Book is handsomely illustrated, well thought out. This is a great visual guide for learning how to better use Photoshop Elements 4 to create better Images. Nice section includes how to make calendars, postcards and much more.

**Weaknesses:** None found.

Books that are a “how to guide” offer an insight into working with a variety of applications. Some of these books work like a text book, detailing how to use the applications and utilize a wealth of text. Some don't always make for easy reading. But the better ones simplify the instruction by dividing the tutorials and focusing upon step-by-step approaches, using a visual oriented system that makes the learning easy and fun. Such a book is Top 100 Simplified Tips and Tricks Adobe Photoshop Elements 4.

This 229-page book is divided into six chapters, which span the 100 instructional tips and tricks. The authors have divided the book into these six sections to teach about working with layering; using filters and effects; mastering type, shapes, brushes; working with photos; working with print, color and the web, speeding things up; working with other element tools; organizing your photos; working with creations in organizer; and exploring the features in Photoshop organizer. Both of the authors have designed several books in the Visual series of books. Their experience is demonstrated through their mastery of the Photoshop through their easy to read yet comprehensive visual laden tutorials.

The colorful screenshots are integrated within the instruction. Numbers inside in red dots highlight the easy to read step-by-step instructions. Application laden screenshots demonstrate how the tools can be utilized to complete carefully designed tasks. The visuals not only save time but illustrate how to make your graphic endeavors more productive.

Each task spans two pages. Under the prominent task number on the top right page is a colored bar. Easy to read, the color bar, on the top of the exercise pages, indicate the difficulty level of each task. The difficulty rating can help differentiate which of the tasks to try first or can target the particular level of your expertise. The lowest level demonstrates a new spin on a common task. The second level, introduced a new skill or task. The third, combines multiple skills requiring in-depth knowledge while the fourth requires extensive skill and may involve other technologies. I was glad to see also that these same rating levels are also listed in the beginning of each chapters' tasks so at a glance, you can see which difficulty levels integrate into the tutorials of each chapter set of tasks. I thought this to be very helpful in gauging the level of expertise as compared to using the novice, intermediate and advance rating. Looking over the tasks gave a better understanding of the complexity of the tasks needs using the tools and the final outcome that needed to be performed. In addition, extra tip sections inserted in the tasks were highlighted. These included "Did you know?" "Customize it," "Put it together," "Caution."

The book and the exercises are well thought out. Exercises like gif animation, text patterns, plug ins, use of scratch disks, use of the brushes and many of the 100 tutorials are not only interesting but help the user learn how to use the applications. The book also includes how to use images beyond working with your photographs. Making a calendar, postcards and much more can help spark your inner creativity while using the software in different ways you might not have thought.

Easy to understand, well laid out with 100 interesting tasks, there is something for everyone to learn or take to the next level of expertise. What more could you want from a book that helps you in many ways, visually lays out the instructions and gives you a better understanding while using Photoshop Elements 4? This book is not a textbook but an instructional visually based manual for learning how to make your photos better and using the images in different ways. For the price and what can be learned regarding Photoshop Elements 4, this book is a great buy.

## Hardware

### Canon PIXMA MP 530 Office All-in-One

reviewed by Robert Pritchett



<http://www.usa.canon.com/consumer/controller?act=ModelDetailAct&fcategoryid=123&modelid=13371>

**Released:** July 2006

Around \$200 USD, £180 GBP including VAT, 295€ Euro

**Requirements:** Mac OS X 10.2.8 or later, Windows 98 or later.

Contains: PIXMA MP530 Office All-in-One; Power Cord; Telephone Line Cable; Print Head; Ink Tanks: PGI-5BK Black CLI-8 (Black, Cyan, Magenta, Yellow); Easy Setup Instructions; Document kit: Setup Software & User's Guide CD-ROM; User's Guide Registration Card; Canon Photo Paper Plus Glossy for Borderless Printing 4" x 6" Sample Pack; Software – MP Drivers, ScanSoft OmniPage SE 9, NewSoft Presto!, PageManager, Easy-PhotoPrint 3.3 and Easy-WebPrint.

**Resolution:** 1200x1200 dpi, 19200x19200 dpi. Print – Black 600x600 dpi, Color – 9600x2400 dpi

**Page size:** Credit card, 4x6, 4x8, 5x7, 8x10, Letter, Legal, US #10 Envelopes.

**Print speed:** 4x6 – 51 seconds, Black 29 ppm at 21 seconds, Color – 19 ppm at 3.2 seconds.

**Supplies:** [http://estore.usa.canon.com/Specification.asp?ITEM\\_ID=36808](http://estore.usa.canon.com/Specification.asp?ITEM_ID=36808)

**Strengths:** Solid Bubblejet 4-in-one printer, fax, copier, scanner. Automatic Sheet Feed, Generous ink tanks. No sharp edges. Low cost per page.

**Weaknesses:** You provide the USB cable. The input sheet feed doesn't work with the OCR app?

**Touched on in Mac ReviewCast #72:** <http://www.surfbits.com>

I figured HP's All-in-One we reviewed earlier could use some competition. I wanted to get a unit that has an automatic sheet feeder. And I don't do a whole lot of photos, since I don't really have a camera I can call my own yet.

With the MP530, instead of a bunch of memory card ports, there is a USB port in front for PictBridge connectivity for digital cameras. Instead of a Color LCD display for previewing pictures, there is an LCD display so copying and faxing can occur without being connected to a computer.

This machine does double-sided copying with sheet feeds either from the Automatic Document Feeder 30-page tray in front on the bottom or from the feed bin in the back. The top unit is not removable for large object to be copied, but it does lift up and does have an automatic sheet feed for copy or scan. Scans do 1200dpi and 48-bit color.

Faxing is from 33.6 Kbps in color or Black and White, takes 40 speed-dial codes and 150 incoming pages.

There is a combo-CD that has driver software for both Macs and non-Mac systems. The OCR app is the lite version of the OmniPage app from ScanSoft instead of the I.R.I.S. app that HP uses. I wanted to use the OmniPage Pro X app, but couldn't get it to install over the LE version and Tech Support was not helpful. The OCR software does work well. And like HP with all the "invented here stuff" for interoperability between printer and computer, Canon



also has their own proprietary interface with the MP Navigator. I'm guessing MP doesn't mean Military Police, but perhaps rather, Multiple Printer – just a guess...

To open the system to see what is inside, the front has to be lifted from both sides. Deep in the bowels of the machine is a place for a solid-state printhead that has 1,856 nozzles for 9600x2400 color dpi. It sits below 5 Ink tanks that run \$50 USD for a 4-pack (CLI-8) of B, C, M and Y (or a Photopack of those along with 240 sheets for the 4x6 glossies for \$69 USD). A twinpack of the PGI-5BK (black tank) runs another \$30 USD and so there are really two black reservoirs, plus 3 other colors, unlike the 6 colors over in the HP we reviewed earlier. Think heavy on print, copy, scan and fax and light on color printing. There is a place to do 4x6 glossies, but color photo printing doesn't seem to be the real reason this \$200 USD printer was created. I find that a bit odd coming from a company who's reputation is pretty high in the digital photography world. But again, Canon has a plethora of printers. A veritable cornucopia of Canons.

What is really, really cute is that there are LED glow light functions in the ink well handles, indicating they are good to go after being properly seated. When the red lights come on for each ink tank, they are seated properly.

It would be nice to figure out what the price per page is, but I don't. C|Net guestimates about 2 cents per page, which is a lot less than the HP All-in-One (was something like 26 cents per page). And unlike some competitors, there are inkjet refill kits available; <http://www.atlanticinkjet.com/ink-cartridge-refills-Canon-MultiPASS-MP530.asp> that can reduced that cost per page down to an unbelievable 1 cent per page! On the other hand, I do know it prints fast. Real fast. Like one page every 2.1 seconds fast. I could get used to that. Faxes go at 3 seconds per page using the G3 modem with memory capacity to handle up to 150 incoming pages and if those are printed, total page print is about 300 pages before refilling both the tray and the bin. There is a button on the front panel to do that switch.

Unlike the HP AIO, the front control panel juts out and stays out. Just don't try to use it as a handle for lifting the incredibly heavy lid to get inside the machine, okay? And the lower paper tray doesn't slide in and out as easily as it probably should, so use it on a flat surface.

To get similar features as found in the HP we reviewed earlier, the MP830 comes closer to that level of functionality with an LCD display.

Prints? Acceptable. 9600x2400dpi is acceptable, isn't it? Yeah, I thought so. By the way, what is a picoliter anyway? Glad you asked - [http://whatis.techtarget.com/definition/0,,sid9\\_gci927661.00.html](http://whatis.techtarget.com/definition/0,,sid9_gci927661.00.html) One millionth of a millionth. Many printers can do 2 to 25 picoliters. This one does 1 picoliter.

Now, if the printhead goes south, where do we get replacements? It doesn't look like these are "consumables, like paper or ink. I'm guessing mail-order. The Apple inkjet from the early days (front end of the 1990s) cost over \$300 for one print head and 4 were required.

Really, for \$200 USD for an All-in-One, this is pretty darned good! I still remember paying over \$2K for our first Apple color inkjet printer that only did one thing and not four back in 1993. A price that is 1/10<sup>th</sup> and does 4 times as much? Yep, it's worth it.

## iPod U2 Special Edition (Late 2006)

reviewed by Eddie Hargreaves

Apple Computer, Inc.  
1 Infinite Loop  
Cupertino, CA 95014  
408.996.1010  
1-800-MY-APPLE

<http://www.apple.com/ipod/u2/>

\$279 USD

**Requirements:** USB 2.0; Mac OS X 10.3.9 or Windows 2000 (SP4) or Windows XP Home or Professional (SP2); iTunes 7; Internet access.

**Strengths:** All the capabilities of newest iPod models (new earbuds, search function); unique and stylish design; less expensive than original U2 iPod.

**Weaknesses:** No earbud covers, AC adapter; exclusive video contains performances already seen or owned by most U2 fans.

When Apple updated its iPod lines in mid-September, it seemed like the U2 Special Edition would be left behind, seeing as how the new video-capable model was just introduced in June. But Apple has been kind enough to not only endow the U2 edition with all the newest bells & whistles of the regular iPod but also drop the price accordingly.

The Fifth Generation (Late 2006) U2 iPod has the following new features:

brighter display, increased battery life (14-hours for music, 3-1/2 hours for video), search interface and newly-designed earbuds.

The new earbuds do not come with the black foam covers. Personally, I found this change annoying as the earbuds slipped around and out of my ears without the foam. I eventually broke down and picked up some extras at Radio Shack for a few bucks. However, I've also heard from others that they prefer the new earbuds and don't miss the covers at all.

Also missing is a Software Install CD. But considering this iPod requires iTunes 7, which was only just released (and will probably be updated by the time this review is printed) expecting users to download a copy isn't too much. And the lack of an AC Adapter, though not a new loss, is also irritating.

So, what separates this model? What do you get for the extra \$30? As with previous special editions, the front is black, the clickwheel is red with white labeling and the back is engraved with the band members' signatures. But the back is now black metal instead of the traditional silver. This aspect is incredibly stylish and pictures can't truly capture what it looks like.

The original U2 iPod included a \$50-off coupon for The Complete U2 set from the iTunes Music Store. This model instead comes with an iTunes Store code you can redeem for an exclusive 30-minute U2 video titled "Love U2". This is an arguably better deal than the



coupon, which was only valid towards defraying the \$150 cost of the "digital box set".

The video contains the following live tracks:

- Mofo from PopMart, Mexico, 1997
- I Will Follow from Queen's University, Belfast, 1981
- God Part II from Lovetown, 1989
- Where The Streets Have No Name from Zoo TV, Sydney, 1993
- Beautiful Day from Elevation, Boston, 2001
- City of Blinding Lights from Vertigo, Milan, 2005.

It seems like an impressive list but for the fact that half of the tracks have already been made available on VHS and DVD releases over the years. And because the video is "protected" with Apple's Fairplay DRM, you cannot separate it into its respective segments to shuffle up among other U2 videos. It would be a much better bonus if Apple created The Complete U2 Videos and gave a \$25 coupon off that. There are a lot of rare videos that U2 fans would gladly plunk down money for to get a good copy of.

Overall, this model is worth the extra \$30 if you're a fan of the iPod and U2. The black metal backing alone is almost impressive enough to warrant it. Just make sure you get a case that can show it all off!

## Oakley SI Computer Bag

reviewed by Wayne LeFevre



Oakley United States of America

1 Icon

Foothill Ranch, CA 92610

1-800-403-7449

<http://oakley.com/o/o1518d>

**Released:** July 2006

\$175 USD, \$194 CND, £93 GBP

**Requirements:** Desire for the ultimate



**Dimensions:** 14" H x 17" W x 5" D (35.6cm x 43.2cm x 12.7cm)

**Strengths:** A lot of room. Many pockets and places to put stuff, cables, magazines, computers, etc. A nice separate padded case for laptops that can adjust for computer size. Modular pockets.

**Weaknesses:** None Found.



### Accessibility

The Oakley web site has a good PDF on Product Detail Specification. More accessories to attach to bag are also available.

### Effectiveness

It will be a long time before I will be able to utilize the effectiveness of all its features.

### Ease of use

Very easy to use. The front takes a few times unlatching it before you get it down, and do it effectively and quickly.

This is the coolest computer case I have ever seen. A definite must have, especially if you dream of looking like your carrying a special computer for your local SWAT team. It isn't called Oakley Tactical Field Gear. Standard Issue, for nothing!

First off, there are two main zippered pockets when you open up the front flap. The rear pocket holds a nice separate padded carrying case for your laptop. It does have a moveable divider inside the padded case to make your laptop nice and snug. The inside is a nice felt type material to protect from scratches.

The front pocket zips open all the way to display two large paper folder type pockets. In front of that is a neoprene stretch type material pocket, 3 pen or tool loops, a zippered mesh pocket, and a pocket that looks perfect for your Oakley sunglasses! On the front flap, there are two large mesh pockets, a lanyard clip and a clear business card holder.

The immediate thing you notice on the outside is it's made from a heavy duty, rip stop nylon. There are 3 large detachable pockets on the front of the bag. They are large enough to hold either small cameras and lenses, or a few 20 round .222 clips. (You have to admit, the bag does look pretty tough.) On the front of the pockets, each has 2 stretch, inch-wide bungees that could hold film canisters. All three pockets are part of a modular system that one or all can be removed. They can be added on another piece of gear or even your belt.

The back has two zippers that will open up in such a way that you can slide down onto a luggage carrier handle.

There are also many webbing straps along the back that you can slip things into or clips things onto.

The carry strap is very heavy duty, especially the clips to attach to the bag. Same with the clips holding the bag closed. All clips, in fact, come with quick release tabs to open up the clip quickly. The shoulder padding is very thick and comfortable. There are also plenty of metal loops both on the outside of the bag and on the strap to attach various items.

The small straps on both sides can be used either to cinch up or expand the bag. There is also a bottom strap that can unstrap, and turn the whole thing into a water bottle holder.

### **Recommendation**

It does not seem that Oakley left out much of anything with this case, and I definitely rate it a buy. A little spendy, yes, but the coolness factor makes up for it. It is a big bag, but if you are not into the corporate looking, leather briefcase type case to hold your gear, than this is the one for you. It will hold your 12 to 17 inch computer, all your cables, a camera, iPod, water bottle, all of it! I whole-heartedly recommend.

## Shareware

### shadowClipboard 3.0.1 – Well organized extra clipboards available as close as you application's menubar

Reviewed by Harry {doc} Babad

**Developer:** Benjamin Salanki at StupidFish23

[sales@stupidfish23.com](mailto:sales@stupidfish23.com)

<http://www.stupidfish23.com/>



**Shareware:** *Single user* license \$15 [USD] Upgrade from version 2.0.x \$8.00.– Allows no clipboard sharing between computers.  
*Group user* license \$30.00, Upgrade from version 2.0.x \$15.00.

A use-to-try feature in advanced mode makes it easy to get to know the product's full features.

**Requirements:** Mac OS X 10.4.x (Tiger) and a PPC or Intel based Mac to run. Size 1.0 MB

**Strengths:** It's simple, unobtrusive and works wherever and when ever you need to paste that saved clipping. The new user guide, although not perfect is a major user-friendly tool.



**Weakness:** The help files are still scattered between Readme files, a manual and the software's help feature. Its all there, but...

*Product and company names and logos in this review may be registered trademarks of their respective companies  
The software was tested on a 1 GHz dual processor PowerPC G4 Macintosh with 2 GB DDR SDRAM running under OS X 10.4.7.*

#### Product Description

The evolution of the clipboard is here. For years the clipboard has been an integral part of the Mac OS, but now shadowClipboard 3 redefines its functionality and takes the clipboard to the next higher level. With unlimited clipboard sets, clipboard sharing, clipboard filtering and clipboard set backups, suddenly there's so much more you can do with your clipboard. shadowClipboard is the clipboard manager for Mac OS X that Apple forgot. It handles multiple clipboards in a convenient, unobtrusive way. shadowClipboard gives you access to files, pages of texts, images, PDF document excerpts and all other data you have copied a few minutes or a week ago. Yes and you can easily clear out the junk whenever you want to, by selecting an item in a clipping list and backspacing.

#### Introduction

I have been using shadowClipboard version 2.0.x from the time I first found it in April of 200. [See my review in the July 2005, Volume 3 Issue 7 of macC] I use the software, at times, dozens of times an hour. Cutting and pasting is a tool I use continuously to turn stream-of-consciousness narrative into almost purple prose. My document creation reality requires me to be an active clipboard user.

As I used version 2.0.4 I occasionally became annoyed at its one window, split window interface. [e.g., the system clipboard on top and *all* the saved clippings on the bottom.]. I thought of a number of ways in which software could be easier to use to accommodate my rapidly growing collection of *saved* clippings but the moment passed undocumented. My list saved items, in shadow clipboard had grow to at least 50 items and I wasn't done with saving more needed clippings. That mean I often had to scroll to an item I'd saved or use drop and drag to move the item up in the column for easier access.

I also noticed that as I worked on various projects with version 2.0.4, that I was transferring almost all of my pre-existing collections of *textclippings* as well as some graphics containing *clippings* to shadowClipboard. A *text clipping, in case someone doesn't know is text or image saved in a form that can be dropped into a document where it is needed.* Usually such items can't be edited, but ClipEdit allows editing. Once a favorite program, ClipEdit, now v. 3.0 <http://www.everydaysoftware.net>, was going unused.

I had thought, 'wouldn't it be nice to be able to divide the 50 items into subsets' so I could access shorter lists for different projects. But, I was too busy to ask Ben Salanki about such a feature. Imagine my delight when I read about version 3.0.x that my needs were fulfilled – talk about in instant gratification. Hence this updated review.

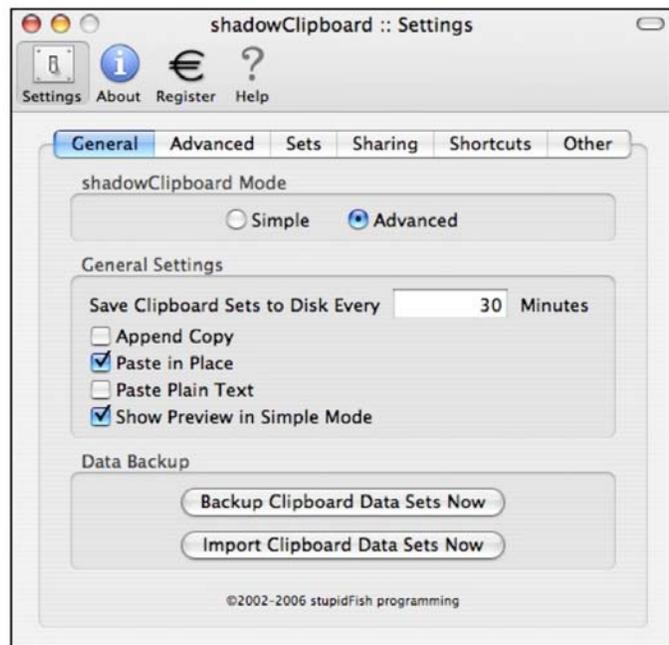
Version 3 leaves the old versions in the dust. It appears to be a complete rewrite, with all of the original functionality and then some.

### Using the Software

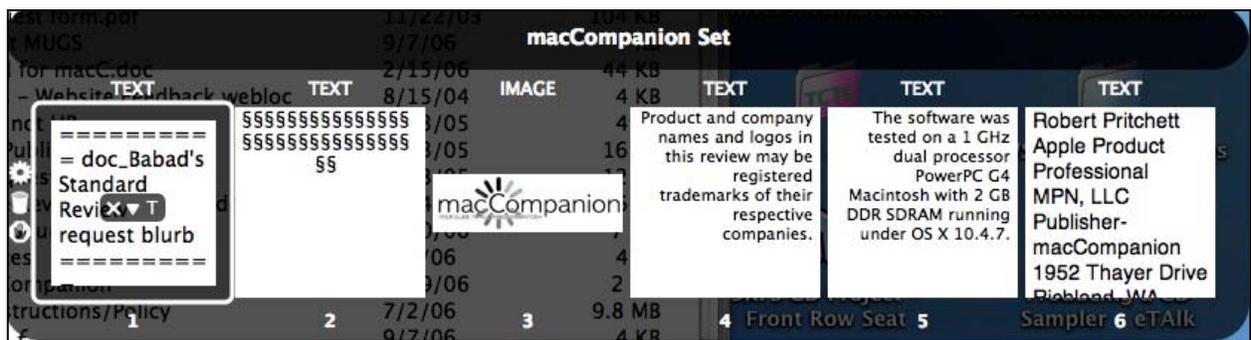
After the usual installation process (and of course registering the product) the icon (a clipboard) appears in the application menu bar. After determining which mode you want to use and if needed, selecting a few preferences and defining some sets you are ready to use the product.

shadowClipboard offers two interfaces. Advanced Mode is the default mode, one that offers users a list of copied items with a user-definable number of clipping sets and slots and a resizable preview section. Simple Mode provides a simpler interface that supports up to 15 clipboards, maximum across your screen.

The power of *shadowClipboard* lies in its simplicity and straightforwardness. From an access perspective, rather than placing a clipboard application into one of my multiple docks, I can access it from the Finder menu bar of OS X. Its next to the other items I've placed there, near my Menu Bar clock.



The *simple mode* interface uses a translucent floating pane reminiscent of the Mac OS X application switcher. The pane provides you with a thumbnail image of the items you've captured. When an item is selected the window containing that clipping's contents also appears. *Enough*, even in version 2.x I took an instant dislike to simple mode and will only say that it takes up too much screen space and to my eyes is ugly. It also reminds me too much of the clipboard in MS Word. But since beauty is in the eyes of the beholder, feel free to do your thing.



Nevertheless for version 3.0, in any mode, you can not only paste selected image clips, but also paste formatted text as plain text. [It's a choice in preferences.] T'is true even when the selections are copied from the finder's document titles, an MS Word, a PDF file, a FileMaker Pro document or my favorite email client. You can remove clippings from your clipboard set by selecting it and clicking the backspace on your keyboard or from a contextual menu with your mouse.



Since shadowClipboard still patiently lurks in the background until needed, it's available whenever I want to use it. To my delight, shadowClipboard needs absolutely no configuring to run, but it has plenty of user customizable features available from its preference pane. Since I am a power user, of course I tweaked with the interface and added extra clipping sets to meet my work needs. Deleting a collection is also easy from the preferences pane as is removing all your custom clipboards.

### Today's Clipboard Sets (item limit) & Their Uses

<u>Active Project Working Set</u> (10) — For one-time projects -I can change them on the go.	<u>Generally Useful</u> (10) — Uncategorized stuff.
<u>3RFS/TMF Set</u> (10) — Folk music related	<u>System Clipboards</u> (30) — It all starts here to catch each and every copy {⌘-C}
<u>Addresses Set</u> (20) — A bakers half-dozen items. No more need for customized email stationary.	<u>macCompanion Set</u> (20) — All of the separators and logos I use in my articles and of course our publishers contact information.
<u>Cooking Related Clips</u> (20) — Logos, recipe sources and often-used headers.	<u>Professional Societies</u> (20) — Logos, special address and phone numbers and boilerplate.

shadow Clipboard's Advanced Mode uses a special sheet-like interface that slides down beautifully from underneath the Mac OS X menu bar and slides out of your way when its not needed anymore. Selecting a specific clipboard entry will preview it in the *preview* pane. This feature is a multipurpose pane that can display scaled images, file and folder icons, and scrollable text content. Select an individual clipping to preview by clicking on the desired item or use the up and down arrow keys to navigate to a particular clipboard entry in advanced mode.

I'm only using the software in Advanced Mode, and using only a few of those advanced features. Even with version 3.0, that's all I need for now, since I'm neither networked nor am I sharing my Macintosh. It's nice to know the extra features listed below are available should my needs expand. You can read more about the capabilities of both the Simple Mode and the Advanced Mode features on the developer's website or in its clearly written and illustrated, now 21-page PDF manual. As noted below, there are still undocumented features that are not yet found in the manual, hence the author's need for the readme files that accompany the software.

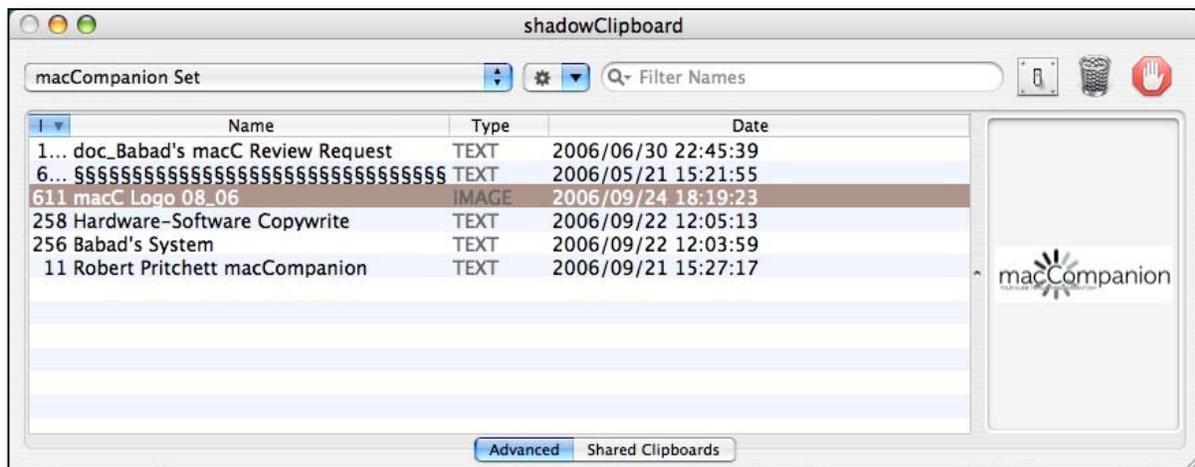
#### Added *shadowClipboard* Features

- Easily access all copied items through the menu icon or with fully customizable key combos — I like mousing around and already use too many shortcuts. Why court keyboard shortcut overlap trouble.
- Changed maximum number of items per set to 999.
- Window visibly can be set to various degrees of transparency. I prefer fully opaque since I fill many of my sets with lots of clippings, which are easier to read in opaque mode.

- One can use the Append Copy (to an existing clipping) feature to append copied items to the pasteboard's contents, rather than replacing it — A very nice feature, but one you should turn off for ordinary cut and paste use.
- The ability to filter pasteboard types, allowing you to skip images or text to reduce memory and disk usage — I didn't check this feature out.
- Use the great sheet mode or switch to window mode if you prefer to move application the window around. — Both work well, it depends on where you want the software's window to appear.
- Share your clipboards with other *shadowClipboard* users on your local network or between users of the same Mac — Untested since my system does not meet these conditions.
- Undocumented Feature — You can change the name of a clipping by clicking on it [e.g., 127 \* 99 Image can be changed to Babad's HD Icon image] just like you can in the finder.

You can also set a limit to the number items kept in a specific user defined set to meet your needs. Of course if you overload any given set, the first pasted item drops off. If you configure your working sets reasonably, if it grows too large, then add a bit more capacity to that set.

The Advanced Mode window features more metadata information about the nature of a clipping's content; e.g., the copy ID, a customizable clipboard name, the clipboard type, the time the clipboard was copied, and the number of times the given clipboard was pasted. Then take your prick of visible meta-data from the preferences.



### The macC List – Advanced mode in version 3.0.1

The current clipboards can display as many clipboards as you've defined in the preferences. The information originally appears in the system clipboard. If you want to save it move to one of your custom sets. (Now, where have I heard this advice before?)

Remember, once any user-selected preferred number of clippings is exceeded, in *any* set, the first copied item gets dropped off the list and the newly copied one takes its place.

The developer warns us “that Advanced Mode allows a high number of clipboards to be used. Setting this number too high might, however, affect system performance.” I've not noticed such a problem, but I do have 2 GB of RAM on my computer.

### Kudos

I want to especially thank Benjamin Salanki, shadowClipboard's developer, for the prompt (overnight) help he gave me as I stumbled through the install and configuration process in going from version 2.04 to 3.0.1. Now I know most of you read readme notes and other literature that accompanies not only a new product, but also one with which

you're just upgrading. But I was in a hurry and figured I knew it all. The bottom line it took me longer to figure out a solution to the problem, than it would have taken to do a little reading. Think of all the, err, fun I had.

### Minor Issues with The Product

Initially disappearing Contents in One Clipboard Set — I originally created a number of sets from clips I use when reviewing books and software, to address footers for various kinds for email messages I send. On one set, "cooking set" the contents disappeared after an hour of disuse. After feedback from the developer asking if I'd move the application, I noticed that I had accidentally dragged the application, rather than its alias into my Fruit Menu folder. Putting it back where it belong solved my problem.

Importing Version 2 Clippings — Based the headings in the import button in the general preferences and the highlighted help window that appear when the cursor hovers over a button, I initially assumed version 3.0 does not import the retained version 2 clipboards.

Since I had transferred my most used clipboard contents to a MSW, I didn't care, not much. [It was a bit like backing up my important documents.] This allowed me to import them into the appropriate clipboard sets in version 3.

Ben provided feedback that Version 3 does allow the import of both current and stored clips from version 2.x. This is detailed in the *IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR PREVIOUS USERS* document that is on the disk image. I tried it and this worked. What you get is a new set called *import*, mine had 50 items in it. I could then distribute these items to my newly created clipboard sets.

### If Wishes Were...

I have several changes I would welcome in the next version of this otherwise fine product. None of my suggested changes affect the present usefulness of the product.

Documentation — Integrate and in places clarify the help files or manual. Also change some of the illustrations to show not only the default setting but also the outcome allowing the use of that given feature (e.g., before and after). [Note test images go that that set when the default is set.]

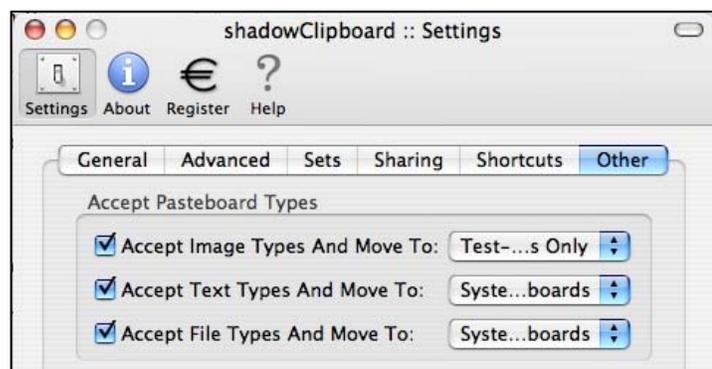
Warning Message — I would appreciate being warned when I try to delete a clipboard sets. A message now exists *only* when one tries to eliminate all sets.

Zoom Feature Desired in Advanced Mode — Advanced Mode, I wish there were a way to zoom the image to get a better look at its contents. If this feature is available, I could not find that information in the manual.

Number of Items in Set — It would be nice, as in the Macintosh finder, if the number of item in a clipboard set were listed. This would allow the user to determine whether the number of clippings in a set was approaching the predefined limit. [Ben noted that he'd see what he could do.]

Software Assessed Help File Readability Issues - The help file notes are done in such small print that I had to get within a few inches of the screen to read them. This font size is smaller than in any other help files I've used. In addition the help files list the customizable features without telling the user what these setting do or by referring to the PDF formatted manual.

Indeed, I'd like to see an expanded outline view for the help files. The later would allow the first time user to see all of the available help option in one glance. Ben noted that "I will change the way the help system works, but it will not be part of the 3.0.2 release, but a later one."



Easier Access to the Help Menu - The help menu should be a toolbar in the main shadowClipboard window for ease of access. Having to go to preferences > help every time I want to check the help files in an unneeded extra step. Ben noted that “I’ll see what I can do”.

## Conclusions

When using *shadowClipboard* I soon started to wonder how I ever managed to work with the rather limiting option of Mac OS X’s single clipboard or even MS Word’s stunted clipboard feature. Try it, you’ll like it — I did with version 2.04, and I’m going to keep on using the product as long as it remains compatible with my operating system.

I agree with Alex King who noted “I’ve toyed with multi-clipboard apps in the past, but I think I’ve finally found one I’m going to stick with in shadowClipboard. [Version 2.0.4] I really like the implementation, but so far prefer the simple interface to the advanced interface.

“I’m a productivity tool junkie, but a very particular one. I probably ditch 90% of the software I evaluate because of the chosen implementation, lack of elegance, etc. It’s high praise from me when I (*Alex King*) include shadowClipboard in the same sentence as *LaunchBar* and *Path Finder* as enhancements/tools I use without thinking about them - tools that let me to do things faster and more efficiently.

“Even though I’m only using shadowClipboard on two machines (my Quad and my PowerBook)1, I decided to buy the “group” license and reward the stupidFish folks an extra \$5 for a job well done. If you use a Mac, check out shadowClipboard. [http://www.alexking.org/blog/2005/12/22/shadowclipboard/.](http://www.alexking.org/blog/2005/12/22/shadowclipboard/)”

In closing, I used to make extensive use of MS Word’s clipboard feature and textclipping files. The MS clipboards were and remain limited to use within the MS Office suite. I soon found its linear interface useless over the variety of project types for which I want to maintain and save clipboard sets.

Check out *shadowClipboard*. This product has become as indispensable to me as has EasyFind, which I’ve previously reviewed. With just a bit more work on the documentation, this product would have been a perfect 5.

This is a great tool worthy of 4.5 macCs.

P.S.

As I read other, mostly one or two sentence *flaming*, reviews about this product [in MacUpdate and Version Tracker sites], I noted that there are still a number of folks who want a free ride. The amount of time I save over a month using version 3.0 as opposed to the Apple clipboard, or other more awkward products I fooled with, is more than worth a few bucks upgrade fee, or even its full cost. I don’t mind paying a developer for a job well done, especially when a product undergoes a complete rewrite.

In addition, I noticed two reviewers commented that the software crashed their systems w/o giving details of which OS they were using and how much memory they had installed. This never happened to me with either version of the product. Both version 2.0.4 and 3.0.1 run in Tiger. Perhaps the problem the reviewers had was the installation of Macintosh OS Tiger only software into a Panther or earlier operating system?

## Software

### Berlitz Spanish Premier

reviewed by Chris Marshall

 <p>Nova Development Corporation <a href="http://www.novadevelopment.com">www.novadevelopment.com</a> <a href="http://www.novadevelopment.com/products/us/zsx/default.aspx">http://www.novadevelopment.com/products/us/zsx/default.aspx</a> <b>Released:</b> July, 2006 \$40 USD, \$45.00 CND, £21.00 GBP, 31,00€ Euro</p> <p><b>Audience:</b> Mac Users who like to be organized (notes, diaries etc).</p> <p><b>Strengths:</b> Uses Mac &amp; PC, iPod, Palm, Pocket PC and CD players. Easy, intuitive and logical. Good use of immersion technique.</p> <p><b>Weaknesses:</b> Nothing specific, other than limitations based on the iPod</p>	 
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**What they say:** Now you can learn Spanish the easy way with the straightforward software that's been helping people learn foreign languages for more than a decade. Berlitz Spanish Premier is fast, easy and effective. Guaranteed! With this unique, time-proven learning system, we've provided three powerful ways for you to learn Spanish: (1) on your Windows PC or Macintosh, (2) in your car, and (3) on the go using an iPod or other mobile listening device.

#### Product Info

- Learn on Your Computer
- Learn in Your Car
- Learn on the Go
- Ideal for All Levels
- System Requirements
- About Berlitz

#### Special Features

- Explore at Your Own Pace
- Innovative Games
- Advanced Speech Analysis

#### Resources

- Technical Support FAQs
- PDF Spec Sheet
- Register Your Product

**What I say:** Living in Spain I have tried for several years to learn the language, with a reasonable level of success, but I still have a long way to go.

Along the way I have tried a number of learning methods, so one area that I am always keen to explore with products like this is “do they work”? Sure, it is good if they are easy to understand, fun and creative, but the only real measure is “do they help you to speak the language at the end of the course”?

The really good news is that this course does that, whilst at the same time providing a variety of interesting ways to learn. Now it is very probable that the variety of ways contributes significantly to the ability to learn and retain, but that is a debate for the academics (with two academics for parents, I have steered well away from that area in my own career!)

I installed both the Mac and PC versions, and subsequently used it both a Palm T3 and an iPod. On both the Mac and the PC, the interface is particularly good, as is the layout and guides, but the bit I liked most was the measurement and analysis of your pronunciation. This went some way to explaining why although my vocabulary is pretty good, I still struggle to be understood!

On the Windows PC, the screen saver with the Flash cards was particularly good. What I liked best about this feature, was that it made you think outside of the allocated time for learning, i.e. at random you would have to switch back into thinking about learning.

The iPod and Palm were adequate – but I see these more as a novelty or “top up” way of learning, only because of the limitations of these types of devices rather than because of any issues with the product.

**In summary:** I would certainly be happy to recommend this product, not just for its ability to teach you Spanish, but also for the flexibility it brings to the process.

## DockStar

reviewed by Chris Marshall

 <p>ecamm <a href="http://www.ecamm.com">www.ecamm.com</a> <a href="http://www.ecamm.com/mac/dockstar">www.ecamm.com/mac/dockstar</a></p> <p><b>Released:</b> September, 2006 \$8.00 USD, \$9.00 CND, £4.25 GBP, 6,30€ Euro</p> <p><b>Audience:</b> Mac Users using Mail with multiple email accounts and who like a bit of color in their dock.</p> <p><b>Strengths:</b> Easy to install and configure.</p> <p><b>Weaknesses:</b> Takes time to remember your options, but that is probably just me!</p>	 
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**What they say:** DockStar is an add-on for Mail.app that adds up to 5 new-mail indicators to the dock icon. This lets Mail users keep track of email as it arrives in various accounts and local mailboxes.

In addition, DockStar brings customizable shapes and colors to the Mail dock icon. Seamless integration allows users to control every aspect of the dock icon directly from Mail's settings panel.

Features:

- Assign a badge to up to 5 different mailboxes.
- Assign badges to individual account inboxes.
- Choose from four fun shapes.
- Fine-tune the size of each badge.
- Select just the right color and transparency for each mailbox.
- Display combined unread count for all mailboxes.
- In English, French, German and Japanese.



**What I say:** If you want a long review this isn't it. If you want a fun but practical application for the cost of a sandwich this is a great product.

Serious Mac users probably "need not apply" as there is nothing sophisticated or advanced about this product, but I certainly found it useful to see at a glance how my inbox was distributed around me various email accounts.

Of course this will depend largely on if you have more than one email account and if so how you use them. I have too many addresses in all reality but I like to differentiate work, friends, MacStuff, etc and I always have one that I use when I subscribe or sign up to things so for me this is a great little application.

**In summary:** The fun lasts a day or two, but the practicality lasts a lot longer than that. I like it ☺

## E-Mail Commander 1.1.4

reviewed by Robert Pritchett



### Koingo Software

1316 Forest Road  
Castlegar, BC V1N 3Y5 Canada  
+1 250-608-5674

[main@koingosw.com](mailto:main@koingosw.com)

<http://www.koingosw.com/products/emailcommander.php>

**Released:** August 14, 2006

**Requirements:** Mac OS X 10.2 or later, Windows 2000 or later.

\$30 USD (Personal), \$79 USD (School), \$99 USD (Business)

<http://www.koingosw.com/store.php>

Try-before-you-buy 15-day trial.

**Strengths:** Cross-platform. Solves one of the bulk-Email block issues.

**Weaknesses:** Needs more work in the oven. Undercooked.

### Other Reviews:

<http://www.versiontracker.com/dyn/moreinfo/macosx/27727>

**Touched on in the Mac ReviewCast #74:** <http://www.surfbits.com>

Bulk up!

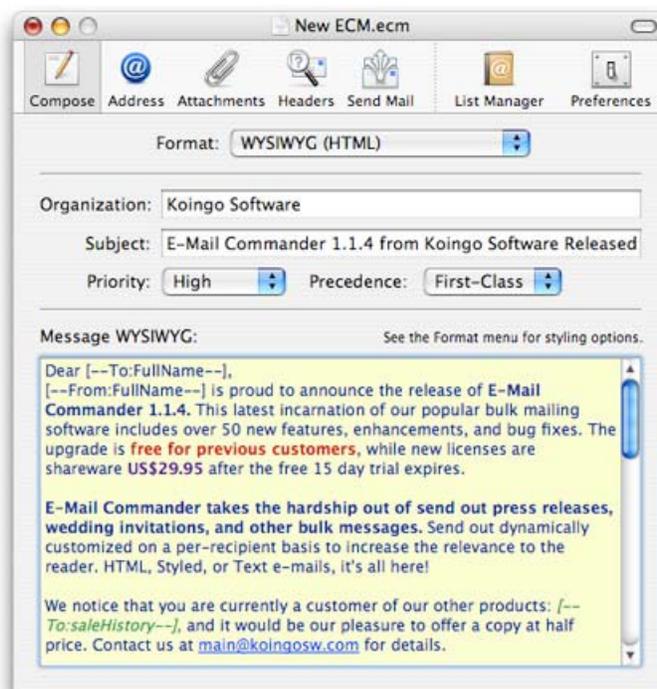
When I send out notification of each month's magazine, I am limited by my ISP as to how many on the list the information can go out to, so I have to do the same message, over and over and over as a "Press Release". Now I don't have to anymore! I don't have to send Emails to myself and blind-copy everybody else. If I have names instead of just Emails addresses, each Email becomes individualized, thus, more personal.

If I have folks in a "group", E-Mail Commander takes advantage of the Mac OS X Address Book and treats each individual as, well, individuals!

And E-Mail Commander is HTML-able, but can be mixed with the plain text format. It also has a bounce-checker and can flag duplicate entries.

End the redundancy (and monotony) of sending out an Email blast!

Okay, ready for what worked for me? I found that to "import, I could only do one line at a time from FileMaker Pro exported data. I could import a column of data but not a whole row of info or a whole file as input so had to resort to adding the info manually. That was tedious. Maybe I didn't follow directions or figure out the help file, so I blame myself for not figuring it out. But why can't I just drag&drop?



Then I could not send “From:” until I had created a Send file in the List Manager. Anyway that was the error message I got. That stumped me for a while. Why didn’t the program lead me to the next step?

I did send to my notification list, but the ISP blocked the list after about 80 Emails, and I had to go back and then choose “imported” and not “successful and also OK to get the rest of the Emails out the door. Again, it took me a while to figure that out. Obviously not everything was “intuitive” for me. But I used it, and I will use it again. Why? Because it helps get past the ISP “don’t send bulk Email” activities by giving notice of when it gets part way through a list so we can pick up where we left of and continue. That is a strength and not a weakness. The weakness is that when the “disconnected” message appears there should be a “Continue” button and not just have the program say “Done” when it really isn’t.

Our final solution? We created a TextCast of *macCompanion* magazine in iTunes, so we don’t have to send out notices each month that the next issue is ready. We just have folks redirected off our site to iTunes to subscribe. It’s that simple. I only wish I’d known about that sooner, but that technology is new. Very new. I’d say even newer than this release of Email Commander. Email as a communicator is limited as a business activity because it has been ruined by Spam. Having folks visit a website, RSS feeds, Podcasts, VideoCasts and TextCasts help us work smarter and not harder.

## Fast DVD Copy 4.0.4 — Make protective personal backups of your movies and some games

reviewed by Harry {doc} Babad



**Developer:** Velan Software

<http://www.fastdvdcopy.com/en/products.php>

**Support:** Accessed from the Website

\$100 USD

**Requirements:** Any Macintosh running Mac OS X version 10.2.x to 10.4.x (Jaguar, Panther and Tiger), 17 GB free disk space. An Apple SuperDrive or burner compatible with Mac OS X; Blank discs: DVD-R (W) or CD-R (W). PPC/Intel Macintosh compliant. An internet connection is required to activate the software.

**Released:** 31 May 2006 **Download Size:** 7.7 MB

**Uninstaller included?** No need, just drag the application folder in the trash

**Audience:** All user levels



**Strength** — One-click copying to DVD-R type media while letting users select what parts of a DVD to copy; fast.



**Weakness** — Some users and reviewers have had a less fortunate experience with the product than I have. In part they were using earlier versions than I reviewed.

The software was tested on a 1 GHz dual processor PowerPC G4 Macintosh with 2 GB DDR SDRAM running under Mac OS X 10.4.7.

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

### Publisher's Summary

“The first software built for Mac OS X that allows users to copy their DVD video collections, Audio CD collections, PlayStation 2 games (with an installed modchip in the hardware), DVD-ROMs or CD-ROMs without losing any quality from the original. Fast DVD Copy is the most powerful digital technology copy software for Mac OS X available on the market today. Copied CDs are compatible with any CD player. DVDs work on DVD-R and DVD-RW compatible players. Older DVD player models may not be DVD-R and DVD-RW compatible.”

### Introduction

If you're a road warrior who prefers to take copies of movies with you so the originals don't get scratched, or your tired of you kids *tearing* up their game DVDs you've probably wondered how to make easy backup copies of your commercial DVDs. You know all about Toast or Popcorn by Roxio, and Apple's burner software and have likely been exposed to DVD ripping software. The later places (rips) the contents of a DVD to your hard disk.

I have a couple or more high school game addicts around the house most days after school and weekends that use both movie and game CDs with our electronics. Our out of town visiting grandsons ranging from 10 to 15+ use both the computer(s) and game machine to do their thing. Therefore I am continuously somewhat concerned about the health of the DVDs we so expensively provide them. When I came across Fast DVD Copy, I figured that by allowing the boys, yes they are all boys, to use backups; I could protect our investment in game software and my movie collection.

I was especially intrigued by the fact that the publisher noted that the product could copy the new dual-layer movies to a single layer DVD. It could also copy single-layer DVD video DVD-ROM, PS2 games, digital audio compact discs and data storage compact discs.

My focus of course was only movies and games, including the occasional foreign language movies shared by friends — those that were not created for our region and therefore would not play on either my players or my computer. I also reflected that the software included with my OS and Toast, my favorite burner software, can handle most audio and data CDs and data DVDs but not encrypted (err. protected) or out of region DVDs.

Around my favorite hellions, disk lifetime is sometimes poor and doesn't seem to increase as the boys progress from elementary school into their teens. I've never figured out how the act of inserting and removing a DVD from a player or computer can lead to scratched media, but grandkids and their friends manage to do it. Perhaps the dog did it?

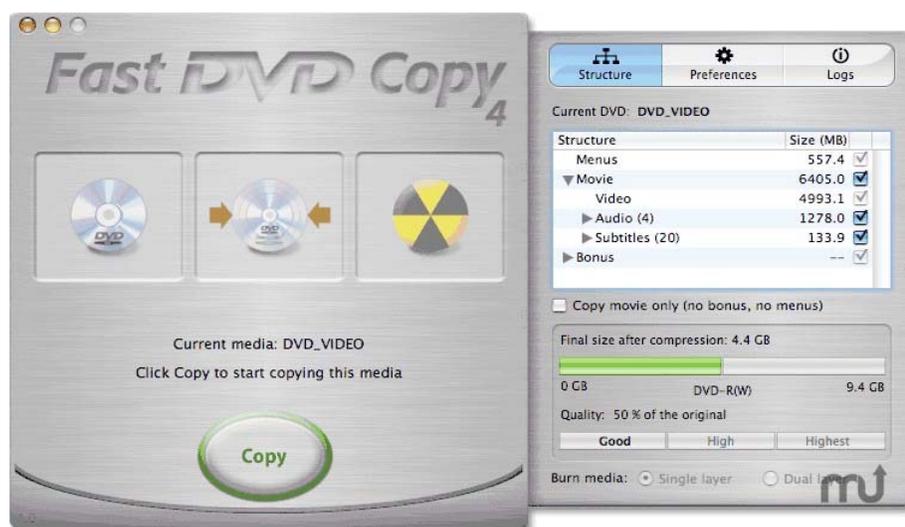
I've spent several months on and off working with the product, with mixed results. Some of the problems were of my doing, some were related to my equipment limitations, but more about that later.

## Working With the Product

The software is easy to install and start to use its one-click copy interface.

Based on the mistakes I made when attempting to learn the software I recommend you read file product specifications *before you start* section of the help using fast DVD Copy. In addition, take the time to set your preferences to meet your specific copying needs.

An easily fixed problem that you should know about is that Apple's "DVD Player Application conflicts with FAST DVD COPY since both try to access the same OS DVD framework.



In addition, "you should check that you are able to see and select your DVD burner(s) in the Drive preference. If you do not see your DVD burner listed in the options or if it is listed under a different name, please check the "Notice about *Fast DVD Copy's* compatibility with DVD burners" located in this manual."

**Fast DVD Copy Works Quite Well for Me** — Copying any DVD is a cinch—pop in a DVD-R or DVD-RW disc and press the Copy button. If you're copying from a dual-layer disc, Fast DVD Copy lets you copy directly to another dual-layer disc if your Mac's DVD drive has that capability (mine does not). You have other simple to implement options if the amount of content you're copying exceeds 4.7 GB

I was able to compress the content of a dual-layer DVD to a size that fit on a standard DVD-R, without deleting any material on the original, but the picture quality suffered. By eliminating material I had no interest in before the copy-compression process I got high quality copy that did not affect my viewing of movies on my standard 2-year old low-definition JVC 36" TV set. [Indeed the picture was better than what I had obtained when copying the same movie from VHS tape to DVD.]

To preserve as much video quality as possible, and minimize compression, you can pick and choose only the material you want to copy. By omitting the extras (previews, and behind-the-scenes footage) and even the trailers and other propaganda from the front of the DVD you greatly reduce disk space needs. You can also choose to remove the HiFi “surround” audio tracks leaving only the smaller size standard “stereo” audio. This is important because the product does not compress the audio tracks.

I was amazed on how good the copy looks and sounds.

Oh, of course I’m not going to name the names of the items I copied, since they were only for *test* purposes, but why should I give the Motion Picture Association of America another target?

**Gottchas** — I did make one very serious mistake when I first started to test the software for copying DVD movies, and some games. I started to duplicate movies onto DVD+R media and of course failed.

My mistaken rationale for using DVD+R was that these many of my movie and game copies were going to be also tested on a PC, which accepts DVD+R media. Excuse, I’d read somewhere that more DVD players were compatible with the DVD+R format than with the DVD-R. That’s for the most part not true, even now.

#### Problem List

First, my Macintosh internal superdrive did and will not recognize the DVD+R media.

Second, although the Velan software is designed to burn to DVD+R media, my total system is not.

Third, my LaCie external firewire drive appeared to recognize the DVD+R media but of course could not copy to it.

*Dumb with 20-20 hindsight!* Sometimes you have to at least read the product specifications, if not the whole manual. However, if you have a newer Macintosh, forget my DVD+R troubles. According a friend who works in Mac support for a major local company, the new Macs work fine with DVD+R (W) type media.

After I finally checked the developers web site and then, just to be sure, the users guide and found my mistakes --- I got the software to work in the manner described by the developer.

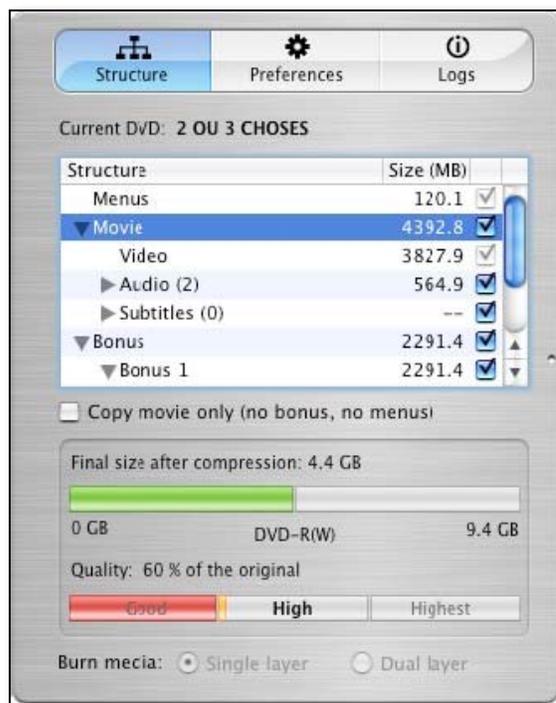
#### Simple Tests That Mostly Succeeded:

I was able to copy, onto 4.7 GB DVD-R media, a half-dozen movies whose purchase date ranged from 1993 to a new release bought last week. Many of these were on single-layer medium but two were created with the newer double-layer disks. For the most part, I only copied the movie itself, using *Movie Only feature*, to copy only the main feature without menus or bonuses. Alternatively, I copied only the movie with the DVD player accusable menus. *I preferred to minimize the compression needed to complete the copy enhancing picture quality.* I don’t watch the rest of the stuff anyway; it’s on the original DVD anyway.

I did try to duplicate a number of computer game CDs both PC and PC/Mac combos with both Toast and Fast DVD Copy. My success rate was higher with Fast DVD Copy, but I didn’t really keep score.

**Features and More Features** — Specific Software Capabilities — The software can function in a number of modes, some of which I successfully tested to limitations of my equipment. [Using only DVD-R media and no ability yet to burn to double-layer DVDs.]

“Copy: FAST DVD COPY will make a copy from a DVD onto a blank DVD+/-R (W) media performing all three steps: ripping or extracting the information from the original DVD, optimization that includes



compressing and rebuilding of the DVD structure when necessary, and burning the result on the blank DVD.

**Rip Only:** FAST DVD COPY will only rip the information from the original DVD and the result will be stored as a VIDEO\_TS Folder in the working volume or folder you previously selected. This VIDEO\_TS folder will not be compressed or optimized, so it will be an exact copy of the content of the original DVD's VIDEO\_TS folder.

**Rip & Compress:** FAST DVD COPY will rip the information of the original DVD, and, if the resulting VIDEO\_TS folder is larger than a single layer blank DVD-R media, it will be optimized (compressing and/or rebuilding of the DVD structure) in order to make it fit onto a single layer DVD+/-R (W). When selecting the Rip & Compress option you will have the chance to remove bonuses and features if the original DVD is Dual Layer, just as if you were copying the DVD. The idea is that using this option you will obtain a VIDEO\_TS folder that is ready to burn onto a Single Layer DVD media using FAST DVD COPY or any other burning engine or application that allows you to burn DVD Video. This VIDEO\_TS folder will be stored in the working volume or folder you previously selected.”

**Kudo for The Users Manual** — The 21-page PDF Help file Velan provides is clearly written and well illustrated. Topics, deserving attention, not previously mentioned in this review include:

\*\*Notice about copying music DVDs\*\*  
\*\*Notice about copying Episodic DVDs\*\*  
\*\*Notice about the quality of blank media\*\*

#### **Other DVD Associated Product Features**

Your privacy guaranteed — no digital mark or traceable code written on your copied discs.

Copies an entire dual-layer DVD video to one single-layer DVD-R (W) disc by your maximizing compression ratios  
Freedom to choose all items or specific items to copy including menus, trailers, audio streams, subtitles, bonus material and special features

Copied DVD videos can be played on any recent DVD player

Option to send copy logs to technical support

Fully copies multi-channel audio (Dolby Digital 5.1, DTS, THX)

Apple iDVD compatible

NTSC and PAL video formats supported

Widescreen and Full Screen sizes supported

DVD copies are region free, but be aware of operating system limitation on regionalization discussed in the manual.

Protection Related —

Removes CSS encryption and Macrovision protection

Provides support for copying ARccOS-protected DVDs

Can handle RCE protection

#### **Review Limitations**

I was apparently able to make functional copies PlayStation 2 games (e.g., the process worked) to a DVD-R disc, but with no modchip installed in my grandsons system I could not verify this. I also had no easy access to other game system's manufacturer's games. So try the software before you buy, and figure out which games systems you can backup. Then tell the good folks at Velan all about it.

#### **Discomforts**

**Legality Issues** — There one hitch to this product, although the product works great, there's one catch: The software isn't technically legal. According to Anton Linecker's review in MacWorld,

<http://www.macworld.com/2005/10/reviews/fastdvdcopy4/index.php> —

“All DVD-copying programs feature the ability to recompress a dual-layer DVD into a format that can fit onto a standard 4.7GB single-layer DVD-R. Other DVD-copying programs—namely Roxio’s *Popcorn*) and DVD2one’s *DVD2oneX* —circumvent the legal issues by omitting the ability to strip out copy protection. But Fast DVD Copy takes its chances with the law by including the power to remove CSS (Content Scrambling System) and Macrovision protection. The result? Velan has created an application that’s much more efficient than Popcorn and DVD2oneX, both of which require a second application to crack copy protection on DVDs.

According to the DMCA, it’s not legal for consumers to override the copy protection on DVDs. Yet it is OK to make personal copies of materials you own. That means that legally, things are up in the air. So far, the MPAA has not gone after individuals. But at this point, you’re using the software at your own risk.”

#### **Velan’s disclaimer is very clear about the legality issue —**

“It is against the law to reproduce copyrighted material for the purpose of selling it to third parties. To make one backup copy of any software or media for personal and an archival purpose is the ONLY intended use for this software. This program is not meant for those who intend on breaking copyright laws; in no way we will be held responsible if you do. Any other use of this software is strictly prohibited!”

**The Users Manual** - The 21-page PDF Help file Velan provides is clearly written and well illustrated, but unfortunately contains NO bookmarks to ease browsing. It could be searched using Adobe’s find function. All web links in the manual are active.

#### **Conclusions**

Although I had occasional failures trying to copy some of my grandson or his friends, games, overall the product (albeit slow on my G4 Macintosh) performed well, albeit more slowly than I would have liked. Actually the program was faster copying a movie than when copying a VHS tape to DVD on my stand-alone GO Video VR3840 recorder.

I agree with Anton Linecker’s conclusion for MacWorld.

“The biggest problem with Fast DVD Copy is the current state of legal limbo surrounding these types of products. Ironically, as a company promoting software that breaks other copy-protection systems, Velan has very strong security for its own product, limiting each activation to only one computer. Legal issues aside, Fast DVD Copy 4 is easy to use and intuitive. And even though it costs almost twice as much as other, similar applications, it is also much more streamlined.”

I rate this product **4.0 macCs**.

#### **After Thoughts**

After finishing my testing, I did a Google check on the product and was somewhat surprised on what I found. Some user had results comparable to mine. Others including David Biedny of *MacAddict* magazine <http://www.macaddict.com/issues/2006/1/reviews/fastdvd> had a less fortunate experiences when testing an earlier version of the product available at the time his January 2006 review was published . [Versions 3.x to 4.01.]

David’s bottom line, if you need to back up your DVDs, you might want to consider using the freeware program MacTheRipper (MTR) 2.6.6 (Last update 03-13-05) to rip DVD to your hard drive and then commercial Roxio Popcorn 2.0 [\$50] or Toast 7 software [\$80-\$100] to burn the ripped copy to DVD. It’s a cheaper method that requires a little more effort, but it’s faster and more reliable than using Fast DVD Copy.

Note that MacTheRipper <http://www.mactheripper.org/> has not been recently updated, but a version 3.0 is under development.is no longer being supported. *Perhaps the Motion Picture Association of America has struck again?* I

took a quick look at MTR version 2.6.6 and it appears to be more complicated to use than I'd like. Perhaps we'll get someone else to review MTR for macC.

“MacTheRipper is a free DVD ripper (extractor) for Mac OS X. It can extract commercial DVD movies to your hard drive, minus all the copy protections and region controls put in place by DVD publishers. You can then use various tools to burn the movie back to DVD-R for use in DVD players, or convert the movie to different formats for playback with a variety of devices. MacTheRipper is intended to backup DVDs you have legally purchased for personal use. Any copyright-infringing activity you choose to perpetrate using this application is illegal, immoral, and beyond our control.”

It was that uncertainty that lead to my only rating the program 4.0 macC's.

## FeedForAll Mac Version 2

reviewed by Robert Pritchett



NotePage, Inc.  
PO Box 296  
Hanover, MA 02339  
1-781-829-0500  
Fax: 1-781-582-1869  
<http://www.notepage.net/>  
<http://www.feedforall.com/>

**Released:** July 2006

\$40 USD Registration provides publishers complimentary access to the RSS Scripts directory, that contains powerful PHP scripts for managing and manipulating RSS feeds. 30-day try-before-you-buy.

<http://www.feedforall.com/download.htm>

**Requirements:** Mac OS X 10.3.9 or later; 18 MB hard drive space.

**Strengths:** Makes building RSS Feeds Easy. Cross-platform.

**Weaknesses:** No non-English language dictionaries available yet.

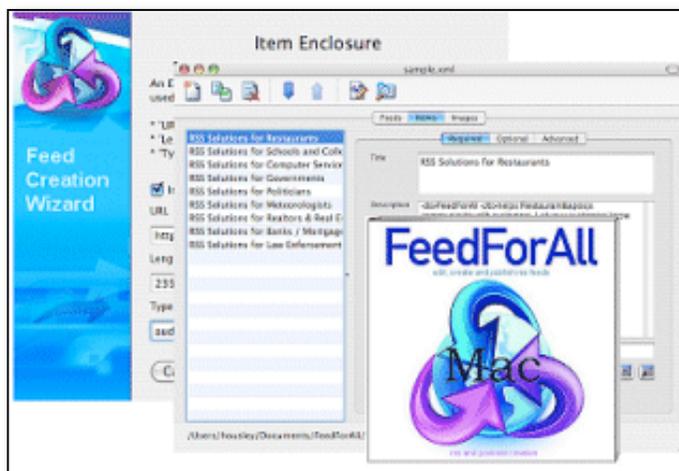
**Other Reviews:** <http://www.feedforall.com/reviews.htm>

**Touched on in MacReviewCast #74:** <http://www.surfbits.com>

### What they say

FeedForAll Mac's new release supports unified publishing, making it easy for publishers to upload files along with their RSS feed, podcast or videocast.

FeedForAll Mac also has the ability to create an OPML list or blogroll of feeds. This makes managing multiple feeds effortless. Importing existing RSS feeds has never been easier with a new advanced import feature that results in publishers having greater control over their imported items.



FeedForAll Mac can be used to create and maintain an unlimited number of RSS feeds and podcasts, enabling users to flawlessly maintain and distribute multiple content streams simultaneously. Existing RSS feeds that are improperly formatted are automatically repaired by FeedForAll Mac, ensuring that all feeds used with FeedForAll Mac conform to the RSS specification.

FeedForAll Mac has a built-in wizard that helps users efficiently create and maintain RSS feeds. The wizard's new extended support walks users through the creation of various RSS feeds and namespaces.

The feature-rich WYSIWIG HTML editor allows content publishers to personalize feeds with images and enhance the appearance of the RSS feed's text. Integrated tools like live spell checking, and image manipulation combine to deliver a powerful tool for both webmasters and content publishers.

### **What I say**

I'm in agreement with the various reviews that can be read above where practically everyone gives FeedForAll high ratings. Why? Because it is easy to learn. It is easy to use. It is rather intuitive and I needed something that I could ramp up quickly to create *macCompanion* into a TextCast (MagCast) out on iTunes. Once I figured out how to fill in the blanks and let the app post up to iTunes, I was able to rather painlessly add each month back nearly 2 years of back issues of *macCompanion* in a matter of hours.

Granted, this is a narrow niche market for an app, but it works and works well. If you are wanting to post daily RSS feeds or iTunes items, this app will pay for itself in about this much time. See? Told ya!

## iGlasses v1.3.6

reviewed by Robert Pritchett



Ecamm Network

<http://www.ecamm.com/contact>

<http://www.ecamm.com/mac/iglasses>

**Released:** September 7, 2006

\$8 USD. Fully functional Demo.

**Requirements:** Mac OS X 10.3.9 or later; iSight or iBot FireWire video camera; iChat AV 2.0 or later.

**Strengths:** Adds a lot of what is missing in mac OS X regarding iSight controls.

**Weaknesses:** None found.

### Other Reviews:

<http://www.macupdate.com/reviews.php?id=16105>

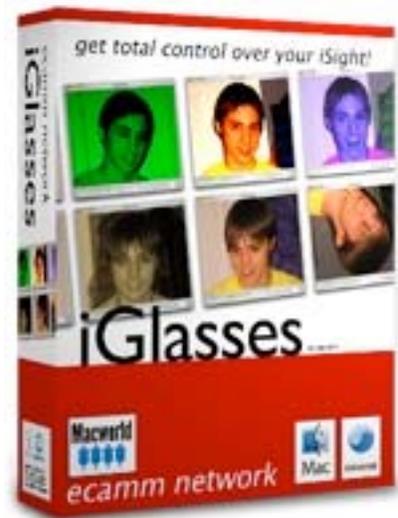
**Touched on in Mac ReviewCast #73:** <http://www.surfbits.com>

Ecamm Network saw a need and filled it. Want to use an iSight camera on a G3 Mac? You can. Want control over iSight camera settings? You can too.



And it really does that too!

It gives control over parts of the VideoMenu and offers more options for brightness controls and even includes black& white, Sepia, crazy colors if you want to go psychedelic or even use night vision effects with the green haze and background as it picks up light.



Controls also exist for focus, but I like it for rotation and mirror effects so I can mount my iSight to the side of the iMac instead of above it. And this effect is supported in practically all camera apps from Apple apps to iSpQ, EvoCam, BTV, SecuritySpy, iVeZeen, and others I've never seen before.

### Supported Applications

- Apple iChat AV 2.0 or higher
- Apple iMovie 4.0 and iMovie HD
- Apple PhotoBooth
- Apple QuickTime 7 Pro Player
- Apple QuickTime Broadcaster
- Apple Safari (for use with Web-based chat)
- iSpQ 6.3.1 or higher
- Yahoo! Messenger 2.5.3 or Yahoo! Messenger 3
- EvoCam 3.5 Preview 1 or higher
- GCam 1.2 or higher
- iVisit
- vChat
- iCamShare
- ohphoneX
- ineen
- BTV and BTV Pro
- SecuritySpy\*
- WuffCam
- Blog.Mac
- iStopMotion
- iVeZeen
- MulleSight
- aMSN
- Mercury
- SightSpeed 4.5 or higher
- Journler
- Gawker
- Skype 1.5 BETA Video Preview or higher

\* Rotate, Mirror, and some effects not supported in SecuritySpy.



Can you find iGlasses in the Applications after installation? No, the installer does not modify the iChat program directly. Files are installed at the following locations:

/Library/InputManagers/Ecamm  
/Library/Components/

Well, so now you know. You want a little more flexibility and ability to tweak your Mac-based camera? Now you can.

# Image Tricks Pro 2.3

reviewed by Robert Pritchett



BeLight Software  
Odessa, Ukraine

[press@belightsoft.com](mailto:press@belightsoft.com)

<http://www.belightsoft.com/products/imagetricks/proversion.php>

**Released:** May 12, 2006 (version 2.1) Added 8 image filters and 2 generators July 6, 2006, Added 4 image filters September 5, 2006. \$15 USD for Pro or Free for the non-Pro version.

**Download:** <http://www.belightsoft.com/imagetricks/update/update.php>

**Requirements:** Mac OS X 10.4 or later; video cards that support Core Image.

**Strengths:** Quickie fun image manipulation.

**Weaknesses:** None found.

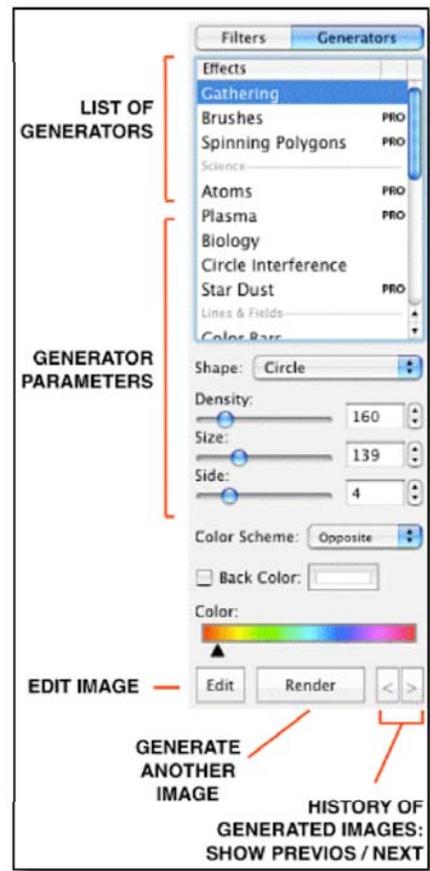
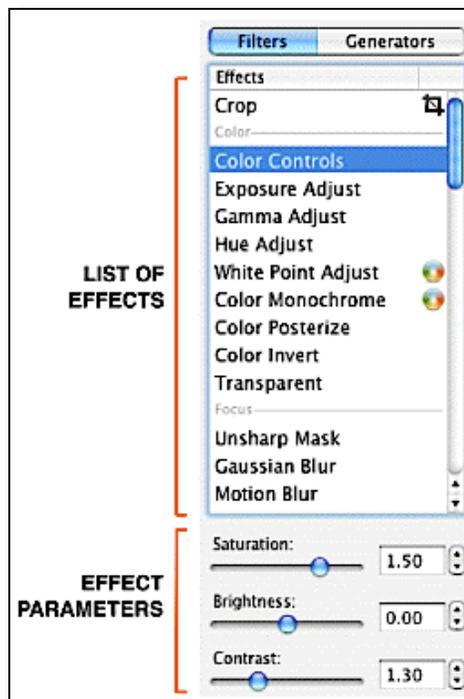
### Other Reviews:

[http://www.mac360.com/index.php/mac360/comments/free\\_and\\_cool\\_new\\_image\\_tricks\\_on\\_your\\_mac/](http://www.mac360.com/index.php/mac360/comments/free_and_cool_new_image_tricks_on_your_mac/)

Why would you want this? If you have Photoshop CS 2, you might not need it. If you don't well... Think instant image gratification without all the palettes. Think mathematical algorithms without having to break a mental sweat. Free or Pro.

The free version has 48 core image effects. The Pro version has five more. The Free version has twelve image generators, and the Pro version has eight more. Imports cover over 20 image formats while exports are the standard five (GIF, JPEG, PDF, PNG and TIFF).

If you have a copy of Swift Publisher, than you will want this app too. If you already have Photoshop CS 2, than perhaps you won't.



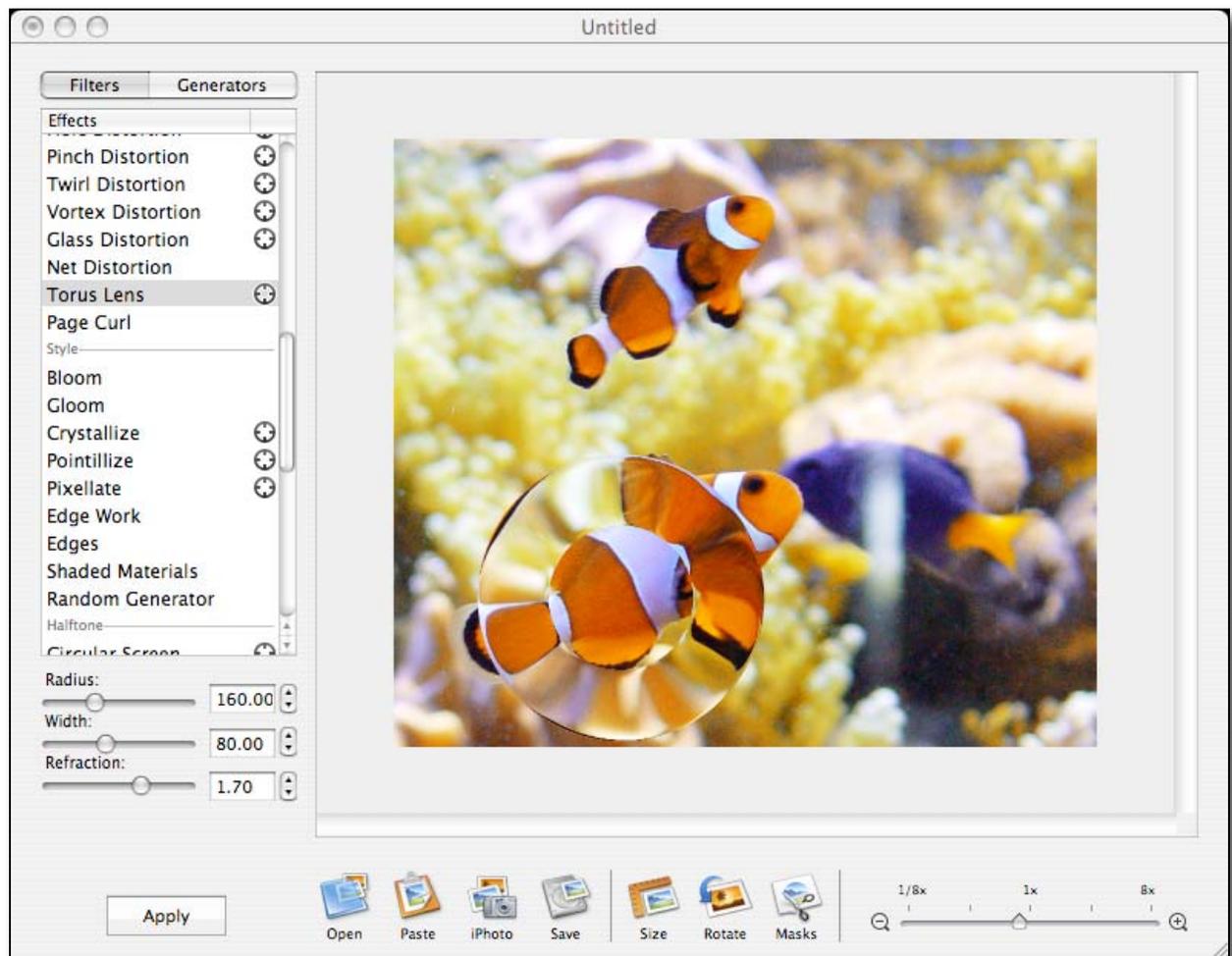
I just found it to be a neat app that has a bunch of filters that can use an animated cursor effect for morphing and distorting images. Frankly, this app is just fun! Generators are different however and don't carry the animation processes across. And you probably don't want those in there anyway. They build in real-time using those mathematical formulas and some pics may take a little bit of time to build up.

All documentation is located in the Help menu.

The Pro version has the additional items:

Image Filters

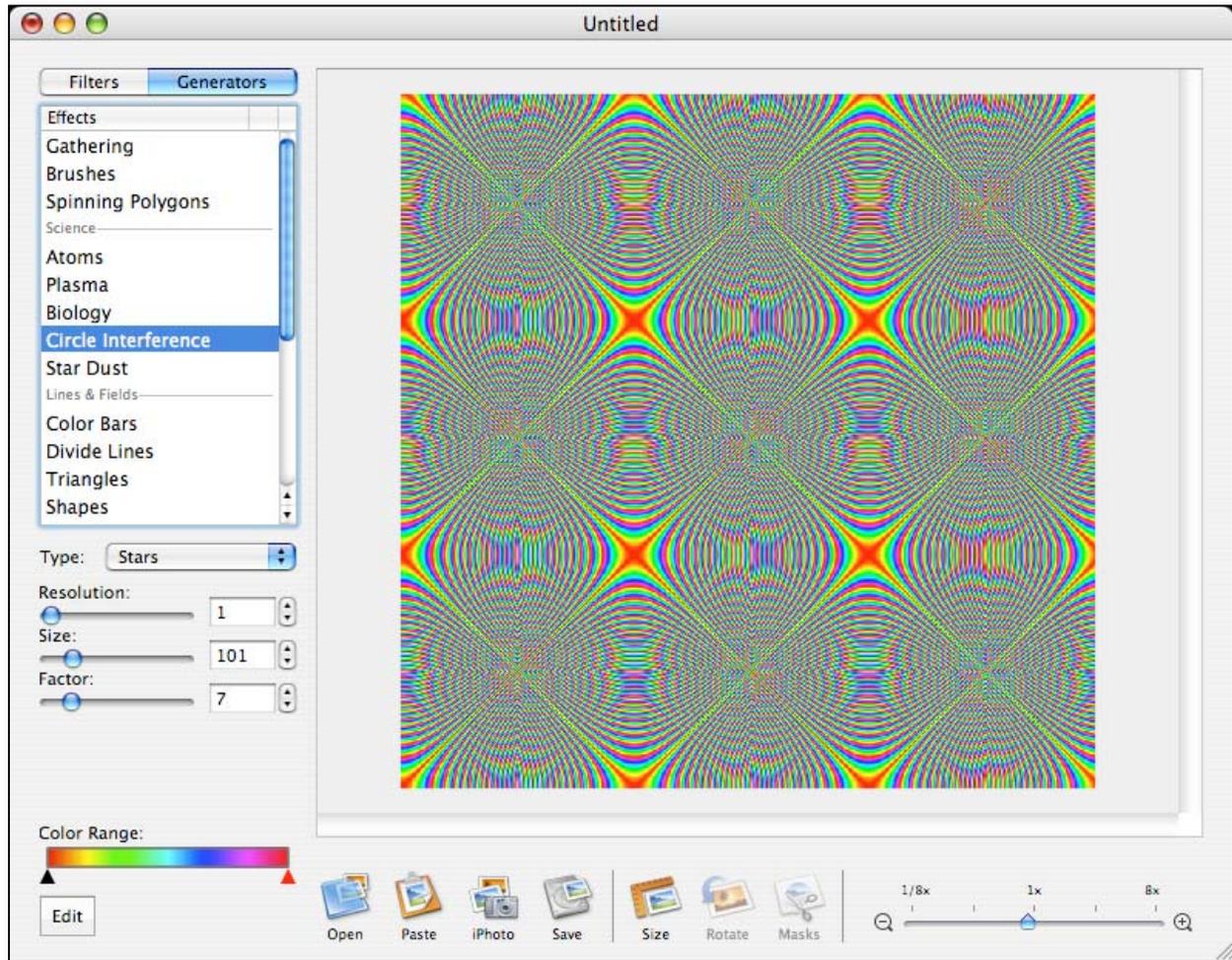
Net Distortion, Page Curl, Rectangular Splash, Shaded Materials, Transparent Color



It would be even more fun if the motion could be captured in this app when moving the cursor around.

## Image Generators

Atoms, Brushes, Divide Lines, Rags Spinning Polygons, Spiral, Plasma, Star Dust



Personally, I didn't really see that much value-add by going Pro, but hey, the app is only \$15 10/3/06 and it is a great way to support BeLight Software in their efforts to continue to improve their apps.

## iValet V1.0.2

reviewed by Mike Hubbartt



ZiggySoft

<http://www.ziggy-soft.com>

**Released:** July 2006

\$19 USD single-user license (Shareware), \$190 USD world-wide site license.

**Requirements:** Mac OS X 10.2 or newer, Universal Binary.

**Strengths:** iPod-style interface, useful easily-accessed tools for heavy internet users, extremely reasonable cost for site and world-wide site license pricing, very good response to reported problems.

**Weaknesses:** Calendar To Do list not integrated with iCal, must import phone list - not kept in sync.

iValet provides telephone dialing, time and date and task tracking, clipboard and a calculator modules in one package. A number of diverse features, ZiggySoft chose an intuitive look-and-feel very similar to the iPod for iValet.



### PHONE

To test iValet, I wanted to use numbers from my Address Book. iValet supports importing phone lists from the Address Book or Microsoft Entourage. I imported my Address Book and encountered my first problem: after completing the import, the iValet smily program icon disappeared. Although the menu was still there, the application itself was gone. I had to restart my iMac to regain access to the software - something familiar to Windows users but not typical for Macs. I contacted ZiggySoft and they had a workaround the same day and had issued a patch to fix the problem within a week. Two of the supported phone modes are for Gizmo and Skype - very useful, but I did not have software installed to test the other three modes (Jon's ABDialer and MacDialer). A nice feature, but not a reason I would buy this application.

### TIME

iValet includes a monthly calendar and clock, and provides a daily To Do list. To add or remove a reminder, click in the area below the clock. Enter the To Do and select a time and you're done - the To Do and time are displayed below the clock for easy reference. Simple and intuitive. My only issue with this: not integrated with iCal. I believe most people find it difficult to keep two separate calendars and To Do lists in sync by manual intervention. Just too much work and I hope this module will be enhanced at a later date. I like it, but I'm not going to use iValet over iCal.

## CLIPS

Writers aren't the only ones that save snippets of information. How many times have you composed an e-mail and needed to save a copy for future reference? Or wanted to save a URL list for a website? Or jot a note on a scrap of paper and stick it to your monitor? Or save yet another password for some site? Wouldn't you prefer a single place to go for that kind of information?

The iValet Clips module lets the user save text clips, password, URLs and e-mail text. Very nice. I saved some notes for article ideas as Text clips and just needed to highlight and select the ? on the wheel at the bottom of the module to edit the content. I entered some accounts and just hover the mouse over them to see the password. I entered several important URLs ([www.maccompanion.com](http://www.maccompanion.com), Apple.com, etc) and just double-clicked on the iValet reference to launch that website. **Note:** make sure you put 'www.' in front of URLs that use it as part of the address.

Very nice feature!

## CALCULATOR

We already have a Calculator with Mac OS X, but I'm glad ZiggySoft included one as well. iValet can be in front of all other Mac windows, so it is easy to use the calculator while referencing data in other applications.

Not a big or new feature, but useful as it stays on top of other applications.

## OVERALL

I personally found the software most useful as a clip repository and calculator. The phone and time/date features will be more useful to other people, but I believe the phone list and calendar/tasks must be integrated with their Mac OS X counterparts to be most useful. I like the intuitive interface, and think the global licensing price is a bargain.



## PowerBoost

reviewed by Chris Marshall

 <p>ecamm <a href="http://www.ecamm.com">www.ecamm.com</a> <a href="http://www.ecamm.com/mac/powerboost">www.ecamm.com/mac/powerboost</a></p> <p><b>Released:</b> September, 2006 \$8USD, \$9CND, £4.25 GBP, 6,30€ Euro</p> <p><b>Audience:</b> Mac Users who have a lot of buddies they want to talk to at the same time on iChat</p> <p><b>Strengths:</b> Simple to install. Cheap.</p> <p><b>Weaknesses:</b> Hard to quantify impact.</p>	 
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**What they say:** Have you ever wondered if your iBook, PowerBook, iMac G4, eMac or G4 tower has what it takes to host or participate in a multi-person conference? Harness and focus the power of your G4 processor to bring your family and friends together. Invite up to 10 iChat users to an audio conference. Host a 3-way or 4-way video chat.

Q: Can I conduct an iChat multi-person video conference using a USB webcam?

A: Yes, you can use a USB camera for a multi-person chat. You will need our iChatUSBCam product and a compatible camera driver.

Q: How do I uninstall PowerBoost?

A: To uninstall PowerBoost, run the "Install PowerBoost" program included in the disk image. Click "Uninstall".

Q: I've installed PowerBoost and now I can't find the PowerBoost window. Where did it go?

A: In iChat, look in the View menu for "Show PowerBoost".

Q: How do I start a multi-party video conference?

A: In your Buddy List, select more than one buddy by holding down the Apple key. Then, click the camera icon on the bottom of the buddy list window. Another way is to invite one buddy at a time by clicking the green camera icon next to their names.

Q: Will PowerBoost allow me to do multi-party AV conferences with Windows users?

A: No, multi-party AV chats require all participants to have iChat 3 or higher.

Q: Will PowerBoost allow me to do multi-party AV conferences with iChat 2?

A: No, multi-party AV chats require iChat 3 or higher. Without PowerBoost, low end and older Macs cannot participate in multi-party chats. PowerBoost's purpose is to make multi-party chats possible on any Mac.

Q: My multi-party chats look blurry. Will PowerBoost help?

A: iChat degrades the quality of the video based on available bandwidth and this results in the blurriness. You should check the Connection Doctor to see how much bandwidth you're getting up- and down-stream. If it's below 384K, then the picture will probably look blurry. We're working on trying to fix this in a future update of PowerBoost.

Q: Will PowerBoost allow me to multi-party conference from my old G3, PowerBook or iBook?

A: Yes, it will. However, initiating (hosting) a multi-party video chat requires a lot of CPU power and conferences initiated from machines below 800 MHz may not work properly. The participant with the fastest CPU should be the one to initiate the conference, and can then invite people with slower machines.

Also, note that G3 machines below 600 MHz are not recognized by iChat as supporting video conferencing at all. You can get around this limitation by installing iChatUSBCam.

**What I say:** One of the hardest products I have had to review, as it does so little, and there is nothing really to it.

That doesn't mean that it doesn't do the job, it just doesn't have that much to it so there is nothing really to fiddle about with. The built in usage meter is neat, but other than flash up down to tell you how much processing power you have available it doesn't do anything – and the reality is are you going to shut down applications just to have an iChat?

And that is probably the crux of the matter. In my opinion, iChat is like virtually every other IM application, in that it is great fun, but not really a business level application. Sure iChat is one of the best on the market but in my experience (and I use IM a lot) there are too many variables included:

- quality of camera,
- quality of audio equipment,
- quality of broadband
- quality of machine, and
- number of applications running.

Of course, multiply this by 2 or as many people you are trying to converse with. The point I am making is that I still can't see audio and video additions to IM as anything other than a "fun to do" add on, rather than an integral part of the communication.

My iChat experience is usually random and unscheduled – a side discussion to something else that I am doing. From time to time I get involved in a short sharp exchange between 2 or 3 other people as we bounce an idea around. For a more detailed project discussion I use more specific applications than an IM client, and if I need to do a truly professional 3+ conference I wouldn't be looking at a standard IM client – although iChat is pretty close.

As such a product that claimed to boost the performance of something that had so many variables involved, and which tended to have an immeasurable level of consistent performance in the first place intrigued me.

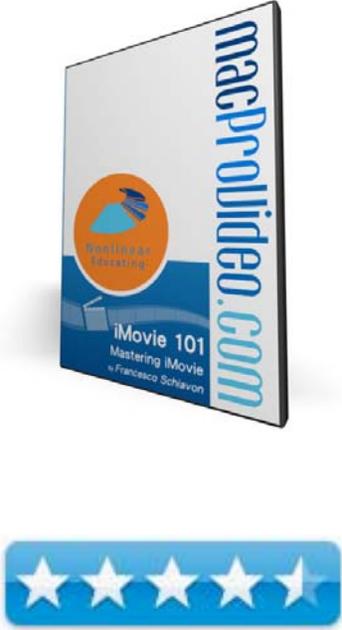
I liked it, and I still have it installed.

**In summary:** No reason not to get it as it is really cheap, but I can't say that it made a huge difference.

## Training

### Mastering iMovie

reviewed by Chris Marshall

 <p>macProVideo.com PO Box 93598 Vancouver, BC V6E 4L7 FAX: 778-786-1331 <a href="http://www.macprovideo.com">http://www.macprovideo.com</a> <a href="http://www.macprovideo.com/tutorial/iMovie">http://www.macprovideo.com/tutorial/iMovie</a></p> <p><b>Released:</b> August, 2006 \$29.50 USD, \$33 CDN, £15.65 GBP, 23.25€ Euro</p> <p><b>Audience:</b> New and Intermediate Mac users with an interest in creating their own movies.</p> <p><b>Strengths:</b> Logical layout, easy to use.</p> <p><b>Weaknesses:</b> Requires proprietary NED to view.</p>	
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**What they say:** iMovie is quickly revolutionizing the way people tell stories. Whether you're editing videos of the kids to send to Grandma, or creating engaging documentaries and short films, you're telling the story of your life, and iMovie is the perfect tool!

Produced by Media Deployment guru Francesco Schiavon, this program provides valuable tips and tricks for capturing, editing, and outputting video using Apple iMovie.

This series of videos uses macProVideo.com's proprietary video display technology, called "NED" (the Nonlinear Educating Device). A dramatic step forward in software education, NED let's you search videos using keywords, present tutorials to audiences in fullscreen mode, and even scale videos on-the-fly so you can follow along with your copy of iMovie while watching the tutorials.

- More than just a basic course in video editing, you'll also learn advanced topics such as streaming video into iMovie in realtime, outputting video podcasts with embedded URLs, and round-tripping between iMovie and GarageBand to sweeten your sound.

Contents:

Chapter 1: iMovie Overview

1. Creating A New Project
2. Capturing From Tape
3. Editing Cutting Clips
4. Using Themes And Transitions
5. Editing Sound
6. Outputting a Movie

## Chapter 2: Creating New Projects

7. Creating A New Empty Project
8. Magic iMovie I: Controlling The Tape
9. Magic iMovie II: Transitions, Music And iDVD
10. Magic iMovie III: Previewing In iDVD
11. Creating A Videocast
12. Tips On Creating A Videocast

## Chapter 3: Capturing Video

13. Capturing From A Camera Tape
14. Capturing From A Camera Live
15. Capturing Video From A File
16. Capturing Timelapse: Creating A Project
17. Capturing Timelapse: The Capture

## Chapter 4: Editing In iMovie

18. Intro To The Clip View
19. Intro To The Timeline
20. Trimming The Beginning And End Of A Clip
21. Cutting Clips Without Destroying Them
22. Adding Titles
23. Modifying Titles
24. Adding Transitions
25. Changing Transitions & Telling Stories With Them
26. Solving Transition Problems
27. Previewing Video FX
28. Applying Or Deleting Video FX
29. Making A Freeze Frame From Video
30. Adding Chapters
31. Splitting Clips Into Two Clips
32. Intro To Bookmarks
33. Pasting Over An Existing Clip
34. Adding Photos
35. Working With Themes
36. Copying Clips Between Projects
37. Crazy Pasteboard Idea
38. Viewing Your Edit On The TV
39. Colour Correcting With The TV

## Chapter 5: Working With Sound

40. Intro To The Audio Pane
41. Applying Sound Clips
42. Adding Sound Clips To The Audio Pane
43. Adjusting The Sound Volume
44. Adjusting Clip Volume Levels Through Time
45. Disabling A Track's Audio
46. Locking Audio Clip At Playhead
47. Adding Voice Overs To Your Videos
48. Applying Audio EFX
49. Synchronizing Visuals To Sound

## Chapter 6: Export And Share Your iMovie

50. Playing Your iMovie Fullscreen On Your Mac
51. Overview Of The Share Pane
52. Exporting To Your Video Camera
53. Exporting A QuickTime Movie
54. Sharing Your Movie With Email
55. Synchronizing iMovie To BlueTooth
56. Making An iDVD

- 57. Making An iPod Movie
- 58. Sharing On The Web
- 59. Sending Your iMovie To GarageBand For Mastering
- 60. Exporting A Still Frame From Video

#### Chapter 7: File Management

- 61. Where iMovie Saves The Media
- 62. How iMovie Imports Files
- 63. Why iMovie Transcodes Imports
- 64. Why The File Size And Trash Grow
- 65. How Much Drive Space You've Got Available

**What I say:** The only reason I haven't given this 5 stars is that it left me wanting a more advanced course, and there is no indication that there will be one.

When I first bought a Mac one of the key things that I wanted to do was to make the most of the hours of video footage that I had shot. Every time I went into an Apple store the iLife demonstrations looked so easy and professional that I was a little frustrated when I found that my own abilities didn't match my own aspirations ☹

I had mastered importing the raw footage, and had got pretty good with iDVD creating small clips for use on my blogs and web sites, but my initial attempts at creating movies with music, pictures and text had ended somewhat prematurely and amidst a not insignificant amount of frustration.

At 150 minutes you could settle down and watch it all in one go, but with each section running at between 2-5 minutes I actually found it more useful to use it as a support/help tool rather than as an educational tool. But then again, I am the type of guy that only really looks at the manual when he has already messed up. I would actually advise that you go through each chapter in sequence and in full before putting into practice what that chapter covers.

**In summary:** A solid performer that does what it says it will very efficiently and effectively. I would certainly recommend it for anyone that is not already familiar with iMovie.

## LiveType 2 Essential Training

reviewed by Chris Marshall



<http://www.lynda.com>

<http://www.lynda.com/store/ProductInfo.aspx?productid=519>

**Released:** August, 2006

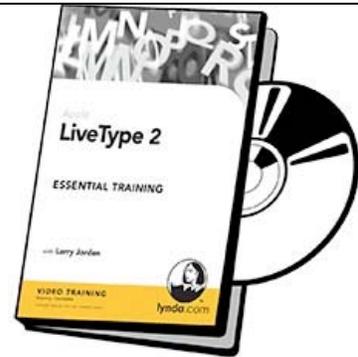
\$49.95 USD, \$55.80 CND, £26.30 GBP, 39,00€ Euro

**ISBN:** 1-59671-264-3

**Audience:** LiveType users who want to get a bit more out of their work.

**Strengths:** Well laid out, logical and a good pace

**Weaknesses:** Should have used a different cursor for demonstrations – extremely difficult to see.



**What they say** No professional movie is complete without professional title credits. In LiveType 2 Essential Training, instructor Larry Jordan shows how professionals and novices alike can take advantage of the many templates and pre-built effects available in LiveType 2. Larry then builds upon this basic instruction, demonstrating how to edit templates and effects, create custom effects, import and export files, and create custom and editable LiveFonts. He concludes by showing how to pull it all together for a variety of projects, from a Web-based presentation to a broadcast-quality film.

### Table of contents

#### Introduction

#### Welcome

#### 1. Learning the Interface

##### Interface

#### 2. Creating a Simple Text Key

##### Creating a simple text key

##### Positioning a simple text key

##### Styling a simple text key

#### 3. Using LiveFonts

##### Creating a simple LiveFont

##### Creating a complex LiveFont

#### 4. Working with Templates

Using templates

Saving templates

#### 5. Using Pre-Built Effects

Using pre-built effects

#### 6. Importing and Exporting Media

Importing and exporting files between LiveType and Final Cut

Importing and exporting files between LiveType, DVD Studio Pro, and Motion

#### 7. Working with Textures

Working with textures

#### 8. Working with Mattes

Working with mattes

#### 9. Working with Objects

Working with objects

#### 10. Creating Custom Effects

Creating custom effects

Creating a crawl

Creating a credit scroll

#### 11. LiveType Secrets

LiveType secrets and keyboard shortcuts

**What I say:** At 3.5 hours running time this requires more than one sitting, but each section is divided into reasonable time slots with the longest running 21.30 minutes but most typical lasting under 10 minutes.

The first comment has to be a negative. It is extremely confusing and difficult to follow the cursor that they use! Basically they use screen shots so the original cursor is always on the screen, although static. Unfortunately they use exactly the same cursor in the demonstrations, which is hard to pick up, and in my view just plain stupid. For a process that is all about making learning easy, this is really dumb!

Unfortunately the second comment is also a negative, and that is due to the low level of imagination that seems to have gone into the presentation of the course. It is fundamentally a series of presentational slides and screen shot videos, which is fine, but the teacher tends to assume you are following what he is doing (which isn't that easy, as I have said above) rather than tell you what he is doing, and in particular what you should be looking out for him to do.

On the positive side I certainly learnt a lot from the course, didn't become bored with the content, or frustrated with the layout, so as far as content and ability to get the job done goes, it was a great product.

**In summary:** Excellent content, well laid out course, but really let's itself down with unimaginative and flat presentation. I would shop around for alternatives before giving this a look.

## TeachMac 3.0

reviewed by Wayne LeFevre



Grass Valley, CA

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

**Demo:** <http://www.teachmac.com/video.html>

**Released:** August 2006

Application is Free. Modules Free to \$15 USD per Module, or a \$49 a year for a subscription.

**Requirements:** Apple Macintosh computer with a PowerPC G3, G4, G5, or Intel processor; Mac OS X 10.3.9 or higher; QuickTime 7 or later; Internet connection for downloading modules.

**Strengths:** Training sessions are set up into modules. Each of those modules are split up into sections that can be viewed all at once or one at a time. Ability to add new modules and create your own modules. Some modules are free to low cost. Every Tuesday there is a small free module you can download.

**Weaknesses:** No bookmarking feature or way to see that you've already watched a section or module. Can only be watched with TeachMac software, not exportable to other formats. Not a great number of modules yet. No way of previewing a module to determine if it is right for you. Must have application to see what modules are available. Web site uninformative.

### What it is

TeachMac is a brilliant application that can help individuals, schools and corporations. From the website it explains "With TeachMac, a school or organization can offer all the training its staff needs without depleting the technology and staff development budgets. With TeachMac, and TeachIt (for the PC), we've created a platform-independent training system. All modules run in both programs, so people most comfortable with one platform can learn and teach about another. Using a PC or a Mac, a trainer could demonstrate proper document formatting, for instance, using examples from Word for Macs and Word for PCs."

After downloading the application, you will be presented with all the free modules. Modules are considered like a training section. When a module is selected, you are presented with all the sections within that module. For example, there is a module called Intro to the Mac. From within that module the sections are Hardware, Operating System, The Finder Window, Working with Objects, Applications, Documents, Managing Your Computer and System Preferences. Now within those sections are the actual lessons, which are also listed, but for brevity, I will not list them all. Most lessons are extremely short, which is unfortunate at times. Also, quality can differ from lesson to lesson, even from within the same module. Sometimes the sound can be good, and other times it can sound far away and canny (as in like being inside a can).

You can then decide to purchase new modules, or you can purchase a year subscription that will provide you with all the modules for download for a year.

Modules that are included have a lot to do with AppleWorks, which I do not have, nor do I know if the new Macs include it. There are modules for teachers and modules for students, which is neat. It will teach you from making lesson plans if you're a teacher, to creating Research Papers for students. There are modules that really run the gamut from the inexperienced to the power user. Also, since the application is free, you can install it onto your mother's computer and have her watch the Intro to Mail module. That way, she won't be calling at 10 at night wondering how she can get her mail!



I should mention that there is also a pane for text, so not only can you have a movie showing you how to make an iTunes playlist, but there is text that can explain things also. There is also a Kiosk mode that the application can take over your screen, and thus play the module lessons in order, and not let the kids just pick and choose what they want to see.

If that was all there was, I would not have been to impressed, and would leave it at that. There are many fine video teaching podcasts out there, some are free, and some are subscription service, but most have nice, descriptive lessons. Some that come to mind are Lynda and ScreenCastsOnline.

But here is where TeachMac has the Potential to really make it an ace product.

First, TeachMac has the ability to create your own custom modules from previous modules. This is cool. You can take bits and pieces from other modules and create and distribute your own module. Back to your mom. You can create a module that tells her how to use e-mail from that module, from another module you can show how to use iTunes, and from another module, how to use iCal. Now these modules are surprisingly small, even e-mailable. Another example is you can create your own modules for teaching your students just the applications that they need to use, then they won't need to watch extra material that they don't have to.

Another ability of TeachMac is similar to the last. You can create your own modules. That is, actually create a module showing how to use an application of your choosing. This would be fantastic for businesses wanting to train their employees on a certain applications that may be in-house only, or not mass market. You can also create a module and actually sell it on the TeachMac website, and receive half of the cost. There are already many modules in work to do just that.

### **Summary**

With the program the way it is, I would give it 3.5 stars, however, I would be willing to give it 4 stars for its potential. Right now it is missing a certain lack of professionalism, (such as same voice, audio level, etc. in one module) that I'm sure will change as more modules become available. I can't wait to see what some of the public can come up with.

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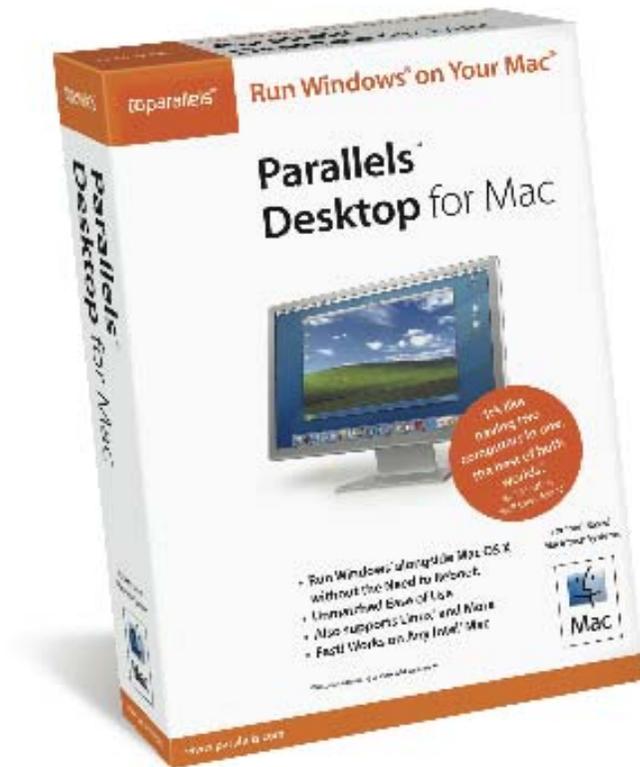
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## Advertising Information

Contact Wayne Lefevre, our new Ad and Marketing Director for working through the process of advertising with us.

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

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

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

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

### Statistical Analysis

We are very excited about our site statistics! The multilingual-capable [macCompanion](#) website is close to 2 million page views a month and readership continues to increase rapidly through our "whisper campaign".

We continue to get greater visibility every day. Many of the various 35 computer operating systems (with many moving towards the Mac® OS X™ environment), 115 online search engines, 269 countries and domains and 319 online robots have discovered us – and continue to do so. So far, over 201 other websites have also linked to us. Many of our readers have made our site one of their favorites. While nearly 70% of our readership stops by for a quick visit via RSS feeds, over 23% spend between 1/2 to 1 hours at a time going through over 250 different pages on our site (mostly archives). Many of those who quickly drop by, come to get the monthly PDFed issue of *macCompanion*. Over 35GB of bandwidth was used in December 2005 alone for download purposes. Previous months have averaged around 20GB. Trend analysis indicates that will continue to increase as folks decide to "Move to the Mac".

### Advertising with *macCompanion*

We have four advertising options you may choose from, and multiple months will receive a 20% discount for both website and PDF-based ads. All advertising must be paid in advance. We accept credit card payments via PayPal, checks, money orders by regular mail and cash in US currency by hand.

### Site Ad Rate

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

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

### **Affiliations**

We do affiliations, and work with those who have made arrangements with online affiliate systems, or we deal directly with you if you have created code, and have a contract we can sign. Check out the Bazaar on our website at <http://www.maccompanion.com/bazaar/bazaarindex.html>

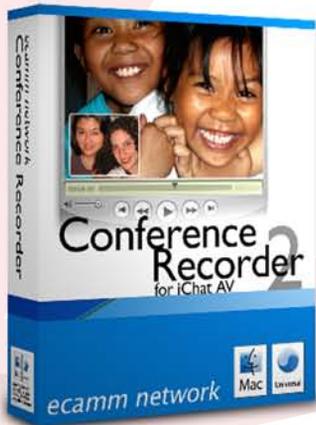
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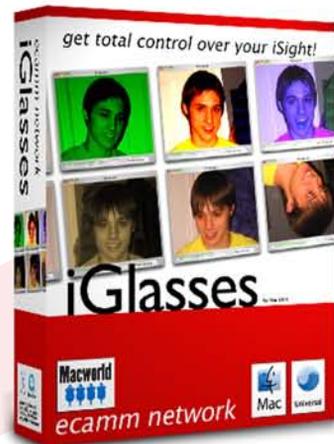
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