

macCompanion

YOUR GUIDE TO ALL THINGS MACINTOSH

it's not easy being green

this month we feature of some of the latest and greatest software including

Adobe's newest addition

CS3

Being Green

Sibelius and many more....

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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.

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Letter from the CEO

The Race Towards “Green” Energy and a higher standard of living

By Robert Pritchett

Caution - this is going to be a long article and you may not like what I have to say. Again, you may.

With all the talk about "going green", you'd think we'd just stepped back in time to the '60's with tie-dyed flowerchildren and getting back to nature. This tends to get a bit personal for me, because we have a daughter who's birthday happens to fall on "Earth Day" each year.

Have you ever gotten the itch to put into practice those things you've been preaching? How efficient is building a business from scratch using the Apple-based technologies we have been professing in *macCompanion* magazine ever since its inception? We want to find out first-hand. You may be able to help.

Sometimes we look at other technologies that are intended to improve the lifestyle and living conditions of mankind in this magazine. I have been deeply involved in renewable-energy recently, because my Volkswagon Bug goes through sticker shock every time I fill up at the pump. I am being driven to two choices – either feed the car or feed the family. It is getting more and more difficult to do both.

Something I've been working on with others is the proposed Co-Op **Ever-Green Renewable Energy Resource Center** posted on the *macCompanion* website - <http://www.maccompanion.com/RenewableEnergy/RenewableEnergy.html>



The renewable energy technologies today are reminiscent of how the personal computer industry was back in the early 1980's. Which technologies are going to win this race? Hopefully, all of mankind will win. Right now, the world is at war with itself. It is time to take off the "Political Correctness" hat and stand for something real, honest and that will make a positive difference for mankind.

I may come across as a bit controversial in this direction I intend to take, but tough. Live with it.

A Light Approach to Renewable Energy

Not to make light of the subject, but I personally believe that we have been given the gift of non-renewable energy sources so that we could do a better job as stewards of earth in finding more environmental-friendly ways to impact the earth less. This would be like moving from horsepower to machine power. You remember the line given back at the beginning of the last century that if everyone road horses, we would be mired in manure? Now if we don't move quickly to renewable energy sources soon, we may well be stranded in a messy mire of non-renewable energy sources. And sadly and tragically, we have witnessed world-wide wars based on control of such resources. There are so many folks working on these issues, that it is almost too much to take in at one time. We can make a difference.

Being an "Ecopreneur"?

If you frequented maccompanion.com over the last few months, you may have seen another banner on our site earlier that was tied to *Citizenre*. I jumped through the hoops and took the training to be qualified as an "ecopreneur", but my personal philosophy differs from the **multi-level-marketing** approach the founders of that rental system they profess. I didn't give them anything more than my time and they didn't offer anything more than possible residuals if I got folks to sign up and express interest with their dollars.



Citizenre offers an on-grid solar energy system you can put on your roof for a fee and you pay them for the energy created each month at the same rate you pay the utility companies. The idea is that you “feel good” about “going green”, because you are using “home grown” energy at a fraction of the cost a full solar system would perhaps otherwise cost – and *Citizenre* gets the energy credits and “ecopreneurs” get residuals. Supposedly after 20-25 years you can give back the system to them and if you move, you can take it with you one time without a penalty. They require a \$500 deposit for anybody interested in this scheme - <http://www.powur.com/web/video/>

A *lot* of people have made deposits, but the production facility still has not been built. As of this writing, they still have no physical products available with the latest excuse/reason being “politics”. To me, that is nothing but smoke and mirrors. I want something tangible. Something I can use today.

I could not find any interest locally for anyone as an electrical installation company that was willing to buy a franchise to service those *Citizenre* systems. If you are like me, you would rather *own* something outright instead of subscribing to a future service (think iTunes music subscriptions – not going to happen on Steve Job’s watch or buying a Mac instead of leasing one).

Citizenre can’t compete here in this part of the country, due to the low power rates. They have stated that there is a rate below which they will not go to compete. We live below that threshold here in our part of the country. Their market is in “high-rent” districts for power.

After talking with David Bonta of the *USA Solar Store* in Vermont and rereading the *Citizenre* contracts, I have pretty much opted out of *Citizenre* and decided to help develop a renewable-energy Co-Op instead.

One of our local county PUDs (Franklin County) has actually *reduced* the Kilowatt-hour fees in a reversal of a trend all other utilities have been treading. How did they do that? They went for the green and we have these wonderful windmills near us that get a lot of wind harnessed from the Columbia Gorge. Because we are part of the Great American Desert, we are blessed with a phenomenon where the Basin inhales in the morning and exhales in the afternoon. Those windmill farms have been breeding like rabbits.

We also live right in the middle of hydroelectric power country in the Columbia Basin, though certain powers want to have them removed “in the interest of improving Salmon runs” (remember the “snail darter” episode as a reason for not building a dam?). We still have one of the few remaining nuclear power plants in operation here in the Northwest. We also have some Photovoltaic farms in the vicinity with new ones coming online soon.

Our Mandate from Above

I personally believe we were given the earth with a command to multiply and replenish it, not subdue it into submission and pollute it. And I am not going to apologize for those beliefs. If you find this to be an issue, so be it.

Do you remember the 1960’s and the polluted burning rivers and floating dead fish due to manufacturing on the East coast and the Great Lakes region?

In Doctrine and Covenants, Section 104, verse 17, the Lord promised that “the earth is full, and there is enough and to spare; yea I prepared all things, and have given unto the children of men to be agents unto themselves”. So we have been given a mandate and a promise, only if we act as wise stewards. The Lord also said in verse 13, “For it is expedient that I, the Lord, should make every man accountable, as a steward over earthly blessings, which I have made and prepared for my creatures.” He also said that if we didn’t manage our stewardships well, He would take that away and give those to somebody else who could do something with them. We don’t want that to happen, do we?

Reducing the “Carbon Footprint”

To help us with becoming more self-sufficient, I am working on a proposal to establish the **Ever-Green Renewable Energy Resource Center** by offering alternatives to non-renewable energy resources that we can use today to reduce our “carbon footprint” regarding our stay on earth.

This ambitious undertaking will have a training and presentation center for “Do It Yourselfers” who want to see what they can do to become self-sufficient with energy conservation, food preservation and preparation, renewable energy and transportation that will cover such topics as All-electrics, Biofuels, Geothermal, Solar, Water, Wind and/or other future technologies. The facility will be “family-friendly” and will have both day and evening instruction available.

The **Ever-Green Energy Resource Center** will also have an on-line presence on the Internet using E-Commerce for selling products as well as establishing online Forums, answering Frequently Asked Questions, posting and hosting online video presentations, etc.

The Solar and Science Store

We will be obtaining tried and true renewable energy technologies by way of the *USA Solar Store* (providing the supplies and materials as part of the Solar Store Co-Op) –

<http://www.usasolarstore.com> in Vermont and the Green Living Journal -

<http://www.greenlivingjournal.com/> And we want to dedicate part of the store to science projects similar to the *Oregon Museum of Science and Industry Science Store* -

<http://www.sciencestore.com/> We are constantly learning and this is a way for folks to take something home in their quest to learn more and dig deeper into electronics, physics and the natural sciences.



Housing and Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design

And then there is the “Zero-Energy” Home -

http://dsc.discovery.com/news/2006/05/31/zeroehome_tec.html

There is an on-going concern for the health and well-being of our planet and laws are being enacted at both state and federal levels to expedite the use of alternative energy resources to help us “go green” in construction **LEED** (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) - <http://www.usgbc.org/LEED/>) and in US state mandates for Public Utility Districts to offer “green energy”.

As a Co-Op, the **Ever-Green Renewable Energy Resource Center** will be built using most, if not all of the various technologies to show how it can be done for both businesses and residences. We are talking about Solar HVAC integration, Photovoltaic windows, thick and thin-film roofing and/or tiles, PV panels, light pipes, windmill units, underground geothermal HVAC, and possibly hydroelectric implementation as well. It may not all fit under one roof!

Renewable Energy Installations

We will be providing renewable energy consulting services for doing site surveys and energy audits and offering installation services by way of Jonathan Herman Lewis, President, *Seraphim Electric Company*, based in Goldendale, WA, specializing in certified renewable energy installations in both Washington and (soon) Oregon - <http://www.seraphimelectric.com>

Foodstuffs and Healthy Living

There will also be an in-house “show-me how-to” kitchen and bakery that will be used for both instruction in healthy food preparation and preservation from *Giggles Gluten Free, LLC* - <http://www.glutenfreebakery.biz> “Man may not live by bread alone”, but an individual’s energy needs to be renewed constantly as well. These specialized foodstuffs guarantee that customers will keep coming back for more! Gluten-free food offers anti-allergen and other disease prevention solutions. Some local hospitals and restaurants are already on the waiting list for these products.

Training and Education

We will be offering classroom environments for Seminars and educational opportunities for renewable energy activities with possible scheduling with the *Solar Living institute* - <http://www.solarliving.org/> in 2008. We hope to establish Renewable Energy Usergroups and provide a place for them to meet.

Transportation Options

The *Discovery Channel* has been airing “the future car” series, but I think they went wrong the wrong road and came up with some incorrect conclusions when they started in on “air compression” technologies - <http://dsc.discovery.com/convergence/future-car/future-car.html>

We've explored the Stirling engine - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stirling_engine and hydrogen systems - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hydrogen_fueled_internal_combustion_engine They both have a ways to go before becoming viable solutions. And it will be quite a while before we can have a small nuclear energy device as a power source in a vehicle.

Once All-Electric vehicles are made available to the general public for *highway use*, we will be able to sell those. We (MPN, LLC) are already an affiliate with ZAP! (Zero Air Pollution) on our website - <http://www.zapworld.com/default.aspx> We just need to obtain a New Vehicle Dealer license to sell on-the-road vehicles. Watch the video at <http://www.zapworld.com/ZAPWorld.aspx?id=4692>

Zap! is famous for those 3-wheeled 40-miles-between-charges and 40-mile-distance vehicles. Our eyes are on the “muscle-car” aluminum Lotus-body *Zap-X* that can do 360 miles between charges, can go 155 miles per hour and can recharge in 10 minutes using house current (projected availability into 2008). They are looking for dealers and have established a US HQ in Sonoma County, CA. They have been in business for 12 years. We want to become a dealer. Their on-board computer system is Microsoft-based, however.



We are looking at other transportation options as well – such as offering gas to biofuel conversions - <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Biofuel> and gas to electric conversions - <http://auto.howstuffworks.com/electric-car5.htm> Others have been doing it and we can too.

Commuter Cars in Spokane, WA can only create about 10 cars a year without more funding. The *Tango* is a 4-wheel vehicle that can go 80 miles between charges and is street-legal - <http://www.commutercars.com>

Green Car Company has relocated to Kirkland, WA and sells and supports a variety of hybrid and “green” vehicles besides Electrics. <http://www.greencarco.com> The latest All-Electric they are selling is the *Kurrent* Neighborhood Electric Vehicle from Italy. They are willing to work with us.

MC Electric Vehicles sells and supports *Zenn*, *Evader*, *Columbia Cars*, *Tiger Trucks*, *Dynasty Motors*, *E-Ride Industries* and *Canadian EV* vehicles in Portland, OR, Seattle and Spokane, WA – <http://www.mcev.biz> We met with Jim Johnson, owner of *MC Electric Vehicles* recently, and he is also is willing to work with us. The *Zenn* will be using the eeStor ceramic storage device instead of one of the other 3 battery systems currently in use.

Phoenix Motor Cars has a Pickup and Sedan that will be delivered later in 2007 for the California Market Fleets before going public. <http://www.phoenixmotorcars.com>

Tesla Motors has sold 100 Tesla Roadsters and has another 100 customers waiting in the queue. They are preparing to produce *WhiteStar Sports* sedans out of Albuquerque, New Mexico - <http://teslamotors.com> The *Roadster* is a street-legal racing vehicle that is a little on the pricey side. We want one too.

Apple-based Technologies and Business

We have an opportunity to include Apple technology into the mix, by using those products for the E-Commerce environment and the storefronts with Point-of-Sale systems and inventory management that are Apple-centric. I think we can make it happen.

Moving Forward and Getting Empowered

As you can see, we (the Co-Op) plan taking the “best of the best” and bringing it all together in one place for our region. As technologies come to light, we will evaluate them and see if they can deliver as promised.

In the meantime, we live with ever-increasing fuel prices and more frequent brownouts due to added housing projects and an aging power grid infrastructure. We are becoming empowered to do something about it!

We are actively seeking sponsors and investors in this energy-enabling dream. If you would like to either participate in this venture or know of others who would like to sponsor or invest in this dream, please get in contact with us so we can get it off the ground.

Digging Deeper into Renewable Energy

Green Energy TV - <http://www.greenenergytv.com/watchnow.html>

Energy Priorities - <http://energypriorities.com/>

Energy Smart News - <http://www.energysmartnews.com/>

Green Building Council <http://www.cascadiagbc.org/resources/cascadia-region-resource-links>

Home Power - <http://www.homepower.com>

Off-Grid - <http://www.off-grid.net>

Peak Oil - <http://www.lifeaftertheoilcrash.net/>

Renewable Energy Access - <http://www.renewableenergyaccess.com/rea/home>

Solar Living Institute - <http://www.solarliving.org/resources/>

Solar Power Maps - <http://www.solar4power.com/solar-power-global-maps.html>

Solar Power Videos -

http://www.youtube.com/results?search=related&search_query=csp%20solar%20power%20clean%20energy&v=aW90sWbgzfY

Wind Farms - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wind_farm

Wind Power Maps -

http://www.eere.energy.gov/windandhydro/windpoweringamerica/wind_maps.asp

According to Hoyle...

Moving From CodeWarrior to Xcode (Part III)

by Jonathan Hoyle

June 2007 jhoyle@maccompanion.com

macCompanion

Over the past two months, we have been reviewing the steps needed for porting CodeWarrior projects to Xcode. In Part I, we outlined recommended preflighting adjustments to your CodeWarrior project and source code. In Part II, we continued by reviewing Xcode settings and using the Project Importer to convert the PowerPlant sample project `Appearance.mcp`. You can review these articles at:

- <http://www.maccompanion.com/archives/April2007web/Goodies/AccordingToHoyle.html>
- <http://www.maccompanion.com/archives/May2007/Columns/AccordingtoHoyle.htm>

Open PowerPlant

Metrowerks' PowerPlant had been the dominant C++ application framework on the Macintosh for over a decade. When Metrowerks' short-sighted parent company Freescale mindlessly ran CodeWarrior into the round, it took PowerPlant to the grave with it. Fortunately, as Metrowerks was transitioning out of the Macintosh development market, the PowerPlant framework was released into the public domain to allow developers to continue using and evolving it to remain viable on Xcode. This includes both the *PowerPlant* and *PowerPlant X* frameworks as well as *Constructor*. PowerPlant is held in SourceForge, with Metrowerks alumni Isaac Wankerl and Ron Leichy as Project Administrators, with a dozen developers currently active on the project. *Open PowerPlant* can be downloaded from:

<http://sourceforge.net/projects/open-powerplant/>

For over a year now, Open PowerPlant has been fully GCC 4.0 compliant, and can be compiled into Universal Binaries. For those of you with projects which rely on heavy use of the PowerPlant framework, I strongly recommended simply converting to Open PowerPlant.

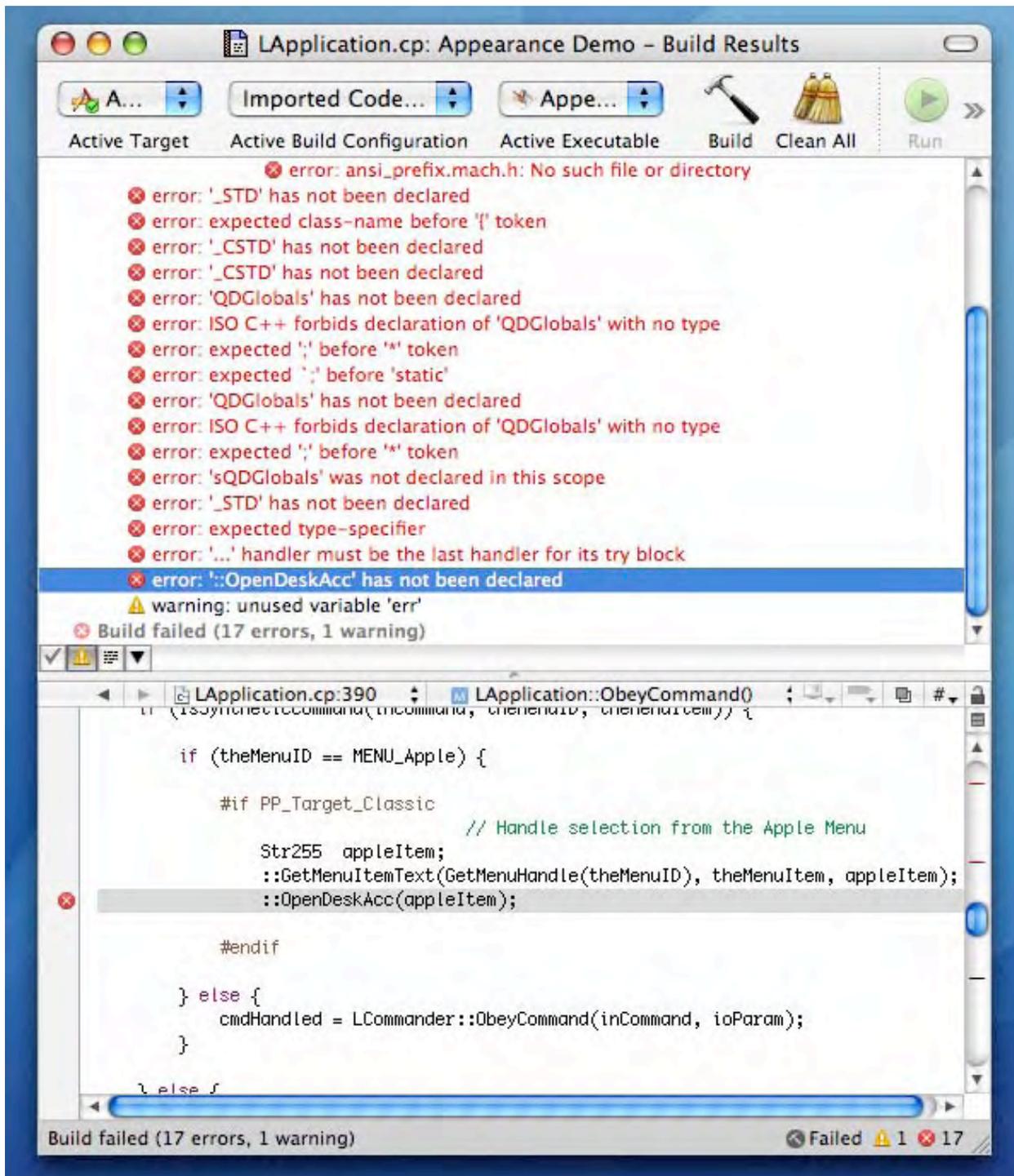
However, for those projects which have minor PowerPlant interactivity, such a brain transplant may be unnecessary. Minor modifications to the PowerPlant source files you are using may be sufficient. If this is the route you opt to go, you should familiarize yourself with Apple's recommendations for PowerPlant changes:

http://developer.apple.com/documentation/DeveloperTools/Conceptual/MovingProjectsToXcode/mig_after_importing/chapter_5_section_7.html

We will continue now with this latter approach.

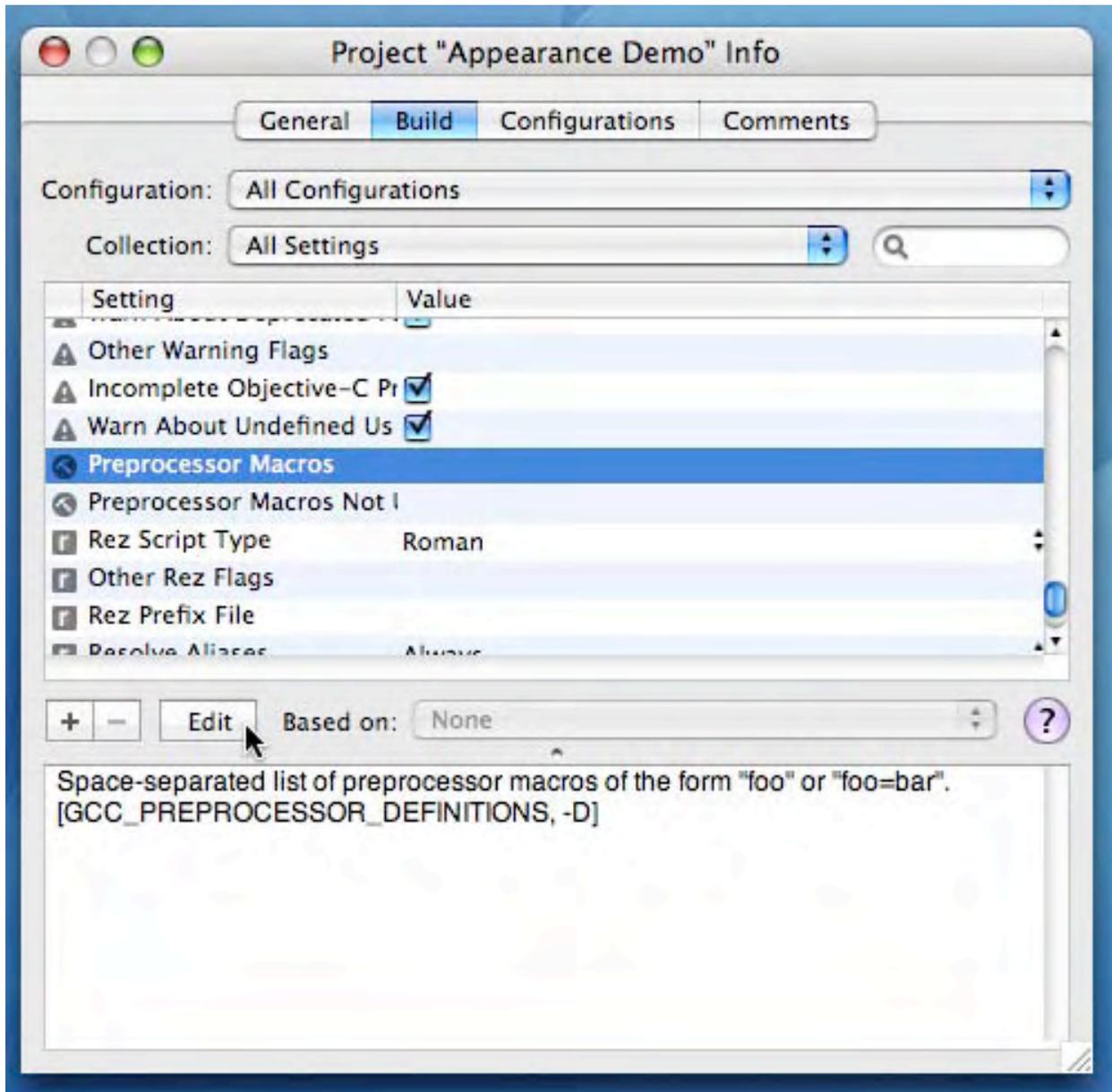
Modifying Our Project Settings

As we last left our Appearance project, compiling Appearance.xcodeproj left us with 17 errors:

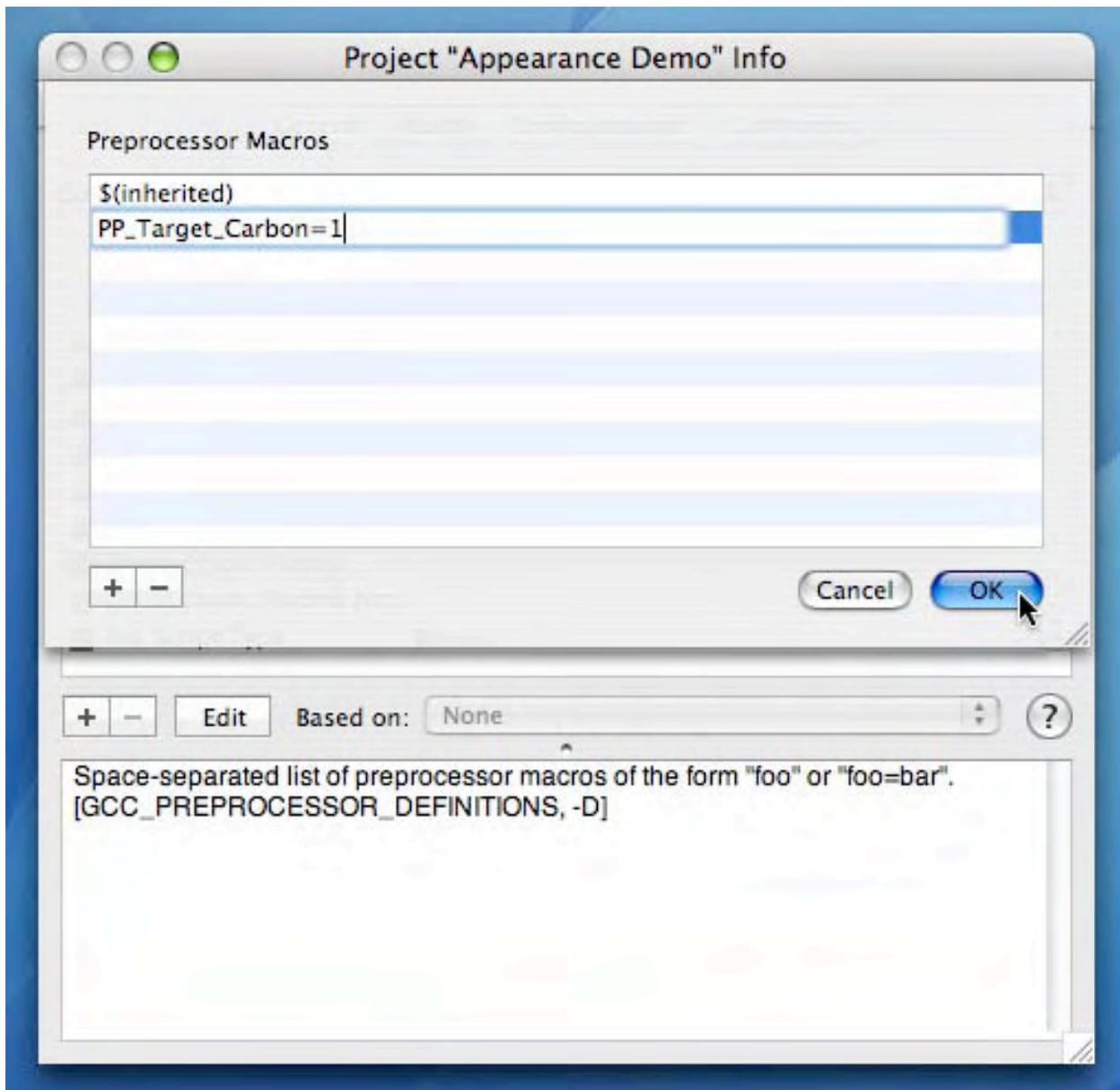


Upon examination of this, we see that many of these errors are due to missing macro definitions. For example, the final error indicates that we have the `PP_Target_Classic` macro enabled when we should have `PP_Target_Carbon` enabled instead.

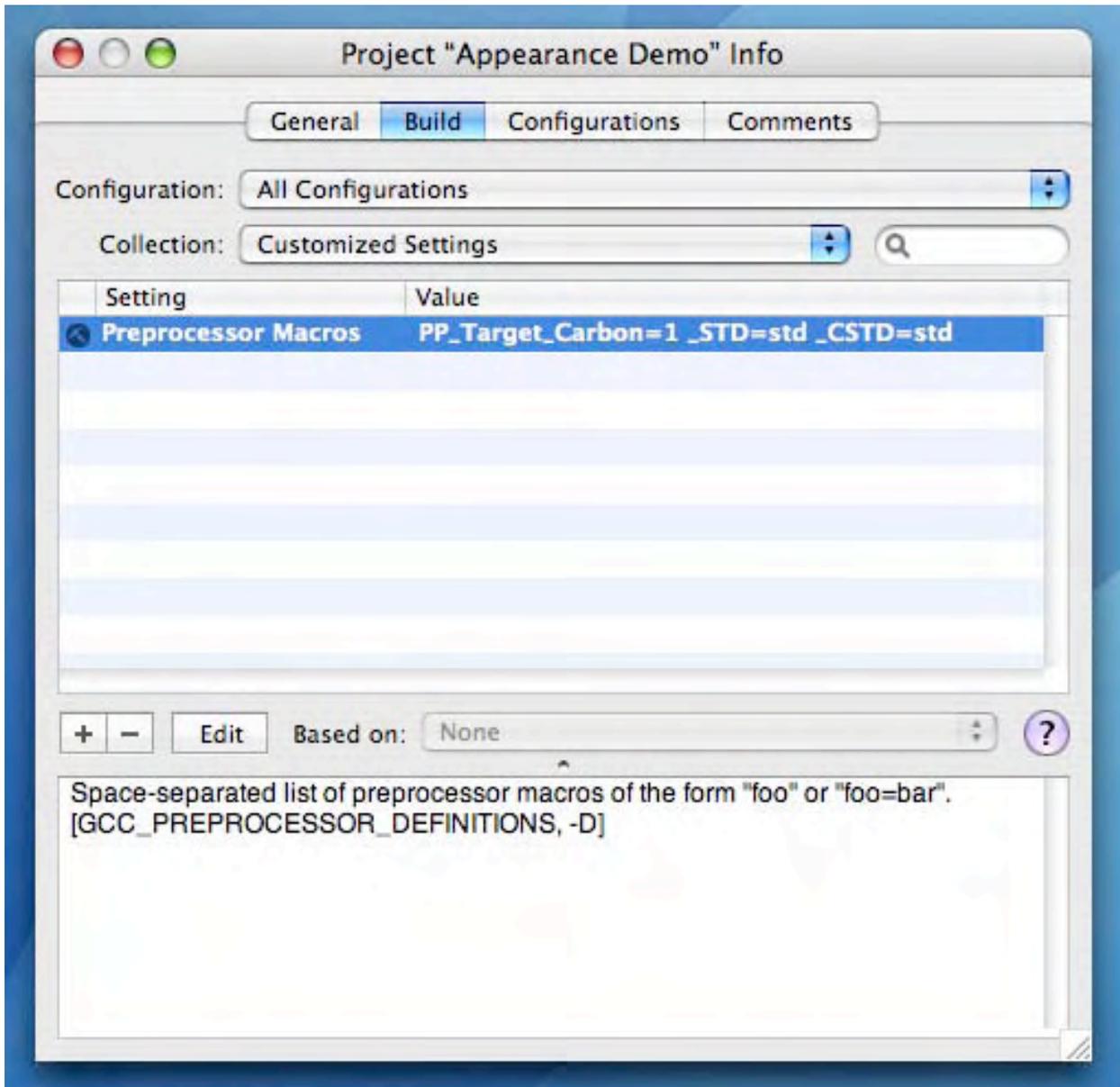
To fix this problem, go to Xcode's Project menu and select **Edit Project Settings**. When the Settings dialog is presented, scroll down and select the **Preprocessor Macros** field and then press the **Edit** button:



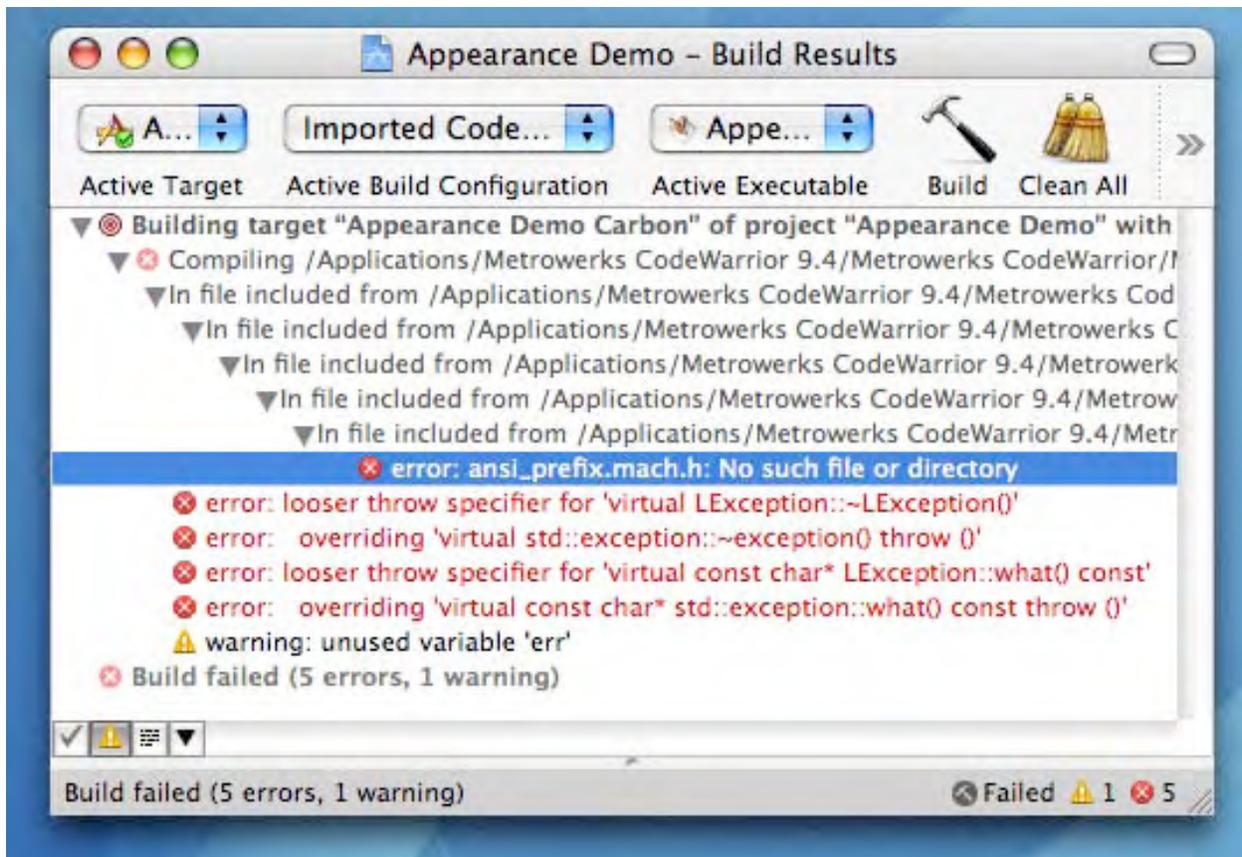
A sheet window will then appear. Click on the + button to create an new field and enter the text `PP_Target_Carbon=1`, as so:



Press OK to save, and recompile. Now we are down to 8 errors left, which include the undefined macros `_STD` and `_CSTD`. As we did with `PP_Target_Carbon`, we add these other two macros, defining them to be `std`. When you are finished, your preprocessor macros should look like this:



Recompiling now should yield you these five errors:



Modifying Our Project Source Files

At this point, we will need to actually modify CodeWarrior files. You may wish to make copies of these files so that the changes we make will not affect other CodeWarrior projects.

The first error is simply Xcode not finding the header file `<ansi_prefix.mach.h>`. Clicking on this error will display the location in `PP_Macros.h` where this file is `#included`. The simplest fix here is to comment out the `#if`, `#include`, `#else` and `#endif` lines, as so:

```
// #if __MACH__
//     #include <ansi_prefix.mach.h>
// #else
//     #define __dest_os __mac_os
// #endif
```

This leaves us with four displayed errors, which are actually only two errors: both occurring inside the `LException` class. Its base class `std::exception` has `throw()` specifiers for its virtual destructor and its `what()` method, whereas `LException` does not. This is remedied by modifying the `LException.h` header and `LException.cp` source file so that these two method prototypes appear as:

```
virtual ~LException() throw();
virtual const char* what() const throw();
```

As we next compile, Xcode generates an error in `LCommander.cp` not understanding the old style header file `HIToolbox.h`. Comment out this `#include` and replace with `<Carbon.h>`:

```
#if __MACH__
// #include <HIToolbox/HIToolbox.h>
#include <Carbon.h>
#else
#include <Balloons.h>
#endif
```

Further on, we get an error in the `LStream` class in overloads of the `<<` and `>>` operators. In particular, Xcode does not accept the type `short double`. Here we merely comment these lines out as so:

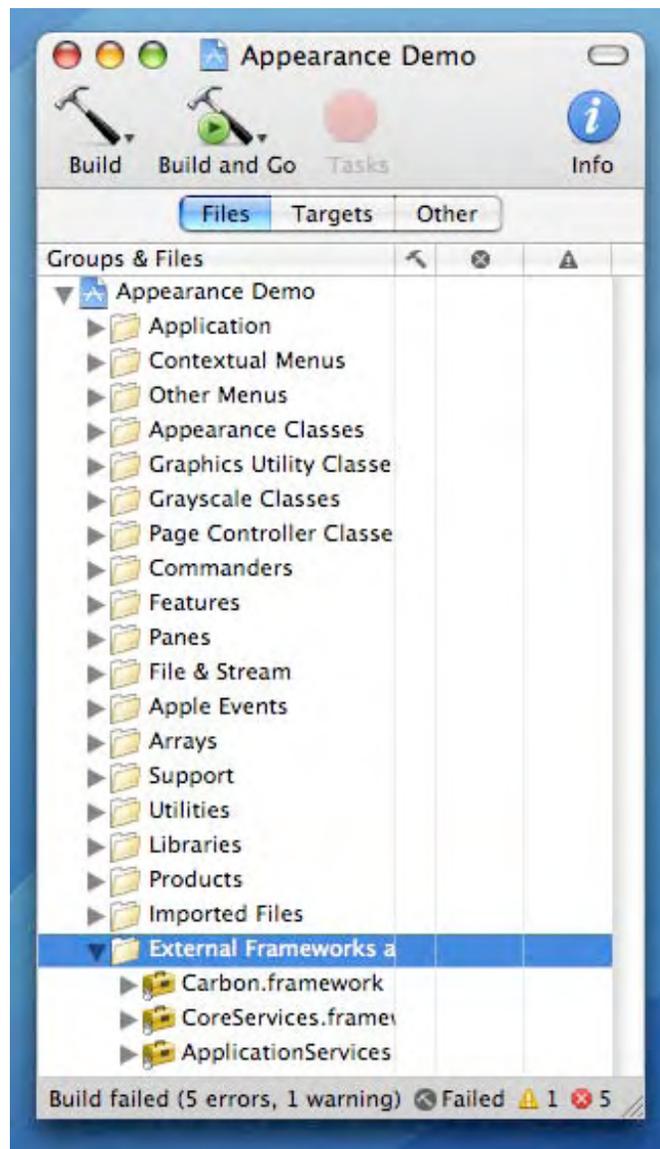
```
// LStream& operator << (short double inNum)
// {
//     (*this) << (double) inNum;
//     return (*this);
// }

// LStream& operator >> (short double &outNum)
// {
//     double num;
//     (*this) >> num;
//     outNum = (short double) num;
//     return (*this);
// }
```

Finally we pass the headers and begin compiling the source files. You'll note how much slower Xcode is relative to CodeWarrior. The first source file we run into trouble with is `InUDebugging.cp`, with a complaint locating the file `!PP_Notes_222.doc`. As this is not a critical file, we may simply comment this one out as well:

```
#if !PP_Suppress_Notes_222
// #include "!PP_Notes_222.doc"
#endif
```

Compilation succeeds, but we are left with a plethora of link errors! This is due to the fact that our Xcode project is lacking the Carbon framework. We need to add *Carbon.framework*, *CoreServices.framework* and *ApplicationServices.framework* to our project. This is perhaps most easily done by drag-copying them from another Xcode project. From Xcode's **File** menu, select the **New Project...** menu item. Within the **New Project Assistant** dialog, select Carbon C++ Application and press *Next*. Select a location for this temporary project, such as the Desktop. Once done, drag the *External Frameworks and Libraries* folder onto your *Appearance* project. It should then appear as such:



You can now dispose of the temporary Carbon project.

Coming Up: In two months we will continue with Part IV of our CodeWarrior project conversion, but next month: A recap of Apple's Worldwide Developer's Conference 2007. See you in 30!



Geek Speak: Random Mac Stuff You Need to Know

An Introduction to AppleScript

<http://www.macfanatic.net>

by Matt Brewer - Copyright © 2007

Mac OS X has several scripting capabilities built right in. Basic shell scripting, Perl, Python, PHP, and Ruby are ones that come to mind most often, especially if you are coming from the Unix/Linux realm. However, there are two other important features to note that are deeply integrated in the Mac OS: AppleScript and Automator, with its introduction in Tiger. I'll be talking about Automator in a future article.

Conceptual Overview

AppleScript has been around for ages and has support in most of the mature/full-featured applications today. AppleScript can be used to write applications complete with buttons, sliders and more, by creating a new "AppleScript Application" in XCode. For more information about AppleScript, visit <http://developer.apple.com/applescript/> for Apple's Documentation and The Apple Script Source Book with tons of examples at <http://applescriptsourcedbook.com/>

Our First AppleScript Application

We are now going to get down and dirty with AppleScript. You can download the completed script here <http://www.macfanatic.net/software/samplecode/convert-itunes-applescript.zip> I firmly believe the best way to learn is to just get started, so with a few brief notes, we'll get started. AppleScript is an elegant and simple language. There are several different ways to accomplish the same simple task because of this. This will easily become apparent once we get started. If you've ever programmed using another language, this might take some time to get your head around, but you'll live. For anyone wondering if you should take the time to learn AppleScript, I'd say yes! It was designed for the average computer user to create scripts to make their life easier. So, without further ado, let's get scripting.

Problem Description

Your friend has just made the switch to Mac and is enjoying himself until he goes to import his music in iTunes. He's never used an application like iTunes to organize his music before now, choosing to use cryptic filenames instead. To make matters worse, most of the songs are old and don't contain lovely ID3 Tag info, such as artist information. This makes it a nightmare for iTunes for the following reason: all his song files are named something like "015 - Gwen Stefani - Rich Girl.mp3". When you import a song like that into iTunes, the artist, album and all other fields are blank and the song's name contain "015 - Gwen Stefani - Rich Girl". This system was fine on Windows for your friend, but he really wants to use iTunes and grab artwork and more, all requiring the artist, album, and name fields to contain the right information. He could go through each song (about 800) and edit this via copy/paste, but that would take months. He turns to you for help. Let's write an AppleScript! (Note: this story is fairly accurate)



First thing we need to do is open the Script Editor. You can find this in `/Applications/AppleScript` or just by using Spotlight for "Script Editor". This is the program that we're going to use to write our scripts. It will check for errors in our syntax (basic structure/use of the language) and let us run our scripts right from this window.



We are going to be doing all of our magic here by interacting with iTunes. The basic approach to tackling this problem is to get a list of selected songs from iTunes, and change the name and artist information for each song. So, to work with iTunes, the first thing we need to type is *tell application "iTunes"*. Anything following this and before the *end tell* will be commands given to iTunes. There are several commands available, such as pause/resume playback, creating a new playlist and more. However, we're just interested in what songs the user has selected in iTunes. To get a list of the selected iTunes tracks, we'll use *set _songs to selection*. This command assigns the variable `_songs`, to the currently selected iTunes tracks. This way, if the user changes the selection while our script is running, we'll still have the original songs he wanted changed.

Now we're going to make sure that our friend selected at least one song, because if he didn't, we don't have a thing to do. *if _songs is {} then display dialog "Please select songs and run the script again."* will take care of that. If the selection was empty, our script will show an error window displaying that message.

Now we are going to count how many songs we have in our list (the ones our friend selected to be converted). We'll do that by *set num_songs to (count of _songs)*. This statement is a little more complex than our previous ones. We are creating a new variable called *num_songs* here (and anytime we use the *set something to something*). Instead of just setting it to a number, we're going to ask *_songs* for the number of items it contains, by calling *(count of _songs)*. Then we'll set *num_songs* to that.

We now know how many songs we have and we're going to set up a loop. A loop is a way of writing statements so that the same thing will be done each time, but to different pieces of data. In this case, for each song in our list, we're going to change the name and artist. AppleScript has a beautiful loop structure. *repeat with i from 1 to num_songs*. This statement declares *i* (the letter i, like "eye") and *i* will be 1 the first time, 2 the second time, and so on until *i* is *num_songs*. We'll use *i* as a way to know when we've messed with every song in the list and to access each song in the list.

Here is a look at what we've done so far. I have placed the *end repeat* and *end if* and *end tell* at the end of each respective call. This acts just like curly braces do in most languages, to let the computer know you are done executing statements that pertained to the loop, or *if()* statement, etc.

```
tell application "iTunes"
  set _songs to selection
  -- If no songs selected, display error message
  if _songs is {} then
    display dialog "Please select songs and run the script again"
  else
    -- Did have selection, so iterate through them

    -- Setup some variables
    set num_songs to (count of _songs)

    -- Iterate through all songs, setting info
    repeat with i from 1 to num_songs
      -- Pointer to current song
      set _song to (item i of _songs)
    end repeat
  end if
end tell
```

We now need to know what's in the "Name" field for each song because that's what contains the information we'll use to fill in the artist/name fields later. To get a nice "song", we'll use *set _song to (item i of _songs)*. Every time we go through the loop, *i* will increment by 1. Therefore, *i* will let us access every item in the list of songs. So, every time we go through the loop, if we set our *_song* to the *i*th item in the list, we'll be all set to do whatever we need to with that particular song.

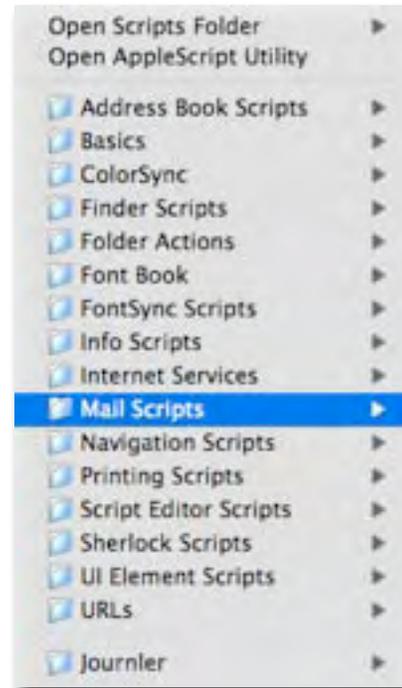
Now we're going to grab the actual name of the song we're working with. This will be some text, particularly, "015 - Gwen Stefani - Rich Girl" in our case. *set song_path to (name of _song)* will give us that text we need. We'll pick out the parts of that text we need for the name of the song and its artist in the next block of code.

I'm not going to walk through the code for parsing the text for your sake. However, I'll give an overview of what the code is doing. We have *song_path* as the name of the song, once again, "015 - Gwen Stefani - Rich Girl" in our example. We don't need the numbers at the front for anything, but we do need the artist name. The artist's name is everything in between those two hyphens, with a space before and a space after, that we'll remove. The code looks for the first hyphen, and then the second hyphen, and copies the text out of that to *_artist*.

Now we just need the song's name. This is just everything after the second hyphen, and that gets copied to *_name*. To actually change the values back in iTunes, the magical code is *set artist of _song to _artist as string* and *set name of _song to _name as string*. Once all of the songs are done, we show a window telling the user that everything went okay and we're done.

Conclusion

That certainly wasn't an in-depth look at AppleScript by any means. There are several more possibilities if you learn your stuff and explore. Most applications will come with scripts available to use and there are tons built in to Mac OS X itself. Just fire up the AppleScript Utility and select the "Show Script Menu in MenuBar" to have a list of pre-installed scripts at your disposal.



With some tweaking you could make this little script more powerful by first making sure that the song being converted meets the criteria (this will crash if it gets a song with more hyphens, spaces, or more) and letting the user set some settings for the format. The latter suggestion could would make it easier for someone to use it if "Stephani, Gwen - Rich Girl" was the format of the names. You get the picture.

If you have any questions/suggestions about what you've read here today, then be sure to drop me an email at the one listed below. Thanks for reading! I also encourage you to visit the Mac Fanatic Message Boards at <http://macfanatic.net/board/viewforum.php?f=11> and look for this article as a thread. Let me know if you'd like another article like this one soon! Then look around the message boards for more great advice and discussion.

Contact Info

You can always send me an email at mbrewer@maccompanion.com or visit my website at <http://www.macfanatic.net> for more information about me and my ramblings. I also produce a weekly audio podcast taking an in-depth review of cool and new Mac applications, along with tips, developer interviews, tutorials, and the occasional tutorial

Views from the Ivory Tower - June 2007

On Scaring Mac Users, Greening Apple and Forensics

By Ted Bade

Another attempt to scare Mac OS users - Yes folks, once again those good people who own and operate security sites and anti-malicious software companies have offered money to anyone who could figure a way to hack a Macintosh. There was even a winner who claimed the \$10,000 prize. The contest took place at the CanSecWest security conference in Vancouver, British Columbia.

Okay, sure, maybe these security companies are actually concerned that Mac OS X users will become complacent and not do anything to ensure the security of their Macs, then one day, will be hit with a virus and lose or have important data compromised. But I really doubt it. It seems to me that perhaps the people in the market to offer protection are trying to scare Mac users into buying their wares. If you would like to read an article on this scare-test – <http://www.electronista.com> > Search for “hacked in contest”.

I have said this many times before, our beloved MacOS X is not perfect nor is it totally secure. However it is pretty secure and close to perfect:-). Due to the inherent security of MacOS X headlines like: “a few Macintosh users were affected by a new computer virus...” Just don’t get hackers their jollies. By this I don’t mean there are only a few Mac Users, but that because of the security of the system and the way we use our machines, only a few would be in a position to actually be affected by said malicious software. Of course the media would blow an event like this out or proportion by saying: “New Macintosh Virus hits the Internet!”

Should we be concerned about malicious software? Yes. While I wouldn’t recommend spending a ton of money, (like my Window’s friends do annually), I will say that Mac users should keep an ear out for information concerning malicious software and install all the security updates Apple provides. With all the press Macs are getting concerning this, you will be hard pressed to miss an announcement of a real piece of malicious code. Heck, if you read this tirade monthly I will be sure to post anything I think is real...

Now I wonder, can I convince these security companies to give me \$10,000 to regularly point out the importance of using their software? What a notion.

Apple moving up in the world - Last month Apple’s percent of the laptop market share rose to 9.9% and desktop sales rose to 7.7%, according to an article posted on the Mac News Network site. <http://www.macnn.com/articles/07/05/11/apple.laptop.sales/>

According to the article, this information was published by Bloomberg. You can view the Bloomberg tables -

<http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=conewsstory&refer=conews&tkr=AAPL:US&sid=aZ10DCwhy1Xo>

If you look over the tables, you will also notice that Apple had 68.9% of the MP3 player sales in that same period.

I post this information because I believe it indicates a trend. People are moving to the MacOS. This is good for Apple and for their dedicated customers. Growth in Apple sales means that people are finding Macintosh computers a viable alternative to the slew of Window's based machines. As more people move to the Mac platform, so will software and hardware vendors, which is a good thing for all Mac users.

Let's hope this trend continues.

Another amazing iPod appliance - You probably heard of the George Forman Grill. But did you know that you can buy the George Forman iGrill? This grill includes an amplifier and speakers so you can play your tunes as you cook! If it's too much to believe, check out the ad -

<http://www.lnt.com/product/index.jsp?productId=2615193&siteID=ZqM0mWHn60g-Q36lTO4YdAi62.KHjCpohA>

As I look at this culinary wonder, I ask myself, what band will release the album, iTunes to cook by?

Perhaps a greener Apple? - One of the more interesting news items I have been following has been [GreenPeace](#)'s attack on Apple. They have publicly criticized Apple for it's lack of concern for the environment and the use of many toxic chemicals. They even hosted a protest at a MacWorld Expo in London, which they were apparently "kicked out" of.

While I don't doubt that Apple is not as environmentally conscious as Greenpeace would like and perhaps no where near as much as they could be, it seems to me that this protest rides the coattails of all the publicity Apple has been getting recently. Which is a sensible thing for Greenpeace as well as for the environment in general. By doing this, they get a lot more notice in the press than they would if they had chosen another computer company! Don't take me wrong, I have strong beliefs about taking care of the environment. I would be really happy to hear that Apple did all the right things for the environment, even if it meant paying a bit more for my next Mac!

Apparently Greenpeace's efforts had an effect in Apple-land. Steve Jobs posted a message that explains what Apple is doing to help reduce the use of toxic chemicals in the production of their computers - <http://www.apple.com/hotnews/agreenerapple/>

Read it over, not only does he explain what Apple is and has been doing and plans to do, but he relates it to the competition. His reply and the changes made at Apple following this were applauded by Greenpeace. They posted an article called: "[Tasty news from Apple!](#)" - <http://www.greenpeace.org/international/news/tasty-apple-news-020507>

They also posted a response to Steve's letter, which you can read as well by [visiting](#) - <http://www.greenpeace.org/international/news/tasty-apple-news-020507/greenpeaceonjobsstatement>

As a final word, I hope that Apple makes great strides in this arena and that this forces other companies to follow in their footsteps! It wouldn't be the first time other computer companies followed Apple's lead, and it probably won't be the last!

If you read through Steve's article, you will discover that MacBooks will begin to use LED backlights in 2007. This technology not only reduces the toxic chemicals in a laptop computer, but also reduces the amount of power needed to backlight the LCD screen. This makes it environmentally friendly in two ways, less toxic chemicals and less power consumption! Not to mention less power cost to operate and longer battery life, both

things the user will like!

Mac's no longer safe from Prying *official* eyes - Many people might not know this interesting fact, Macs are a lot harder for law enforcement agencies to get into than Windows machines. For a long time MacOS X has made use of password protection and encryption to hide information. Law enforcement agencies might hire a computer guru to help when computer's are involved with a crime, but the majority of these people have experience only with Windows and are often baffled when a Macintosh was involved.

Now a company has developed a piece of software that can be used to break into a password protected Macintosh. The product is called MacLockPick and is supposed to be available only to Law Enforcement Agencies. Check out the developer's site by [visiting - http://www.subrosasoft.com/OSXSoftware/index.php?main_page=product_info&cPath=200&products_id=195](http://www.subrosasoft.com/OSXSoftware/index.php?main_page=product_info&cPath=200&products_id=195)

Macworld wrote a nice article about this product which you can view by [visiting - http://www.macworld.com/news/2007/04/27/maclockpick/index.php](http://www.macworld.com/news/2007/04/27/maclockpick/index.php)

This will give you their take on it.

I am not necessarily opposed to Law enforcement people having tools to get evidence from computers to help solve a crime. What bothers me is that it won't be long before someone makes this software freely available over the Internet. Then anyone who has the desire could use it to break into anyone's Macintosh or into a .Mac account. That is not a good thing. But there is nothing we can do about it now. But at least we are informed and can take a little more care with our Macs!

The Apple Developer's conference takes place later in June. I am hoping there will be some very interesting announcements made at this event. Who knows what product is ahead of schedule or what new item Mr. Jobs will decide to announce? I will be sure to comment on all the interesting stuff in the July edition. Until then, keep enjoying your Macintosh.

Doc_Babad's Macintosh Tips - A Macintosh Tip or Three...

June 2007 Edition

By Harry {doc} Babad Original Material © 2007



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The software related tips were tested on a 1 GHz dual processor PowerPC G4 Macintosh with 2 GB DDR SDRAM; running under Macintosh OS X OS X 10.4.9.

As part of this month's contribution to macC, I have reviewed *MS Word 2007-The Missing Manual* book by Chris Groover. Yes, we'll wait a bit more for the Macintosh version Office (Word) 2008 since it's not due out, perhaps, until later this year. In keeping with my continues search for tools and shortcuts to make *wording* a bit easier, I'm sharing, with permission, some of Alan Wyatt's *Macwordtips* http://www.macwordtips.com/jumping_to_a_comment.html. One thing that pleases me about learning how to use Alan's tips is that, based on reader the Groover book, the tip will likely apply in Word 2008.

This month I continue sharing my occasional tip-related finds with you. Many, but not all of the Tips I share come from — Paul Taylor's Hints & Tips column <http://www.mac-hints-tips.com> and are used with his permission. Where I use any one else's tips for this column, I acknowledge both their source and their contributors. As a mater of routine I ask for permission to use these items unless they've already been widely distributed on the Internet.

Oh, I almost forgot! Unless otherwise noted, all the tips and tidbits I share, where appropriate, work on my computer. If I don't own the software but if the tip sounds interesting, I'll so note at the end of that specific write-up.

Tips I've provided this month, as always in a random order, include:

- A Solution to my Ongoing Nemesis — Removing Automatic Lines from MS Word
- Jumping To a Comment in MS Word
- Understanding MS Word's Click and Type Features
- Set Office 2004 Zoom Levels Via Mouse
- Using Acrobat to Turn A Scanned Blank Form {Graphic} Into One You Can Fill Out.
- My Missing Capital C – Murphy Strikes Again

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A Solution to my Nemesis — Removing Automatic Lines

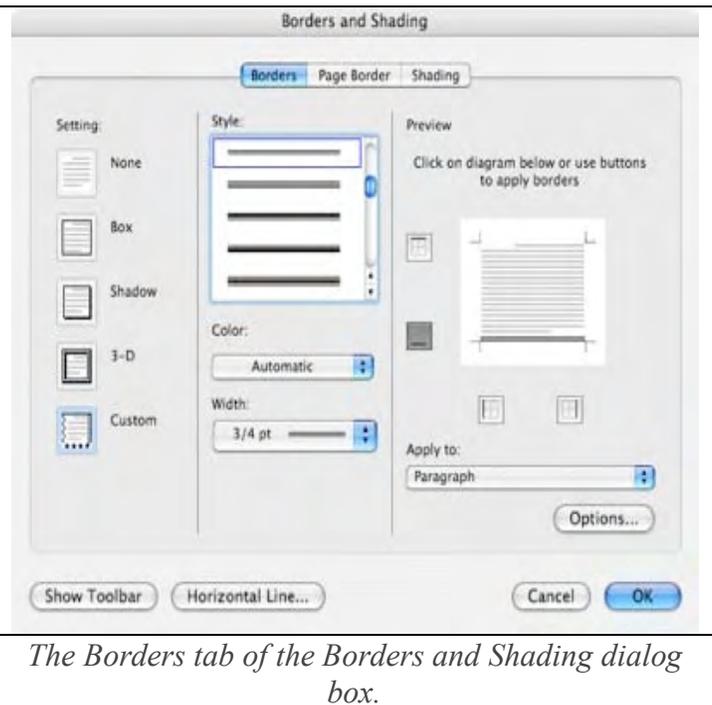
Have you ever noticed how if you type a few equal signs on a new line in your document, and then press *ENTER*, Word for the Mac replaces what you typed with a double line that extends the whole width of your document? Actually, this works if you enter as few as three equal signs, dashes, or underscores. In each case, Word replaces your characters with a different type of line.

In some instances, this Word feature can be a great timesaver. In other instances, you might have really wanted the characters in your document, not the line that Word thought you wanted. In these instances there are three ways you can handle the situation.

First, you can press **Cmd+Z**, choose Undo from the Edit menu, or click on the Undo tool right after you pressed **Enter** and Word added the line. In this case, the line is removed and your characters remain. Using the Undo feature may not be practical *if you don't use it right away*.

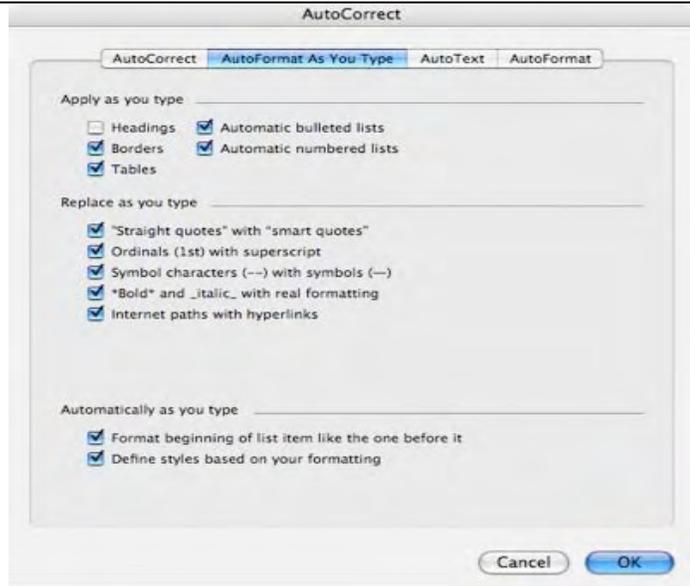
This leads to the *second* method of dealing with the line. If you later want to remove the line, it helps to understand how Word added it in the first place. When you pressed **Enter** at the end of your characters (the ones Word replaced with its line), Word removed the characters and added a border to the paragraph just before where you typed the characters. You can verify this in the following manner:

1. Position the insertion point in the paragraph just before where the line appears.
2. Choose *Borders and Shading* from the Format menu. Word displays the *Borders and Shading* dialog box.
3. Make sure the *Borders* tab is selected. Notice that the line should appear at the bottom of the paragraph in the preview area of the dialog box.
4. To remove the border, click on the *None* option.
5. Click on *OK* to close the dialog box. The line (border) previously applied by Word now disappears.



The *third* method of dealing with the line is to simply turn off the feature that causes Word to replace your equal signs, dashes, and underscores with its own line. Follow these steps:

1. Choose *AutoCorrect* from the *Tools* menu. Word displays the AutoCorrect dialog box.
2. Make sure the *AutoFormat As You Type* tab is displayed.
3. Clear the *Borders* checkbox.
4. Click on *OK*.



The AutoFormat As You Type tab of the AutoCorrect dialog box.

Alan Wyatt's Macwordtips 2007-04-25 13:39:35-04
http://www.macwordtips.com/removing_automatic_lines.html

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Jumping To a Comment in MS Word

Word includes a powerful tool that allows you to add comments to your document. You can use the Go To function of Word to jump to a specific comment in your document. You do this in two different ways.

The first way to jump to a comment is as follows:

1. Choose Go To from the Edit menu, press **Cmd+G**, or press **F5**. Word displays the Go To tab of the Find and Replace dialog box.
2. In the left side of the dialog box, click on Comment. This informs Word what you want to go to. The Enter Page Number box is relabeled as the Enter Reviewer's Name box
3. In the Enter Reviewer's Name box, enter the name of the person responsible for the comment. You can also use the pull-down list to select the name of a reviewer. If you want to go to the next comment, leave the box blank or select the name Any Reviewer.
4. Click on the Next button.

Alternatively, if there are no comments in the document, you will jump to the beginning of the document. If you modify the technique a bit, you can jump to a comment relative to the comment at which you are currently located. This is done as follows:

- ✓ Choose Go To from the Edit menu, press **Cmd+G**, or press **F5**. Word displays the Go To tab of the Find and Replace dialog box.
- ✓ In the left side of the dialog box, choose Comment. This informs Word what you want to go to. The Enter Page Number box is relabeled as the Enter Reviewer's Name box.
- ✓ In the Enter Reviewer's Name box, enter a plus or minus sign followed by the number of comments you want to jump. Plus is forward; minus is backward. For instance, you could jump forward two comments by entering **+2**. Word changes the Next button to a Go To button.
- ✓ Click on the Go To button.

Alan Wyatt's Macwordtips 2007-03-24 19:20:11-04
http://www.macwordtips.com/jumping_to_a_comment.html

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Understanding MS Word's Click and Type Features

Word for the Mac includes a feature known simply as Click and Type. This feature means that when you are working in Page Layout view, Online Layout view, or print preview you can double-click your mouse in any open area of your document (where there is not text), and begin typing right away.

Normally, you begin typing at the left side of the screen. If you later want to adjust your text to the right margin or center it on the screen, you do so by using the toolbars or menus. Click and Type, however, allows you to quickly format and enter text at the same time. The result is faster editing and formatting.

You can tell if Click and Type is active by how the mouse pointer behaves on screen. If the mouse pointer, when moving within the document window, looks like a simple I-beam insertion pointer, then Click and Type is not turned on. If, instead, it looks like an I-beam with some horizontal lines near by, then Click and Type is active and ready. These lines indicate the formatting of the text that you can insert. There are four possibilities:

- **Left aligned.** If the horizontal lines are near the upper-right side of the I-beam, then it indicates that double-clicking your mouse will result in a left-aligned paragraph where you click.
- **Left aligned, first line indent.** If the horizontal lines are near the upper-right side of the I-beam, but there is also a very small arrow at the left side of the first horizontal line, then double-clicking will result in a left-aligned paragraph where you click, with the first line of the paragraph indented.
- **Centered.** If the horizontal lines are directly beneath the I-beam, then you can enter a centered paragraph by double-clicking your mouse.
- **Right aligned.** If the horizontal lines are near the upper-left side of the I-beam, then it indicates that double-clicking will add a right-aligned paragraph where you click.

Remember that Click and Type only works if you are viewing your document in Page Layout view, Web Layout view, or print preview. The lines near the insertion pointer I-beam appear only as you are moving your mouse pointer left and right within the document window.

If you don't like or don't use the Click and Type, you may want to turn it off. You can do this by following these steps:

1. Choose *Preferences* from the Word menu. Word displays the Preferences dialog box.
2. Make sure the *Edit* tab is selected at the left side of the dialog box.
3. Make sure the *Enable Click and Type* check box is cleared.
4. Click on *OK*.



The Edit tab of the Preferences dialog box

Alan Wyatt's Macwordtips 2007-04-19 11:18:14-04
http://www.macwordtips.com/understanding_click_and_type.html

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Set Office 2004 Zoom Levels Via Mouse

Sometimes, you just want to change the zoom level within an application. Many applications have a Zoom menu option somewhere to control just that -- increase the zoom level, and everything on the screen gets larger, making it easier to see small text, or manipulate tiny objects.

Microsoft's Office 2004 suite is no exception -- Word, Excel, and PowerPoint (but not Entourage) all feature a View -> Zoom menu item. But using it is a bit time consuming. First you choose the menu, and then you pick a pre-set zoom level, or enter your own value, and then click OK. You can also put a button on the toolbar, which does something similar. Still, it's hardly a fast and fluid operation.

Enter the mouse. In all three of the above applications, if you hold down Command and Control and then move the scroll wheel on your mouse (or drag your fingers on a scrolling-enabled trackpad), you can rapidly increase or decrease the zoom level. Move the wheel up, and you'll zoom in; move it down, and you'll zoom out. The amount the zoom changes with each tick of the scroll wheel will vary between the applications. Word seems to go in 10-percent steps; Excel uses 15-percent increments; and PowerPoint steps through the fixed zoom levels (including 'fit,' which means I had a stop at 152 percent) in its Zoom menu. Excel and PowerPoint are also limited to 400-percent maximum zoom, while Word will go up to 500 percent.

Although prefer the keyboard for many tasks, there's no doubt that using the keyboard and a scroll wheel mouse is the quickest and easiest way to set a zoom level in the various Office 2004 applications. *Doc sez, I've added the zoom features to my customized toolbar so don't use this tip, buy you may find it useful.*

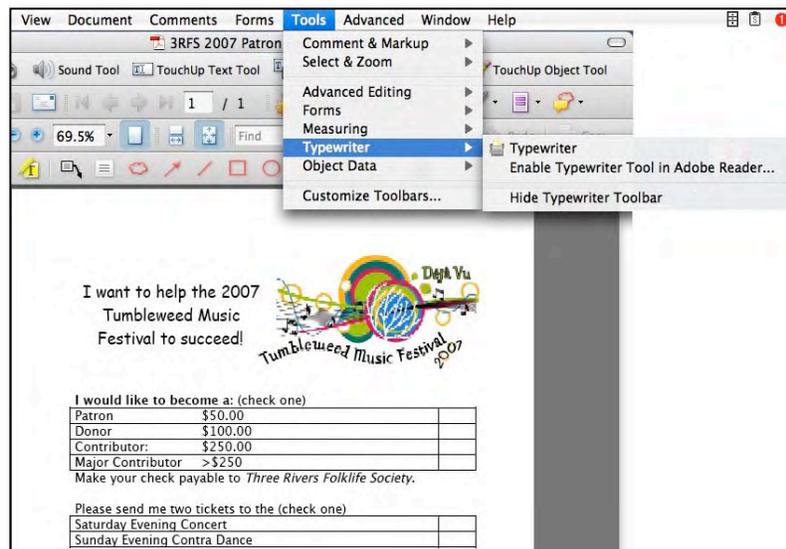
By Rob Griffiths <http://www.macworld.com/>
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Using Acrobat to Turn A Scanned Blank Form {Graphic} Into One You Can Fill Out.

Now if your handwriting is a bad as mine, your really want to avoid fill out forms manually. Since I no longer have a typewriter, this alternative, one I used for many years, no longer works. No I don't want to buy you cast off IBM Selectric typewriter, I've no space for it in my office. So what to do? It's all very simple, at least as long as you have a scanned copy of the form in PDF format. Oh yes, and have a copy of Acrobat 8.

Okay, open your scanned PDF, it a graphics file, in Acrobat. You will Use the Typewriter tool to type text anywhere on a PDF page. Organizations sometimes provide PDF versions of their paper forms without interactive form fields making them harder to use, unless printed. The Typewriter tool provides a simple solution for filling out such forms.



- Choose *Tools* > *Typewriter* > *Show Typewriter Toolbar*, and then click the Typewriter button.
- Click where you want to type, and then begin typing. Press *Enter* to add a second line.
- To change the text size, select the text, and click the *Decrease Text Size* button or the *Increase Text Size* button in the Typewriter toolbar.

- To change the line spacing (leading), select the text, and click the *Decrease Line Spacing* button or the *Increase Line Spacing* button.
- To move or resize Typewriter text block, select the *Select* tool, click a Typewriter text block, and drag the text block or one of its corners.
- To edit the text again, select the Typewriter tool, and then double-click in the Typewriter text.

Note: To let Adobe Reader users type text in a PDF by using the Typewriter tool, open the PDF in Acrobat Professional, choose *Tools > Typewriter > Enable Typewriter Tool In Adobe Reader*, and save the PDF. See the image above.

PS: I no longer have a version of Acrobat 7 Pro on my computer so do not know whether this hint works for that version. If AA7 had a typewriter tool, then this work, but AA7 could not activate files opened in Acrobat Reader to allow the completion of forms.

Modified from Adobe Acrobat 8 Help Files

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My Missing Capital C – Murphy Strikes Again

The Problem — Right in the middle of typing an article in MS Word [MSW], I lost the ability to use a capital c. This was true whether I used my Logitech or Apple keyboard. It did not matter which shift key I used. It was so in the finder and in every application I tried.

As part of the detailed testing describe below, I tossed all new utilities All the other utilities I use have been on my drive for at least six months. I did not uninstall updates such as migrating to Toast 8 or Acrobat 8 Pro.

An Awkward Workaround — I could still get a capital “c” in PopChar but had to select it from the ASCII chart.

More oddities — When I type a word like changing with the shift key depressed for the first letter that letter gets lost. Typing CHANGING drops the first letter to HANGING.

Meanwhile — Alternate Workaround: Using change case in MSW on the word Acta or any lower case “c” allows me to capitalize the whole word retaining the capital “c”.

Status Caps Lock Key — I’ve disconnected right after I got my Macintosh and it has been off despite many OS System changes and Updates. I then fooled with the cap locks key. In my trouble shooting clicking it or holding it down with trying to type a capital c didn’t have any affect, so that is not part of the problem.

I fixed it but don’t know whether it was dumb luck or pure cussedness. So I’m not going to tell you how, but share the what’s I tried. You figure it!

Tests Run

| | |
|--|--|
| 1. Startup in Safe Reboot Mode by keeping the sift key down when restarting | Restart -Capital “c” returned. – Okay, it’s something I added or a system component that glitched. |
| 2. Repair Permissions – Normal Startup | Restart -No effect – capital “c” still gone |
| 3. Restore Directory – Disk Warrior 4.0 | Restart -No effect – capital “c” still gone |
| 4. Toss all recently installed utilities, things that added system and finder functionality via the menu bar. | Restart - No effect – capital “c” still gone. |
| 5. Do Extra Testing with Text Extender and Universal Access [The later was the last thing I’d added and reviewed.] | No effect – capital “c” still gone Restart - capital “c” still gone |
| 6. Deleting the finder.plist | No effect – capital “c” still gone Restart Finder - No effect |
| 7. Deleting the Fontbook.plist | No effect – capital “c” still gone; then Restart - capital “c” still gone |
| 8. Changing fonts or default Font | No effect – capital “c” still gone |
| 9. Repair Permissions – Using Apple OS <i>Install Systems DVD</i> Startup disc | No effect – capital “c” still gone |
| 10. Repair Hard Drive– Using Apple OS <i>Install Systems DVD</i> Startup disc | No effect – capital “c” still gone |
| 11. Once AGAIN Startup in Safe Reboot Mode by keeping the sift key down when restarting | Capital “c” returned. – Okay, it’s something I added or a system component that glitched. But which? |
| 12. Normal Restart - A Small Miracle | Capital “c” returned. Now many weeks later, I still have a capital “C” |
| What I would have tried next | Cleared the Font Caches |

Feedback is welcome – this one I could not find when googling for an answer.

Harry {doc} Babad

That’s all folks...

May Updates of Interest

By Mike Hubbartt

1. Apple Updates general site: <http://www.apple.com/support/downloads/>

An important Apple update for this month:

- Apple Security Update 2007-004, released 4/20/2007 – 10 MB (improves MacBook and MacBook Pro compatibility and addresses a security issue).
- Apple Security Update 2007-005 for Mac OS X 10.3.9 and 10.4, released 5/25/2007 – is available for both client and server editions of OS X 10.3.9 and for both PowerPC and Intel installations of Mac OS X 10.4. Fixes a security flaw in iChat and also improves the security of the following system components: bind; CarbonCore; CoreGraphics; crontabs; fetchmail; file; mDNSResponder; PPP; ruby; screen; texinfo and VPN. Security Update 2007-004 has been incorporated into this security update.
- QuickTime 7.1.6, released 4/02/2007 – 45.1 MB (delivers numerous bug fixes, addresses a critical security issue with QuickTime for Java)

IMPORTANT! Apple announced that Leopard will NOT be available until October, even though they vehemently denied the rumor earlier in the month.

2. Microsoft

A, Office 2004 for Mac 11.3.5 Update

This update contains several improvements to enhance security and stability, including fixes for vulnerabilities that an attacker can use to overwrite the contents of your computer's memory with malicious code. In addition, this update includes all the improvements released in all previous Office 2004 updates.

Applies to: Office 2004 Standard Edition, Office 2004 Student and Teacher Edition, Office 2004 Professional Edition, Word 2004, Excel 2004, PowerPoint 2004, Entourage 2004.

Released: May 8, 2007

3. Adobe

A. Creative Suite CS3 began shipping mid April. Nice!

4. Montage

A. Mariner released an update in March, April, and now a third on May 2, 2007.

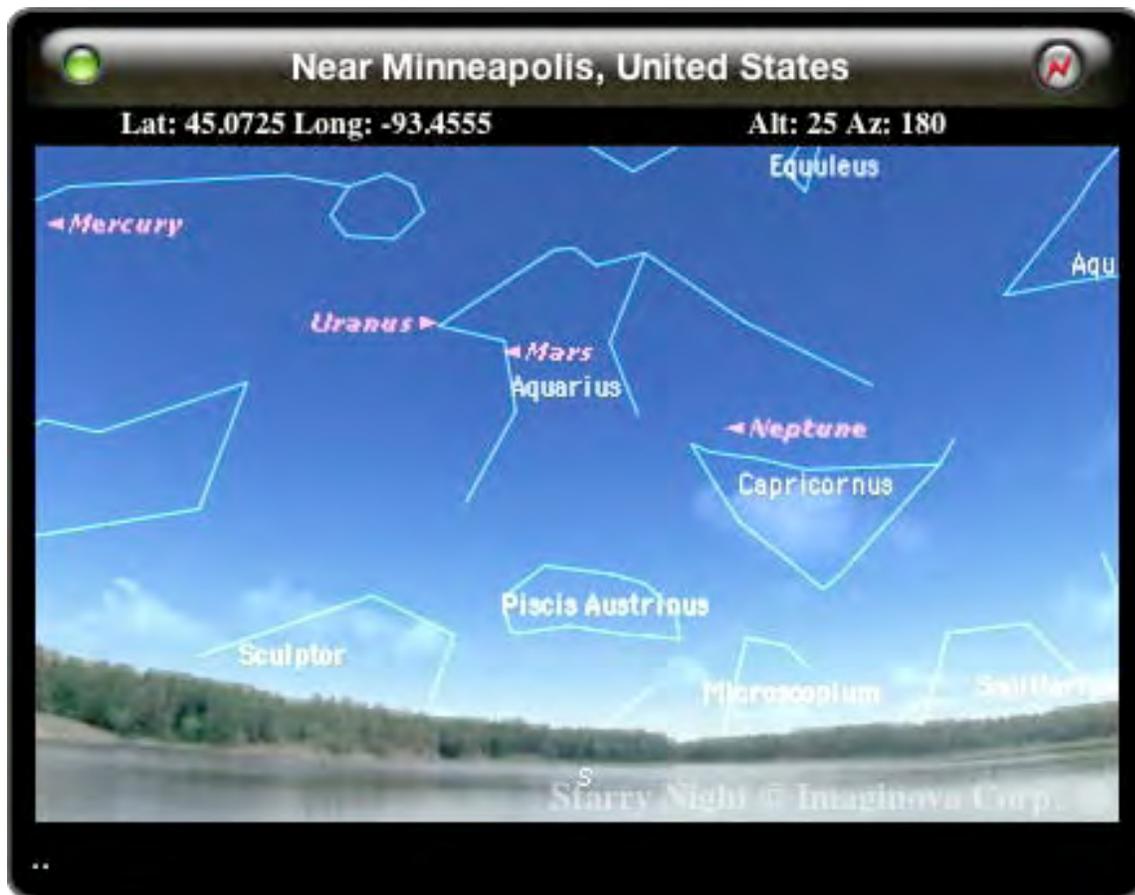
- Element (character, location, camera location, time of day) suggestion lists now popup after a single character (previously required you to type 2 or more characters)
- Fixed a problem that prevented Annotations from working
- Fixed a problem where applying styles (Format, Bold, Italic) would fail in Scenes view, and would not be saved or printed although style changes appeared to be applied in Script View.
- Fixed a performance issue where Montage's CPU usage would sometimes increase when a blank unsaved file is open
- Fixed scene insertion location when inserting scene in Full Screen mode
- Fixed a problem where tab key failed to work on page 2 or higher in script view
- Fixed a problem where suggestion lists would disappear upon typing the 3rd character on page 2 or higher in script view
- Text boxes are now centered in Scenes View
- Fixed a number of problems related to inserting scenes in script view: - Page count now remains correct - Page no longer scrolls incorrectly - Cursor placement after scene insertion remains correct - New scene is inserted in the correct location
- Fixed a problem in Script View in Mac OS X - 10.3.9 where keyboard input would fail when typing a scene header, character or anywhere else a popup list was expected
- Fixed a problem in Script View in Mac OS X - 10.3.9 where typing the start of a slug line would make typed text disappear
- Fixed a problem where changing name of one character (such as Fred) may affect name of another similarly-named character (such as Alfred)
- Fixed a problem where inserting a scene in a numbered script would result in typing problems in new scene
- Increased the width of popup suggestion lists to accommodate longer names
- Fixed a problem where typing dialogue in Script View across pages resulted in dialogue text at top of new page gets formatted as Scene Heading
- Inserting a scene in Scenes view: New scene now has Scene Heading element selected, and cursor is placed at the correct margin for Scene Heading
- Made Script view background same as the dark grey in Scenes View
- Added Category column to the Contact list
- Fixed problem with Apply To popup menu in Scene Numbering sheet so that menu updates correctly, and all menu options can be selected

B. On May 21 while attending the Cannes Film Festival, Mariner announced Montage 1.3. Although the current version supports importing scripts created with Final Draft, version 1.3 will provide 'Save as Final Draft', localization for French, German, Spanish and Italian, and support Movie Magic files. Note: The press release did not say how Montage would support Movie Magic – import or save as – so we'll let you know as soon as we do.

5. May Shameless Astronomy Plug

A. [May 2007 issue of Starry Night Times](#)

B. [New Starry Night Widget, released 4/19/2007](#)



A new scrolling banner across the bottom of the widget for up-to-date news, plus a few other enhancements make this a must-have. Download it today!

To see Starry Night online – <http://www.space.com/snserver/snweb.html?zip=55311>

C. Pending Eclipses

- * 2007 Aug 28: Total Lunar Eclipse
- * 2007 Sep 11: Partial Solar Eclipse

The Northern Spy

by Rick Sutcliffe

Technology News and Views Since 1983

Spring Roundup

June 2007

This year's lead bull award

has to go to Apple, and not just because the Spy has a heavy investment of all kinds in iSteve's products (riding for the brand), but by the general consensus building among consumers, pundits, and Wall Street.

Investors have to be happy with record sales, profits, stock prices, and a 35% year-over-year growth, versus the industry's slackish 9%. Apple is now within reasonable reach of third place in computer market share behind faltering Dell and HP, a spot now occupied by likewise fast fading Gateway. After all, iSteve has only just begun to convert mindshare to marketshare, and has sufficient reserve of the former to run the latter to 10% over two years without busting a sweat, without offering anything new. So, that third place could be achieved by a year from now, but seems a lock in two. Second and then first depend on both new mindshare generated this year and next, and on how fast the fall of others accelerates. You read it here first.

More corroborating good news appears to come in the form of word that web surveys claim the percentage of people using MacOS-based browsers on the net has doubled in the past eight months. The Spy admits to being skeptical of this item, because the 10K hits per day on his own sites do not as yet demonstrate such a trend. Perhaps better data will surface in the mid-term future, but meanwhile, don't hang any hats on this statistic just yet.

Coming additions to the Apple ramuda include

- a flash-based notebook, possibly including a range of products reaching down through sub-notebook sizing toward the MaciPhone and iPod,
- more new stores, including Calgary and Vancouver,
- bigger and badder AppleTV units,
- the lurking Leopard, incorporating a slew of new features that collectively make Vista look like last season's dried up grass,
- Tiger 10.4.10, the placeholder OS designed to fill a few security and performance potholes currently annoying the herd during its now extended wait for the new cat,
- the MaciPhone itself, marking a watershed in the entire cellular industry, already generating the biggest product launch and largest consumer stampede in eHistory, and against which every other phone will henceforth be compared. Cingular gets this, at least partly, so is in a mad rush to rebrand itself as AT&T in order to attach Apple's toy to a new image right out of the gate. Do the rest get it? More on this below.

Amazon has joined the stampede,

away from the debilitating and wasteful "digital rights" protection racket by announcing a DRM-free store. This is an obvious attempt to compete with Apple, which now offers EMI label tracks without stifling restrictions imposed by the music industry's muscle. First cracks in the facade, folks, and hasn't the Spy told you so often enough? All forms of copy protection are a complete waste of time and money. Look it up. This may be listed as the Spy's sixth law, but he first formulated it back in the early 1980s, when he used to unprotect floppies and mail them back to manufacturers to demonstrate the futility of the practice. If we could only ditch that regressive anti-consumer robber baron legislation misnomered the Digital Millennium Copyright Act, we might begin to see the future's shape. Someday we'll look back on the protection racket with incredulity.

In the herd passing by, the Spy notes

- Logwatch 7.3.5. for Linux and assorted UNIXs. Install with rpm -Uvh <ftp://ftp.kaybee.org/pub/redhat/RPMS/noarch/logwatch-7.3.6-1.noarch.rpm>,
- TLA Systems' DragThing 5.8, which now also becomes the upgrade path for once competitor DropDrawers, and is of course available mirrored at downloads.thenorthernspy.com (Have we mentioned TLA's very nice P Calc 3, also in a widget?),
- IBM's Power 6 chip running hot at 4.7G and representing Apple's once and no longer future. Nice for high end servers and speciality devices, though you couldn't run these power suckers in a consumer product (why there was no there there for Apple). OTOH, neither can you deny the deep geek value of the best line of chip design the industry has seen in decades. Sigh. Too bad the pinstripes' engineers couldn't have made it a priority to get the speed up and the power consumption down for mass market purposes. But, IBM wanted a small waterhole all to itself, so it waved goodbye to the main herd--a move that will eventually prove costly.

Meanwhile, having performed a BTG (Branch to Tall Grass),

MS sponsors a lonely shorthorn drive which relatively few buyers attend. Certainly, some forty million copies of Vista have been pushed out the door, but unit placements have slowed dramatically, box assemblers are reverting to XP, many institutional and government buyers have deferring purchase for two years or longer, unsold boxes are piled in most stores, reviewers are universally negative, and long-time employees quietly shopping resumes around. Customers must perforce accept new machines with the lame OS pre-installed (artfully boosting the raw numbers), but many rip it out and installing XP rather than experience vistas of grief. Thus, despite strong words from a brave face, Redmond must be very worried.

In all the hype, an upgrade to the venerable Mac Office 2004 at version 11.3.5 has gone almost unnoticed. It's a 59.5MB upload, but for security and stability reasons, strongly recommended by MS for all Mac users. The Spy has mixed feelings about the whole thing. Nothing much could rescue W*rd from its non-intuitive, clumsy, confusing interface, nor Access from its status of worst in class, but he depends heavily on Excel, still the single most important and best designed piece of application software in the industry--ever--all categories, and this despite it employing VBA, the all-time industry-wide poster boy for how not to do language design. All those macros he wrote in such linguistic pain are out the window on the next upgrade, when VBA falls to AppleScript. What happens then to cross-platform compatibility? Will an Excel file automated on the Mac still perform on Vista, or vice-versa? Apparently not, and this therefore strikes him as an interim measure, likely to be abandoned a year or so down this road. Time to find a new spreadsheet product with more stability.

Is it just a case of hoof in mouth disease,

or does the MS rant over Linux and associated programs/utilities violating some 200+ of its patents strike you also as arising from a severe inferiority complex? Or, is this a suicidal desire to become the next SCO. Who, you ask? Exactly. Face it. Linux has won the data centre wars, and offers no threat on the desktop. Attacking it is a total waste.

There's another issue here most people are missing. Software patents themselves restrict an industry that depends for its very existence on being nimble-footed, able to ramp up new technology quickly from raw ideas. Patenting those ideas (which is what this amount to) is contrary to the spirit of the information age, impedes progress, may violate international law, and will surely cost MS more in time and resources than it could possibly hope to gain, even if some tame judge does exhibit an attack of temporary insanity. That's why the Spy's second Law--everything will eventually be open source. Lock horns elsewhere folks; this is another lost battle.

Somewhere back in the herd,

despite rumours it will ditch its current OS for a Linux base, labours Palm, which recently announced the Treo 755p. This is for the Sprint network and will have some new features, but the Spy classifies it as a minor rev, along with all the 600+ models. The camera is now 1.3MB, the battery removable, the expansion slot on the side, and the antenna hidden inside the main case, screens are higher resolution, there is more software, and higher data speeds, and yet... and yet, in view of the MaciPhone, all this seems too little and too late, a recycling of the then revolutionary Treo 600 but without any renewed vision for what a phone/PDA could become. Indeed, Palm seems to be the company with the most to lose, a prairie dog community on the path of the herd. There mightn't be much left in a few years.

Don't know whether Apple will be able to do better on this front, but the cost of mobile phone service is exorbitant, especially considering that data plans are extra. Hey, let's have that 755p \$280 advertised price without being shackled to a monthly contract, and supply a little competition so the phone companies aren't raking in obscene profits. Then tell me how wonderful these smart phones are. iSteve take note. Even twenty million back orders won't revolutionize the industry if customers realize they're being ripped off on the utility bill afterward. Let's hear it for some real creativity in phone industry pricing--prepaid plans, free roaming, no lock-ins, and for that matter, no locked phones. It makes no more sense to protect services than it does software or content.

--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>

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

The Spy's Shareware download site: <http://downloads.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>

Logwatch : <http://www2.logwatch.org>

TLA Systems (Drag Thing PCalc 3) : <http://tla-systems.co.uk/>

Office press release :

http://www.power.org/news/pr/view?item_key=beb3d7582586bd44d45292705332153ed9121618

Office Downloads : <http://www.microsoft.com/mac/downloads.aspx>

Palm : <http://www.palm.com/us/products/smartphones/treo755p/>

The Principles of Beautiful Web Design

Reviewed by Robert Pritchett



Author: Jason Beaird

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

Publisher: Sitepoint

<http://www.sitepoint.com/books/design1/>

Released: March 2007.

Pages: 180

\$40 USD, \$52 CND, £28 GBP, €43.21 Euro

ISBN-10: 0975841963

ISBN-13: 9780975841969

Audience: Anybody interested in taking websites up a notch.

Strengths: Shows how to make gold out of dross.

Weaknesses: Some typos that got past the publishers.

Introduction

“Tired of making web sites that work absolutely perfectly but just don’t, well, *look* very nice? Using *The Principles of Beautiful Web Design*, you’ll see just how easy it can be to create aesthetically pleasing and usable web site designs.”

In this book...

On the website it mentions that an RGB color card is included with *The Principles of Beautiful Web Design* by Jason Beaird. My copy of the book did not, perhaps because I ordered it through O’Reilly - <http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/0975841963/index.html> It can be ordered for an additional \$7.95 USD from the SitePoint website. This is offset by the fact that there are Internet links sprinkled throughout the book both in the text and in the footers.



There are 5 chapters on layout and composition, color, texture, typography and imagery.

I marked areas that were helpful to me, such as multi-column navigation and layout configurations, information on color contrasts, special treatment regarding sIFR (Scalable Inman Flash Replacement) where text can be seen in original fonts without resorting to graphics at <http://www.mikeindustries.com/sifr> or <http://www.wiki.novemberborn.net/sifr> I also learned about comparing screen type at <http://typetester.maratz.com/> and HTML character entity references at http://www.w3schools.com/tags/ref_entities.asp

On our website, depending on the browser, you may see the blue outline on a graph, usually the magazine cover that is linked to another page. I found through this book how to use multiple layered images to “hide” the link.

Conclusion

Besides being a tad overpriced for the amount of content, and being an advertisement for other Sitepoint books, this book does a great job introducing aesthetics to web design.

Recommendation

If you are interested in putting on a good image online, this book will help you get there.

Devices of the Soul: Battling for Our Selves in an Age of Machines

Reviewed by Robert Pritchett

O'REILLY®

Author: Steve Talbot

<http://www.netfuture.org>

Publisher: O'Reilly

<http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/9780596526801/index.html#>

Released: April 2007.

Pages: 281

\$23 USD, \$30 CND, £11.54 GBP, €17.83 Euro

ISBN-10: 0596526806

ISBN-13: 9780596526801

Audience: Anybody interested in how hi-tech affects society.

Strengths: Looks at the impact of hi-tech on society.

Weaknesses: The book is “shovelware” from *Netfuture: Technology and Human Responsibility*. One or two cuss words.

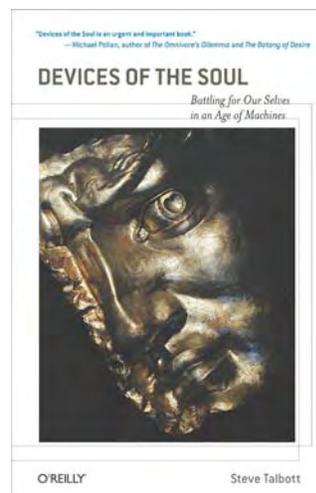
Introduction

Devices of the Soul: Battling for Our Selves in an Age of Machines is a thought-provoking collection of “the best of the best” from Steve Talbot’s online *Netfuture: Technology and Human Responsibility* newsletter.

"Self-forgetfulness is the reigning temptation of the technological era. This is why we so readily give our assent to the absurd proposition that a computer can add two plus two, despite the obvious fact that it can do nothing of the sort-not if we have in mind anything remotely resembling what we do when we add numbers," writes Talbot. "In the computer's case, the mechanics of addition involve no motivation, no consciousness of the task, no mobilization of the will, no metabolic activity, no imagination. And its performance brings neither the satisfaction of accomplishment nor the strengthening of practical skills and cognitive capacities."

In this book...

There are 5 parts to the book that almost come off as “high-brow”, but not quite.



Technology, Nature and the Human Prospect dedicates itself to looking at how we almost unquestionably accept anything that is generated through computers. Steve compares us to the Waorani, who have superior weapons with the blowgun and oneness with nature to feed their families, but liked the inferior single-shot breachloaders, because they made a wonderful sound and cool clicking noises and power of explosions. Are we any different with the “wow” factor of shiny new things with the “intrinsic attraction of the object itself”?

In *Extraordinary Lives*, Steve questions the reasoning behind trying to make those with “handicaps” like those who do not and the exceptional gifts they bring to humanity. Those who have suffered, yet have coped without “becoming one” with technology. Perhaps like Jordi in *Star Trek the Next Generation* who used special visors to “see”, and given the option to gain regular sight, he opted to go back to his own system of seeing. There are many examples of those who have worked with children with challenges and how their lives have been touched as they worked with these special individuals. Swim with dolphins or have conversations with birds.

In *From Information to Education*, I found the concepts of bringing balance and connection into focus as we become a “wired” society. I may just have to get a copy of Jane Healy’s book *Failure to Connect: How Computers Affect Our Children’s Minds – For Better and Worse* since Steve Talbot essentially devotes much of this section to her disturbing findings. In fact, Steve lists a number of paragraphs to these topics and lists them at http://www.netfuture.org/inx_topical_all.html and <http://www.allianceforchildhood.net>

I also found the commentary on harm caused from accelerated human development rather eye-opening as he looks at baby walkers, video games and sexual relations. And I loved his coinage of the term “kanbrain” (play on “just-in-time” kanban for the mind) and issues regarding a “credentialed” society and the failings of higher education.

On Socializing Our Machines, I tended to get lost with Ella, HAL, Rodney Brooks and Kismet as Steve attempts to bring spiritual responsibility to mechanical creations.

The final section *On Mechanizing Society* digs into good vs. evil, technologies designed to “protect” us, and digital servants and privacy issues, profit and capitalism gaming and Internet ubiquity.

He finishes up with a look at a hope for a better, healthier society without falling into the crassness and back allies of a baser uncivilized environment that is being approached by what we see online today.

Conclusion

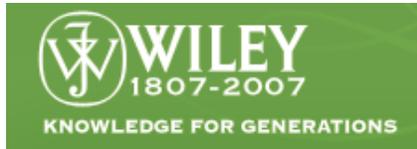
Steve Talbott helps us realize that technology is designed to help us and not replace us, but we need to not relinquish all thought=process to machines and take responsibility for our actions and inactions regarding how we use technology. Do we use computers to make things better or are we letting evil tendencies take over?

Recommendation

Everything in this book can be read on Steve Talbott's website, but if you would like to have it all in one place and you would like to sit down and read a book "offline", then this one might be one you might enjoy regarding how we may put computer technology into proper perspective.

iPod and iTunes for Dummies (4th edition)

Reviewed by Dr. Eric Flescher



Authors: Tony Bove and Cheryl Rhodes

<http://www.dummies.com/WileyCDA/DummiesTitle/productCd-0470048948.html>

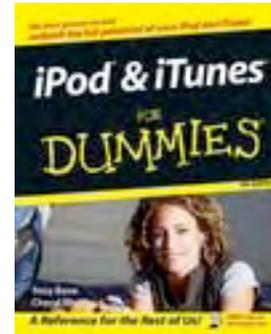
Released: October 2006

Pages: 432

\$22 USD, \$26 CND, £15 GBP, €17, Euro

ISBN: 0470048948

Novice/Intermediate/Advanced



Strengths: Covers a lot of territory about iTunes and iPod. Covers topics in breadth and depth. Easy to read but informative.

Weaknesses: Only black and white, but easy to read.

The iPod and its software iTunes have been a hit for millions of computer users and is the MP3 player of choice. There is no manual for the iPod or iTunes. While both the hardware and the software are easy to use and easy to understand, there are music lovers who want to know more about their devices right away, instead of waiting to hear from a friend how to find or do something. That is where *iPod and iTunes for Dummies* (4th edition) fills the void.

While most of the *Dummy* books are adequate, there are some that stand out to an even greater extent. These offer good in-depth and comprehensive advice, tutorials and information, especially for price. This one is a great one to get you started, whether you are an iPod novice or have upgraded your knowledge to new versions of the software or device.

Both authors have written more than a dozen books on computers, desktops publishing and multimedia and their experience is displayed with prowess in this book. *iPod and iTunes for Dummies* is packed with information in its 6 parts that include 28 chapters and span 432 pages.

I like the way this book is organized and set up. It is easy to read, yet informative and helpful. While it lacks color, the readable format including illustrations, readable screenshots and photos make it stand out.

There are also special insights which are noted with special icons throughout the text. Five highlight icons are entitled "Remember," "Technical Stuff", "Tip", "Warning", "On the Web" and serve to target important information in the chapters.

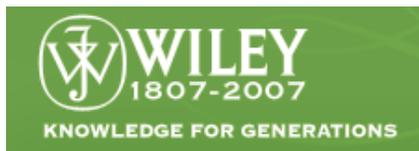
This 4th edition covers the latest updates: Set up iTunes and iPod; buying music and videos; importing music into iTunes; burning CDs from iTunes; get wired for sound; organizing your songs, playlist and more; getting the most out of your battery; selecting and encoding format; recording and editing sound; adding podcasts and working with sound shows. The book also explains in details how to use the iPod as a hard drive storage unit.

Special parts of the book that some users might find useful in particular are Using Airtunes for wireless stereo playback (Chapter 6); sharing content on networks (Chapter 7); managing photos and videos (Chapter 11) ; baking your own discs with printed inserts (Chapter 14) and decoding audio encoding (Chapter 18). There is also a good index and an appendix section with musicmatch additional information and web resources for the Internet related to the iPod.

While it might be a Dummies book, it does not “talk down to you.” It is not only a good read, but the price is a good one for what it offers. The book is a great resource guide. The best way to look through the book is to read the sections that are most interesting and jump around. There are many good books out there, but this one is definitely worth considering.

iPod Fully Loaded

Reviewed by Dr. Eric Flescher



Author: Andy Ihnatko

<http://www.wiley.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd-0470049502.html>

Released: October 23, 2006

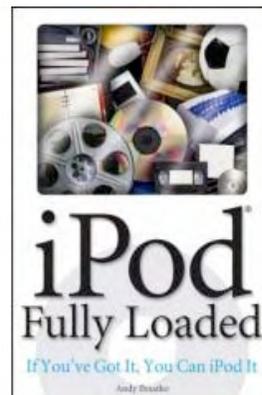
Pages: 312

\$20 USD, \$14 CND, £14 GBP , €15.50 Euro

ISBN-10: 0470049502

ISBN-13: 978-0470049501

Novice/Intermediate/Advanced



Strengths: Great tutorials and information. Breadth and depth of information in a field guide like book is a remarkable find. Great price and can be used for mac or pc iPod users. Nice looking book as well.

Weaknesses: None found.

As anyone knows, the iPod is a big hit both for Mac and PC users. There are many ways to use it and sometimes the best way to discover the merits of this device is to read a good book that is both a tutorial and informational resource guide. For the price, breadth and depth of the information in a book that also looks good, you can't beat the *book iPod Fully Loaded*.

Andy Ihnatko is well known in Technology and Macintosh circles. He has written for nearly every Mac magazine and is currently the Chicago Sun-Times Technology columnist. If you've got a copy of *iPod Fully Loaded*, you can iPod it and this guy backs up its title by being very authoritative and having a lot of information.

In its 312 pages within 20 chapters Andy squeezes a lot of good and useful information. The pale shades of the book utilizing the light green lines are laid out throughout the book along with great screenshots, tips and tidbit and more. These subtle hues draw your attention into all the textual information that makes reading easy instead of a chore. It is a different change not to see brilliant stark white pages and this arrangement complements the text well.

There is a nice troubleshooting section. Chapter 3 has valuable information concerning what it takes to record from a USB turntable. For audio recording the free *Audacity* software can be downloaded and the rest of the chapter shows how to use it with your iPod. The section has good information choosing and preparing an audio source as well down and very useful. The section “What software can’t do for you ” applies more information about music with records and tape conversion. Importing into iTunes is important and covers even more.

There are chapters that deal with podcasts, streaming audio, Internet video, downloading free music, using your iPod with web pages, working with email, presentation usage. There are interesting chapters dealing with using the iPod for travel both for PC and Mac users while using Google Maps (Chapter 19) and using the iPod as photo storage, backing up files and much more.

Finally, the book has a nice index, and interesting Appendix sections on automating processes in Mac OS X and workflow. The second appendix is Text-to-Speech.

Andy has crafted this book with in-depth detail, tutorials and solid instructions. It is easy on the eyes as well as being pleasurable for your brain. The book is easy on your wallet and is well worth the price. This book is a great buy if you are thinking and reading to gain more knowledge for ideas and solving problems concerning your iPod.

the myths of innovation

Reviewed by Robert Pritchett

O'REILLY®

Author: Scott Berkun

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

Publisher: O'Reilly

<http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/9780596527051/>

Released: May 2007.

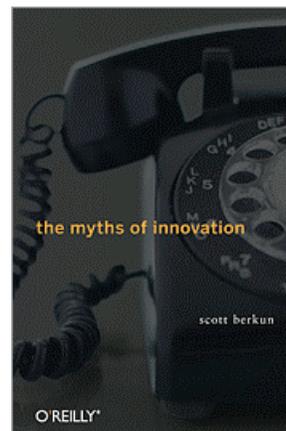
Pages: 192

\$25 USD, \$33 CND, £15 GBP, €19.38 Euro

ISBN-10: 0596527055

ISBN-13: 9780596527051

Audience: For anyone interested in looking at what drives innovation.



Strengths: Demystifying epiphanies and challenging misplaced faith in myths.

Weaknesses: One or two cuss words. At the time of the review the <http://www.mythsofinnovation.com> website did not work. And the book does have a typo or two that snuck past the printers.

Introduction

“In *The Myths of Innovation*, bestselling author Scott Berkun takes a careful look at innovation history, including the software and Internet Age, to reveal how ideas truly become successful innovations-truths that people can apply to today's challenges. Using dozens of examples from the history of technology, business, and the arts, you'll learn how to convert the knowledge you have into ideas that can change the world.

- Why all innovation is a collaborative process
- How innovation depends on persuasion
- Why problems are more important than solutions
- How the good innovation is the enemy of the great
- Why the biggest challenge is knowing when it's good enough

In this book...

Scott Berkun has done an excellent job bringing google searches and his own research to print regarding innovation. Since Scott is a former Microsoft Manager, I found his occasional references to Steve Jobs intriguing, even as we hear the Microsoft PR machine continue to make Microsoft appear as an innovator.

Scott even has a self promotion website and Blog that brings interactivity into the equation.

The Myths of Innovation looks at a list of idea killers, but Scott's Blog provides balance and even lists idea starters not found in the book –

<http://www.scottberkun.com/blog/2006/idea-killers-ways-to-stop-ideas/>

<http://www.scottberkun.com/blog/2006/idea-starters-ways-to-grow-ideas/>

There are 10 chapters and an Appendix that makes the book feel like Scott took a Master's Thesis approach to writing. The book was heavily previewed by others, based on the plethora of quotes praising the book found prior to getting into the Preface.

There is some repetition, but not much as Scott Berkun lays out what the myth of epiphany is, the “history” of and method for innovation, the “lone” inventor, why good ideas are hard to find, how bosses know more than you, why we believe that best ideas win, problems and solutions and a tongue-planted firmly-in-cheek approach to why innovation is always good (Not).

I dog-eared the heck out of this book even as I experienced the dark angst that seems to be the flavor of this book. Scott shows us who some of the brave souls are who took intellectual and physical risks to improve the world and the near-total rejection initially of their ideas and concepts that eventually did in fact change the world for the better.

Each chapter has footnotes that either link to book references or website links for digging deeper.

I came away realizing once again that innovators create sea changes and challenge the status quo with their egos. I now understand that imagination needs to be rediscovered and that facts, ideas and solutions each require quality time to come to fruition. And to bring those innovations to fruition may require entrepreneurship to bring them to light.

Nothing gets accomplished in a vacuum and while one or two individuals get “credit” for championing a cause, there are myriads of others behind the scenes that make things happen, based on hundreds and thousands of previous little insights and inventions beginning with something as simple as a screw.

I really liked this line – “America created Superman, not *Second-place-man* or *Sometimes-better-than-average-guy*” – as Scott delves in to the benefits of Meritocracy.

Apparently there is a Yin and Yang thing about innovation and Scott also looks at some secondary factors such as culture, dominant design, inheritance and tradition, politics, economics, goodness, short-term vs. long-term thinking and finding the “sweet spot” between the competition of ease of adoption of an idea and the goodness of a given innovation.

Most innovations are a function of a problem looking for a solution, with the best innovations looking at what customers want vs. what engineering constraints or “revolution” is being pursued. I read about the importance of prototyping and experimenting before rushing off to production.

The last chapter deals with unintended consequences of innovative ideas and cites the fact that Orville Wright lived to see the plane originally intended for peaceful observation in war to replace the hot air balloon, to be used to drop nuclear bombs on cities. He missed out watching them used to fly into buildings.

The effects of dichloro-diphenyl-trichloroethane used to control typhus and malaria ended up creating collateral effects such as cats eating DDT-laden lizards that died, causing the rat population to increase and bringing back the threat of plague to humans. Scott also created a table showing the good and bad effects not only of DDT, but automobiles, personal computers and cell phones.

The potato famine of 1845 in Ireland was triggered by the Clipper ship. The 5 weeks that used to be the time to cross the Atlantic was enough time for the potato fungus to die. Once the Clipper did the same trip in 12 days, the fungus was still alive and caused the Great Potato Famine in Ireland. Each innovation finally accepted by the public either eliminated or reduced existing jobs – but created whole new industries. Thus the “angst flavoring” I found in the book.

Conclusion

Perhaps the reason the book cover is in shades of black, is because there is a darker side to innovation. But if we didn't have great thinkers and risk-takers, would society be better off or worse today? I would say, “bring on the innovation”!

Recommendation

If you want a thought-provoking experience looking at innovation, philosophy and morality, Scott Berkun has done a pretty good job bringing these related issues to our attention.

Word 2007: The Missing Manual, First Edition

By Harry {doc} Babad © 2007

O'REILLY®

Author: Chris Grover

Publisher: Pogue Press, O'Reilly

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

Released: December 2006

Pages: 552

\$23 USD, \$39 CDN, £13.99 GBP, €29.00 Euro

ISBN 10: 0-596-52739-X

ISBN 13: 9780596527396

Audience: Intermediate and advanced users of MS Word.

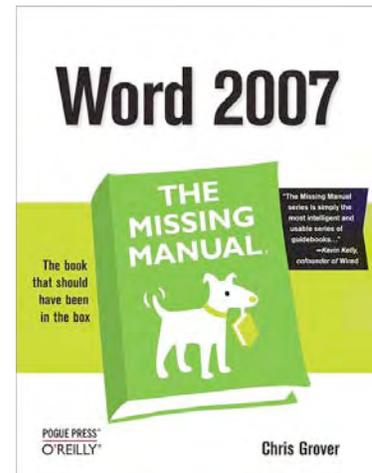
Strengths: This book explains basics in detail and teaches, in a more summary fashion, more advanced concepts. It appears to have been written for those who are just beginning to use Word seriously, or for those who want to learn more about creating attractive documents for more than just typing letters or shopping lists.

Weaknesses: Even with a magnifying glass many of the gray illustrations were indecipherable. Hasn't anyone heard of color screen shots? Sure they cost more to print, but they serve to help the reader's understanding rather than filling space.

Where appropriate the instructions in the book were tested, for fun, on a 1 GHz dual processor PowerPC G4 Macintosh with 2 GB DDR SDRAM running under OS X 10.4.9 using MSW 2004. Product and company names and logos in this review may be registered trademarks of their respective companies.

Publisher's Description

"Fast-paced and easy to read, this concise guide teaches you the basics of Word 2007 so you can start using the program right away. You'll learn how to create documents, format and edit text, share the results, and go beyond basic documents to handle graphics, create page layouts, and use forms and tables. The new Word is radically different, but with this book, you'll master the new features in no time.



“Word 2007: The Missing Manual not only explains basics like how to create documents, enter and edit text, format, print, and fax, but also learn how to create sophisticated page layouts, insert forms and tables, use graphics, and create book-length documents with outlines and Master Documents. Coverage also includes how to share documents with other people and programs, create web pages, automate documents with fields, and automate tasks with macros and the Visual Basic scripting language.”

Introduction

When I asked myself, “Why are you reviewing this book about a piece of peecee software?”, I had to think. Hard work, but it only took a minute. First and foremost MSW (Microsoft Word) is my primary working tool. Although I recently flirted with NeoOffice 2.1 (see the May 2007 macC), I can be best described, as an “old dog” as far as my word processing habits is concerned.

Office 2008 for Mac is coming in the second half of 2007. Microsoft press releases state that the new version of our productivity suite is designed to work seamlessly for users on either Intel-based Macs or PowerPCs. I wanted to learn more. I have several options, all but one poor.

- Run out and buy both an Intel Macintosh and Office 2007. Sorry, I’ve neither won the lottery, nor yet save enough for my grandkids college education.
- Borrow a PC and a copy of Office 2007 and play with that – Life it too short for those kinds of diversions.
- Read a good book and hope to get a feel for what MS promised for us, the Macintosh, later this year.

As others and I have noted previously, Microsoft's documentation is terrible. Using the help files, at least for MSW 2004, even if I found the features I needed, I still have trouble using them. *Word 2007: The Missing Manual* helps you master Word's redesigned user interface and gives you exactly what you need to create unique, attractive and effective documents. In addition, the author has written a comparable volume *Word 2007 for Starters: The Missing Manual* for users new to the software. This book meets the high standards set by the series editors.¹

So I read this book for possible oohs and ahs I could look forward to in a few months. In this review I share both my thoughts on this, on of the excellent Missing Manual series, from both a potential Windows User and from a hopeful MS Word addict on the Macintosh. I soon learned that the new Word is radically different from previous versions on both platforms, an attention-getting fact. These differences were all made clear by Chris Grover in this book.

¹ Check out; *Inside Microsoft Office 2008 for Macintosh*
<http://www.microsoft.com/presspass/features/2007/jan07/01-09Macworld.msp> and
Microsoft reveals details of Office 2008 for Mac
<http://www.macworld.com/news/2007/01/09/msftoffice/index.php>

Working with the Books Contents

Okay, I read on, starting on page one and stopping at the index. Note that the book assumes a small amount of PC knowledge on the part of the reader. Fortunately, to get the most out of the book, I had the knowledge.

So what did the book tell me to expect:

- Gone at the dropdown Menus – Glory Be the Ribbons — The “drop down” menu has been replaced by “ribbons” that more directly allows you to focus not only on what you want to, but also provided you instant access to the tools with which to make the changes you want. Everything you’ll ever want to do in MS Word is now packed into the ribbon. Functions are grouped logically into tabs: so, for example in Word you get tabs called: Home, Insert, Page Layout, References, Mailing, Review, and View. These however, on occasion, change as you change tasks in MS Word providing you with a developer, add-ins or other options. Each one could be thought of as a “task”. You want to Insert something, change the Page Layout, Review a document, etc.



- But here’s the problem: this new interface, which is now common to all office applications, is so different from what was there before, that (initially at least) no one really knows how to use it. We’ve all grown up with the familiar Word pull-down menu. Word 2007 is so different that many users will resemble a folksinger switching to a newfangled Fender guitar after a lifetime using his bread and butter acoustic box. Although the ribbons are a change, based on my reading, they should only cause a minor discomfort to heavy MSW users. I’m guessing it will not take long to adapt to them.
- There are new file formats, changes designed to protect against macro based do-bads. Gone is .doc and here we come with .docx and .docm, the later for all document that contain macros.
- Many of the often used functions, but not their menu shortcuts, have been reorganized according to the task and function in a way that is less confusing to the user. Under each tab in what was the menu, you get a collection of buttons, list boxes etc to help accomplish the task in question. – This book tells it all.

Take note, the best way to use this book is not by reading it as I did. [Reviewers, compulsively, don't want to miss anything.] Instead, read a chapters or part of one, a little at a time at time. Or perhaps just browse in the areas of interest until you find something that you've wanted to do in MSW that eluded you. For me, topics that stuck a chord were creating bookmarks, working with long documents, and using mail merge.

Then, right away, not tomorrow, do the virtual exercises. The book is full of good examples of the various functions and methods discussed in each section. They are easy to follow, and help you in understanding the material of a given section. These are not explicit tutorials in a how-to sense. The reader should walk though the steps for any given action, with the book propped up next to your screen. I did this, translating the information to MSW 2004, and was surprised how quickly I got comfortable with using MS Word in ways that were previously awkward.

...And Now the Details

The book is divided up into chapters that deal with the more and further along, the less routine talks you want to perform. Starting with the basics, the books walks you through the basics of accommodating the changes to, and using MSW. In later chapters, the book gets its teeth into core complex materials, e.g. setting margins, customizing columns, and formatting sections using style sets. Finally, there are chapters on customizing Word: changing the workspace, using macros, creating your own themes and templates, and so on.

Although all parts of this book are well organized, outlined, and logical, many of the topics were not personally compelling. This is no fault of the book, but rather is the result of how and for what I use MSW. Many of you will find the chapters that I was not impressed by, useful and compelling.

The Introduction — Perhaps the best part of this book

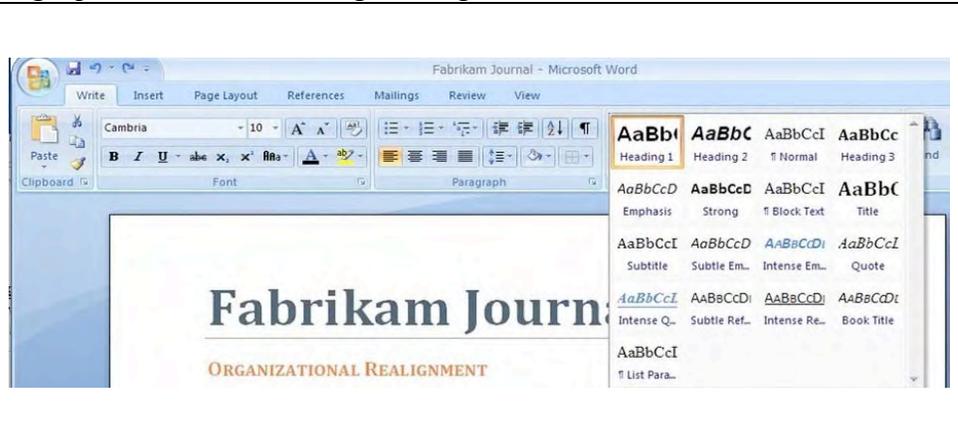
Part One — Word Basics for Simple Documents

Chapter 1: *Creating, Opening, and Saving Documents*

Chapter 2: *Entering and Editing Text*

Chapter 3: *Setting Up the Document: Margins, Page Breaks, and More*

Chapter 4:
*Formatting
Text,
Paragraphs,
and
Headings* —
That
includes
using the
now more
accessible
styles



Chapter 5: *Themes and Templates*

Chapter 6: *Spelling, Grammar, and Reference Tools*

Chapter 7: *Printing Word Documents*

These are the usual getting started themes and are well worth a quick glance, if for no other purpose than to see the changes made in the user interface in Word 2007.

Part Two — Creating Longer and More Complex Documents

Chapter 8: *Planning with Outlines* — This was an excellent chapter, which focuses on planning your document by making use of a more streamlined outlining interface in Word 2007. Although I'm still likely to work first in Opal (on my Macintosh of course) but then I own the product. However, what I read leads me to believe the implementation of outline features will become easier in Word 2008. Than in MSW 2004.

Chapter 9: *Working with Long Documents* — Perhaps the weakest part of this document. But I am coming from the perspective of a writer of longish technical documents and an occasional book chapter. Mo0re about that later in the review.

Chapter 10:
Organizing Your Information with Tables — One of my favorite tool made easier to use. The book also clearly explains when to use tables and when to rely on setting margin tabs.

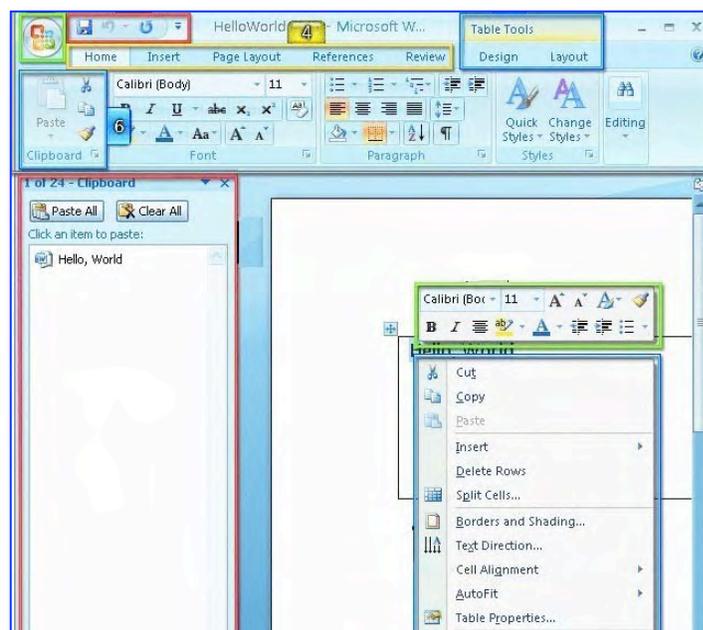
Chapter 11: *Adding Graphics, Video, and Sound to Your Documents* — I ignored all but the graphics part of this

chapter since there is no conceive occasion that I might want to do this. I was delighted to find that the process of inserting an illustration with a caption has become easier to do on Word 2007. That ease I hope will spill over to Word 2008.

Cause Celeb — The section on graphics and other media complete forgets to warn readers about copyright infringement.

A Nit or Three — What is smart art? (See pages 258 and 271). What is a “pull quote”? — I love new words but give me a reference - please.

Chapter 12: *Mass Mailing with Mail Merge* – Although I seldom need to mail more than two dozen “form” items, after rending the section, I began to think I might well be able to do a mail merge.



Part Three — Sharing Documents and Collaborating With Other People

Chapter 13: *Creating Web Pages and Blogs* — It looks more easily doable, but I don't.

Chapter 14: *Creating Forms with Word* — The way to go! This worked out well in MS 2004 when I tried it. I can hardly wait to create forms in MSW 2008 when it is released.

Chapter 15: *Word's XML Connection* — Another section that I had no immediate use for, although it's good to know it's been covered.

Chapter 16: *Collaborating with Other People* — What me, an iconoclast and loner, collaborate? But seriously, from what I've recently read, there are additional virtues to using MSW rather than Acrobat for this purpose. I've used both and have difficulty choosing. The collaboration process, in MSW, now looks less cumbersome (its interface including track changes) and is likely to be smoother than what I need to do in MSW 2004.

Part Four — Customizing Word with Macros and Other Tools

Chapter 17: *Customizing Your Workspace* — Although the interface is different, I am delighted to have learned that it is as easy to customize MSW 2007 as it was Word 2004 – But, I hope neither colleague, nor my grandson, tries to use MSW 2004 my shortcuts... they will be surprised at the many changes I've made. My daughter did, much to her chagrin.

A Nit — There's no information on creating a new set of customized special purpose toolbars. I can and have done this in MS Word 2004. Have I missed something?

Chapter 18: *Changing Your Security Settings* — Okay, folks will find these easier to use. One new thing I learned was that there is metadata that identified you in your documents, whether you want that or not, but the book tells you how to remove it.

Chapter 19: *Introducing Macros and Visual Basic* — The Macros section was fascinating. I've managed to butcher every instance of recording a macro shortcut in MSW 2004. I've focused on simple stuff like reformatting text that I copied from the web. The macros were supposed to make it easier to transform the text to my preferred recipe format. The information in this chapter makes that easier to do even in MSW 2004.

Chapter 20: *Creating Your Own Themes and Templates* — This was a capability that I've avoided for many version of MSW. Every time I've tried, I do something wrong — some day I'll get back to this when my needs for complex standardized templates evolve.

Part Five – The Appendix

The later includes a, excuse the pun, brief but focused helpful section called “Works Help and Beyond.” It should be a must-read.

The book concludes with an index, which proved complete content list in the instances I needed to check it.

A Minor Discomfort

The only place book disappointed me, except for the illegibility of many of the graphics, was in explicitly dealing with the creation of long documents. I’m not sure whether I can put into words what I was looking for. Perhaps it’s a sort of way to integrate the bits and pieces of information to enable me to produce a template or three that I could use to create a technical document without having to worry about individual styles or the formatting of the pieces. Perhaps I’m in the wrong book.

It’s not that I’m not intrigued by *master documents* or collaborative writing (or editing). However, what I really want to know is how to write a long document based on creating a style that works for or a longish technical report. The style should be intuitive, all the aspects of style and document origination should both self-consistent and easy to implement. Now the book has sections on creating TOC and Indices and working with links. It also discusses headers, footers, and bibliographic citations at great length. There is a lot of good information about creating Tables, inserting graphics and the like. But the book requires me to work too hard at integrating the pieces. Shame on you!

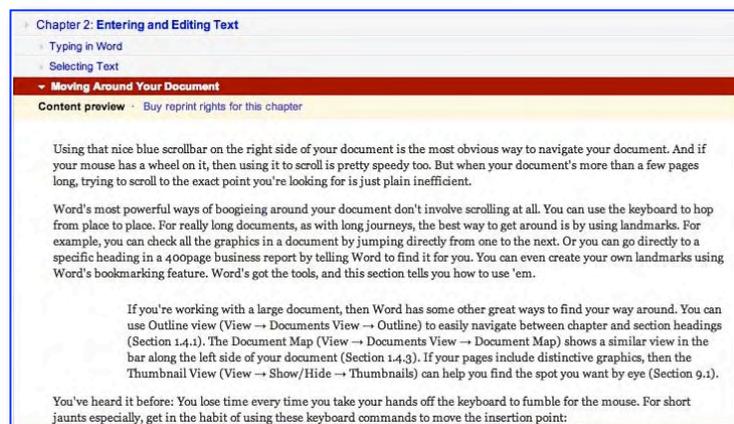
Another Graphics Issues — In a number of places (no I did not make a list), a graphic seemed either out of place or could not be tied to the associated text. This seems more loosey-goosey than the other Missing Manuals.

A Kudo for the Publisher

When I checked the publisher’s web site, I found a great deal of useful book related material. As I always do, since I need a copy for my review — I checked out the TOC. The TOC for *Word 2007: The Missing Manual* is presented not as a list but in outline form. When you click on a chapter or section

title, you can read the first two to four paragraphs of that section. Sometimes, there is a paragraph of additional material from elsewhere in the book associated with that topic. No graphics are provided, but the outline allows the reader good look at the whole book. A little of that material might also be useful to reviewers. The outline approach to a book’s contents beats providing a single chapter/section lists. Ups, the O’Reilly folks do that too and the index as well. Perhaps such annotated TOCs have been a part of previous book descriptions on the O’Reilly website, but I’d not previously noticed.

<http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/9780596527396/toc.html>



Conclusions/Recommendations

I recommend this book to those peecce users just starting out in MS Word or for those who want to build on their basic knowledge of this powerful word-oriented document creation tool. Although not the complete story, it does provide a readable and clear means to really learn the in-depth capability of this the latest version of MS Word.

In fact, for anyone wanting to get familiar with the MSW's suite's new interface and richer but easier to use features should buy this book.

...And if that not enough, Check out the Missing CD on the website. It contains examples exercise and more, without charging you an extra \$5 USD for a CD you many not often use.

Author BIO

Christopher **Grover** lives in Fairfax, California with his wife and two daughters. Chris received degrees in Creative Writing and Film from Emerson College in Boston, Massachusetts. He's worked as a technical writer, advertising copywriter and product publicist for more than 25 years. His freelance articles have been published in a variety of magazines from Fine Homebuilding to CD-ROM World. Chris's latest project is launching Bolinas Road Creative, an agency that helps small businesses promote their products and services. He's also the author of "Word 2007: The Missing Manual" and "Word 2007 for Starters: The Missing Manual."

Hardware

Tom Bihn ID Messenger Bag

Reviewed by Wayne LeFevre



Tom Bihn
2203 1st Ave S. Suite #200
Seattle, WA 98134
1-800-729-9607 (US and Canada)
+1 206-652-4123 (Other Countries)
Fax: +1 206-621-8264
<http://www.tombihn.com>
\$130 USD, \$142 CND, £65 GBP
Requirements: None



Strengths: Heavy Duty, many configuration options for wearing.

Weaknesses: None.

Introduction

When I needed a messenger type of bag to carry papers, magazine, books and maybe a laptop back and forth to the hospital I didn't think twice about where to get it. Tom Bihn. I already had a Tom Bihn backpack, the Smart Alec, but it was a little awkward for just the items I was carrying. After some research on tombihn.com and some correspondence with them, I found that the ID bag had recently been redesigned and would be a perfect fit. How right they were.

It finally struck me that Tom Bihn and Apple, Inc. are definitely on the same wavelength, and have a lot of the same ideals. Tom's bags are meticulously hand crafted, with design and functionality seamlessly blending into one. The workers on the floor obviously take pride in recreating the art pieces that Tom has designed. I emphasize again something that I pointed out last time with the Smart Alec review, the craftsman on the floor aren't in another part of the world, where workmanship can be questionable and no oversight committees are needed to make sure things are done correctly. These people work alongside the actual designer in Seattle, Washington. That not only keeps quality high with fewer QC issues, but perhaps even inventiveness and innovation can spring from such a relationship, furthering these exceptional bags.

Description

From the website,

“The ID is a mid-sized messenger bag designed to be used on its own as a messenger bag capable of swallowing everything you need throughout your day or with the addition of our Brain Cell hard-sided laptop case, a secure laptop messenger bag that cradles your laptop and its accessories.

The front flap features a large pocket lined with 200 denier nylon Dyneema® ripstop fabric (a tough, impossible-to-tear fabric) and closed by a #8 YKK Splash-Proof zipper. It's the perfect pocket for storing items you'll need quick access to, such as plane tickets or your passport.



On both sides of the ID are pockets designed to securely carry portable electronic devices such as cell phones, iPods/MP3 players or PDAs. Lined with Ultrasuede® and closed by #8 YKK "splash-proof" Uretech® zippers, these snug pockets also provide scratch-free storage for eyewear. Both pockets feature a tiny opening at the beginning of the zipper for your iPod/MP3 earbuds cord to feed through without getting scrunched. The right side of the ID features an exterior water bottle or umbrella

pocket that can be cinched down with compression straps if not in use.

Under the front flap of the ID, you'll find a #8 YKK zippered pocket, and behind the front section of the bag, an open-top pouch with five organizer pockets sized perfectly for pens, your laptop power supply, and other small accessories. Three small plastic rings inside the bag offer a place to secure the key snap that will keep you from losing your keys, and give you extra spots to secure Tom Bihn Organizer Pouches to the bag.

The main compartment of the ID is wide, open, and offers easy access to your stuff. You'll have room for a couple of books, a light sweater or jacket, a notebook, magazines, and lunch, in addition to typical accessories (pens, cell phone, iPod/MP3 player, small digital camera, toiletries, wallet, checkbook, keys, etc.).



Should you choose to use the ID as a laptop messenger bag, the main compartment features removable Annex clips designed to securely connect a Brain Cell hard-sided laptop case inside the bag.”

The Brain Cell that I use is a #4, which can hold a 15” PowerBook. The fit is tight, but very capable. The size 6, which holds a MacBook, fits comfortably. Unfortunately, my size 4 Brain Cell is vertical, not horizontal, so make sure when ordering if you do get a Brain Cell, which I highly recommend for the padded protection of your laptop, that it is of the horizontal kind.

The back of the ID is foam-stiffened to protect you from feeling the stuff you put in the main compartment. The back features an open flat back pocket perfect for even the thickest of magazines or newspapers, and a removable waist strap for extra stability when you're on your bike.

You can choose between three different shoulder straps to use on your ID bag. The Standard Shoulder Strap, included, is a 1-1/2" wide heavy nylon webbing strap and features a comfortable, wide foam pad that won't slip off your shoulder and is designed to conform to your shoulder and back. For an extra \$10 USD, you can switch out the Standard Shoulder Strap and replace it with the Q-AM (Quick-Adjust Messenger) Shoulder Strap. For an extra \$15 USD, you can switch out the Standard Shoulder Strap and replace it with the Absolute Shoulder Strap.



My favorite strap is the Q-AM. A quick tug of the loop on the end of the strap tightens the long padded strap so the bag instantly rides comfortably on your middle back. Half of the waist strap now becomes a stabilizer strap across your chest making those long walks or bike rides a breeze.

The popular Absolute Shoulder Strap is well padded with almost a gel type consistency. It has a slight stretch to it making carrying any bag much less of a chore. I swear it makes the bag feel lighter. If you want to simply keep the same over-the-shoulder strap of the basic bag, you really will appreciate spending the extra few dollars to upgrade to the Absolute Strap. You won't regret it.

The exterior of the ID is made of 1050 denier Ballistic Nylon (not the fake 1680 denier pseudo-Ballistic Nylon common on lesser products) and is lined with 500 denier Cordura® nylon.

Using the Bag

If Tom could design an ID with a wider main zippered pocket that you could add some internal padded dividers, it would be a perfect camera bag for a DSLR. Whenever I am not using it for a laptop, I always have my camera in the main pocket. No, it's not padded except for the back, and it really isn't even wide enough, but until I get a real camera bag it does nicely. I might even have to look at the new Buzz bag.

Conclusion

Anyone looking for any type of bag for your Mac, or just about anything, needs to look past your local Best Buy and Staples. The quality just is not there with those bags. Not only are they boring to look at, usually with no color, but try to get them to take the bag back when it starts to rip. Yes, you can obtain a bag at your local store for \$30 USD or so, but you'll probably be buying more than one. Tom Bihn designs these bags so they look as good and last as long as you want them to, and that is worth the extra money you might pay for. Plus, they have a Wish List implemented on their site, so you can send your better half a little nudge to their e-mail. My Wish List is under MacFevre! ;-)



Front of ID Bag with Brain Cell in main pocket

iVak iPod Nano Case

Reviewed by Daniel Mackenzie



VAKAADOO, LTD

Unit F, 9 Birdhurst Rise,
South Croydon,

London CR2 7EG United Kingdom

Tel: 0845 895 1002

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

\$25 USD, \$29 CND, £12.69 GBP,

€18.59 Euro

Requirements: 2nd Generation iPod
nano

Strengths: You can dock it in the case,
the material is strong, screen protector,
good looking, lightweight.



Weaknesses: None found.



Introduction

When I look at any iPod case, I want one that is durable. That is one thing that turns me away from gel cases. This is one case which is, in my opinion, in between a gel case and a hard case. It provides the protection of a hard case and the style and colour of a gel case.

Getting Started

One of the phrases the company uses to promote the case is that it's the "Invisible iPod Case". This does not mean that it is clear, it means that the case blends in with the iPod to make it look like there isn't a case at all. I think it has achieved this goal except of lines on both sides of the iPod but that can't be helped. The package included the iPod case, a little rope and a piece of plastic that lets you wrap your headphones around it. This thing is really simple but cool. It lets you adjust the length of the cable so it's just right and your headphones don't get tangled.



Using the Hardware



Putting the iPod in the case couldn't be easier either. Just put the iPod in and snap the two sides together. It is as easy as that and it has a strong seal. If you don't know how to get it open, they have a diagram on the side of the packaging. Another great feature is that you can use a regular Apple dock with it while it's in the case. I've had a problem before when I had to take the iPod out of the case in order to dock it. The screen protector does a great job resisting scratches. It is the same with the case. After using it for a while, you could still say the case was brand new, no signs of damage or scratches. Even under the case it's clean. With some cases, dust and other particles can get up cracks in the case, but nothing got into this case. The rubber-like material makes it easy to hold and does an awesome job of protecting the iPod. If you aren't sure they have the right colour for you, don't worry. They have a colour for every iPod Nano 2G, including the limited edition red Nano.

Conclusion

I have enjoyed this case a lot. I can't think of a thing that could be bad about this product. A strong iPod case that is stylish and functional should be enough to satisfy any iPod user's needs. Awesome job, Vakaadoo! Don't change a thing!

Recommendation

I would recommend this case to anyone with an iPod Nano 2G. Even if you have a case already I recommend you check this one out. You will like it.

Clean Text 5.0 — It does what it says and the greatest of ease

By Harry {doc} Babad - © 2007



Apimac Software, Inc.
Viale Venezia 50/1
Milano, Italy
+44-870-122-4864
FAX: +44-870-122-4864
support@apimac.com
http://www.apimac.com/clean_text/

\$25 USD, \$15 USD Upgrade, Five-user site license \$50 USD, Academic discounts available.

Version Uploaded: 21 Feb 2007

Requirements: Any Macintosh, Power Mac, iBook, PowerBook, eMac, iMac, Mac mini, MacBook, MacBook Pro and Mac Pro running Mac OS X 10.2 or newer; Universal binary; uses 16.1 MB hard drive space.

Strengths: Easy to install, learn and use.

Weaknesses: Lack of a glossary to define the function of the filters.

For a demo of this product: <http://www.apimac.com/downloads/index.php/> A shareware reminder window appears and forces you to wait for some seconds every time you open the program and some options as "Fix Paragraphs" and "Remove Returns" are unavailable.

Copyright Notice: 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 10.4.9.



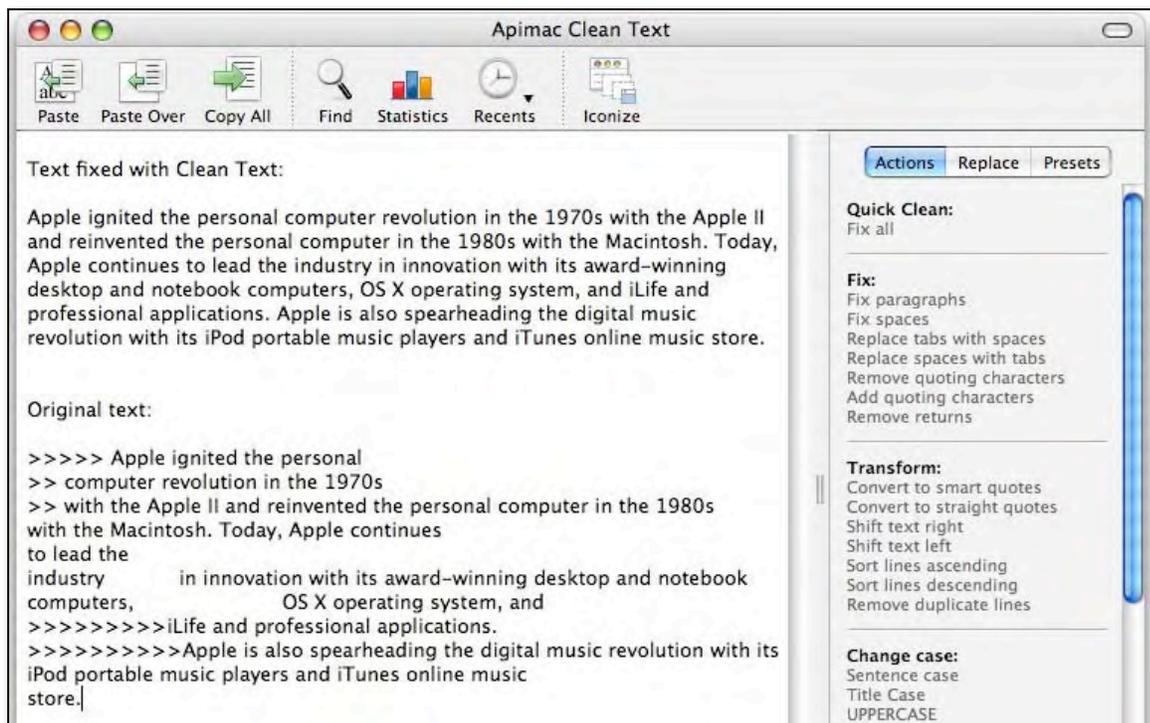
Disclaimer: When briefly reviewing share-freeware I will often use the developer's product, functions and features descriptions. All other comments are strictly my own and based on testing. Why need I rewrite the developer's narratives, if they are clearly written?

Introduction Including Publisher's Summary

I've been using Selznick Scientific's SmartWrap 2.7.3 [\$18] for cleaning up stuff filled Eudora emails. I also have a more universal version of 2.7.3 [\$18] installed that works on some oddly structured documents I receive from well-meaning peecce users. The more universal version works via a paste to my clipboard but also support a large number of both text editing and email programs - <http://www.selznick.com/products/smartwrap/mac/index.htm/>

After having lived with *SmartWrap* for many years, I was eager to try a new text cleaning application. The product appeared, based on the MacUpdate description, more broadly useful. It was also a new toy to play with, but who would challenge that.

Apimac Clean Text is a tool dedicated to webmasters, graphic designers and magazine editors to reduce text cleanup time. *Clean Text* for the Mac eliminates all text formatting preparing it for pasting or printing. It performs other useful functions, such as removing empty lines, removing unwanted spaces, removing tab characters, converting smart quotes, tabs, returns, and more. (I wonder if programmers would benefit from the application?)



Clean Text is an extremely useful tool when you have to paste some text copied from one document or application into another. This is especially true, when you want the text to get the attributes (such as color, font, dimension and style) of the new document instead of preserving the attributes copied from the old one. You will not need this application with *MS Word*, which comes with the attribute saving capability find/replace built in.

As its publisher notes “often you have to paste some text copied from one document or application into another, and you want the text to get the attributes (such as color, font, dimension and style) of the new document instead of preserving the attributes copied from the old one. *Clean Text* for Mac eliminates all text formatting, preparing it for pasting. Moreover, the application performs other useful functions, such as removing empty lines, removing multiple spaces, removing tab characters etc. It's also very useful for printing out text without wasting ink and paper on extra “pages”, as often happens when you print directly from a Web browser.

Getting Started Using the Software

No complex installation procedures, or tuning of complex preferences. It works after I installed it my application folder from the downloaded .dmg file. I neither had to read the simple directions in the Read-me file nor the 3-page (help) Manual. Just like any well-crafted Macintosh program, install it and use it. One thing that worked was not mentioned in the documentation. I could drop and drag a document, for cleanup, to the applications' icon in the dock. Good, one less set of clicks.



I had a lot of fun with the replace feature; it's almost as flexible as the one in *MS Word*. I used it to clean out redundant information in email messages. You know multiple copies of contact information and those annoying AOL tags.

Help or No Help — The brief downloaded help file was very limited. It only contained “Create a preset” and a Trouble shooting” assistance guide. (The downloaded document was identical to the information in the “help” file I accessed from the application menu.)

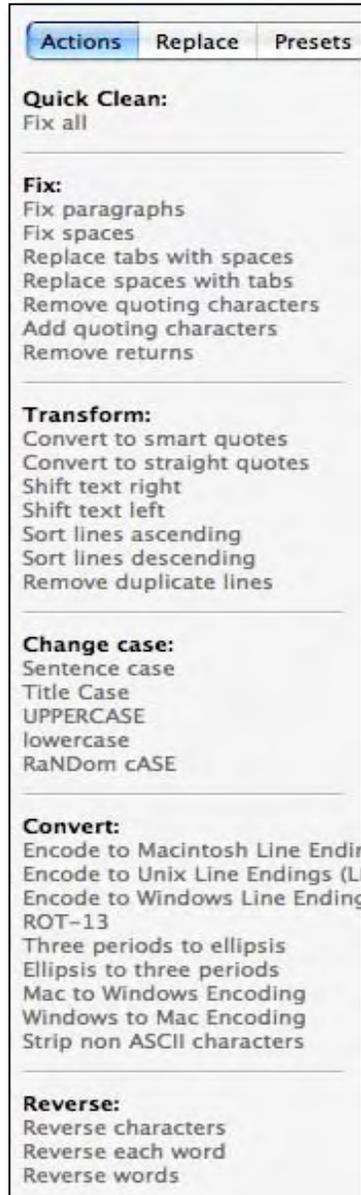
What I Did — I had a number of weirdly formatted email messages and a few rich text formatted documents that were full of garbage. So I tested them.

I found, the brand new *Quick Clean* action, let me solve with a single click the most common cleaning problems for text found in email messages, strangely text coded documents and web pages. After cleanup, then I could further reduce clutter with the replace feature.

I actually played briefly with both the *Quick Clean* and a few of the individual filter actions, but could find no especial reason, at least for now, to specify anything but the former.

The software is flexible and intuitive. You can use the filters one at a time or group them to work in parallel. That for some could be a great convenience. You can, I noted, save the filters you used as a custom preset, so that you can rerun it again later. However, with the limited test samples I had available, the *Clean Text* mode did almost everything I needed. (More on the one exception, below, in the discomforts section.)

Discomforts



Definition of the Software Filters' Functions — Many of the functions (what they did) were obvious from their name but not all. Alas, the brief Help-Manual I downloaded did not help. I would have welcomed a glossary an actual definition of the function of different filters, with an example. Unfortunately, I am not of the school of *if the developer wanted me to use a function, he would have explained it*.

I thrive on glossaries and tutorials. Indeed I was troubled by the lack of explanation of the difference between *paste* and *paste over*, or how *copy all* differed from both of those.

However, with the limited set of test samples, I could not explicitly determine the differences. I'm not a great believer of things being intuitively obvious.

An Unforeseen Limitation to the Product — Although the product, based on limited testing, does everything it claims to, I am greedy and unhappy. But First: why limited testing, I don't keep text formatted gibberish containing content on my hard drive, but immediately clean up with the Selznick product. I had to await some "chain" emails full of layered quotes (layered forward messages) before I could test Clean Text. One came just in time, and of course I cleaned it up, ASAP. I like the developer's example so I'm using it as an illustration.

I'm unhappy because I need some tool that kills the following types of intruding garbage. I had to find the secret message by selecting each set of intruding items and using MS word Find/Replace feature, delete them. (e.g.,)

| |
|--|
| <pre><div class=MsoNormal style="TEXT-ALIGN: center; mso-margin-top-alt: auto; mso-margin-bottom-alt: auto" align=center>&nbsp;</div></pre> |
| <pre><div class=MsoNormal style="mso-margin-top-alt: auto; mso-margin-bottom-alt: auto">In mid December, your paper reviewer is listed in the Preliminary Program.</div></pre> |

Conclusion

Overall impression of the product – good and bad points... Don't forget to include support issues if you experienced any during your evaluation of the product. The products differ on whether you need to use one filter (cleanup facet) at a time or are able to group them for a particular task.

Recommendation

There are a number of products that serve, to various degrees of detail, the same overall function as Clean Text. These include the Selznick product for Eudora [\$18], and Text Soap 5.5.3, <http://www.unmarked.com/textsoap/> a \$30 product.

Other than the lack of a glossary of terms, I am quite happy with *Clean Text*, and would buy it because it is a more powerful and flexible tool than is SmartWrap.

Path Finder 4.6.1 — A file management program that out-finders the Finder

By Harry {doc} Babad - © 2007

welcome to **cocoatech.**
fresh and tasty concoctions for Mac OS X

Developed by: Steve Gehrman

<http://www.cocoatech.com/weblog/>

Cocoatech

Los Angeles, CA

help@cocoatech.com

<http://www.cocoatech.com/pf4/>

\$35 USD, Update \$18 USD, £19 (inc. VAT) GBP.

Released: December 5, 2006

Demo Path Finder 4 is available as a feature-complete demo for 21 days.

<http://www.cocoatech.com/download.php>

Requirements: Mac OS X 4.x; Universal Binary; 20 MB Download, Hard Drive Space.



Versions for earlier Macintosh OS X Systems are available.

Strengths: If you want a finder function that is both fast and feature rich, try Path Finder. The product provides the most flexible method I've yet found to access and manage the almost 177,000 files stored on my drive as well as the uncounted music and graphics files I keep on an external drive. The product's primary features, although intimidating a first glance is both easy to use and powerfully capable.

Weaknesses: The Product may be too complex, even for some experienced users. However I suggest folks download load it and play for a few days. By doing side-by-side searches in Apple's finder/spotlight combination with Path Finder you will quickly recognize the benefits of using PF4 as both a search and file management tool. I also believe among heavy Macintosh users, the fearful will become advocates in less than the 21-day demo period. [*Sic.* Heavy means neither gaming nor surfing.]

Copyright Notice: 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 10.4.9.

Disclaimer: When briefly reviewing share-freeware I will often use the developer's product, functions and features descriptions. All other comments are strictly my own and based on testing. Why need I rewrite the developer's narratives, if they are clearly written?

Introduction

Path Finder is a file management program that out-finder's the Apple *Finder*. It is a powerful and flexible file browser that has a streamlined interface full of rich finder enhancing features. When I last reviewed Path Finder (version 3.2.1) in the October 2004 macCompanion, I thought highly enough of it to give it a 4.5 rating. However, at that time, having even then created an anal-retentive's well organized hard disk, I chose not to continue working with it. [Don't ask, I don't remember why.]

However, having read about its additional features, and user-friendly interface, I decided to give it another try. After all despite tweaks over the years, Apples Finder is a very limited beast. Indeed, it too often bugs me disturbing by thought processes, by asking me (pop up message windows) dumb question many of which I have no way of answering. Popup Warnings - All I want to do is move documents and folder around to where they belong after working on them on my desktop.

In Matt Neuburg's recent TidBits article (<http://www.tidbits.com/tb-issues/TidBITS-815.html>) he notes: "The Finder is the application that Mac OS X users love to hate. Take a moment to think of something about the Finder that makes you absolutely furious. It shouldn't take long! Here are some examples:

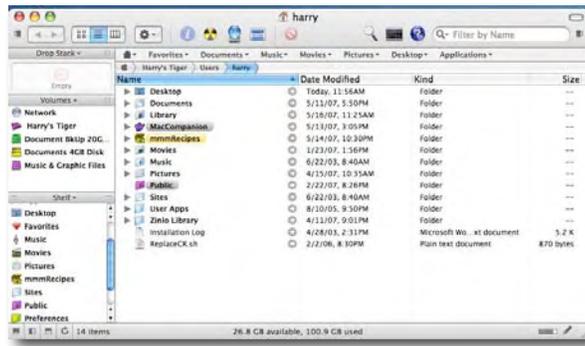
"Why doesn't the Finder say where you are? Why doesn't it report what folder each window or column represents in the larger hierarchy of things? You probably know about Command-clicking on a window's title to see its path; but some people, like my mother, don't - and in any case you still have to do something (the Finder doesn't just show you where you are), plus you can easily get lost in column view because columns have no headings

"When you drag multiple files into a folder, and the Finder asks if you want to replace an existing file, why doesn't it report relative modification dates? When you drag one file into a folder, the Finder tells you whether an existing file with the same name is older or newer. But if you drag multiple files into a folder, it doesn't - it puts up a separate dialog for each existing file, asking whether you want to replace it, but without the relative date information, which is usually crucial to making an intelligent decision about whether to proceed."

Both Matt and I can go on at great lengths, as you likely can, about the finder's limitations. Rather than doing that, let it suffice the Path Finder 4.x overcomes these limitations in a simple to understand way, with which even peecee switching newbies will be comfortable.

What is it?

Path Finder [PF4] is a file browser for Mac OS X. It has many added and more powerful features than Apple's finder and other utilities provided in OS X Tiger. PF4 allows creating customizable labels, customized fonts and colors, a desktop trashcan, more controllable spring-loaded folders, and an image converter.



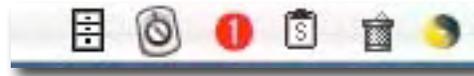
You need more flexibility? Check out the screen shots of the PF4 general and browser preferences at the end of this article.

There's also a preview drawer, a menu key editor, an enhanced column view, and a built-in application launcher. The product give you the and the ability to view invisibles, to compress/decompress, files create disk images, add and remove thumbnail icons. Just incase that's not enough you can open the program with the menu, view hex, copy paths, secure-delete, launch as root, find files, as well as creating aliases and symbolic links.

Getting Started

Drop and drag the application to your applications folder. Try it out for 21 days, and then buy it. [Oh, I haven't told you why yet, oh well!]

Click on the product icon in your Menu or use the keyboard (Command F1) and Path Finder is at your beck and call.

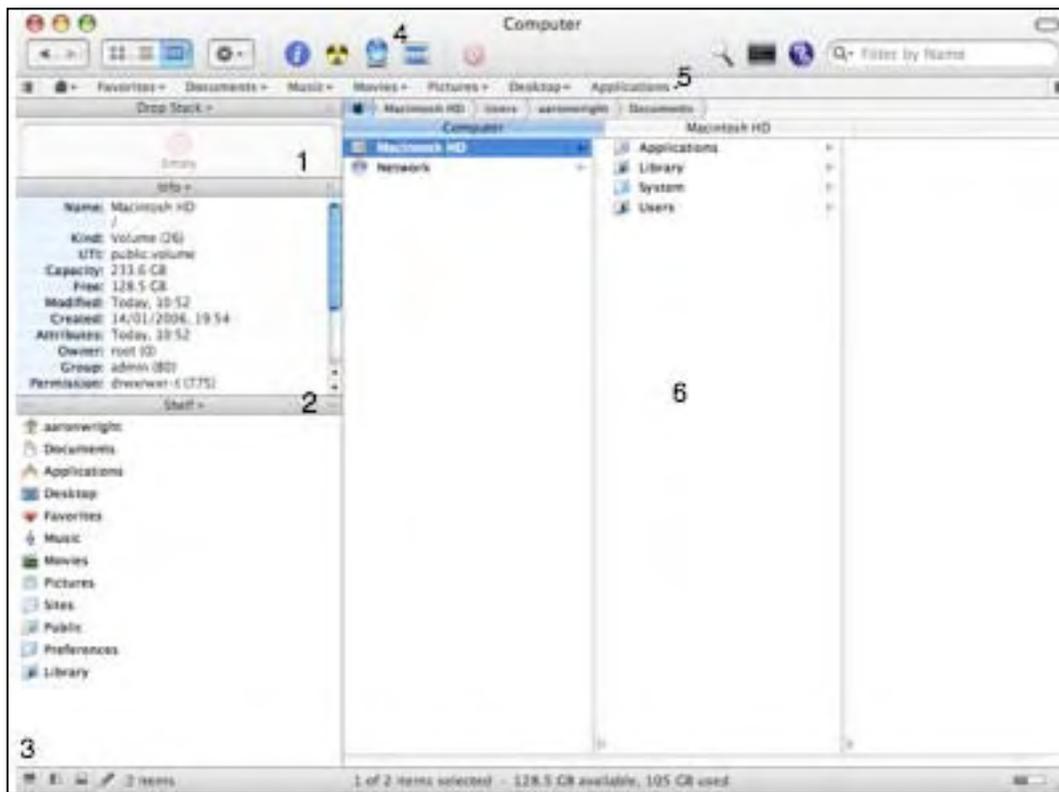


To become re-familiarized with the product I spend about a week running my normal hard disk "find" searches with Apple's *Finder/Spotlight* combination, *EasyFind* and *Path Finder*. Although it took a bit of time to become comfortable with Path Finder's more complex interface, my learning curve for simple, attribute-limited searches was short.

Ignoring my searches with Apple's Tools, always a hit or miss proposition, the items I located with PF4 were accurate. When compared to my normal EasyFind searches, the PF4 filters were easier to use. No, I'm not going to glut this review with side-by-side screen shots, the software works, and works effectively.

Just like the Spotlight and Finder search results windows, you can double-click any file in the software's search results to open it, or use drag-and-drop to work with it. But unlike Spotlight, important information about each file—modification date, size, kind, and location—is visible without having to click get info button. (Hold the mouse pointer over the Where value to view the full path to the file without having to expand the window.)

If you're interested in a blow-by-blow description of the PF4 interface check out Aaron Wright's fine description in *Path Finder: A Finder Alternative?* On the AppleMatters website. The image below, with its numbered feature items should wet your appetite for such information. [<http://www.applematters.com/index.php/section/comments/path-finder-another-alternative-to-finder/>] The image does not even show the products *still* closed drawers that expand PF4's capabilities.



Moving right along — When you're done finding stuff you've buried on your hard drive, include the path to where things live, you can create and manipulate disk images, compress with numerous formats (including StuffIt, which is built in), convert images from one format to another, and even do screen captures.

Stuff I Ignored — The aspects of the software's capabilities which I ignored relate to what I call it geek tools. PF4 is capable of examining running processes, which are listed, and can be sampled or force quit. This seems like a steroid drive *Activity Monitor*. There's also terminal access, a console (for viewing logs), and a hex editor built right in.

But first a set of menu views in PF4 plus one of the trusty Apple Finder.

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| | | |
| <p align="center">Apple Finders View Menu</p> | <p align="center">A Cornucopia of View Option in PF4</p> | <p align="center">Stay in Command</p> |
| <p align="center">View the Differences</p> | | |

An Almost Concise Partial List of Key Features

Abandon Spotlight — Mostly eliminate any need to use Apples frustratingly stupid Spotlight. Path Finder allows you to search both file and folder names; only file names or only folder names, or the contents of files.

Search by Using Filtered Contents — A text box at the top of the window lets you quickly filter the current view. A folder's contents can be filtered by document kind. This allows you to view and work with (for example) just JPEGs, or just JPEGs and TIFFs. It's a better alternative than sorting by *kind* in the *Finder* or even in *EasyFind*.

Tabs! — Tabs are easily the most powerful new feature in PF4. Its main benefit is reducing the number of windows you have



open when you work, in a haphazard, multiple projects at one, fashion. This feature amazes me —I can just see how much easier file management can be without overlapping layers of windows cluttering up even my 22" screen. Better yet, every tab has the entire directory structure of the opened folder, thus you can access any folder quickly just by clicking on them.

Faster File Copying — Path Finder's progress bars contain more information than just a blah graph. The copy engine is different (Apple's has always been slow).

Bookmarks Bar [e.g., Tabbed Folder]s —Tabs are easily the most powerful new feature in PF4. Its main benefit is reducing the number of windows you have open when you work, in a haphazard, multiple projects at one, fashion. This feature amazes me — just how much better file management becomes without overlapping layers of windows cluttering up my 22" screen. PF4 adds a very Firefox-like Bookmarks Bar, onto which you can drag folders, applications, or documents. You can browse entire directories from the Bookmarks Bar and, when you get to where you want to go, open subfolders from the tabs. Multiple folders can be shown in a single window using "tabbed browsing", and files can be dragged from one tab to another.

Now I'm not yet a great fan of tabs, but their convenience is growing on me.

Drop Stack, Good Temporary Place To Collect Files for Grouped Actions— A "Drop Stack" drawer lets you drag and drop items from anywhere on you drive to form sets for later processing. You can delay task such as copying or moving a file or folder or even burning, compressing, or mailing it. Drop Stack is a *temporary*, smart holding bay for folders and files. Sometimes I need to gather odds and ends from all over my computer into one or more folders to use to burn a CD for a client. If you tried that with Apple's finder, you know that it's literally a drag, and another one... My most used solution is to drag stuff directly into Toast's window, but that's neither fast nor elegant.

In Path Finder you simply drag files and folders to the Drop Stack. DF4 keeps track as you stack-up files and folders. (Note the drop Stack box is an index (e.g., alias type link) of your files. Until you actually physically drag an item from its located on your hard drive, the file hasn't actually moved anywhere.) However, you can use the stack to aggregate an archive, burn your stack to a CD/DVD, or e-mailing it, but only in Apple Mail.

Viewing File Contents From Within PF4 — You can view the contents of many kinds files with Path Finder's built-in text editor and PDF viewers. I've read that PF4's capabilities are more comprehensive than those of either Spotlight or the Finder, but have not tested this.

Work With and Easily Change Document Attributes — File information includes Spotlight metadata, and lets you change ownership, permissions, type/creator, and creation/modification dates. Normally I use another application to meet such needs; what's that 3 or separate tools instead of a single well integrated one. I know there are wonderful tools for doing so, such as [publicsapce.net A Better Finder Attributes](http://www.macupdate.com/info.php/id/11143/a-better-finder-attributes-x/), now v. 4.5 - <http://www.macupdate.com/info.php/id/11143/a-better-finder-attributes-x/> or FileUtilsCM X 1.7.2 - <http://www.macupdate.com/info.php/id/9104/fileutilscm-x>, but these are further additions to you application or CM collection.

Looking in detail at all of FP4's rich features, I was impressed by the number of stand-alone applications that I use regularly, this tool could replace. This is true despite the fact that most of the more specialized tools I use have gotten 4.0+ rating from macC.

Discomforts

Do Boolean Searches — I still, haven't figured out whether Path Finder can do Boolean Searches. I find such capabilities useful in other applications, allowing me to explicitly define the type of search to perform. For example, search for items containing *all* the search words (*and*), *any* of the search words (*or*), or the complete phrase. In addition, just like in Google, EasyFind or DEVONagent, it would be great if you could search using wildcards or operators. Also, controlling your searches to be case-sensitive or insensitive is something I value.

Eudora, Thunderbird, and I guess MS Entourage Mail Support — We hold these truths to be self evident, many of us don't like or use apples mail application.

I Need a Manual — No in depth manual of how to make effective use of the splendiferous and abundant features. Trial and error is fun, but I've got roads to travel and other things to see, or at least lots of other reviews and articles to write.

The developer does note: "This basic documentation provides an overview of Path Finder 4's features. We will be posting more detailed help files for Path Finder 4 to our web site in the coming weeks."

Permanently Replacing the Finder with Path Finder — I read that it was possible, if you decide that you like using Path Finder more than the Finder itself, you can have Path Finder quit the Finder and take its place. Now that make me nervous, I like the Command F1 approach better, especially since I've read no feed back on pros and cons of this alternative.

Conclusion

If you're tired of the Finder's limitations, the fact that it slow, crashes, and on my computer both stutters and loses icons, download and try Path Finder. The free 21 day trial period is more than long enough, if you do lots of searches for files on your hard disk, to demonstrate the superiority of this product to what Apple provided.

The Path Finder interface will look more cluttered than Apple's Finder. But don't sweat that, it only takes a few fast successful searches, rather than the results I too often get working in the finder, to make PF4 feel downright homey.

If this product had a detailed manual, I'd have no qualms about giving a perfect 5, someday soon, I hope.

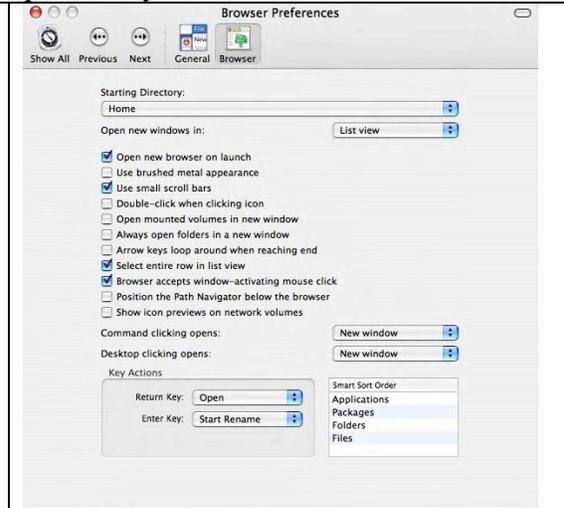
Although I shall not give up using *EasyFind*, an old friend, I expect to do more of my hard disk searching and other finder function in Path Finder.

Recommendation

Try it — you'll buy it! As noted by Kevin Schmidt, <http://creativemac.digitalmedianet.com/articles/viewarticle.jsp?id=36877>; "Granted, \$34.95 may seem a bit steep just to replace a part of Mac OS X, but with the native Finder as (arguably) bad as it is and with Path Finder 4 as good as it is, the price is a pittance, especially in light of the sheer volume of features Path Finder 4 packs under the hood."

I completely agree with ATPM's *Miraz Jordan* [<http://www.atpm.com/12.03/path-finder.shtml>] who noted: "Path Finder is a great investment for anyone who wants to have a *more than a* couple of clues about the files they work with. It's not for everyone: if you're stumped by how to Trash a document or can't remember how to save your letter into a specific folder, then Apple's Finder will suit you nicely."

More Screen Shots
... You're not supposed to read them, just be impressed by the rich choices offered.

| | |
|---|--|
|  |  |
| PF4 General Preferences | PF4 Browser Preferences |

More Reading

7 things I like about Path Finder for OS X [www.43folders.com/topics/pathfinder/]

Joshua Scott Emmons' *Tigersharks: Taking Path Finder 10.4-only*

http://www.oreilynet.com/mac/blog/2006/06/tigersharks_taking_path_finder.html?CMP=OTC-13IV03560550&ATT=Tigersharks+Taking+Path+Finder+10+4-only

PS:



It is rare that one individual is responsible for creating such a rich and powerful program. Kudos to its developer.

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Software

DEVONagent 2.1 – See digests of your search quick and accurate results

By Harry {doc} Babad - © 2007



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Bissingen Germany, European Union
Phone (E.U.): +49-7142-988086

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

\$50 USD, Upgrade from v.1 \$20 USD, 25% Educational discount available.



Requirements: Mac OS X 3.9 or later; Universal binary; ca. 20 MB Hard Drive Space; 512 MB or more RAM, 256 KB or faster Internet connection. Localized in English, German, French and Japanese.

Version Posted: 08 Mar 2007

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

Strengths: Generates a quick, useful, effective, easy to understand digest of the search results. The search engine optimizes your search efforts toss the unneeded chaff. The software's interface is both intuitive and easy to use and in case you're not feeling intuitive, there's a ca. 270 page user's manual that at times helps. Its tutorial section is excellent.

Weaknesses: The new software features, despite being powerful, are so poorly explained that they are difficult to utilize. Were the manual, where it focuses on it more powerful advanced search features more clearly written, this product would have been rated more highly.

Previous Reviews:

<http://www.macompanion.com/archives/august2005/Software/DevonAgent.htm>

For a 60 hour demo of this product: <http://www.devon-technologies.com/download/index.html>

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The software was tested on a 1 GHz dual processor PowerPC G4 Macintosh with 2 GB DDR SDRAM running under OS X 10.4.9, connected to a cable modem.

Publisher Description

“**DEVONagent** is the solution for you if you are tired of clicking hundreds of links delivered by Google & Co. just to find out that most of the links are either outdated, broken or lead to junk pages. It communicates with search engines, digs for you through all the results and gives you only those documents that are really worth reading. Even better, it summarizes the accumulated knowledge and presents you with a list of the most important topics and an interactive mind map. Finding information on the Web has never been easier.”

Introduction

Having access to Google and a host of other search sites, all at no cost, why should someone spend \$50 USD for another browser? Indeed there were not only free or shareware general-purpose browsers, but also browsers capable of doing simultaneous multi-site searches. All you need to do is browse at the PureMac site <http://www.pure-mac.com/>.

I'd originally asked myself that question in my August of 2005 macC review of Version 1.7 and working with version 2.1 just reinforces my belief of the software's value. Despite the fact that the software is aimed a heavy information search users such as Journalists, Information analysts, scientists and lawyers, it is an outstanding tool for doing genealogical research or searching for obscure recipes or all about that great Celtic band, The Chieftains. I have also used the software as a high-end interface to Google and MSN Search.

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

Okay, after I dragged the application to my application folder I was ready to start using it. No, I didn't initially read the manual, having continued to use Version 1.7 since I reviewed it. I had enough confidence that I understood how the software functioned from past experience. Some of my search experiences are reported later in this review.

FIRST PRINCIPLE OF A SUCCESSFUL QUERY

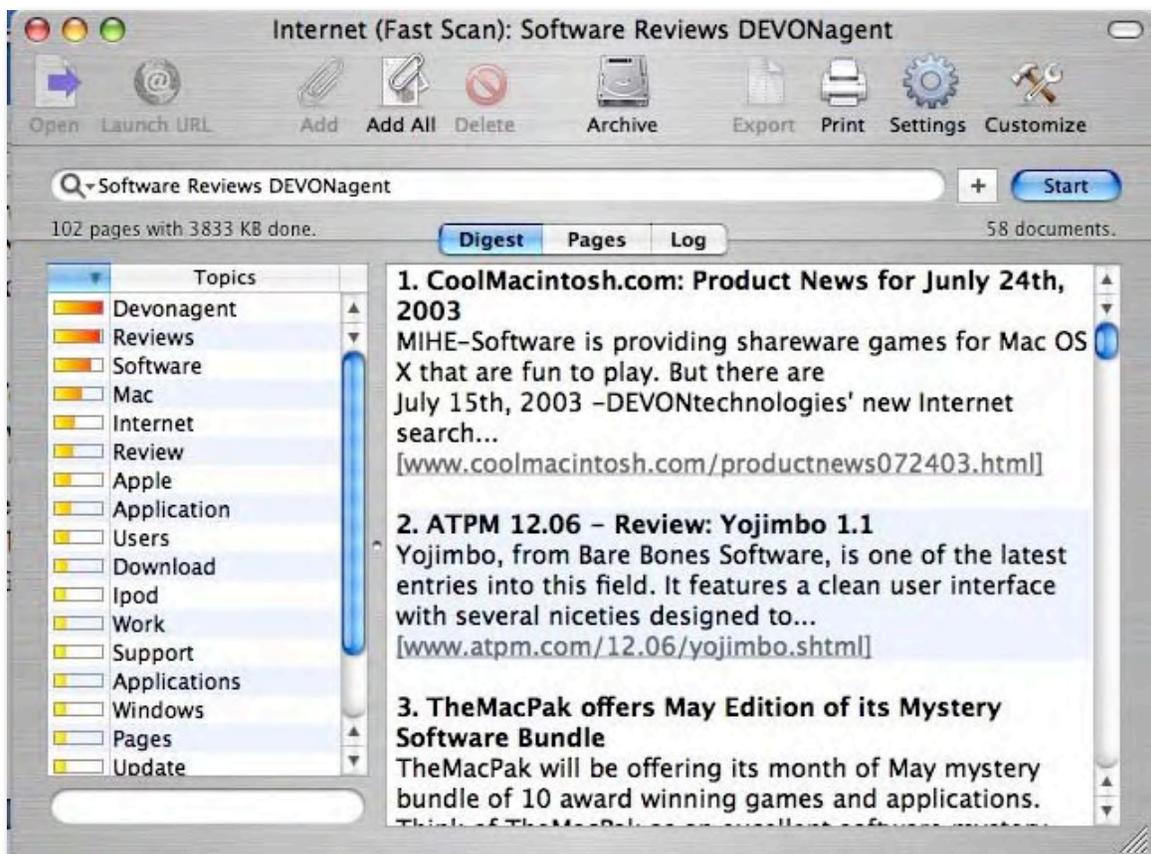
Make the query precise and unambiguous. DEVONagent's tools for clarifying your query are really quite simple and can help you obtain a high percentage of useful results rather than a confusing "mess" of irrelevant results.

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



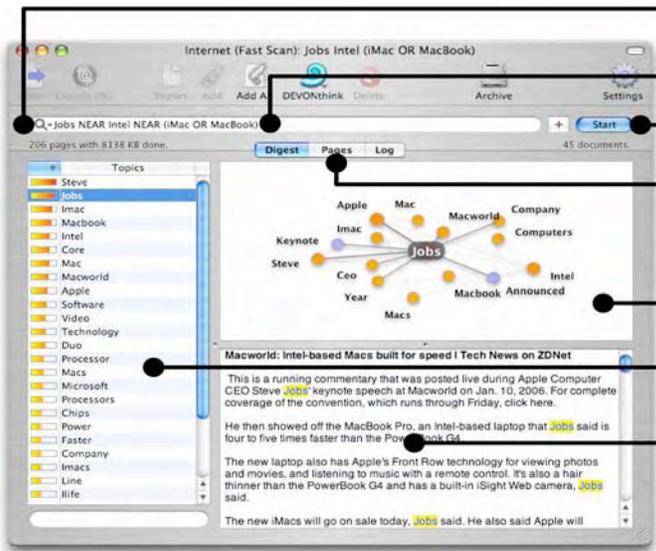
DEVONagent sends your query to one or more search engines, depending on the search settings (see the manual's chapters "Settings" and "Plug-ins"). It then collects the results and displays them on the "Pages" tab. Then select any of the found pages to display its relevant information as plain text in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

From all collected results, DEVONagent calculates a dynamically updated digest, which can be found on the "Digest" tab. These, so called relevance charts sometimes make sense to the user, but for the most part I ignore them. More importantly are the search finding digests. The digest is a plain text summary of all information in the result pool DEVONagent thinks to be relevant to selected topics. It is very useful when deciding which of the found links you might want to pursue.



Using the Software

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



The screenshot shows the DEVONagent search interface. The search query is "Jobs NEAR Intel NEAR (Mac OR MacBook)". The interface includes a search bar, a "Start" button, and a "Topics" sidebar. A "Topics Map" is displayed, showing a network of related terms like "Apple", "Mac", "Macworld", "Company", "Computers", "Intel", "Macbook Announced", "Macs", "Year", "Ceo", "Steve", "Keynote", and "Imac". A "Dynamic Summary" is shown below the map, featuring a snippet from ZDNet about Intel-based Macs.

- Choose your search set or plug-in
- Enter your query
- Start the search run
- Switch between digest, page list and log
- Navigate the topics map
- Select topics to focus the map and the summary
- View the actual data as a dynamic summary

It can't be easier and more fun to search the Internet, can it?

DEVONagent Search Page

My searches made some, but not extensive, use of Boolean operators (e.g., AND/OR/NOT/NEAR, or grouping search terms with quotation marks.) For the purposes of this review would have been needlessly time consuming. If I need Boolean operators, I know I can use these combinations plus other logic operators described in the user manual). The software is able to work with more complex search criteria than Google or other search engines I've used. For those who needed addition help using the programs advanced search (my term) features, tutorials on the *DEVONacademy > Tutorials* pages are both easy to understand and helpful. http://www.devon-technologies.com/support/academy/da_tutorials.html

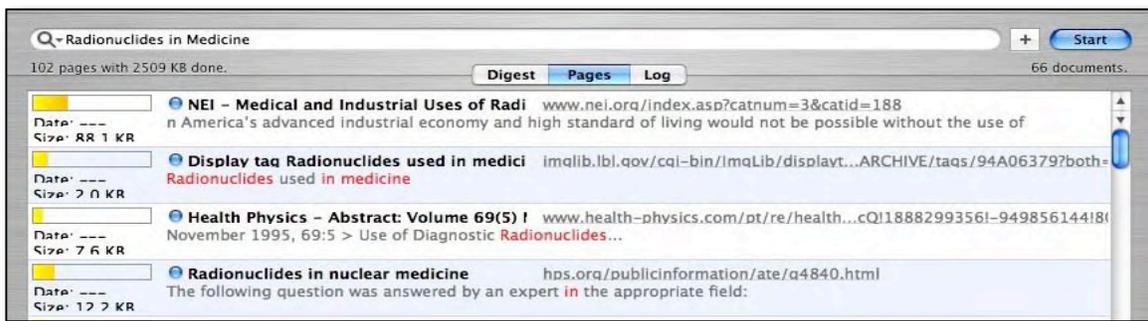
In addition, during my last review of this product, I had not taken the time to rephrase the questions (vary the search terms for the information sought). This time around, I did that with better, but not totally satisfactory results. As always, my focus when searching for technical information, is gaining information at the level that a good reference librarian would provide. I know this is unfair because librarians have access to private databases as well as more comprehensive search defining tools, but I keep trying.

Making In Depth Use of Boolean Searches — From my reading it would appear that DEVONagent's Boolean logic feature helps further focus a search, beyond what I was able to do. [A Primer on using Boolean search delimiters would be welcome; perhaps I'll search for one.] Focusing search results is especially useful when you are doing *deep scan* searches that can yield up to 500 results. [I've so far avoided this search mode.]

Prior to checking the new manual, I used DEVONagent to gain information on topics such as those listed below. When comparing results from Google with DEVONagent, I searched the first seven to nine pages (10 items per page) for relevance. This is the number of hits equivalent to the number of found items in DEVONagent. My search focus and actual experience in finding the sought for information, is described below.

Search Experience

Radiation Medicine (Other Terms Searched: *Radiation in Medicine*, *Radio Medicine*, *Radionuclides in Medicine*) — DEVONagent returned sets of overlapping hits 66-75 in number most of which were useful. [A partial *Pages View* is illustrated) Google overwhelmed me with hits (704,000 to 29,000,000) some of which were useful.



Poppiah Buffet Recipes (Other Terms Searched: *Poppiah Party*, *Poppiah Buffet*) — Most of the hits from DEVON were to blogs that did not contain detailed recipes; but there were a few good hits. These Chinese crepes are wonderful, and the 30-45 minutes and follow-up, gave me some fine cooking ideas. I did not choose to search Chinese Crepe Recipes, but would have if I'd come up dry with the other terms. I also got 11,200 hits in Google, something I did not follow-up on.

Nuclear Energy and Global Warming — The search term gave me 75 documents in DEVON AGENT, which I did NOT need to narrow down based on reading the digests. When searched in Google, I got 2,130,000 hits, many of which in the first ten pages of the Google search results were commentary on commentaries. Both searches were fast but having digests available made it easier to check and chose the DEVONagent hits. I was planning on doing some Boolean Searches on this topic, but could figure out how to better focus the query.

Cyber and Security Locks — I am planning a macC article on this topic and decided to use the opportunity to get better familiar with the topic. My initial search with DEVONagent primarily resulted in computer protection related items, rather than the physical locks and keys protection for which I searched.

Changing the search criteria to CyberLock and CyberKey gave me dozens of hits that focused around description like: “access control without wiring or power, in padlocks, switches and doors. CyberKey and CyberLock provide wireless access control in doors, cabinets, padlocks, enclosures, safes and switches.” I archived these for future use.



Of the 1,140,000 hits I got with Google, the first 10 pages contained little information related to my search needs. Lot of interesting and to me enticingly distracting material, but I know I must stay focused. A more focused Google search reduced the number of hits to 563, many of which were relevant. Although both sets of hits contained commercial information, the individual sites I spot-checked had enough details on the general attributes of these protective tools to serve as a basis for an article.

One hint: use the words in probable hit to refine your search – Better results might have been obtained from the phrase *CyberLock or CyberKey*. For some reason, in DEVONagent, the results of using the “or” were not better. For some reason the items on the first 12 pages of Google’s 23,100 hits seemed more relevant.

Software Reviews DEVONagent (Compared to Google Results) — Although I got more hits in Google, both searches gave me comparable returns. Being able to use the digests in DEVONagent, substantially speeded up the search process.

A Recipe for Thai 5-Spice Pork, Duck or Chicken— My initial search for the items themselves, and the combined names of the dishes was disappointing. What turned up were restaurant menus, around the world, many of which looked wonderful. Adding the term recipe, the name of the dish made all the difference. But even that added focus resulted in hits to many recipes that had nothing to do with the Thai dishes I sought to cook. I did well searching for *Thai 5-Spice Chicken Recipe*, getting a better-focused set of hits both in DEVONagent and Google. Much to my surprise, I also searched DEVONagent with the parenthetic additional phase (NOT restaurant) and but it did not help focus the search. I wonder what I did wrong in my Boolean phasing?

Even more surprisingly, a the narrowed searches for the name of the dish *Thai 5-Spice Duck* *or Thai 5-Spice Pork*, or these items individually gave no hits in either Google or DEVONagent. Putting quotation marks around parts of these phases did not help. In all cases, the word *recipe* gave the search a magic touchstone. Strange!

Glossary of Chinese Cooking Terms (DEVONagent only) — I tried a number of variations on the theme including: *Chinese Cooking Terms* (75 hits), *Chinese Cooking Terms Glossary* (63 hits) and *Glossary of Chinese Cooking Terms* (54 hits). But in all of these I could have saved myself the duplicate searches. Click, click and I got two great hits in DEVONagent, so I did not try doing then Google search.

A Summary of DEVONagent's Key Features

Strong Booleans Search Features — Besides the typical Boolean operators AND, OR and NOT, DEVONagent provides you with the much more powerful NEAR, BEFORE and AFTER operators. Typically, only scientific high-end databases feature them, but DEVONagent makes them available for routine Web researches. For example, paraphrased from the manual: Suppose you want to search for information about the mercury contamination of fish and to focus on information released by or referring to the United States Environmental Protection Agency. The first challenge to formulating the search is recognizing that the agency can be referred to as the "Environmental Protection Agency", "EPA" and "E.P.A." No, you don't want to do an AND search on these alternatives. Using: ("Environmental Protection Agency" OR EPA OR "E.P.A.") is better.

There's another potential ambiguity, because it's possible that a large reference source might contain the word "fish" in one section dealing with fishery resources, and contain the word "mercury" in another section dealing with the history of barometers. Tying in the need for information about mercury effective search criteria becomes ("Environmental Protection Agency" OR EPA OR "E.P.A.") AND (fish NEAR mercury)

General Result Archive Capability — DEVONagent finds, collects, and organizes information with powerful search architecture, and a simple to use built-in archive. It was easy to add search result pages to it with just one click. That allowed me to organize my research results into folders and sub-folders. I could later search the archives for what I needed, using a Finder-like toolbar search field.

Search Sets to Help Optimize Searches — The new version uses a Search Set metaphor in which selected plugin act a search delimiters. As TidBITS Matt Neuburg noted, "At the heart of DEVONagent's functionality are its Search Sets, which despite the name are not "sets" of anything; they are the instructions for performing a search. So a DEVONagent user's most basic needs are to understand what I can better do with a Search Set will do."

<http://db.tidbits.com/article/08545>

Alas, using *search sets* was something I could not master in the two weeks I worked with the software. On the positive side, there are more than 130 plugins for popular search engines, databases, and search tools, to assist in creating predefined search sets. Unfortunately optimizing my use of them will need to wait until I better understand Search Set (better termed criteria or focus.)

Scanners by any other name — Search Content Scanners, a special type of plug-in (filter), post-process and filters the results using additional criteria about the resulting found items contents. This way you can find only pages containing links to software archives, webcams or picture galleries or even exclude them. Also, you can use scanners to display all images, links, email addresses or liked documents contained in a web page in a convenient drawer. [Once again, due to my lack of understanding on how best to use these tools, I ignored them.]

Visualizing Search Results — A graphical topics map, now available in version 2.1, displays colored bubbles for topics, with lines linking related topics. Red, yellow and black bubbles correspond to terms in the topics list. Blue bubbles are additional topic terms that are not in the topics list. Lines between the bubbles indicate *surmised* connections between topics.

For additional features, new and old, check the publisher's web page and the software manual.

Software Limitations

Finding The Manual — **Unlike** many products, the manual was not a part of the download package. I did find it on the developers web site Support > DEVONacademy > DEVONagent Manual. This was a bit more effort than most users will make.

Manual Shortfalls — In addition although the introductory materials and tutorials (getting started) were excellent and the detailed uses of the various pull down menu items clear, other parts of the manual were difficult to understand and use. I would welcome a significant expansion of, with examples, of the material that focuses on plugins, scanners and the other technical tools that enhance the ability to do an in depth search. Without such detail, would be power-search users - like me - who need enhanced search capability will, remain frustrated by their inability to use the tools provided by the developer.

With feedback from Eric Boehnisch-Volkmann, Devon's President, I was pointed to the tutorials, which solved many of my problems to better use Boolean search terms. They also provided help for my taking advantage of the plug-ins and post processing scanners. However, I still have along way to go before I master the later and therefore feel comfortable doing more complex focused searches. Using secondary queries to narrow down search results is another area that I need to learn.

Side-by-side comparison views still needed — When searching variations on a theme, as I did for a year ago for *search engines*, I would like to have the ability to display several search results side-by-side to more easily look for newly found items. I would welcome a “docucomp” feature. *Feedback from the developer provided me with a possible solution. “You could of course open multiple search windows, run different scans and compare the results.”* That worked, but a docucomp feature were make side-by-side comparisons easier to browse. Note, I’d asked for this feature in my version 1.7 review.

A Glossary of Terms — The developers use words like plugins and scanners in non-traditional ways. A glossary would be helpful

Conclusion

DEVONagent 2.1 remains a great search tool. I ended up finding almost all of what I needed to know, rapidly, and with fewer irrelevant hits than by doing advanced Boolean query-supported searches in Google. I do at least 3-5 searches, some simple and others complex, every day. I remained disappointed when searching for more esoteric technical information, the kind provided by a reference librarian, when I can afford one. But that is a learning curve issue, not the fault of the software. Nevertheless, after only a few searches, I knew that this updated program remained a keeper.

The ability of the program to query multiple search engines simultaneously, and to visit each link for you to filter and summarizes the results is an invaluable time saver. As a result DEVONagent steers you much closer to the content you want, without a lot of googling around dead or outdated sites

I, as likely you do, get tired of clicking through the hundreds of links delivered by Google (or Yahoo, Ask.com, etc.) Indeed I routinely seldom check past the first 5-10 pages of Google search results likely missing a gem or two. Actually I search for two pages past the last relevant hit I find in a Google search.

It also bugs me to find many of the links are outdated, broken, or lead to junk pages. *Google has no way to sort hits by date, a feature that would be helpful.* Therefore, I often use DEVONagent to either do an initial search, or more routinely, to redo one that came up dry when done in Google. It has been a part of my dock since version 1.7 and sits next to the icon for FireFox.

The product does an excellent job of communicating with search engines, digging through all the *found* results for you. As my tests with both this and version 1.7 demonstrate, there’s a lot to gain by using DEVONagent for search for information on the Internet.

Not tool is perfect, but it more often then not, this software gives me only those documents that are worth reading. Even more impressively, it summarizes the collected information and presents me with a list of the most important topics, which I can check out. Finding the information I need on the web has gotten significantly easier with DEVONagent 2.1. Although I’m still not able to make use of it’s more sophisticated features, all of my results out-googled-Google.

New to this version is an interactive mind map to help make sense of the findings, but since I'm "graphically impaired" it did nothing for me.

Recommendation

I asked myself whom this powerful search tool would best serve? That turned out to be an easy question — anyone who:

- Does at least 2-3 searches a *computer working day* to support their business or hobby projects.
- Is tired of thousands of false hits in Google or Ask.com.
- Wants to focus their search results closer to what is being sought.
- Finds that reading a digest of a search item more useful than double clicking a on a found page and figuring out whether the contents are relevant.

Perhaps more to the point is whether the new \$50 USD price or \$20 USD update is worth your money?

One reason for buying the product or updating the earlier version is to make use of the new more powerful plugin and scanner features to focus your searches. As noted earlier, the product is aimed both at casual but repeat Web surfers and serious researchers. What it does, it does well, but you must help it to work effectively when formulating search criteria.

Alas, the advanced search criteria (features) are imperfectly explained in the help notes/Manual. Indeed, I *almost* agree with Matt Neuburg's conclusion. But indeed information to support a more effective use of the product for advanced searching, is available on the website, the tutorials were just a bit hidden from where I'd normally search.

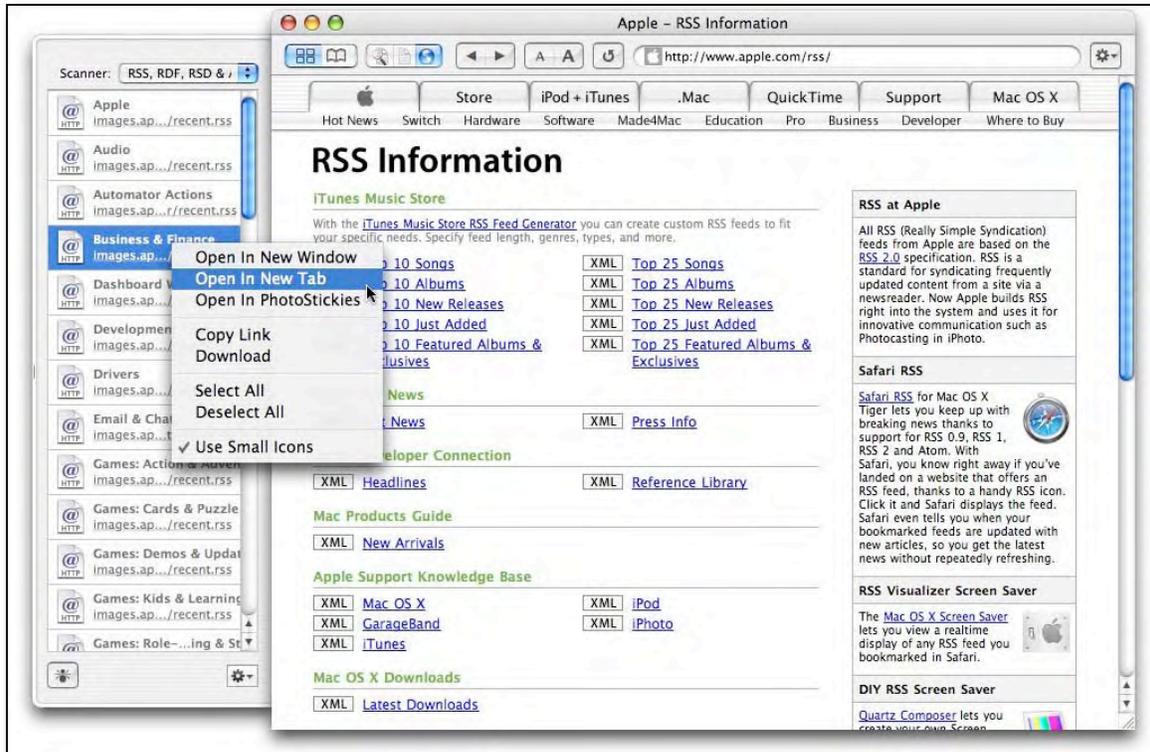
Do follow Matt's advice but remember there are helpful tutorials on the site to smooth you r becoming a master of DEVONagent. Matt notes: "In my view, the increased price, ... and unhelpful manual are potentially serious obstacles. The best thing, however, is to download the demo (a 5.7 MB download) and decide for yourself."

Doc sez: Given all of that, I would buy the software and hope for a better and clearer future manual. A manual, which better explains the more advanced search customizing features and provides practice examples rather than my having to rely on tutorials would be of great service to users needing in-depth search tools.

PS:

Why I'm Not Using DEVONagent as my Default Web Browser

Overall, I found that DEVONagent, based on the Safari engine, could serve well as an integrated web browser. However, I still choose not to make it my default browser even though I know it is especially tailored to the needs of web researchers, among which I number. I've updated and patched Safari with other shareware tools such as PithHelmet and I'd rather not give up Apple's product. Indeed, although I use FireFox extensively, it takes second place to Safari. But the decision I've made about choosing a default browser is a personal one having nothing to do with the merits of DEVONagent 2.1. Your decision will likely be different from mine.



Dreamweaver CS3: How Did Adobe Fare?

Reviewed by Tim Verpoorten (Surfbits)



<http://www.adobe.com/products/dreamweaver/>

As part of the CS3 Design Premium - \$1,760 USD,
Standalone - New - \$399 USD and £394 GBP, €658
Euro, Upgrade - \$199 USD and £163 GBP.

Requirements: PowerPC® G4 or G5 or multicore Intel processor; Mac OS X v.10.4.8; 256MB of RAM (512MB recommended) for PowerPC based system; 512MB (1GB recommended) for Intel based system; 1.6GB of available hard-disk space (additional free space required during installation); 1,024x768 monitor resolution with 16-bit video card; DVD-ROM drive; QuickTime 7 software required for multimedia features; Internet or phone connection required for product activation; Broadband Internet connection required for Adobe Stock Photos and other services.

Original review at <http://www.surfbits.com/?p=1147>

I've been a big fan of the former Macromedia Dreamweaver since version 1.0. Whether I was using a Windows PC many years ago or a Mac currently, I always felt that Dreamweaver was the best WYSIWYG website design tool out there. In recent versions, Dreamweaver has added a few features including their best effort at CSS editing, but really nothing earth-shattering. Therefore, when Adobe released their first version of Dreamweaver, CS3, I was more than excited to install it and run it through its paces.

The first thing I noticed was that Adobe did not change the interface to match the rest of the CS3 suite. Some may consider it a negative, but I was relieved the familiarity was still present. Dreamweaver CS3 now works with Adobe Bridge and Adobe Device Control. These are interactive with all of the CS3 apps. Adobe Bridge is best described as a system-wide asset repository which allows users in any of the CS3 apps to drag and drop, or import pictures and graphics into their open apps. While Adobe Device Control allows you to preview your project in one of over 200 different mobile devices.

There are several noticeable improvements, but one of my favorites is the manner in which CSS is now handled. To start with, you are given about 30 templates to begin your site design. This is always the most difficult portion of website design, getting started. These templates are similar to Wordpress blog designs that give you the choice of columns and headers and footers and sidebars. I am also certain that you will find many other CSS templates on the web that you can import and use to get started. Next, CSS style management has improved so you can easily save styles and add inline styles and have them saved through your entire project. The style sheets are very customizable, in fact you can even drag and drop the rules in the order you want them. Finally, as with previous Dreamweavers, Adobe has added a wonderful compatibility wizard that will tell you how your CSS will work in other browsers. All in all, the added CSS capabilities are worth the upgrade to me.

The next big feature in the new Dreamweaver CS3 is the implementation of the Spry framework. The Spry framework is basically javascript bundles that make it so much easier to add navbars, menus, pop-ups and more to your website. Adobe created this Spry framework and although you can download it separately and use it, Adobe has worked it into Dreamweaver seamlessly. It's basically Web 2.0 development in simple Spry Widgets and Effects. You can also work with XML via Spry Data. Together Adobe has successfully added Ajax capabilities to the other server-side tools in Dreamweaver.

The final feature in the new Dreamweaver CS3 that I wanted to mention was how it works with Photoshop. We all knew that one of the best aspects of using the Macromedia design suite was how well Dreamweaver and Fireworks worked together. I was very concerned that Adobe would not take advantage of this opportunity, but rest assured, you can easily drag and drop images and layers into Dreamweaver from Photoshop and have Dreamweaver optimize the images and size it to fit your design. I still use and love Fireworks, but it sure is nice to know that you have the option to bring Photoshop images into Dreamweaver if you need it.

If you want to upgrade from an earlier version, prices start at \$199 USD and as a stand-alone product the price is \$399 USD. Not everyone reading this review will need Dreamweaver to create their website. Sometimes iWeb, Rapidweaver, Freeway or TextEdit is all you need, but for those of us that have customer websites to take care of, or are looking for the server-side implementation that Dreamweaver can give you, I think the new version is worth the upgrade.

Fireworks CS3: Thank You Adobe

Reviewed by Tim Verpoorten (Surfbits)



<http://www.adobe.com/products/fireworks/>

As part of the CS3 Design Premium - \$1,760 USD,
Standalone - New - \$299 USD and £300 GBP, Upgrade -
\$149 USD and £150 GBP.

Requirements: PowerPC® G4 or G5 or multicore Intel processor; Mac OS X v.10.4.8; 256MB of RAM (512MB recommended) for PowerPC based system; 512MB (1GB recommended) for Intel based system; 1.6GB of available hard-disk space (additional free space required during installation); 1,024x768 monitor resolution with 16-bit video card; DVD-ROM drive; QuickTime 7 software required for multimedia features; Internet or phone connection required for product activation; Broadband Internet connection required for Adobe Stock Photos and other services.

Original review at <http://www.surfbits.com/?p=1149>

In my review of Dreamweaver CS3, I mentioned that I've been using DW since version 1.0 and love it. The same can be said for Fireworks. I've been using it since the early stages and it works perfect for what I needed it to be, a fast, full-featured website design and website graphic application. Fireworks is a bitmap and vector graphics editor, it is designed specifically for web-based graphics.

Many users were worried that when Adobe purchased Macromedia that Fireworks would go the way of Freehand and be left to die a slow, non-upgradable death. But the powers that be in Adobe realized the potential of Fireworks and decided to keep it and drop Image Ready in the Photoshop family instead. All I can say is "Thank you Adobe".

Fireworks could be a bit quirky in the manner that it approached design problems. The way it handled slicing and layers and animation were unique, but once you learned how Fireworks handled a situation, it was simple from that time forward. As I mentioned, I used Fireworks all the time for my graphic work. I resized images and designed new images and created animated images in Fireworks. To say that I was looking forward to seeing what Adobe did to Fireworks in CS3 was an understatement.

The first thing you noticed was that like Dreamweaver, the interface remained basically the same. Adobe allowed Fireworks to draw from their Bridge application for fast and easy image selection. Adobe also made certain that Fireworks played nicely with the big boys. You can now import PhotoShop and Illustrator formatted images into Fireworks and almost always keep the layers intact. In fact, Adobe even made it easier to import Fireworks images into Dreamweaver. Now a simple copy and paste is all it takes to move your finished graphic into your Dreamweaver website.

The next thing that Adobe added was something called Pages. It makes Fireworks your first stop for website design. You can now quickly mock-up a webpage in Fireworks and then save it as a page in a series of designs. In addition to designating a master page containing elements that you want to appear on every page, you can use Pages to quickly preview your whole website including hyperlinks and rollovers and hotspots all in one Fireworks file. What a wonderful and simple idea to streamline your whole website creation process.

One of the other added features worth checking out is the SlideShow command. You can take a folder full of graphics and either through Flash or Adobe's Spry framework, create a slideshow that best resembles a photo gallery of graphics. I also noticed a Common Library feature that allowed you to store graphics and reusable pieces of graphics in a bin for use on other projects. This seemed very similar to what Flash does with its shared items. There's also a new Color palette and a Path Tool for advanced vector work.

Fireworks CS3 is still my favorite graphics application. Adobe took a good product and have made several improvements. The improvements are not huge, but they are solid and it shows that Adobe has plans for Fireworks and I look forward to future versions. This is a definite upgrade for me. The upgrade price is \$149 USD and new purchases are \$299 USD. (MSRP)

InDesign CS3

Reviewed by Mike Hubbart, © 2007



<http://www.adobe.com/products/indesign>

As part of the CS3 Design Premium - \$1,760 USD,
Standalone - New - \$699 USD and £715 GBP, Upgrade -
\$199 USD and £163 GBP.



Requirements: PowerPC® G4 or G5 or multicore Intel processor; Mac OS X v.10.4.8; 256MB of RAM (512MB recommended) for PowerPC based system; 512MB (1GB recommended) for Intel based system; 1.6GB of available hard-disk space (additional free space required during installation); 1,024x768 monitor resolution with 16-bit video card; DVD-ROM drive; QuickTime 7 software required for multimedia features; Internet or phone connection required for product activation; Broadband Internet connection required for Adobe Stock Photos and other services.

Strengths: Very nice product guide; improved user interface; includes video tutorial; PhotoShop types of effects; XHTML support; improved find and replace functionality; reasonable upgrade price.

Weaknesses: That it so long to release this update.

Adobe was excited about their CS3 rollout, and went to great trouble and expense to get the word out so people could see the considerable improvements to this popular product line. And when CS3 started shipping mid April, I don't think many customers were disappointed with the considerable improvements to all of the software in the CS3 product line. I was glad the day the software finally arrived, and it didn't take long to tear open the packing and get started.

Getting Started

I installed the entire Design Premium package, so it took a while to get everything installed. The Design Premium package includes the Application and Content disks, plus a video tutorial disk from Adobe and Lynda.com. Quark took this same approach with QuarkXPress 7.1, which also includes a Lynda.com tutorial – an excellent idea and kudos to both companies for including Lynda.com materials at no extra charge.

I did take time during the software installation to look through the CS3 Workflow Guide – it is nice for the product line, but too spare for individual product support. The layout in the guide was superb. After the software completed installation I took time to go through the tutorial, then dove into InDesign CS3, and I was not disappointed.

Using the Software

Last month I reviewed QuarkXPress 7.1/7.2 and noticed that Adobe needed to do some catching up with Quark if they wanted to keep happy customers. Looks like they did with CS3. One of the nice things about QuarkXPress 7.1/7.2 is the ability to do some Photoshop style effects without using Photoshop. Looks like Adobe agreed with the concept, because they too provide the same support in CS3. While I agree that good software doesn't need to do everything, there are times I don't want to switch to Photoshop or a graphics package to add shadows and inner or outer glow effects and now that is possible.

The second thing I liked about InDesign CS3 was the improved UI. Now don't get me wrong. I like the layout in CS2. The CS3 layout lets you create custom workspaces, so you can have different organization for different products or for other people that share your computer. And the control panel is improved as well. Customize the panel and menus to show fewer or preferred options, which helps when working on that tiny laptop or a crowded 20" iMac screen.

Adobe also enhanced table support. It is now easy to apply styles to tables and cells, so any global changes affect all the tables. So much for spending a lot of time manually reformatting every table when some creative genius on your project decides to change a font or spacing right before sending the file to the printer (I don't believe I'm the only that had that happen...). And for those people that compose in Word and bring it into InDesign, but forget to add those pesky symbols like ®, ©, ™, and € in Word, Adobe has a Glyphs panel to make that task simple within InDesign.

Something else I liked; the page panel shows document previews, not just page numbers, so it is much easier to locate content and switch to that specific page. It is another very nice feature, but most useful for people working on larger projects (manuals) instead of short pieces (brochures or ads).

One last important new feature worth mentioning; export to XHTML. This is nice when you produce a monthly magazine (like *macCompanion*) and use DreamWeaver (like *macCompanion*) to create the online version of the issue. This support in QuarkXPress was a big advantage over InDesign CS2 and I really appreciate how much easier it will make my life as a desktop publisher and web designer.

Conclusion

This update is what Adobe needed to catch back up to Quark. The improved UI and new features will please the Adobe faithful, at least until Quark enhances their product again. I know some people fail to appreciate the benefits of competition, but I believe Adobe's and Quark's drive to please (and keep) their customers will only make things better and easier for everyone involved in with publishing on a small or large scale.

Recommendation

The user interface improvements alone merit an upgrade from CS2 to CS3, although the new features will convince many people to switch from another product to InDesign. I've enjoyed using InDesign CS2 and really like the improvements in CS3 and heartily recommend people upgrade to this version. Absolutely worth the minor expense when upgrading from an earlier version, and highly recommended.

Mail Factory 2.5

By Harry {doc} Babad



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Ukraine

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info@belightsoft.com

<http://www.belightsoft.com/products/mailfactory/overview.php>

\$40 USD for the download with an added \$9 USD S/H or the physical product, a CD; Academic Price \$28 USD

Released: February 8, 2007



Requirements: Mac OS 10.2 or later; Universal binary; 50 MB Hard Drive Space; Printer.

Strengths: An absolutely easy to learn labeling application suitable for creating addresses or sheets of labels. Importing addresses, a problems with version 1.x, have been corrected, enhancing its usefulness and flexibility.

Weaknesses: Nothing worth mentioning here upfront.

Previous Reviews: Reviewed by Harry {doc} Babad and Ted Bade

<http://www.macompanion.com/archives/september2004/Shareware/MailFactory.html>

For a demo of this product: <http://www.belightsoft.com/download/download.php>

Copyright Notice: 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 10.4.9.

Introduction

When Ted and I previously reviewed this product, it had two primary weaknesses. First, it only accessed collected addresses from supported sources, the number of address containing programs supported were quite limited at the time. Second, there were some problems with address appearances.

Since that time, I've continued creating addresses (envelopes) and labels using a combination of MS Word (yuck) and the using address containing databases created in my Dymo LabelWriter 330 Turbo software. For other less often used addresses information, I could get that information from contact databases created in FileMaker Pro 6 [FMP.] Right now I have individual databases for professional contacts, suppliers of stuff, customers for our crafts business, and friends and family. — I'm going to get relational with FMP 8, real soon and get rid of record duplications.

My testing of Mail Factory differed from that reported by other reviewers. I neither use Apple's mail (email application) or address book; nor the Microsoft's products (Outlook or Entourage) I could test the products automatic access to these programs. Aside from my use of FMP, I also store email addresses and website information, in my familiar but long-in-tooth, Eudora eMail client. I seldom fill in the other contact address information in Eudora, because my databases are easier to search than Eudora.

As a result, extracting address for use in Mail Factory must work with FMP, if not, it would remain relatively useless to me, as was version 1.1.

Suggestion, to avoid data entry errors, most of my address input tasks are simplified, by using the CardIris, a business card scanner. I am a two finger dyslexic typist; so try to avoid a bad case of GIGO - <http://www.macompanion.com/archives/April2006/Software/CardIris3.htm/>.

Having recently reviewed and been well pleased with the other Belight products, <http://www.macompanion.com/documents/freeissues/2007/April2007.pdf>, I felt it was time to recheck Mail Factory.

Its ability, in version 2.5, to extract address information from FileMaker Pro (wonderful) and Eudora (okay) makes an enormous difference in the product's usefulness to me. In addition, its generic ability to import Tab-delimited text, which most Personal Information Managers [PIMs] can output their contents, should be important to other users who've waited for a more flexible product.

I have often wished, as you might have, that MS Word, the Apple or Microsoft's address books and mail client features had better means for customizing and printing envelopes and labels. That's why I was eager to re-review the product. I'm glad I did.

Product Overview

“Mail Factory is a Mac OS X software for designing and printing envelopes, post cards, address and shipping labels on your Macintosh. It conforms to postal guidelines, prints USA, Canada and UK mailing barcodes and includes special mailing features, like automatic address formatting.

Mail Factory lets you create custom label and envelope layouts—by dragging address elements, images, and more onto your chosen label or envelope—and then print them out using contacts from OS X's Address Book, Entourage, Eudora, or a number of other contact databases. You can also use one of the included templates for pretty much any label or envelope printer, or let Mail Factory's Assistant walk you through the process of creating your own format and style.”

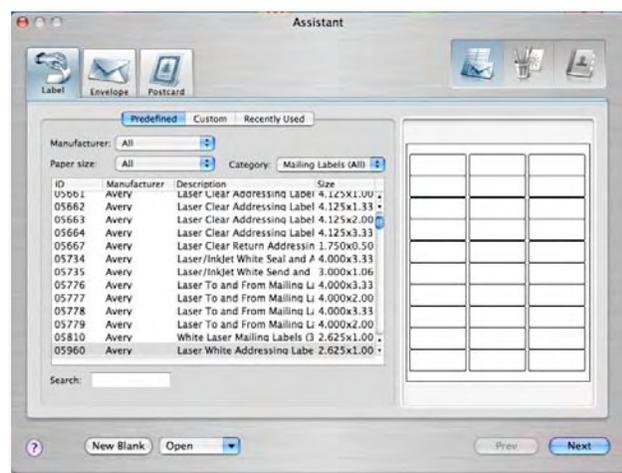
Getting Started

Installation was traditionally simple, double-click the downloaded .dmg file. Then, double-click the Mail Factory installer icon in window that appears. Follow the installer instructions.

There are even uninstalling instructions in the ReadMe file. Okay, a confession, I used the version of Mail Factory that came with the Printfolio suite I reviewed last month, but it's identical to the stand-alone product. Indeed, I had Version 2.4 on my hard disk, now deleted, but had never worked with it.

Click on the application, Mail Factory opens directly into its Assistant window — it helps you create labels or envelopes. One nice thing about Belight's software — there are no preferences to adjust or personalize. That's one less decision to make, wonderful.

You'll note that there is a vast selection of available label formats from manufacturers (e.g., Avery, Decadry, DYMO, MACO, Xerox). Should you want to address an envelope, available formats include the more standard U.S., European, and Japanese sizes and configurations as well as many specialty formats for greeting cards or post cards.



Features & Functions (Annotated from the publishers website)

Address/Label Assistant — Once you choose your label or envelope, the Assistant guides you through the design process. After choosing your address layout, you can manually enter the address or import it from Apple's Address Book, Entourage, Eudora, FileMaker Pro, MS Excel, Now Contact, vCards, or tab-delimited text files. Ill be discussion address data import into Mail Factory later in this review.

Mail Merge — You can quickly print single envelopes and labels, or batch-print addresses from OS X Address Book, Entourage, Eudora, Now Contact, MS Excel, FileMaker, vCards or *tab-delimited text files*. Use the built-in storages of recipients' and senders' addresses to edit and store mailing lists.

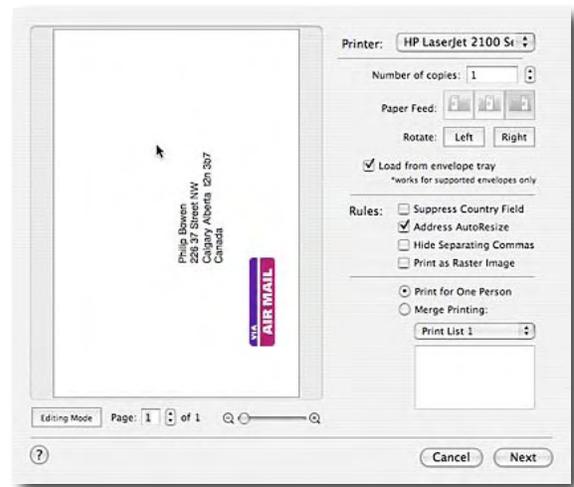
Advanced Mailing — Mail Factory prints USPS POSTNET, Canada Post and Royal Mail barcodes on labels and envelopes to help expedite delivery, and correctly formats addresses for more than 50 countries. It contains 15 address templates (corporate, personal and extended ones) that simplify the process of address creation. Its unique *address recognition* feature allows you to paste an address as text from other applications — Mail Factory automatically formats it to the required postal standards and applies the barcode.

The tests I tried worked. Addresses and labels I created needed a minimum of format

tweaking. Unlike version 1.1, almost all text material formatted correctly.

Flexible Printing — Mail Factory supports labels from most popular companies, including Avery, APLI, A-One, prints on DYMO (LabelWriter-series), Seiko (SLP-series) and Brother (QL-series) printers. Mail Factory can let you fine-tune the output to make up for variations in different printers' paper-feed and it is completely compatible with Dymo's LabelWriters.

Such advanced merge printing functionality is reportedly perfect for mass mailings.



I tested the product with my Dymo Printer in single label mode and on envelopes fed directly to my printer.

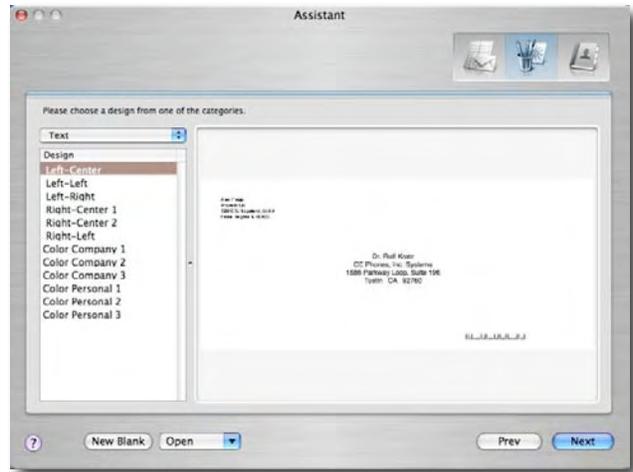
I have only short address lists, with limited mail merge needs. Therefore, I did not test this feature. In lieu of mail merge a manual cut and paste works fine for merging a dozen or two recipients. I also printed a set of address labels on my HP printer. All worked fine.

In addition, MS Word's awkward merge mode spoiled my taste for doing mail merges, a bad taste I've never recovered from.

The convenient print dialog in Mail Factory lets you make occasional final editing changes to the chosen labels and envelopes. Of course it will also let you see which labels will be printed. Also, you can choose the position of the next available label, on a sheet that you're printing to, so you can re-use partially used label sheets.

This worked better than a comparable feature in MS Word and was easier to use.

Label/Address Design Tools — Add personalized, corporate look to your mailings with dozens of ready-made designs. You can also insert custom images with your company logo or other graphics, apply masks and control transparency. More than 800 clip art images, collection of postcard designs and 100 unique masks are included. One thoughtful feature is the separate clip art library of all those special handling labels like “Magnetic Media” or “Fragile-Hand Stamp” that you so often need but never seem to have at hand. Furthermore, the fact the Mail Factory graphic interface was virtually identical to that in *Business Card Composer*, helped me to become instantly comfortable with designing labels and address with graphic elements.



The tools and Inspector windows offer the level of control and convenience that is common to the other Belight programs. You will rarely find a need to sift through the menu bar lists for a command or feature. Once you get acquainted with the software’s design features, you’ll wonder why other developers insist on forcing complex graphics interfaces on the hapless user.

What I especially like about the product was that I’d become familiar with the Belight Software design interface by using *Business Card Composer*, *Swift Publisher*, and *Disc Cover* so I had no essentially no learning curve to become comfortable with Mail Factory. To those of you new to the Belight products, what can I tell you? The design features are easy to use, and if on occasion you get stuck, the well written and easy to understand *Help* menu is just a click away.

Getting Ready To Test Mail Factory

Okay, I’ve admitted that I don’t use many of the sources need to automate the performance of Mail Factory. I decided to work with both Eudora and FileMaker Pro, after all that’s all I had. (My Apple address book contains only six or seven entries; three are variants of my business’ addresses).

Eudora — As part of this review, I *dumped* some address information, yes tediously field-by-field from my Dymo Address lists, into my Eudora address book. It was about time to add such information, at least for my frequently used contacts. That Eudora associated list became one test set. Alas when I imported the Eudora address book into Mail Factory, it was all there. Several dozen sets of compete address and hundred of blanks (just folks names) or incomplete entries. But I knew that was going to happen.

The Address Book Access Thing From FileMaker Pro — Since most my addresses are in FMP databases, as noted earlier, I had two choices — Export/import tab delimited addresses or export addresses directly from FMP. I ended up creating two alternative test sets, from my 3,000 records FMP professional contacts database. *They turned out to be identical.*

By using FMP's export feature, extracting only address related information from my database I was able to import information into Mail Factory and to easily map it. During the process of using FMP's export (to tab-text) feature, I ignored the information in the FMP database about folks emails, websites, wife and children's names, birth dates — you know the rest of the PIM stuff.

Tab Delimited Text — Use this format when exporting from FMP or a PIM, and then import them into Mail Factory. Specifically, in FMP you select the fields you want exported.

| | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------|---------------------------|
| Title/Salutation | Name First | Middle Initial (Optional) |
| Name Last | Affiliation | Street Address |
| Street Address 2 (In Principal) | City | State |
| Zip | Country | |

Such address parts need to be in the correct order to simplify mapping the imported records to the Mail Factory. Since you can export a selected part (found set) or all of a FMP database to a tab-text file this is a good way to get started. Doing so is an initial, minor, hassle, but was easy to do. Indeed, exporting addresses is better than cutting and pasting them individually each time you want use an address in Mail Factory. By the way, if your database was configured to keep the city-state-zip information as one field, you'll need to create a custom address template. If you, in days gone my have a mixed set of data, you need to fix each individual address that contains a combined *city-state-zip* as you need it.

Despite my rapid success with exporting tabbed-text from FileMaker Pro, exporting addresses directly to Mail Factory was more trouble. I used my 3000 items professional contacts database for testing. My problems were based on the structure of the databases I created. My contacts databases, whose initial content was created on my first Macintosh, have evolved, perhaps mutated, into my current FMP contact databases.

Direct Export From File Maker Pro — For the second test of FMP address data, I worked entirely within Mail Factory. I used the program itself to extract the FMP address containing information.

None of the problems in using FMP as a source of Mail Factory addresses, described below, were caused by problems created by the Mail Factory interface. They were due entirely to the pedigree and organization of my databases, which had evolved over my years of using a Macintosh to store address information.

I'll detail those FMP export problems and their solution in my June Tips column.

Never the less, I could have saved my self an hour of trial and error importing FMP addresses by seeking help. I should have checked Mail Factories Help, then and there, the folks at Belight are conscientious about writing good help files. But I didn't, I tried to tough it out. If I'd checked I would have found in the Help files, an item called — Mail Factory *Help* > *Integration with Third-Party Databases and Contact Managers* > *Importing Data from a FileMaker Database*. For most folks, these instructions would have done the job.

“You will need to associate the fields in your source file with the fields in Mail Factory address panel. Look at the fields in the **Contact Data** column, and, opposite the fields you need imported, click on the corresponding cell in the **Map To** column. A pop-up list will appear. In the list, choose the appropriate field name. For instance, if the first cell in **Contact Data** column contains "Peter," choose "First Name" in the corresponding **Map To** cell.

“You don't need to map each and every field. For instance, if your FileMaker database contains phone numbers, and you don't need them in Mail Factory, just leave the corresponding cells in the **Map To** column blank.”

In reality, the way my data views in FMP were configured, during my fist attempt at data extraction, I sucked in the whole record (say PIM please). That information from my existing, more complex data views (full PIM information) made it frustratingly difficult to map only address-associated data.

My FMP databases are an accumulation of contacts exported from MS File, and AppleWorks. They also represent countless database formate revisions, some which were created on my SE-30.

Finally, they are an accumulation of what, often partial, information I had the time, not the full sets of contact information I get when I scan business cards.

I knew I had to find a better way.

Therefore I eventually created a new view (report) in my professional contacts database that focused only on address list attributes. That greatly facilitated the direct export process.

Mail Factory gleans information from whichever report (view) you've last used in the database. (This observation in not in the otherwise excellent documentation.)



It turned out that by using a (report form) focused solely on address list information, ordered appropriately, mapping the information to Mail Factory was indeed simple

Address Extraction from FMP — Use FMP's Export Features.

Dealing With Other Address Data Sources — An addition feature of the product is its ability to deal with non-address addresses. If your address source is a web page or eMail, the software's "Paste as Address" option will intelligently parse your clipboard's contents and insert them into the appropriate address field.

Is all of this worth the trouble? Yes. Once you make the commitment to one of the supported address books or extracting addresses from a database e.g., Eudora or FMP), mailing with Mail Factory moves much faster and beat the heck out of the alternatives

Okay, I've the best set of address data I could acquire imported into Mail Factory, What's next? Obviously I could now get onto the business of creating envelopes and labels.

Working With Envelopes or Labels

Creating An Envelope — Open Mail Factory and you see the Assistant, ready to create labels or envelopes for you. We'll start with envelopes, although I alternate between printing labels and printing addressed envelopes. Its left hand window shows a long list of envelope names and sizes. A preview pane at the right shows the relative sizes of the envelopes as you select (click) between them. Now, since I only use to US No.10 business envelopes or more rarely to a #6 envelope size for bills and letters to friends. My LabelWriter is loaded transparent labels that I use for holiday or greetings cards or larger envelopes – envelopes I don't want to push through my color laser HP printer. The other envelope sizes are of little interest to me, but they're available when needed.

I did not do much with the ability to add graphics to my envelopes. I did a test or three using the design window to add clip-art, photos, or other designs a test #10 envelope. Since I'm not into personalizing envelopes, not even with my business' logos, but you may like it. You can even use downloaded images from Google, if you like, personalizing your envelopes. By transferring the image to your word processor, you can even create a stationary set, but this is easier to do in Belight's Swift Publisher.

Creating a Label Sheet — The capability to create label sheets from your address lists allows you to avoid having to feed envelopes through your printer. To do so, you will need to Mail Factory's label assistant. The Assistant's list of included label sheets is impressive, and included the Avery address label stock I use. If I had not had a Mail Factory supplied template available. I could have created a custom label layout to fit the labels I had. That's cheaper than buying new labels and tastier than printing off center or poorly spaced labels. The tools are there, except for a ruler, which you'll need to provide the label assist the needed label dimensions. Fingers work too, so you can count the number of labels on a sheet.

A Kudo – Mailing Tips to Save You Time and Money

Postal service in the USA and some other countries uses special equipment that sorts mail automatically and helps to deliver mail faster and more accurately (and sometimes at less cost). To qualify for automated processing, your mail must be prepared properly. Check out the *Postal Guidelines* in Mail Factory's help.

Minor Discomforts

Street Address_2 and Other Glitches — Many of the business addresses I use require a two line street address. I could not, in the time I had available for review and testing, figure out how to add the second street address line. It is likely, based on my reading of the Mail Factory help files, that I need to create a custom template with two address lines, sometimes soon. Real soon.

The “comma” Inc. Problem — Many of my address in FMP lists the affiliates as the **So-and-So Company, Inc.** The Mail Factory import process treated anything following the comma as a separate data “field” separator. I'm not sure I can resolve this issue, except on a case-by-case basis. To do so would require manually adding the word “Inc.” to each address to which it applied. Alternatively, my solution, ignore the absence of “Inc.” — Again not a Mail Factory Problem.

To Zoom or Target — Zooming, in contact view, to tune an address on an envelope, does not focus on the selected field (Sender or Addressee). It would be nice to zoom to the spot I want to fix, having previously selected it.

Conclusion

Mail Factory from BeLight Software is an excellently crafted program that produces great looking labels and envelopes with a minimum of effort. Its interface, like the other programs in the Printfolio suite, is clean and intuitive. The software's rich and varied features are conveniently accessible but never obtrusive.

My testing showed, the program was solid and stable. Perhaps due to the import problems caused by my FMP databases, I did not notice any rough edges in the interface or gotcha's that interfered with its use. (There's a bit of that in other reviewers' comments, but I found nothing in such Google posted reviews worthy of repeating.) For a change, I have no serious suggestions for improvements to this product.

BeLight has been shipping regular updates for all of its products, responding to user feedback and an evolving Macintosh operating system. They continue to add, an impressive array of new features with each release. Compare the features and limitations of version 1.1 to 2.5, a quantum leap of enhancements over a period of a bit more than a year. So now when I want to print an envelope, I click on Mail Factory, select the address and do so. Alternatively, if the address has not been entered into the Mail Factory database, I manually add it. Then it's available for future use.



Recommendation

My editor insists I answer the following question. “What you’d suggest a friend consider before spending hard-earned cash on this product. If you are tired of struggling with the paltry address features in MS Word, or Apples address and mail utilities, order this product.

Unless your address collections are as dispersed and messed up as mine, you’ll get instant gratification. Despite all the initial problems, I had importing my FMP address collection into Mail Factory; it was well with the effort. Now if I want to write a letter to Dr. XXX at MIT, a contact I made in 1974, I’m a click or two away from an addressed envelope. [Yes I checked the Internet; he’s been prompted but is still on the faculty?]

This program has a lasting place on my hard drive; let it be so for you,

Doc.

Periscope: Webcam Software

Reviewed by Ted Bade



Freeverse, Inc.
447 W. 24th Street,
New York, NY 10011
(212) 929 3549
FAX: (212) 647 0562
info@freeverse.com
<http://www.freeverse.com/periscope/>

Released: April 2007

\$30 USD

Requirements: Mac OS X v10.4 or later;
Built-in or external iSight, or a supported 3rd-party USB
or FireWire camera; Mac OS X 10.4.9 provides improved
support for 3rd-party cameras.

Strengths: Easy to use to both capture images and to share them.

Weaknesses: limited video manipulation, no movie option. You can save a series of pictures as a movie, but not capture a movie.

For a demo of this product:

<http://www.freeverse.com/download/select.php?name=periscope&platform=osx>

Introduction

Periscope is a program that gives you control of your external or built-in iSight camera. You can use it to snap an image based on a variety of different events including motions, duration, a script file and more. It's a great utility and it works well.

If you have an iSight camera or a Macintosh with one built in, you can use Periscope to automatically (or manually, for that matter), capture images for you. It is up to you to decide how to apply the controls and position the camera! You can use these abilities for security or just for fun. Once the image is captured, Periscope offers some basic tools for saving the captured image.





Basic screen

You can capture an image using one of five different ways. First is the ability to snap a shot when motion occurs. You can either have the software and camera watch the entire screen or a section of it. Sensitivity to motion is set by moving a simple slider control so that an image is taken exactly when you want. Set the sensitivity up to capture a shot with the slightest of motion or so only major movements cause it to snap. But what if you want to snap an image when someone walks into a specific area? You can set Periscope to monitor one or more regions of the view area for motion. Each region's sensitivity is set independently. Although the regions are rectangular in shape, they can be made any size.

You can also use an audio input as a trigger. I think of monitoring the baby in its crib or watching the front door. When a noise happens, an image is snapped. As with motion, you can adjust Periscope's sensitivity to sound. Just be sure to set the sensitivity level so that every cricket chirp doesn't snap an image!

Another method of capturing images is to use a timer. Tell Periscope to snap an image at a regular interval from seconds, to minutes, to hours. Want to see a movie of how the stars cross the sky? Set it up to capture an image every 1/2 hour as it watches the sky, then play back the results as a short movie!



Capture Tab



Share Tab



Review Tab

For a more complex means of control, you trigger the operation of the camera by an script file. The script can take a bunch of things into account, limited only by your needs and imagination. And finally, for those Macs that have them, you can operate the camera using the Apple remote control. This would be a great tool for capturing candids at a party. No one expects that PowerBook on the table is actually being controlled from across the room.

As well as capturing the image, you can tell Periscope to add certain pieces of information to the image it takes. The Date and Time stamp is the most obvious item, Whenever an image is taken the date/time is included on the image. You can control the font and color used for the text, and include only date, or only time, or both. When you turn on that feature, a date/time box appears on the screen, this box can be moved to avoid covering anything that might be important. You can also add a line of text to the image. This might be useful if you had multiple cameras and wanted to know exactly which one you are viewing or simply to title the captured image.



Setting motion regions

With the pictures stored on your computer, you probably want to do something with them. Periscope offers a handful of options for sharing the images, available under the “share” tab. You can use Periscope to email an image, save it to a folder, or to a .Mac or Flickr account, FTP it to someone or just put it in your iPhoto library. I was impressed with how Periscope handles emailing an image. From within Periscope, you simply enter an email address and title, Periscope then sends the email using your email address as the sender. This might be useful to have your Mac at home send you images of what’s happening there while you are at work!

Conclusion

If you have an iSight camera and want to use it to capture an image automatically, you will want to take a look at Periscope. It does a good job of capturing images and offers a variety of events that trigger an image. It is an interesting program which works well. Download the demo and see how it works for your needs.

Adobe Photoshop CS3 Extended: A New User's First Look

Reviewed by Chris Marshall



<http://www.adobe.com/products/photoshop/photoshopextended/>

As part of the CS3 Design Premium - \$1,760 USD, Standalone
- New - \$999 USD, £570 GBP, €1,236 Euro Upgrade - \$349
USD and £163 GBP.

Requirements: PowerPC® G4 or G5 or multicore Intel processor; Mac OS X v.10.4.8; 256MB of RAM (512MB recommended) for PowerPC based system; 512MB (1GB recommended) for Intel based system; 1.6GB of available hard-disk space (additional free space required during installation); 1,024x768 monitor resolution with 16-bit video card; DVD-ROM drive; QuickTime 7 software required for multimedia features; Internet or phone connection required for product activation; Broadband Internet connection required for Adobe Stock Photos and other services.

Original review at <http://myapplestuff.com/cs3-photoshop-extended-wow/>

Get everything in Adobe® Photoshop® CS3 software and more with Photoshop CS3 Extended, which enables you to edit 3D and motion-based content and perform image analysis.

Opening Photoshop CS3 Extended (\$999) -

<http://www.adobe.com/products/photoshop/index.html> for the first time for me was like standing on the high diving board a week after learning to swim. I was really excited, but apprehensive, nervous and more than a little daunted by the prospect.

Why the analogy? Well not only was this my first time with Photoshop, but I am hardly what you could call an expert when it comes to photo editing.

I had always wanted Photoshop, although I couldn't really have told you why. It seemed like one of those things that I 'should' have, even though I knew that I wouldn't really be able to do it justice. To be honest it was inevitable that I would get it: first I got a Mac, then a 23" Apple Cinema Display, then a Nikon D80 so Photoshop was a natural addition. Not for one minute though had I appreciated how huge it was - in terms of product features, instructions and guides, tutorials, books, seminars, disciples, forums and followers. It has been like opening the door to a whole new world. Oh yes, it makes my photographs look better as well. I really couldn't do the exceptional features of Photoshop justice, and to be honest there are so many really good reviews and tutorials around on the internet by people that actually know what they are doing, so it seems that the best I can do is share my experience and observations with you.

Let's start with the price - it is expensive. Actually it is very expensive. At \$649 the non extended version is still a lot of money. I couldn't even say if it was worth it or not as that is going to depend totally on your own circumstances, but what I can say without any hesitation is that it is a totally amazing feeling to take a RAW image, 'mess about' with Non Destructive editing, try all kinds of 'styles' and come out at the end with a picture that really could have been taken by a professional (OK, maybe they were having a bad day) . Personally it has taken me another step higher on my Photographic enjoyment ladder. I thought the Nikon D80 improved things, so to improve immensely something that had already undergone a huge improvement is, well it's immensely huge.

It isn't as daunting as I thought it would be, but it isn't easy by any means. Fortunately I had a reasonable idea of what could and couldn't be done, and perhaps more importantly I had already adjusted my approach to actually capturing photographs. You really do need to focus on creating a photograph rather than 'taking a picture'. For example my tendency used to be to capture the whole scene to show something, whereas now I will capture a specific part of the detail and that allows me to get some incredible imagery with Photoshop.

The most amazing thing? The feeling when people actually stop and take the time to comment on your photographs. I have always liked to show people our photographs when they come round - but I have really noticed that now rather than politely wait for me to stop rattling on about them, they are asking me questions, lingering on pictures, comparing them etc.

So Nikon D80 (expensive) + Photoshop (expensive) = amazing experience (priceless)

That probably sums it up. Amazing. I am still in 'shock' at how impressive it is and how much enjoyment I am getting from it. I have a long way to go still, but at least I will have some great photographs to record the rest of the journey. I didn't want to leave it there though so I asked my friend Mac what he liked most about CS3 *"The primary thing I like about photoshop now is speed. Obviously.... It runs a lot faster now on my intel macs. Does not necessarily load faster, but over all operations are much faster. Also I really like the new toolbox/window layout. I find it more intuitive and logical."*

For those of you that haven't already visited the site to see the features here they are:

Top features

Nondestructive editing

Edit nondestructively with new Smart Filters, which let you visualize different image effects, and Smart Objects, which let you scale, rotate, and warp raster and vector graphics — all without altering the original pixel data. Rich painting and drawing toolset

Create or modify images with a wide assortment of professional, fully customizable paint settings, artistic brushes, and drawing tools.

Advanced compositing

Create more accurate composites by automatically aligning multiple Adobe® Photoshop® layers or images based on similar content. The Auto-align Layers command quickly analyzes details and moves, rotates, or warps layers to align them perfectly, and the Auto-blend Layers command blends the color and shading to create a smooth, editable result.

3D compositing and texture editing

Easily render and incorporate rich 3D content into your 2D composites — even edit existing textures on 3D models directly within Photoshop Extended and immediately see the results. Photoshop Extended supports common 3D interchange formats, including 3DS, OBJ, U3D, KMZ, and COLLADA, so you can import, view, and interact with most 3D models. Movie Paint

Enhance video directly within Photoshop Extended. Now you can paint, add text, and clone over multiple frames of an imported video sequence.

2D and 3D measurement tools

Extract quantitative information from images with new measurement tools. Easily calibrate or set the scale of an image, and then use any of the Photoshop Extended selection tools to define and calculate distance, perimeter, area, and other measurements. Record data points in a measurement log and export data, including histogram data, to a spreadsheet for further analysis. Faster, more flexible asset management with Adobe Bridge CS3

Organize and manage images more efficiently with next-generation Adobe Bridge CS3 software, which now delivers improved performance, a Filter panel for easier searching, the ability to group multiple images under a single thumbnail, the Loupe tool, offline image browsing, and more.

Better raw-image processing

Process raw images with increased speed and superior conversion quality using the Photoshop Camera Raw plug-in, which now adds support for JPEG and TIFF formats; new tools including Fill Light and Dust Busting; compatibility with Adobe Photoshop Lightroom™ software; and support for over 150 camera models.

Enhanced Vanishing Point with 3D support

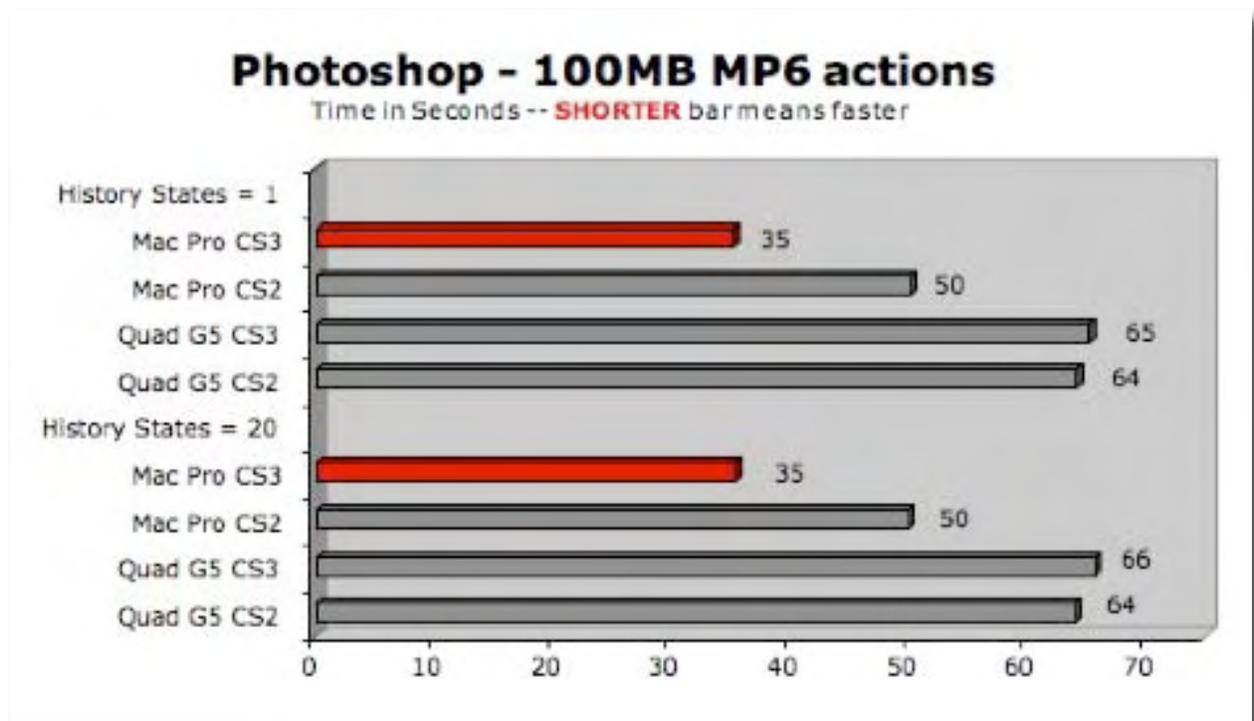
Edit in perspective on multiple surfaces — even those connected at angles other than 90 degrees — with the enhanced Vanishing Point, which also lets you measure in perspective; wrap graphics, images, and text around multiple planes; and output 2D planes as 3D models. Wide range of supported formats

Import and export an even greater range of file formats, including PSD, BMP, DICOM, Cineon, JPEG, JPEG2000, OpenEXR, PNG, Targa, and TIFF.

To see all features - <http://www.adobe.com/products/photoshop/photoshopextended/>

I have absolutely no idea how much better CS3 is over CS2. When I was digging around to try and find out I found this really useful [article](http://www.barefeats.com/quad16.html) - <http://www.barefeats.com/quad16.html>

It was based on the CS3 beta so if anything I would assume that the performance is even better. The article is full of interesting graphs like this:



Just in case you are a CS2 user that hasn't heard why you should upgrade it appears that these are the main reasons why you should upgrade:

* Smart Filters * Quick Selection and Refine Edge tools * Advanced compositing * Streamlined interface * Better raw image processing * Improved Adobe Bridge * Enhanced Vanishing Point * Enhanced 32-bit HDR support * Peak performance * Black-and-white conversion

So back to the diving board. I survived, it was pretty ugly at first and if I am honest the first couple of times resembled a pretty horrific belly flop! I am going to persevere. In fact I am going to do more than that, I am going to 'crack it' as I am totally hooked already. I think the best thing will be to stop the review now and maybe come back in a month or so and see what my thoughts are then.

Sibelius 4 Professional

Reviewed by Daphne Kalfon



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London N4 3HF
0800 458 3111
FAX: 020 7561 7888
infoUK@sibelius.com

Australia
Sibelius Australia
2/52 Weaver Street Edwardstown SA 5039
08 8277 1722
FAX: 08 8277 1799

infoAU@sibelius.com
<http://www.sibelius.com>
\$600 USD, \$650CAD, £303 GBP, €443
Euro

Requirements: Mac OS X 10.2.8/10.3.9/10.4 or later, 256Mb+ RAM, 250Mb hard disk space.
Recommended if using Kontakt Player Silver or audio file export: G4/G5, 512Mb+ RAM,
500Mb hard disk space.

Strengths: extremely versatile, flexible program. Geared to a very wide range of users such as music teachers and music students of every type of ensemble, conservatories, colleges and advanced users such as film composers, concert musicians, orchestrators, arrangers, conductors and more.

Weaknesses: None found.

For a demo (brochure and CD-ROM) of this product: call toll-free: 888-474-2354 or email infoUSA@sibelius.com. For those outside North and South America, consult the website for the applicable toll-free numbers and email addresses.



Introduction

Sibelius 4 is a complete package. It allows composers to write, play, print and publish their music notation projects. It is designed for beginners as well as very advanced composers. It has powerful tools for teachers, and allows users to synchronize their score with a video. Sibelius comes with the Kontakt Player Silver from Native Instruments, which will play back music using high-quality sound samples taken from actual orchestral instruments. The program is also available for purchase as a 5-pack, network or educational site license.

Getting Started

The box contains the installation CD, a handbook, a detailed 500+ page book called “Reference” which is a printed version of the online manual, a brochure outlining all the products in the Sibelius family and a sheet titled “Latest information and technical help”. I should mention that for regular purchasers, the box may not also include the “Reference” manual, but was included in mine for review purposes.

Installation and registration was a very simple, quick and straightforward process using the serial number provided. I really appreciated that when compared to previous experiences I have had in trying to install much smaller and cheaper notation programs.

After Sibelius finished loading, a dialog called “Playback and Input Devices” appeared, with Kontakt Player listed first in the “Device” column. Clicking on the test button allows you to confirm whether or not the chosen device is working.

Just to make sure it was indeed using the Kontakt player, I opened one of the many scores provided, to have it play through. Well, the only glitch was that even after installing the Kontakt Player Silver and choosing it in the “Playback and Input Devices” window, Sibelius still defaulted to the built-in DLS (General Midi) player, which is not what I wanted to use. The solution was quite simple however. Under the *Play* menu, I chose “substitute devices”, and chose “Kontakt Player”. Clicking *OK* will temporarily change it to use the Kontakt player, whereas clicking on the “reset sounds” button will permanently change it.

Choosing an input device (my MIDI keyboard) was simple and worked immediately.

Using the Software

I started by cracking open the handbook, which is basically a quick tour of Sibelius. The first chapter deals with installation, registration and MIDI setup. The next chapter gets you started on the “Quick Tour”, and the last section of the book is a “How to” section which shows you how to set notation for every kind of music such as band, choir, early music, guitar, jazz, orchestra, percussion and so on. The back cover of the book has a detailed diagram of what each item on the menu bar means, as well as many of the most used keyboard shortcuts that are built into the software. A full listing of keyboard shortcuts is contained in the Reference manual which is also available online.

I decided to start off by going on the quick tour. They highly recommend it even for those who have used other notation software programs, because each program is different and one may otherwise miss those important differences and other special features. A nice feature about the handbook is that as one goes through the tour, the relevant tutorial videos are signaled using a clapperboard symbol, and every few pages there is at least one “Pearl of Wisdom”, about using the software, as well as a brief “recap” at the end of each section. For the tutorial videos, Sibelius co-founder Ben Finn explains how to use the program’s main features. Topics covered range from a basic intro right through to publishing your scores on the Internet and tips on using the built-in Kontakt Player.

Besides the tutorial videos (19 in all), the handbook and the detailed online reference manual, there is also an online help centre which can be accessed from the *Help* menu. So... it is easy to see that there is more than enough help on hand to get you from beginner to seasoned user and beyond.

So the first section of the Quick Tour consists of chapters “Look and feel”, “Playback”, and “Basic editing”. These sections introduced me to the basic tools I would use most often when I begin to use Sibelius. It was very straightforward. I watched the accompanying video for “Look and feel”, and found it very easy to follow. The voice-over was at a good slow pace, easy to understand, and accompanied by a “live” screenshot of whatever was being discussed. There is also a transport bar at the bottom which allows you to go back, rewind, fast forward and so on, through the tutorial.

The next chapter is “Printing”. Using an example score from the Quick Tour to print out, the operation went smoothly and I was very impressed with the quality of the printout.

This is followed by “Starting a new score” and “Mouse Input”. Following the easy steps, I ended up with four full bars of note input on a very professional looking new score.

The next chapter is titled “Alphabetic Input” and guides you through the process of learning how to input notes into your score using the computer keyboard, as well as how to input lines, text, and how to notate using the four voices - which are colour-coded to make things easier. A feature I really like is that as I save at regular intervals, Sibelius creates a “backups” folder of each save so that in case my score gets deleted by accident or I simply want to go back to a previous save, I can go to the folder of backups and choose which one I want from there.

Next is “Step-time input” which covers how to enter notes into your score via your MIDI keyboard. This method is extremely straightforward. One glitch I noticed was that as I input my notes, Sibelius didn’t quite get the right accidentals in its “intelligent guess” process. It chose A-flats instead of G-sharps (my score was in the key of F+) so I did have to correct those. I was pretty impressed with how I can play for example, a chord, and Sibelius will enter the whole thing instantly into my score.

Something that wasn’t mentioned is that you can also use the numeric keypad on your computer keyboard to change note values during step-time input; the quick tour only mentioned using Sibelius’s onscreen Keypad to do this, which isn’t as efficient.

This is followed by “Flexi-time input”. After a few tries, I was able to get a perfect written rendition into my score, of what I played on my MIDI keyboard, all in real time. I was impressed by the speed and accuracy with which Sibelius was able to transcribe what I played.

Next is “Basic formatting” which illustrates just how flexible and sophisticated Sibelius is when it comes to being able to instantly change layouts and formats, of which there are many to choose from.

“A little arranging” showed how with just a few easy steps, you can easily rearrange your music for any combination of instruments, and here again, there are so many combinations to choose from under the “Notes” menu.

The next chapter discusses how Sibelius allows you to publish music on the internet either to SibeliusMusic.com, which is a very large database of sheet music, or you may publish teaching materials onto SibeliusEducation.com for students and colleagues to download and which in turn allows you to obtain the same from others, or you may also publish your scores onto your own website.

I should mention that this viewing, sharing and printing of scores on the internet is enabled by Scorch, which comes with Sibelius and is a free web browser plug-in.

What I was particularly interested in (and excited about) checking out was the “Video” chapter. Well, it was so easy to import a video and have it play in sync with my Sibelius score. Wow, that was easy. Sibelius also has many files of short videos which you can copy to your hard disc from the CD-ROM, and either view the accompanying music score that was written for it, or write your own. I viewed one of the videos and found the accompanying music score to be of quite a decent quality. I do think this is yet another great tool that comes with Sibelius, for those who are keen on writing film scores.

I need to mention that as I was playing the music to the video, I noticed lots of clicks and pops. I then closed the two other Sibelius notation projects I had currently open, and just in case, I also quit any other programs I had running which I didn’t need. Then I quit Sibelius and re-opened the score and video, and then the music played fine. Just something to keep in mind. That may be a bit of a glitch but there is an easy solution :)

The handbook also covers “Parts”, “Worksheet Creator” (for music teachers), “Guitar tab”, “Exporting graphics” (this allows you to export all or part of your score into another program), “Scanning”, “Opening files from other programs”, and the *Espressivo* feature which uses artificial intelligence to create a more human-like performance of your music. I checked out the sample score, before *Espressivo* was used, and after, and was impressed by the difference in performance. This feature can be easily applied to any score.

And of course once you are done, exporting audio is done simply by choosing the “export” option under the file menu.

The handbook goes on to describe further features of Sibelius by listing them and where they can be found in the Reference manual for more detailed information. This is a very handy feature as it allows you to quickly find what you are looking for and read the relevant sections in the Reference manual.

I found the sounds in the Kontakt Silver Player to be of quite a good quality but you can always upgrade to Gold if desired.

The last part of the handbook is called “How to” and basically gives you very helpful pointers on how to set up pretty much any kind of score in Sibelius, from early music to jazz

Conclusion

Sibelius is an incredibly sophisticated yet easy to use notation software program. It will allow you to do anything you want to do in the world of notation.

Recommendation

For anyone who is keen on writing their own scores for whatever ensemble of their choosing, without having any limitations on creativity, Sibelius is most definitely the way to go. As always however, always try before you buy and Sibelius lets you do that with the demo CD-ROM.

WriteWay Professional Version 1.6

Reviewed by Mike Hubbartt, © 2007



John Haack

JT Enterprises, LLC

Support@WriteWayPro.com

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

Released: 2006

\$79 USD (Download), \$86 USD (CD-ROM)

30-day demo (6.2MB) available for download.



Requirements: Windows 98 2nd Edition, Windows 2000, XP or Vista; 64 MB RAM; 10 MB hard drive space; 800 x 600 screen resolution.



Mac version – planned future release.

Strengths: Built-in word processor; demo version available for download; install and run WriteWay on up to two computers; includes graphics to help visualize people and places.

Weaknesses: No Mac version at this time; some windows don't tile, requiring the user to select a back window to see all the contents; don't usually expect to see a three-act format to organize novels – a format more typical for screenplays.

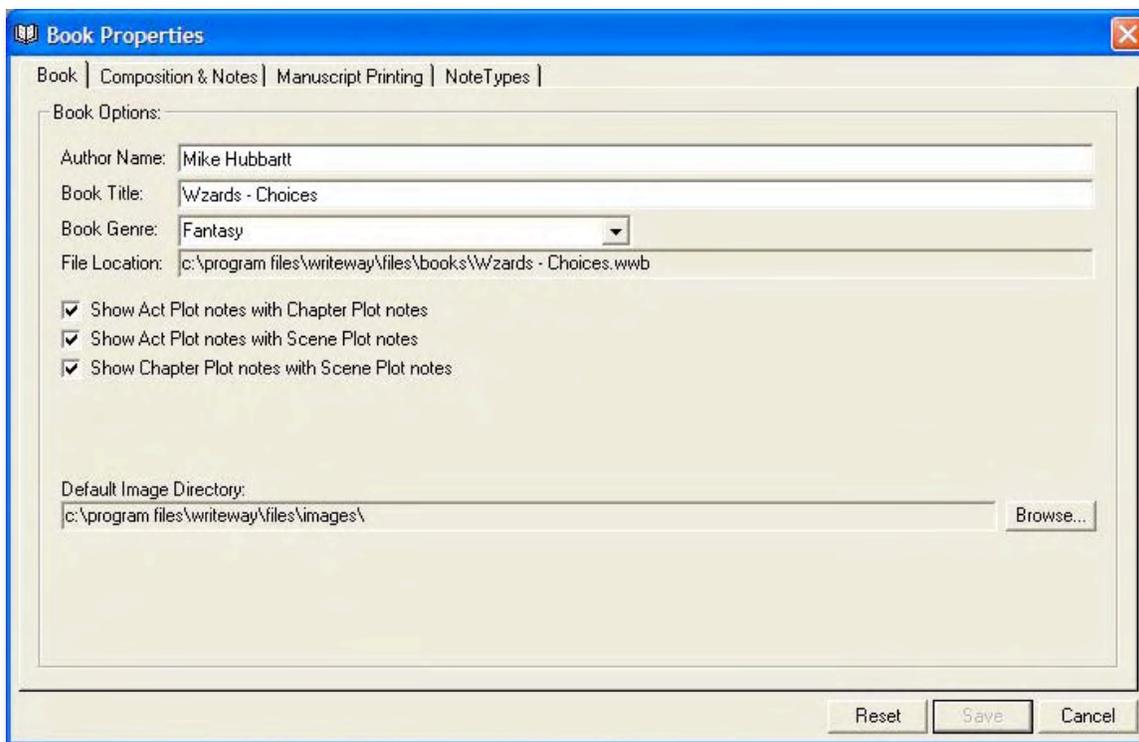
Comparison Table - <http://creative-writing-software-review.toptenreviews.com/>

Getting Started

I downloaded the software from the product website and installed it on a 3GHz desktop running Windows 2000 Professional, and on a 3 GHz laptop running Windows XP. No problems encountered on either computer. Although it doesn't require an Internet connection to activate the software, I used that method for both installations – it was painless both times.

After launching the software I decided to create a new book, so I selected *File – New Book* from the program menu and was able to specify the book title, filename and genre. I entered the information for my novel and had to fill out information in the *Book Properties* window.

The first tab of the window let me enter the Author Name, Book Title, and Book Genre. The file containing the book is displayed, but is not editable. You can also choose to enable or disable showing plot notes with chapter and scene plot notes. And you can specify an image directory for the book at this screen – helpful if you like to add pictures of people or places to your fiction to better visualize them as you create your story.

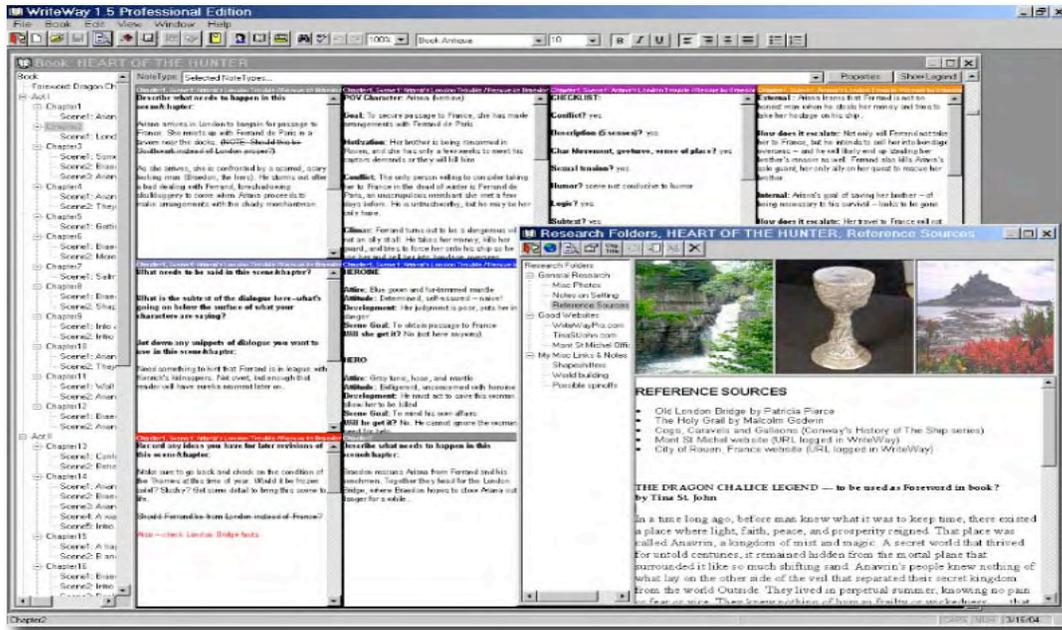


Set the font, default left tab, and choose between single and double spacing at the Composition and Notes tab. You can also choose to include a foreword and author notes in the outline. The third tab is Manuscript Printing and you set the font and spacing, just like the second tab, margins, chapter and scene options, and text for the header and footers. Nice. The last tab – NoteTypes – is the place to modify existing Notes types or add new ones. Useful if you write multiple genres and want to specify different title colors to easily discern when switching between stories.

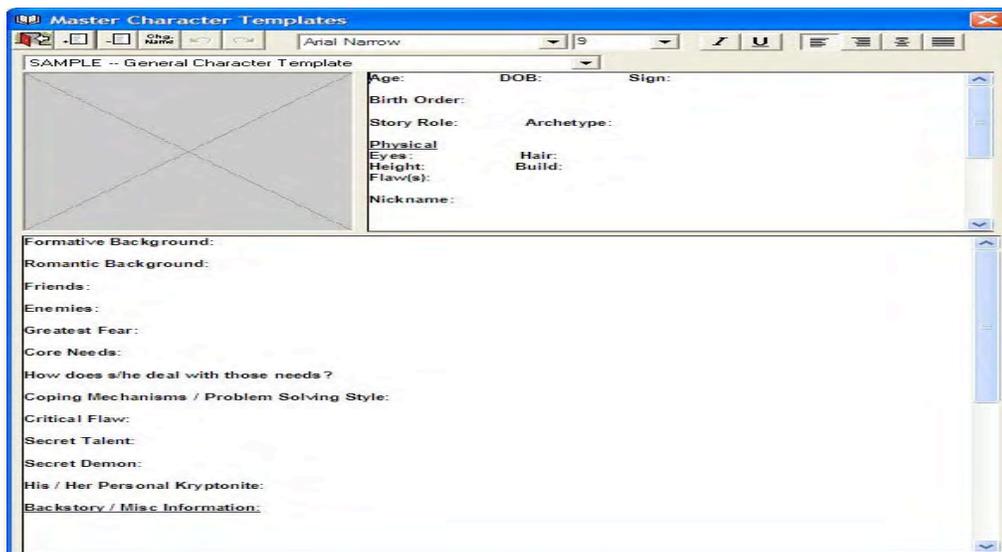
Using the software

With a new story ready to go, you see the Book Wizard, with the overall story structure listed as Acts I, II and III at the side of the wizard. To add a chapter, move the mouse over Act I, press the right mouse button and select Add Chapter. Although it is optional, you should enter the plot elements before starting to write the chapter – I did so, then moved the mouse pointer over Chapter 1 (at the left of the screen), pressed the right mouse button and selected Add Scene. This opened the built in word processor, so I could start writing my story.

The word processor not only includes area to enter the story, it also shows the book plot, act plot and chapter plot. A nice way to insure you stay on track with your outline, without having to switch to another screen. Nice touch and useful. Oh, and you can resize the plot section to have more room to display the actual story – again, another nice touch.

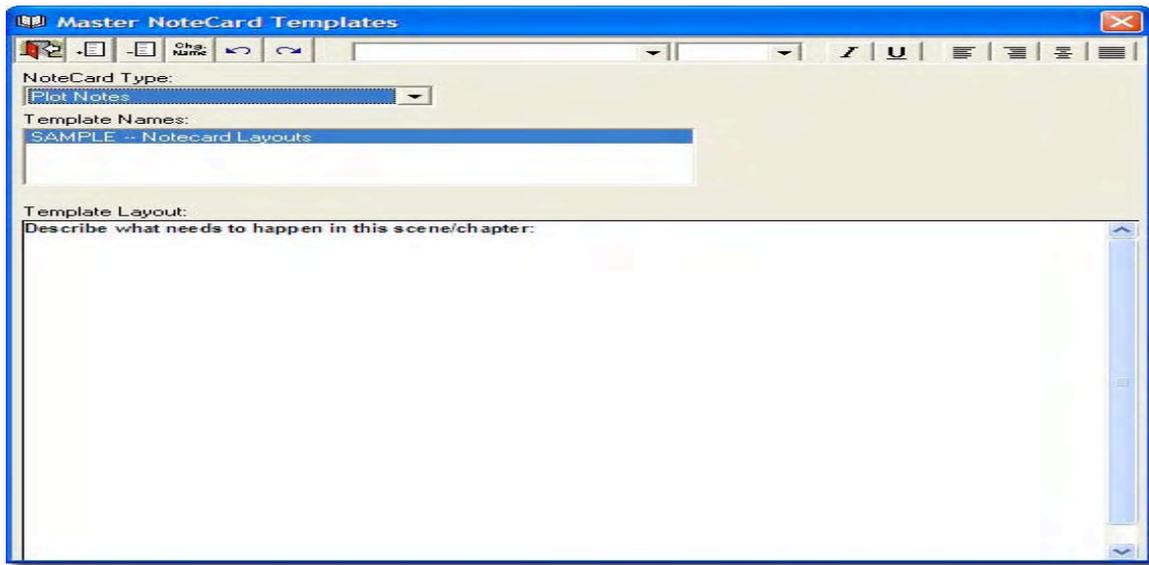


WriteWay Pro also provides character background screens, with written information and even a picture to help visualize the people in your story. Enter the heroes and villains background (and appropriate pictures), and it is simple to switch between them during story development.



I liked the character background screen, but this brought up a negative aspect of the software. When I was working on the story, I wanted to see character background at the same time. I could display the main and character screens at the same time, but the contents overlapped and I had to switch back and forth to read character information and return to my story. I'd really like to see the windows tile, so character content is available while writing – hopefully a Mac version will take care of this perceived shortcoming.

In addition to the character profiles, *WriteWay Pro* provides note cards:



Note cards provide an electronic means to replace those handy PostIt® notes that cover most monitors (and not a few desks) at home or office. The types of note cards that are available for each book are: Plot, Conflict, Character, Scene Sketch, Setting, Dialogue, Romance, Suspense, Subplot and Revision, plus you can add other cards as needed, which is another nice touch of this product.

A list of valuable *WriteWay Professional* product features:

| | |
|--------------------|--------------------------|
| Organize | Character Profiles |
| Story Notecards | Outline |
| Composition | Dictionary and Thesaurus |
| Reports and Stats | Word/Page Count Tracking |
| Notecard Templates | Storyboard |
| Synopsis | Miscellaneous Pages |
| Research Folders | Future Book Ideas Folder |
| ARCs/Galleys | Import Capability |

Conclusion

The software license allows the purchaser the right to install and run the software on up to two computers, as long as the purchaser is the only one using the software on both computers. Very fair, and also handy when you have two computers and want to work on both without needing to buy a second software license.

A representative of JT Enterprises told me they are in the process of developing a version of WriteWay for the Mac. I look to that, considering the product has a built-in word processor and the cost (\$79) is quite a bit less than MS Word for the Mac.

Recommendation

If you have a PC and have tried to write a story for years but just couldn't seem to get past the first chapter, consider WriteWay. The standard version is just \$39 USD and the Professional version is just \$79 USD – not too much to pay to get that material organized so you can focus on writing the rest of the story.

If you have an Intel processor Mac or a PC and a desire to craft fiction, this is a good product. I hope JT Enterprises comes up with a licensing scheme friendly to Mac owners that buy this product before a Mac version is released. Recommended as a good value for the features.

Enjoy the fruit Spread the seeds



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Apple Store for Businesses in the USA

<http://store.apple.com/AppleStore/WebObjects/BizAgent?qprm=126559>

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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 and consulting efforts, we also create *macCompanion* as a freely available PDF-based monthly. It averages about 100 pages per month. July 2006 was the 4th-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 PDF 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”.

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

The *macCompanion* Staff