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Welcome

Robert Paul Leitao, rleitao@atpm.com

Welcome to the July issue of *About This Particular Macintosh!* July is traditionally a month of national celebrations and family summer gatherings. Many of us take to the road while others make room for friends and family on vacation. No matter your July plans, please take a moment to read our latest issue. Each month we explore what we call the “personal computing experience” in our easy-to-read monthly magazine format.

Sitting On Top of the World

Apple’s share price ended June trading at \$122.04, not far from its all-time high of \$127.61 per share established in early June. This closing price valued the company at over \$105 billion dollars. Apple’s current share price places the company’s market value in the thin air region among the world’s most successful enterprises. It’s been a hard climb for Mac fans and the company’s shareholders over the past twenty years. The question to be answered this month is whether or not the share price will figuratively make base camp and pause following the iPhone’s release, or continue its ascent toward the top spot among the world’s publicly traded firms.

A Room With a View

With Apple’s prospects at the top of the world, the release of the Safari 3 Public Beta for Mac and Windows provides all PC users with a room with a view of Apple’s new products and technology. Windows users downloaded the beta release of Apple’s popular Web browser more than a million times within the first few days of release.

Increasingly, Apple is making Windows irrelevant in bringing content distribution and digital device management to PC owners. The Safari beta further extends the Mac-like experience on Windows, especially for those who already use Apple’s QuickTime media player and iTunes solutions. Apple is bringing its product user experience to consumers the Mac’s limited market share has yet to reach. Watch for Apple to further exploit the Windows installed base for content distribution and device sales in the coming months and years.

The Long Engagement

Apple has been engaged in developing the next upgrade for Mac OS X for well over two years. The delay in the release of Leopard until October is due to Apple’s need to move engineers from Leopard development to the iPhone project. Apple needed to be sure the new device shipped as planned with a full complement of advertised features. At last month’s conference for Apple software developers, CEO Steve Jobs highlighted many of Leopard’s advances in usefulness and functionality. The October release date for the commercial version of Leopard provides developers with more time to test and tune their products before Leopard hits store shelves.

The Odd Couple

From a social standpoint, the iPhone is a marriage of unequals: the banal and boring cell phone meets the panache of the iPod. The OS X-style interface of the iPhone only adds to the allure of this new product. The Apple iPhone is available through Apple retail stores and company-owned AT&T Wireless outlets, as well as Apple's online store. Both companies see the iPhone as a new start in a maturing cell phone market. Apple is the master of the customer relationship, while AT&T offers an expansive national cellular network and packaged communications services. Watch for both companies to leverage the iPhone's consumer appeal. Apple is interested in selling Macs and pushing the adoption of OS X, while AT&T is battling for gains in a very competitive communications services market. Apple will benefit from both the sales of the iPhone and monthly payments from AT&T on iPhone cellular service contracts.

Newlyweds

The June 29th release of the Apple iPhone weds the popular Apple iPod with the functionality of the cell phone in one appealing new product. Media reports indicate first adopters, many of whom waited in long lines outside Apple and AT&T Wireless stores to be among the first to purchase the new device, were mostly happy with the purchase and purchase experience. The iPhone can be activated at either the retail store at time of purchase or through Apple's iTunes. Activation delays through iTunes on the 29th caused many first adopters to wait hours before enjoying their new purchase. Preliminary reports indicate that overwhelming activation-related traffic experienced on the 29th did not carry over to the following day.

Sibling Rivalry

The release of the new iPhone ahead of the release of new iPods reduces the chances of sibling rivalry. We suspect that the next generation iPods will incorporate many of the iPhone's most attractive features. The iPhone may represent a preview of forthcoming iPods as Apple chooses to compete with other PC makers not by releasing lesser functioning Macs at lower price points but by releasing digital devices that replace the need for someone to own more than one PC.

The iPhone will have its own halo effect on Mac sales due in part to the iPhone's use of OS X. For millions of iPhone buyers this will be the first real look they will have at Apple's modern operating system and its enhanced functionality, stability, and appearance. Reducing the need for consumers to have more than one PC enables Apple to focus its design and product efforts on a true digital lifestyle component system, with each piece providing independent functionality with full integration with other Apple solution components. Watch for the next-generation iPods to include an implementation of OS X similar to the implementation in the iPhone.

The iPhone may be the first release of a new generation of Apple digital devices.

Divorce and Remarriage

Apple's iPhone partnership with AT&T brings back together two of Apple's CEOs. Dr. Gil Amelio, who preceded the return of Steve Jobs to the helm at Apple, is a member of AT&T's board of directors. Although Dr. Amelio [authored a book](#) about his tenure at Apple, his brief biography on the AT&T Web site makes no mention of his time at the company. Dr. Amelio has been a director of AT&T since 2001.

Our July Issue

Thank you for joining us this month, and every month, as we bring you the latest news, views, and product reviews. Our editors have developed content to celebrate the “personal computing experience” as we all celebrate the sights and sounds of summer.

Our July issue includes:

The Candy Apple: Beyond Pen Pals

Here's a place to put all your leftover books and magazines, in case your local library is full.

Bloggable: Are You Out There, Steve? It's Me, Wes

Wes Meltzer may have doubted the existence of the iPhone, many times, but he's doing penance for his sins now while he waits out a year on his T-Mobile contract. He'll also send you around the review world, with those lucky souls who have already held an iPhone, and through the Valley of Doubt, in this month's *Bloggable*.

Mac About Town: Dear Steve: Hurry Up and Slow Down!

When in your computer's life cycle did you buy? Beginning? End? Both can be right, if it is also the moment you need it. Mike Chamberlain relives both the thrill of victory and the agony of defeat in the continuing battle to have it all.

MacMuser: Furs Thoughts About the Big Cat

“Steve Jobs' keynote speech at WWDC opened more, er, err... windows into the domain of the Leopard.”

MacMuser: Stuffed, Eleven Years Ago

Mark Tennent finds it hard to open old DiskDoubler archives—but that may not be a bad thing.

Outliners: Some Perspectives on the Worldwide Developers Conference

Ted Goranson uses his *ATPO* column to provide some observations on WWDC and how Apple has changed.

Photoshop For the Curious: Effective Layer Effects

With just a couple of mouse clicks, and this introduction to Photoshop's Layer Styles, you'll find that it doesn't take years of graphic design school and Photoshop training to create professional-looking effects.

Segments: About This Particular Upgrade

For those on a budget, the decision to buy an updated laptop is not one to be made lightly. With any computer purchase, there's always the stigma of something coming out that's better and cheaper than what was just purchased. The best way to minimize the pain of this phenomenon is to make hardware purchases just as new models are released. But is this practice of waiting worth while, especially when the new hardware's "improved" specifications might only be marginal?

Segments: The Hunt for an iPhone

For Christopher Turner, the hunt for an iPhone began two and a half years ago.

Desktop Pictures: Crowders Mountain

Reader Forrest Brown brings this month's desktop pictures taken at Crowders Mountain, North Carolina.

Cartoon: Cortland

"Uncomfortable" is the word of the day: at the office, on the dance floor, or in MySpace. No one is having a good time on this particular night, well, except for maybe Steve.

Cartoon: Qaptain Qwerty

He is still waiting for that One More Thing.

Review: Crossword Express 7.4d

This powerful crossword maker could use a prettier interface and higher intergration of Web capabilities.

Review: i-Volution Shell

The i-Volution Shell is Frank Wu's perfect laptop carrying case.

Review: PocketDock AV

An update to May's review of the PocketDock Line Out USB—SendStation now carries an updated version that also outputs video.

Review: Redline 1.0.3

Ambrosia Software's Redline is a fun racing game with lots of options. Fortunately, it doesn't share my love for crashing.



Welcome

I just discovered your magazine and am enjoying it immensely. I recently started going through your archives starting from the oldest issue. My first Mac was an original 128K Mac from 1984 that I bought at Computerland. I still have it and it still works.

Thanks for the great magazine!

—*Mike*

Who Needs an iPod?

I was really intrigued by the description of your column in the table of contents, but after reading it I wish you would have written more more about *why* you seem to have outgrown your iPod. That an exponentially larger music library would lead you to using a device (a mobile phone) that holds less music and plays for a shorter time seems counter-intuitive, but obviously it's the case for you and probably others. Was it a change in lifestyle, or your attitude toward music, or a weariness toward carrying a lot of gadgets, or what exactly? It would be interesting to read why you think your tastes or needs have changed so much in such a (relatively) short time.

—*Julia*

I originally stopped using my iPod because I didn't like having earphones in all the time and prefer listening to a loud speaker, even in mono. It was deciding what to use as a ring tone that made me use my phone's MP3 player. Personally I'd like a phone that goes "ring ring," but apparently that's unfashionable. So currently it's Iggy Pop's The Passenger. :-)

Then, as you say, a pocket full of gadgets becomes tiresome so one small device that can do it all is appealing.

—*Mark Tennent*

Thanks!

I must say that your publication, driven by will and dedication, is far more than I could do. For this, I thank you for a great site! Please don't quit. For every one of these attaboys, there has to be a thousand more who also appreciate but didn't write. For this, I'm sure!

Ciao, from bella Italia,

—*John McMahon*

One of Leopard's Hot Spots

iChat seems like a great solution if all one's clients are on Macs. But in 19 years of doing design—on a Mac—I've never had a client who used a Mac. To my knowledge, iChat doesn't work with PCs. Without seeking out clients who are Mac-based just because they *are* Mac-based, how do I take advantage of this technology with my PC-based clients?

—*Lawrence Standifer Stevens*

Skype may not have the upcoming iChat Theater features, but for simply videoconferencing, it works beautifully across both platforms.

—*Lee Bennett*

Aluminum Desktop Stand

I am amazed that both ATPM and the Mac magazines have overlooked the best of all the laptop stands: the “Kamas” stands with finned heat sinks. The Japanese company has designed them for the MacBook and MacBook Pro. Thus the newest model solves the problem of the blocked CD slot.

It is made of beautifully machined metal. The Japanese company has been making them much longer than the johnny-come-latelys who have cobbled together stuff that has appeared on the market in the last couple of years. You can see pictures [here](#).

—*Mario S. De Pillis, Sr.*

If you can convince them to send me a review model, I will be more than happy to review it. Most of the time—and it's sad that the industry is this way, but it is—the products that get reviewed are the ones that have PR departments working on their behalf. Otherwise, very few people know about them, or people do know about them but the manufacturer is, for whatever reason, unwilling or unable to provide a model for review.

—*Chris Lawson*

We'd love to hear your thoughts about our publication. We always welcome your comments, criticisms, suggestions, and praise. Or, if you have an opinion or announcement about the Macintosh platform in general, that's OK too. Send your e-mail to editor@atpm.com. All mail becomes the property of ATPM and may be edited for publication.



The Candy Apple

by Ellyn Ritterskamp, eritterskamp@atpm.com

Beyond Pen Pals

I have written before about my amazement that the Internet makes it so easy for us to connect with one another: friends, family, work or student groups, and total strangers. A few months ago, I made a new connection that renewed my appreciation for the way this stuff works out, and I would like to share it with you.

I subscribe to three or four magazines, and I used to save them for the recycling bucket. A couple of years ago, I heard about a Web site called [Books For Soldiers](#), the point of which is to send paperback books and magazines to soldiers short on reading material. I visited the site, and while I appreciated the need for registration and rules, at the time I did not want to enroll. A friend had a relative in Iraq, so I sent my stuff to him and hoped his unit had some use for it. Quench gum and beef jerky, and then there were the books, DVDs, and magazines.

Every couple of years, I go through my books and movies to clear out the stuff I won't read or watch again. That made a large first shipment, two years ago. Then I settled in to monthly magazine shipments with an occasional goody thrown in. After a while, that soldier came home. The nerve!

While I was happy for him, I needed a new target for my leftovers. I signed up with [Soldier's Angels](#), and for a few months I had a sailor to send stuff to. But then he also came home—to Norfolk, one state from me.

I took my magazines to the gym for a while but it felt weird. I tried arranging a DVD swap with some online friends, but they thought my leftover DVDs were bad. Well, yeah, that's why I wanted to swap them! But then I remembered, lots of soldiers have DVD players and need movies.

So I started looking for soldier adoption Web sites. There are gobs of them. Some will prepare care packages for you, and they want you to sponsor them. Some help you connect with a specific soldier, and this is the sort I wanted. I settled on [AnySoldier](#), a site that allows soldiers to sign up to distribute letters or gifts to fellow soldiers who may not be getting much mail. For security reasons, postal and military regulations will no longer allow packages or letters addressed to "Any Soldier" to be delivered. If you address your letter to CPL John Doe, ATTN: Any Soldier, etc., it's fine. But as I learned after a while, you can just address the items to "your" soldier, and he or she will hand them off as appropriate.

There are a lot of neat things about this site. You can sort the requests several ways: to get a soldier or sailor from your area, or one who has not had a lot of responses, or even

one from a particular service branch. The soldiers and sailors post messages with their units' requests for specific items. My unit had electricity but no microwave, and I was able to send them one. It arrived undamaged, so they were also able to use the microwavable popcorn my friends sent. Once you get going on this stuff, you will find that people you know also want to contribute.

The site stresses that the most important thing for us to send is our support—that is, letters. We do not have to send high-postage items. I made sure my first shipments included letters telling the soldiers I do not know anyone who says anything bad about them, regardless of how we feel about the invasions. We know these individual soldiers and sailors have volunteered to defend us, and we admire their courage and dedication. End of story.

The site has lots of great suggestions about what to send and how to send it, and FAQs about what not to send and the like. Spend a little time researching it before making a commitment. Once you find your “perfect match,” you will make a new friend—even if you never hear from him.

People from many nations use AnySoldier. In the US the way it works is that we pay postage to an APO or FPO address, which means the item goes to New York City or to San Francisco before going overseas. We pay postage only to NYC or San Francisco. I'm not sure about postage from other nations, but I assume there are similar arrangements available. You just have to look around.

Happy mailing!

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Are You Out There, Steve? It's Me, Wes

O Steve, who art in Cupertino, I must ask Your forgiveness. I doubted, and yet you brought forth unto us the iPhone. You did not even insist that I eat my hat in contrition; you did not even remind me that I remained skeptical long after just about everyone else on Earth. You have not barred me from buying one for myself—unless maybe it's like the No-Fly List administered by the Grand High Priest of the TSA, i.e., in secret—and you have even allowed me to go about my business slaving after one since then.

I was [blown away](#) when Stevie the J. announced the iPhone. To be more precise, the first words out of my mouth were, “Holy cow!” It was so startling even curse words wouldn't come forth. (Channeling Harry Caray can have its benefits, like hearing “Cubs win! Cubs win!” much more often than in real life. . . though as of this writing they're riding a four-game win streak and Alfonso Soriano's come alive.)

So, in thankfulness, I have catalogued here all of the times that I denigrated the very idea of the iPhone. Who has ever volunteered to go take a sit in the stocks for their sins before? Enjoy it while it lasts, folks, Plymouth Rock's just a national monument now.

Anyway. I wrote, in January 2005, that I did not believe that Apple would ever release a cell phone on their own. My exact words were:

My bet instead is on a mid-range [co-branded Motorola-Apple GSM phone](#) with flash RAM in it that can synchronize with selected iTunes playlists from your computer. It could use Bluetooth or, more likely, a wire to sync. Three things I'm betting against: a CDMA version, unless Verizon shells out big time; proper functionality for American users, since cell vendors here cripple all the cool stuff; and more than 256 MB RAM.

It gets worse. (“Worse? How could it be any worse?”) In August 2005, I said, “I'm not holding my breath, though; Steve Jobs seems like too much of a control freak to put the Apple brand on an infrastructure as disastrously spotty as any of the major cell networks'. ([Can you hear me now?](#))” And in March 2006, I gave my elusive *LBJ Shot By JFK* award to someone who thought the iPhone would [bring ubiquitous Internet connectivity](#). . . although I stand by that one more than anything else.

Let's just say, knowing that I have about a year left on my existing contract with T-Mobile is probably penance enough.

Hands-on

Normally I don't like starting at the end of the month and working my way backwards, but I know the reason most of you all are reading this column is to see what you can find out about the iPhone. Then, I'll follow up with some other links, and my own thoughts (!). The iPhone is due out on Friday, June 29, and this column will publish on Sunday, July 1, which means that by the time you read this, you might have an iPhone already. If so: I hate you. Die a painful death.

If not, read on!

David Pogue, Walt Mossberg, and Steven Levy got their hands on review models of the iPhone. I don't know who else did—can't be all that many, or I'd have seen some links by now—but they're all varying degrees of impressed. Any device which Walt Mossberg, particularly, finds impressive, must be, since he's much less of a technophile than either Levy or Pogue, and he is far more critical of the ease of operating the devices he reviews.

Rather than just tell you that they were impressed, I'll give you a little taste of what they have to say. We'll kick it off with Pogue, who is probably the funniest tech reviewer I know of. He writes that, although it has flaws and lacks some basic functionality, it's basically what we expected it to be. . .that is to say, revolutionary.

[T]he bigger achievement is the software. It's fast, beautiful, menu-free, and dead simple to operate. You can't get lost, because the solitary physical button below the screen always opens the Home page, arrayed with icons for the iPhone's 16 functions.

You've probably seen Apple's ads, showing how things on the screen have a physics all their own. Lists scroll with a flick of your finger, CD covers flip over as you flick them, e-mail messages collapse down into a trash can. Sure, it's eye candy. But it makes the phone fun to use, which is not something you can say about most cellphones.

[. . .]

But even in version 1.0, the iPhone is still the most sophisticated, outlook-changing piece of electronics to come along in years. It does so many things so well, and so pleurably, that you tend to forgive its foibles.

Mossberg does exactly what we always expect from his reviews, and does a terrific job of focusing on the nuts and bolts of the experience of using the iPhone. It's a long review, but his conclusion is that the device is a "breakthrough," and on the whole as easy to use as you expect from an Apple product. He adds that its single greatest feature, its phenomenal screen, "makes other smart phones look primitive." (Not that *that's* hard—he must not have used my T-Mobile SDA, the UI of which makes "primitive" sound like a compliment.) The greatest drawback to the iPhone, Mossberg concludes, really is the AT&T network, which everyone on Earth agrees needs improvement. A quick round-up of his impressions about the various facets of using the iPhone for a couple of weeks:

The iPhone's most controversial feature, the omission of a physical keyboard in favor of a virtual keyboard on the screen, turned out in our tests to be a nonissue, despite our deep initial skepticism. After five days of use, Walt—who did most of the testing for this review—was able to type on it as quickly and accurately as he could on the Palm Treo he has used for years. This was partly because of smart software that corrects typing errors on the fly.

[...]

Keyboard: The virtual keys are large and get larger as you touch them. Software tries to guess what you're typing, and fix errors. Overall, it works. But the error-correction system didn't seem as clever as the one on the BlackBerry, and you have to switch to a different keyboard view to insert a period or comma, which is annoying.

Web browsing: The iPhone is the first smart phone we've tested with a real, computer-grade Web browser, a version of Apple's Safari. It displays entire Web pages, in their real layouts, and allows you to zoom in quickly by either tapping or pinching with your finger. Multiple pages can be open at the same time, and you can conduct Google or Yahoo searches from a built-in search box.

[...]

Expectations for the iPhone have been so high that it can't possibly meet them all. It isn't for the average person who just wants a cheap, small phone for calling and texting. But, despite its network limitations, the iPhone is a [whole new experience](#) and a pleasure to use.

And Mossberg gets the detail that I haven't seen reported many places (and that I don't expect the usual Everything Apple Touches Must Be Evil crowd to pick up on), that, like the iPod, software updates will resolve some of the missing features that Apple needed to get the phone out the door.

Levy, *Newsweek's* reviewer, gets what I think makes the iPhone so seductive almost immediately: its interface is far more intuitive than most cell phones', precisely because of the absence of hardware buttons. He goes on to note that this is in character with Apple's other product developments:

Apple has a history of using cutting-edge technology, slick design and friendly software to break the common logjam in which our machines have the capability to perform certain tasks, but developers haven't figured out how to make the experience easy.

In more detail, he writes:

During my travels and airport delays, I was able to keep up with my e-mail, negotiate my way around the downtown, get tips on the city from an old friend

whose number I don't normally have handy, check the weather conditions in New York and D.C., monitor baseball scores and blogs, listen to an early Neil Young concert and amuse myself with silly YouTube videos and an episode of "Weeds," all on a single charge before the battery ran down. Now, just about all those things could have been done by devices that are already out on the market. But considering I'd had the iPhone for just a day, and never taken a glance at a manual, it was an impressive introduction. In contrast, I've had a Motorola handset for two years and am still baffled at its weird approach to Web browsing and messaging. What's more, with the exception of learning to type on the iPhone, which requires some concentration, doing all those things on that five-ounce device was fun, in the same way that switching from an old command-line interface to the Macintosh graphical user interface in the mid-1980s was a kick.

Here's someone who sounds like he's used Windows Mobile before. I know how he feels. As awesome as it is that I have an incredibly powerful cell phone at my fingertips, it took me a couple of days to figure out how to use Pocket IE to access anything that wasn't already bookmarked, and I still can't get ESPN's Web site to load. YouTube? Video? Was ist das?

Then Levy writes a series of bullet points where, like Mossberg, he runs through each of the various functions of the iPhone and how they work. For a quick summary: There are flaws in each, but it's just so darned easy to use! He concludes (in the middle of his article), "The iPhone is the rare convergence device where [things actually converge](#)."

What do you think? I spent a lot of time watching Apple's videos on [how to use the iPhone](#), and I'll admit that I was impressed. It was a scripted demo, of course, but you can't fake, "Press the 'Swap' button to switch to the other call," or "You can press the home button to bring up the home screen during a call." I can't even predict whether the left or right button is going to be 'Swap' on my phone! It doesn't always work! And this is an *improvement* over my last cell phone.

And, readers: if you have an iPhone, send me your (short) review, and I'll wheedle my editors into postfixing it to this column. We can round it all up this month!

The Doubt, Susan! The Doubt!

In spite of this, it's true that expectations are very high for this device. I can't remember any Apple product being this eagerly awaited...ever. It's a sign of how far the company has come from the Original iMac Era that ordinary people seem genuinely excited about this device without having seen it.

That brings out all of the usual suspects, the people who are always convinced that every Apple product is sort of a failure-in-waiting. You know who I mean.

And I suppose, in a moving-the-goal posts-back-to-the-back-of-the-end zone sort of a way, the iPhone is at very real risk of failure. Every smartphone designer from here on out is

going to have to make its phone at least try to be as simplistic and straight-forward as the iPhone, and the iPhone, as the first entrant into the market, might not be the best device.

But I think it will be a success on its own—and not everyone does. John Gruber's got a couple, and I've got a couple more, for you to enjoy, especially since as far as I can tell exactly zero people have held the device in their hands.

The first of Gruber's gems is a *New York Times* article about the iPhone, which mostly quotes a couple of industry consultants and Verizon's chief marketing officer. It's a doozy—Verizon seems to think that they can compete with AT&T, née Cingular, and the iPhone by offering *even more phones!*—but I think my favorite line is the one Gruber quotes:

[O]lder customers who can afford it, he said, will not care about all [the fancy features](#) of the iPhone, while younger ones who are excited about the device will not like the cost.

On some level this is true, because my grandparents, who are in their 80s, are the sort of people who turn off their cell phones when they're not using them. But, on the other hand, my dad is 49 and called me just a few months ago, ecstatic that he had just figured out how to use the WAP browser on his Samsung cell phone, and *he's* bouncing with the kind of enthusiasm for the iPhone that usually he just shows for new cars.

The other is one David Platt, a former Microsoft software engineer, who pans the iPhone without having used it or, as far as I can tell, having *even watched one of the ads*. He writes:

[U]sers will find it essentially impossible to use one function of the tiny box without disrupting the operation of another. A few dedicated technophiles might, just *might*, figure out how to do so, but it will require far more dedication than an ordinary user is willing to invest in learning and then remembering. This combination condemns the iPhone to a [tiny niche](#) at best.

Uh. Huh? Is he really saying that if it doesn't have keys and can do anything other than place calls, people won't be able to figure out how to use it?

Now, to our other few doubters. Some of them are less brazen than Gruber's, but they all share one common thread: they all believe there's something less than meets the eye about the iPhone, and that consumers will either be frustrated by a lack of features or unable to figure out how to maximize the device.

- The *Daily Mail's* Rob Waugh says the iPhone [is doomed](#) by its lack of 3G Internet connection and keyboard, at least in the first generation, although he admits to being impressed by the straight-forward UI.

- *Ad Age's* Al Ries believes that convergence devices are a set-up for failure. [Period](#). He lists a variety of convergence failures, without mentioning the single biggest success, the BlackBerry. I sometimes think what holds back the BlackBerry is that even technophiles like me don't use e-mail voraciously enough to justify the cost; but he sees devices that do more than one thing as a failure almost necessarily.
- *Slate's* Jack Shafer comments on the unusually ridiculous hype about the iPhone, and wants to know why no one is talking about Helio's button-less Ocean phone, but seems to miss the entire point. First of all, Helio? Who? I'm a tech geek. I had forgotten about their existence till I read his article. Second of all, the fact that the iPhone has only one button isn't *really* what makes the iPhone such a big deal, right? Anyway. He thinks that, since it's just a cell phone and has been [set up to save all mankind](#), it's doomed.
- Glenn Fleishman—*that* Glenn Fleishman?—apparently has a column in the *New York Post*. He wants you to remember that the iPhone 2.0 isn't that far away on the horizon. [Don't buy one yet!](#) is his counsel. He seems to be in the divergence crowd, which I'll admit *I've* usually agreed with, here, but it'll be interesting to see how easy it is to use all of the convergence features.
- Last, John Podhoretz also wants you to hold off on buying the iPhone, at least just yet. He writes, also in the *Post*, that the people buying the first-gen iPhone are [beta testers](#) paying \$500 for the privilege of testing the phone. Without comment...John Podhoretz? On technology? Huh?

All right, folks, that's a wrap for this month. What do you think of the iPhone? Just drop me a line, and we'll spread the word around. Bloggers call this an "open comment thread." Happy calling!

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Mac About Town

by Mike Chamberlain, mchamberlain@atpm.com

Dear Steve: Hurry Up and Slow Down!

Let's all 'fess up right from the beginning, shall we? You've drooled over the latest and greatest that Steve Jobs and the happy computer elves at Apple have dreamed up. You've gone back to the Apple store and looked. You've visited Apple.com, you've read the reviews and, finally, you have decided to pull the trigger and "get it."

Because you are a savvy shopper and a well-informed citizen of the digital age, you know that the clock is ticking as the smiling sales person hands you the bag or the DHL truck pulls away from your curb. You know that your gleaming, perfect, latest "whatzit" has already been rendered old news by the next-generation product that is already in the product replacement line of the merry band in Cupertino. So, regardless of how delighted you are with your new purchase, somewhere deep in your unconscious is the niggling knowledge that you won't be happy forever. Your unease can be heightened, of course, depending on how deep in the product life cycle you gave in.

In the past year I've lived at both ends of the spectrum. Last fall I bought a new MacBook Pro Core Duo through my office, fully aware of the rumors of the coming Core 2 Duos. I calculated that I could live without the bump in speed so, three weeks before the change was announced, I made the move. Initially, it looked as if it had been the right call. That is, until it was revealed that the new laptops could be upgraded to 802.11n but my "old" MacBook Pro was out of luck. Don't remember seeing *that* consideration in any of the info I read!

Life is strange, however, and a few months later I found myself moving up to a new office. Because of the ability of running Windows on a Mac, the IT folks gave me permission to select a MacBook Pro for my personal computer. This time I waited. The result was that the day after the new generation of LED MacBook Pro's was announced, I placed my order.

The truth is that the smug look on my face (illuminated by the glow of a bright LED screen) is the result of forces totally outside my own control. I needed a computer when I needed a computer. One time I was at the end of the cycle and the next at the beginning. The current rate of cycling means that, in Apple's case at least, you will have about 6–8 months of having the "new toy" but will then rejoin the majority of us with "last year's" model. As long as Apple continues to push the envelope and bring out the latest, there's no other way for it to be.

As an Apple "fan-boy," I'm willing to live with the pain.

So...do I buy the iPhone now or wait for 2.0? 2.1? Steve, call me!



Furs Thoughts About the Big Cat

Steve Jobs' keynote speech at Apple's worldwide developers conference (WWDC) opened more, er, err..., windows into the domain of the Leopard. The complete speech can be viewed [here](#). Full details of Leopard [here](#).

Most of the "new" features have been around for some time as add-ons for Mac OS X, but Apple has pulled them into the operating system. The new Downloads stack, was such an obvious idea that I immediately renamed and moved my own "Just In" folder from its usual place on the Desktop and into the Documents folder. I then dragged its icon into the Dock. Voila! Not a stack, but almost, and hovering over the Dock's icon opens the folder.

The new Finder Jobs announced has been needed for years. Until now, the OS X Finder has stayed almost as clunky as in OS 9, with a few new twists. Try copying or deleting a huge library of typefaces, for example, and the Finder rapidly bogs down. If connected servers close, the Finder stops until it has determined the drive has actually disappeared. In such cases it's usually quicker to force-quit the Finder and relaunch it.

One thing I can never understand is why it is considered easier to navigate via icons rather than a list of filenames. Perhaps a folder containing only a few files is OK, but as a book designer, a job involves hundreds of images, text files, and so on. They reside inside sub-folders and often across different hard disks with only an alias or symbolic link connecting them with the main job folder. Using icons in such cases would make it virtually impossible to find specific files. In the same way, the new iTunes-style album cover navigation facility will be of limited use on large folders as it is to select iTunes tracks by flipping through the cover art from a well-stuffed music library.

Apple's new [Back to My Mac](#) facility seems an answer to many problems for people who work at multiple locations. Any Mac user with a .Mac account will be able to access her main Mac from another Mac anywhere else in the world. This is because her Mac stores its IP address at .Mac. She will be able to search and retrieve anything from her home Mac via a secure tunnel. Nothing new, perhaps, but a lot easier than SSH or a VPN.

My partner, for example, often has to work away from our office and usually has to remember to take files with her and upload them to her .Mac account or our FTP space. Jobs didn't give details about how the .Mac account would know about internal IP addresses and DHCP routers, but presumably Apple has that covered, perhaps by using UDP punching.

Recent changes to the .Mac service have given it a much-needed turn of speed, although it can still get the Finder into a tizzy, so I prefer to use a WebDAV application such as

[Transmit](#) or [Goliath](#) to access my iDisk. On the other hand, Mac-using clients think it's really helpful to be able to drop large files into my iDisk's Public Folder. Once they have done it for the first time, the server stays in their Recent Items list, so they have almost instant access to my iDisk. This is far better for many than firing up an FTP program or using a browser-based and JavaScripted upload tool.

[Time Machine](#), the new backup application, will bring into the OS a lot of the functionality of third-party programs we use such as Silverkeeper and SuperDuper. According to Steve Jobs, the overwhelming majority of users do not back up their Macs. This is probably because they have nothing to back up to other than CDs or DVDs. Time Machine will not help this. As demonstrated, it still needs a second drive to save files to. It will, however, back up system files, and this is extremely welcome. Anyone who has searched through preferences and other Library folder items trying to solve a problem application will know what a painful process this can be. Time Machine will solve this by keeping earlier versions of those files that have since become corrupted.

The [new facilities in Mail](#) look tasty. As designers, we are often called on to make HTML newsletter e-mails, and the best solution we have found so far is to use Netscape's built-in HTML editor, which can save in e-mail format. Mail's editable template-based solution looks to be a better method and opens the door to a new industry in the same way [RapidWeaver](#) did for Web site creation. On the other hand, the worst thing about Mail is that it will encourage people to send us HTML newsletter e-mails.

As Jobs would say, one last thing—the price. For the extra facilities, new applications, and features, [64-bit](#) computing, [multicore](#) support, and free developer tools as well, \$129 is incredibly cheap. Jobs joked about all the versions of Windows, but it is an important point if Apple is to gain market share. As a new owner of a Mac capable of running Windows, I was put off the idea simply by the price of the various versions available. For a little more I could buy another computer with Vista already loaded.

Leopard looks like the cat's whiskers. I can't wait.

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Stuffed, Eleven Years Ago

It was eleven years ago, almost to the day, I wrote my first backup CD. The information contained on it is still relevant and fascinating to look through as a time capsule. It's just that I can't get the darned stuff off it. That is, I can, but I just can't use it. It had to happen, and I share the blame 50/50 between myself and [StuffIt's](#) owners, currently Smith Micro.

Back in 1996 when the CD was burned, computers came with on-board RAM that would fill the average low-key graphics card nowadays. Hard disks were smaller than the space occupied by today's decent first-person shoot-em-up, and would never be able to accommodate a software suite such as Adobe's CS. Empty space in 1996 measured in megabytes as today's is gigabytes, meaning it was possible to back-up an entire computer to one or two CDs.

Publishing then was still at the cutting edge of computer innovation, needing ever more space and power as the boundaries of possibility were stretched. As we already had a collection of external hard disks, removable media, and a billion floppy disks, CDs seemed a good solution, able to hold what felt like an enormous amount of information. Little did we suspect that things would go full-circle, and hard drives would become a cheaper form of mass storage and transportation. One of our large-format, full-color books recently took six DVDs to transport, an unbelievable amount of data in 1996.

The 1996 CD in question took about an hour to make and verify at a heady 2× speed. On it are document backups and, more importantly, 19 MB of maps I need for a job in hand. At that time we were using a compression application called [DiskDoubler](#), which could compress and decompress files on the fly. It meant we could squeeze more on our hard disks, and it was these files that we copied onto the CD. DiskDoubler remained a feature of our computing until Apple moved to Mac OS X. StuffIt has been around even longer, and for years the free StuffIt Expander could open DiskDoubled files. But unbeknown to us, this feature was abandoned a few versions ago.

This year our laptop died. It didn't have a hard life and could run old Mac OS 9 natively unlike our desktop Macs. They, being powered by PowerPC G5s, will still run the old Apple operating system in the Classic environment but, the relevant StuffIt version needs the real McCoy to install into. So we are...er...stuffed, and the 19 MB of maps might as well be on the moon.

Our real problem is that much of the huge collection of CD backups will also contain compressed files. The information is there; we just cannot access it anymore. In many

respects this is a good thing. After filling drawer after drawer with CDs, then DVDs, before moving on to shoe boxes, and lately the spindles the blanks come on, we are just about CD'ed out. Our database will say exactly which CD contains the files we want, but it cannot tell us where the darned thing is. One late-night misfiling can take hours to rectify; and, besides, we've run out of names to call the boxes.

It looks like our garden will sprout a whole new crop of bird scarers, the only other use we can put the useless disks to. Not that the pigeons seem to mind; instead of scaring them, the CDs act as a physical barrier between brassicas and birds.

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About This Particular Outliner

by Ted Goranson, tgoranson@atpm.com

Some Perspectives on the Worldwide Developers Conference

This month, Ted Goranson returns! (For a bit.)

No, this is not an interesting *ATPO*-type column...not even the long-promised “end all” massive survey of features in writing applications.

This month is a sort of opportunistic column. It’s a report on WWDC, the yearly Apple worldwide developers conference. At the end there’s a small offer to have readers review the upcoming, more traditional *ATPO* column on writing features.

I recently went to WWDC (dub dub dee cee). It’s been held every year in early June (except last year) or thereabouts since 1983. This is my first one since before the Jobs era really began. I’m not one that counts two Jobs eras, since he wasn’t all that giant an influence the first time around. That notion is sort of the centerpiece of my report.

WWDC presentations cover stuff that we all agree to include in the standard non-disclosure. Plus there are other things that developers might discover that come up there and elsewhere, and these are covered, too. So I can’t talk about what I discovered technically. But that’s not very interesting in an *ATPO* sense. What is interesting is the tone of what I saw.

To get this, you need to know my background. I’m not a developer. I don’t write or manage the writing of programs. Never have. But for almost 40 years now, I’ve been a research manager, mostly for advanced defense and intelligence computer projects. Research is something the average citizen never sees, sort of like abattoirs, a steamy enterprise that delivers stuff in nice packages. I use the metaphor deliberately because though research is what anyone would fantasize about if they understood it, its incredibly political and subject to the whims of all sorts of forces.

If you are interested in computing, then you might be interested in the future of computing. Some of that is determined by folks making the same old stuff, but a bit better. But the real future is from disruptive ideas, huge movements, amazing insights. And if you’re interested in that, there’s a weather that surrounds and empowers this sort of thing.

Apple Computer used to do real research. They used to be a major player in the game of inventing futures. And the US Advanced Research Projects Agency (ARPA—in Republican times, it’s DARPA) used to be a player too. And NSA, the National Security Agency, that formerly super-secret spy agency that is still the world’s greatest user of computing power. It used to employ more advanced mathematicians and computer science researchers than

anyone. These two agencies and companies like Apple, Xerox, IBM, and AT&T gave us what we have now, relatively unchanged in 20 years.

Before I retired, I was in that game peripherally. I was involved from the government side, which sponsored MACH (which became the inner workings of OS X), in NeXT (which NSA helped out a lot. A lot.) and in Taligent (which was a joint venture among Apple, IBM and HP to develop a truly next generation operating system). Taligent was housed in the original Apple headquarters.

Now I head research that deals with reasoning about media for a new Mac-centric company.

So far as Apple goes, the great period for potentially disruptive research was in my estimation between 1985 and 1995. I bring up this old history because I'm going to contrast that with the current WWDC experience. From a business strategy perspective, Apple was a disaster in that period. Market share was slipping, and the company seemed surely doomed. As we all know, Steve Jobs brought it back to the force it is today through focus and a wise strategy. It's a case studied in every business school and remarked on by the technical and business media.

But from a technical and research perspective, those years were golden. Apple may have been losing in the market, but that meant that the research community within Apple was trying harder, making "shoot-the-moon" bets. Apple was in the business of inventing the future. Its reach was always ten years out technically. Now, it is a solid refiner, an expert design and engineering shop and the benchmark in retail. They invent cool. They deliver cool stuff now, but they don't invent it.

It's a bit depressing. Xerox and IBM don't do basic information technology research any more, either. AT&T Bell Labs doesn't exist, though someone still uses the name. The NSA is a disgraced shell of a once noble and important force. DARPA is constrained by Congress from doing anything adventurous and instead is chartered to make only things that metaphorically go boom.

Let's go back to Apple, say 15 years ago. In that era, if someone had a good idea, they might be able to "just start." The company was highly fragmented with many factions and competing philosophies. So it was relatively easy for a small research project to start and even grow to significant size. Often different parts of the company would have competing solutions to the same problem. There were intellectual challenges around every bend. Survival was a matter of working the internal intellectual ecology.

That's where the developers came in. In those old days, Apple research projects, many of them, reached out to the community. Some were public and involved folks outside Apple. Apple researchers would use this community as leverage or justification for their efforts. It's a common model, or used to be. So when we had a WWDC, it was a jumble of agendas. It was great. You could see right before your eyes the tension out of which great ideas come. These were the days when Macs and Cray supercomputers were designing each other.

Now when we go to WWDC, we do it hoping to discover what the unified team at Apple has finished, mysteriously kept secret, and served up to us to play with in the (mostly) consumer market. In the old days, they not only told you what they were doing, but they also depended on you to create support from the outside. So those old WWDCs were a matter of teams from inside and outside of Apple selling to other teams. It was much like politics was in those days: heady, contentious stuff where a political party was defined by the things that mattered enough to argue about. Now in politics, and Apple, every message is controlled and homogenized. Stay on point.

I'll give three examples of things Apple worked on in those days that were the center of old WWDCs. I mention them sometimes in *ATPO* columns: Dylan, OpenDoc, and QuickDraw GX.

Dylan

Lisp is a programming language, generally regarded as the oldest one still in use, perhaps tied for that distinction with Fortran. It remains the basis of artificial intelligence work today, but otherwise isn't widely used. Explanations for why this is are controversial, one of many such controversies involving the language. We have always needed something as powerful but more programmer-friendly. So Apple set up a lab next to MIT, then the center of real AI work in the world. It was also where Mac Common Lisp was developed, the very best in existence (on a general purpose machine). The project was named Dylan, for Dynamic Language.

Even today, there are differences of opinion about whether Dylan was a good idea, and whether the design was compromised in some way. But readers, this was before Java, and by any stretch Dylan was far superior in every dimension and surely could have filled the void that Java eventually did. Java succeeded in large measure because it was marginally better than the alternatives. Dylan was a good bit better.

Dylan, incidentally, had an integrated development environment called the Binder, which was a combination Finder and browser. A plan was to redo the Finder later with a "coding" view. Now imagine that.

I believe it is quite true to say that had Dylan been handled a wee bit better, the world would be a Dylan world instead of a Java one, with fewer programming barriers, and we would all be vastly better off. Dylan had its main enemies within Apple, and one of its greatest battles was the fight to be the language of the Newton. When it failed this, it was eventually killed. Ironically, Java (then known as Oak) was being developed at Sun for portable devices like the Newton, and was "repurposed."

OpenDoc

People probably look at this wonderful thing we have in the World Wide Web and believe that it is as wonderful as things could have been: that the evolution of computing infrastructure always produces the best. As it happens, there had been a number of solid designs

for a hypertext Web, presented at more than a few conferences. The beknighted “inventor” of the Web merely implemented one of the simpler designs.

Many of us in the research community were appalled at how quickly it spread. Not that it spread, but the way it spread, with narrow business interests snuffing out alternatives. IBM and Apple were then the powerhouses interested in the future, and they proposed OpenDoc as an advanced linkable document architecture that would not only supplant HTML but also a similar but inferior candidate for the future developed by Microsoft. Apple eventually released an OpenDoc Web browser, Cyberdog.

Perhaps as with Dylan, it would have been impossible and lethal to fight the wind. Surely when OpenDoc was killed, the battle was already lost. But those of us trying to fix the Web now because of stupid, avoidable early design decisions mourn those days when people—people at Apple and surrounding Apple at WWDCs—believed we could do better.

QuickDraw GX

For all intents, Apple invented the notion of a document on screen. They also invented the key notions of integrated display and printing of text. Then along came Adobe with something on Macs that was the same, only better. It’s what we still use now, more or less, 23 years later, a thousand years in computer time. But Apple thought they could do much, much better, and they created a radical display, font, drawing, and print technology called QuickDraw GX.

This was a jumble of ideas, some quite wonderful, some poorly implemented, alongside “regular” QuickDraw. I was involved in some way, way cool user interface research using GX. Quite honestly, GX allowed some things that even today, even after this WWDC, are not possible and probably never will be in OS X.

This WWDC

Well, that was quite a ramble, wasn’t it? The point is that the last time I actually went to a WWDC it was intellectually exciting. There were communities and clubby meetings where deep strategic issues were bandied about. It wasn’t just mechanics that showed up, but visionaries. I was part of it. Everyone there was, and you could feel things shifting fundamentally. Every move was one into controversial and risky territory.

So already you’ll know that this WWDC was a matter of culture shock for me. It was huge, reportedly 5,000 attendees (mostly developers one assumes) and a thousand Apple engineers. The tone was all different. Apple now makes software to sell hardware, and it sells media to sell hardware. And it invents and sells “cool” in order to support both. It’s a different model. Effectiveness matters. Invention is largely purchased, but that’s not unique to Apple and in fairness Apple holds its own relative to others.

About one in 20 attendees were women, way up from what I remember. I saw only a few African-American faces the whole week. The type of person was decidedly less geeky, less revolutionary, better behaved, fatter, and more socially adept than what I recall. I saw few

tattoos and fewer facial piercings. Compared to the average crowd at Macworld Expo in that same center, the developers were decidedly less cool. Only one religious head covering.

Here's a summary of the big results. . .

Apple is a bona fide force in the market now as seen outside of the community. Their products are the coolest and most useful. We all like that, to be part of the winning team. But to be a genuine part of that team, you really do need to do things the Apple way. There are fewer viable choices than there were even a year ago.

Many of the people that I talked to were in the business of making things that would be disruptive and revolutionary in their areas. So the innovation is there, but instead of being led by Apple, it's being led by the developers using Apple tools.

A key development is happening in the Mac user interface, and I'm a bit sad about it. Someone a few years ago had the clever idea that the design of the machine and the visual design of the software should have something to do with each other. So when we got colorful round, wet plastic Macs, we had a user interface with those same features. When we got brushed aluminum Macs, the user conventions adapted. It's a wonderful idea, to have this seamlessness between the inside and outside of the machine. I am convinced it subliminally mattered to many folks who use their Macs for creative work.

But we ended up with a jumble of conventions (even with Apple-supplied applications) and nothing was working now, so they just jettisoned the experiment and made decisions based on cognitive science. Good, everyone's glad. But that diversity seemed as if it was the very last vestige of competitive internal forces within Apple, and I was sad to see it go away at WWDC. It's being partially replaced by what may be a stronger inside-outside metaphor: that page-flipping feature that was in iTunes covers and now will be in the Finder. It's a good substitute in terms of the ambiguity of inside and outside spaces, but I don't see an immediate convention for *ATPO*-type applications to usefully leverage. I imagine many will use it anyway.

In fact, I think we will see three rather distinct categories of Mac applications from here on. That will be true of the applications *ATPO* has covered, of the writing applications *ATPO* is looking at now, and of the media-rich versions of those that probably form the future of both. This last category is where I am working. You know how in early *ATPO* columns I made a big deal out of whether something was Carbon, Cocoa, or Java? I think in the future that will morph to these three categories. They are:

1. Applications that follow the Apple lead in nearly every way possible. Apple has certain ideas about user interface, metadata management, Web interaction, text and media display and so on. These frameworks are getting more and more mature and complete. They make it possible for developers to rely on Apple for many things and concentrate on novel and useful things instead.
2. Applications that strike their own path but heavily leverage Apple frameworks. These will be mostly Cocoa programs, and integrate with some services like

scripting and media handling. But the main architecture of the application is outside the Apple norm. That means they will be less likely to be “me too” in appearance and functionality, less likely to advance quickly in terms of features, but more likely to offer something unique.

3. Applications that mostly do it their own way. Of course, these can still be good Mac citizens, but for various reasons they “roll their own.” Naturally this includes the big, legacy companies like Microsoft and Adobe and some of the multi-platform vendors. But it also includes disruptive new visions that haven’t been accommodated by Apple’s narrowing (albeit deepening) focus.

I’ll ask you to fill in examples. At first I thought of doing a mini-*ATPO* to illustrate these categories. That would be nice, but as this column is already late, we may do it after this monster column on writing tools.

The *ATPO* Writing Survey

Yes, I am writing a survey of writing application features. These types of columns take hundreds of hours. I am still soliciting input and advice and now have a new request. When I have a reasonably complete draft, I’d like some of you to review it for correctness and completeness. If you are interested in this, let me know by [direct e-mail](#). Thanks.

Copyright © 2007 Ted Goranson, tgoranson@atpm.com. Ted Goranson is senior scientist of EchoStorm, working with intelligent video.



Effective Layer Effects

New Toys

Before getting into this particular Photoshop topic, I'm going to take a moment to mention this particular Mac-enthusiast's latest acquisitions. Most importantly, I'll now be writing to you from a Santa Rosa-powered, LED-backlit [MacBook Pro](#). But even though that's most important to me, you won't really see any difference, will you?

The second acquisition, however, is one you will notice, beginning with this month's column. I picked up the Adobe CS3 upgrade for my office and, since a Creative Suite license allows for two installations to be activated (the intent being to allow a designer to have CS installed on a desktop machine for primary work and a laptop for travel work—which is exactly the case for me), I get to use CS3 at home. Yes, I'm well aware if I ever stop working at my current place of employment, I'd be legally obligated to deactivate it on my personal computer—and I most certainly would do so.

But the reason for my telling you about this is because, obviously, all future screenshots and descriptions are going to come from a Photoshop CS3 (that's Photoshop version 10) perspective. While the majority of the palettes are functionally the same (there are a few new ones), the engine for organizing them and methods for collapsing them is completely different—a big improvement, if you ask me.

Suffice to say, I'll start thinking about a future column to talk about some of the new cool things in Photoshop CS3, especially the new palette engine. Meanwhile, in the short term, I'll do my best to be mindful of anything I write about that is different in CS3 than it was in CS2.

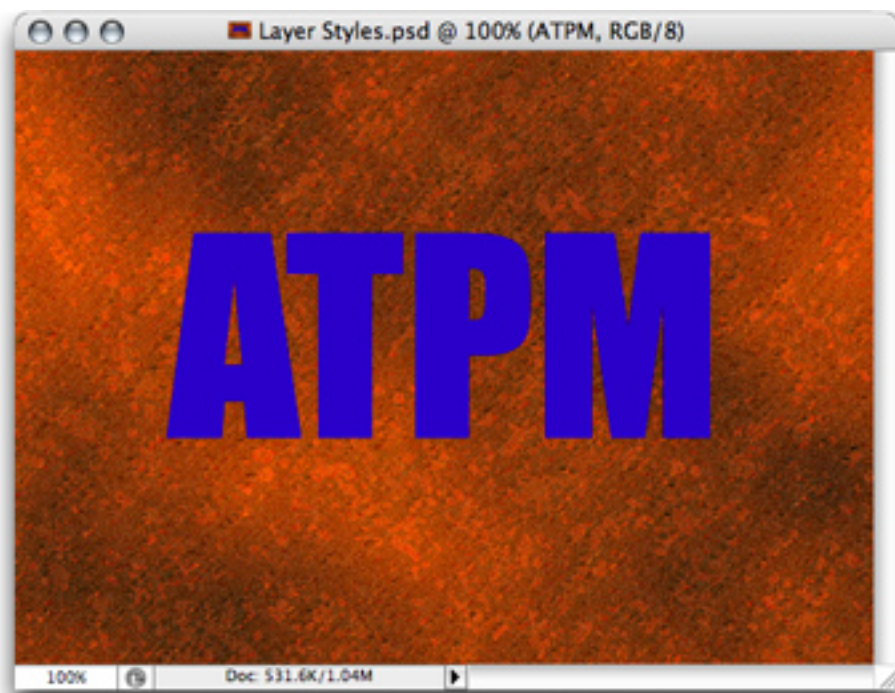
Nomenclature

[Last month](#), I briefly exposed you to the Layer Styles, which let us create a drop shadow on the speech and thought bubbles. Let me make a little clarification. You might have a bit of cognitive dissonance over the fact that I named this topic “Effective Layer Effects,” but the Photoshop feature we'll cover this month is actually called Layer Styles. My explanation is simple. I've called them Layer Effects for years and have been, as it turns out, wrong. But I'm not the only one and, if you browse online forums covering Photoshop, you'll find other people who call them Layer Effects, too. The point is, whether you refer to them as Layer Styles or Layer Effects, we're talking about the exact same thing.

Onward.

In Preparation of Layer Styles

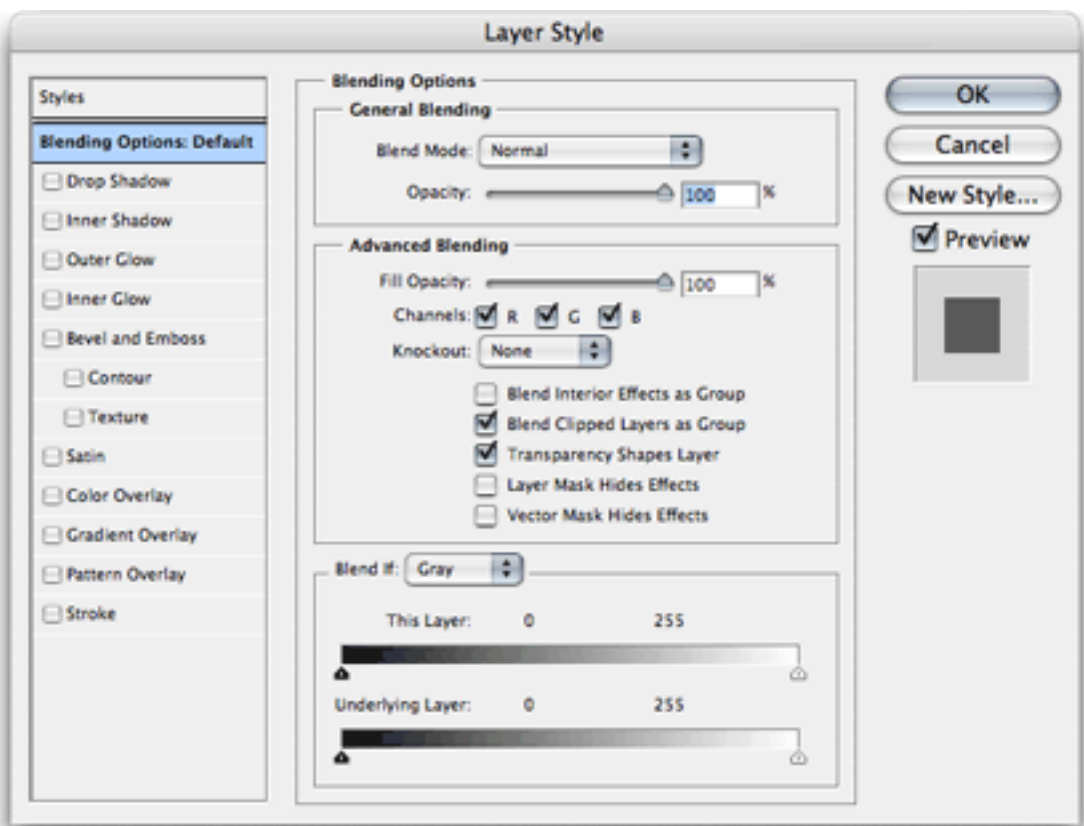
We'll begin with some plain text that should show off the results of various Layer Styles well. You can, however, apply Layer Styles to any graphic that has transparency on its layer.



This Photoshop document consists simply of a text layer with the *ATPM* letters positioned atop a background layer of a texture I randomly chose.

It is important to note that Layer Styles, as the name implies, affect individual layers. That means the image to which you want to apply an effect should be on a layer by itself. In the screenshot above, the *ATPM* layer is completely transparent except for where the letters themselves are positioned.

To start applying Layer Styles, with the desired layer selected in the Layers palette, you can either directly choose an effect from the Layer ▾ Layer Style menu, or use my preferred method of simply double-clicking the thumbnail in the Layers palette that you want to work on. (Note, if you're applying a Style to a text layer, you must hold the Option key while double-clicking the thumbnail.)



The basic Layer Style palette with no Styles selected.

The default pane of the Layer Style palette is called Blending Options. Many of the options on this pane are somewhat advanced and you can experiment with them later, but you may want to try out the General Blending settings after you've applied a Layer Style. Changing the Blend Mode causes the effects to be rendered based on different mathematical formulas, and the Opacity slider allows you to leave the effect fully opaque or any percentage of translucency.

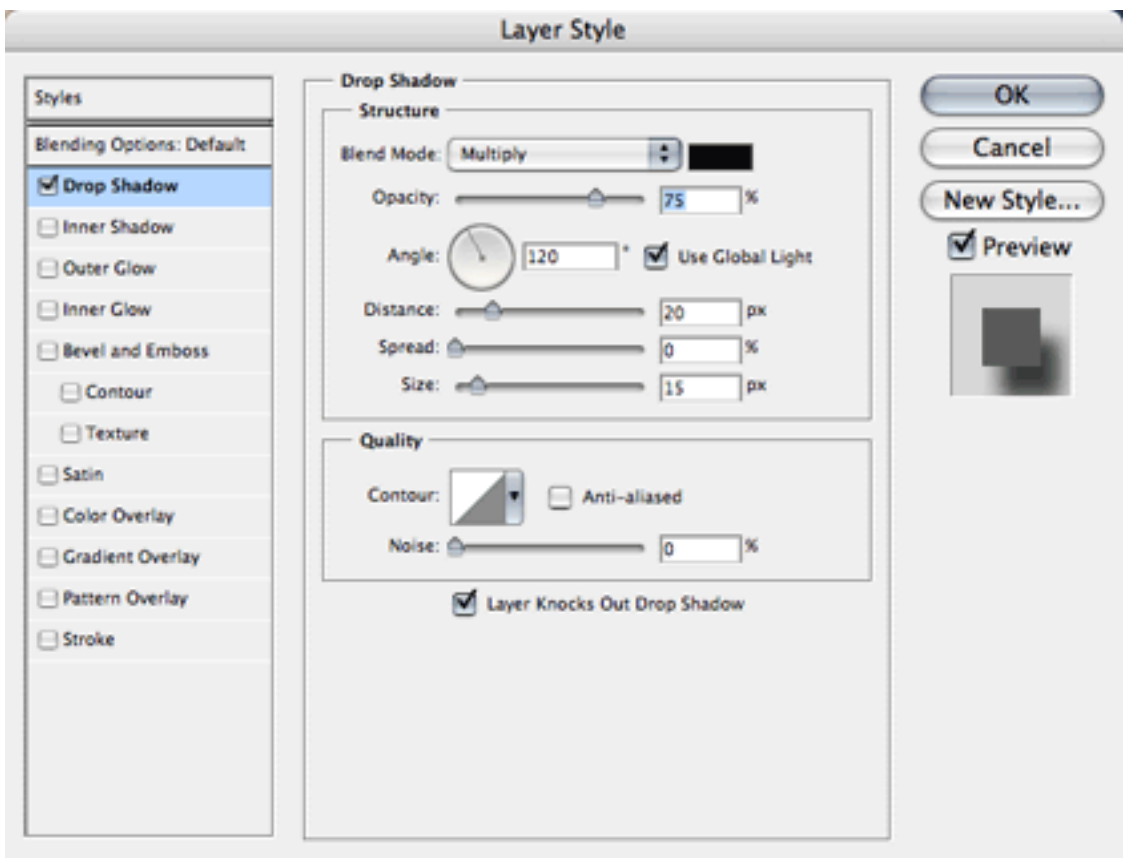
Don't be frightened by these Layer Styles. Every one of them is quite straightforward, and the best thing is that *Layer Styles are nondestructive*. That means if you don't like what you did, you can easily change it or turn it back off.

Drop Shadow

Drop shadows are arguably the most commonly used Layer Style.



Drop Shadows give the illusion of something floating above items on layers underneath.



Drop Shadow settings.

As you can see, the Drop Shadow Style creates a dark shade behind the image. You can change the color of the shadow by clicking the black rectangle next to the Blend Mode menu, and even experiment with different Blend Modes. The Opacity slider should be pretty obvious, allowing you to set how dark the shadow will burn into whatever is in the background.

The Angle selector defines the direction that the light that's creating the shadow is coming from. Each Photoshop document can have one Global Light definition so that you can easily match the light direction used for all your Layer Styles.

The Distance selector defines how many pixels away from center the shadow will be offset.

Think of Spread as sort of a way to burn in the shadow, making it fill out more than it should. Try it, and you'll see the results.

Finally, the Size selector lets you set how many pixels of blurring to use in the shadow. Setting it to zero produces a hard-edged shadow. The higher the number, the softer the shadow edges.

The items in the Quality section are a bit more advanced. The Contour setting lets you adjust the exact level of shades from 0% to 100%. It works exactly like [Curves adjustments](#) on your photos. With the Contour setting, you're only adjusting the Layer Style.

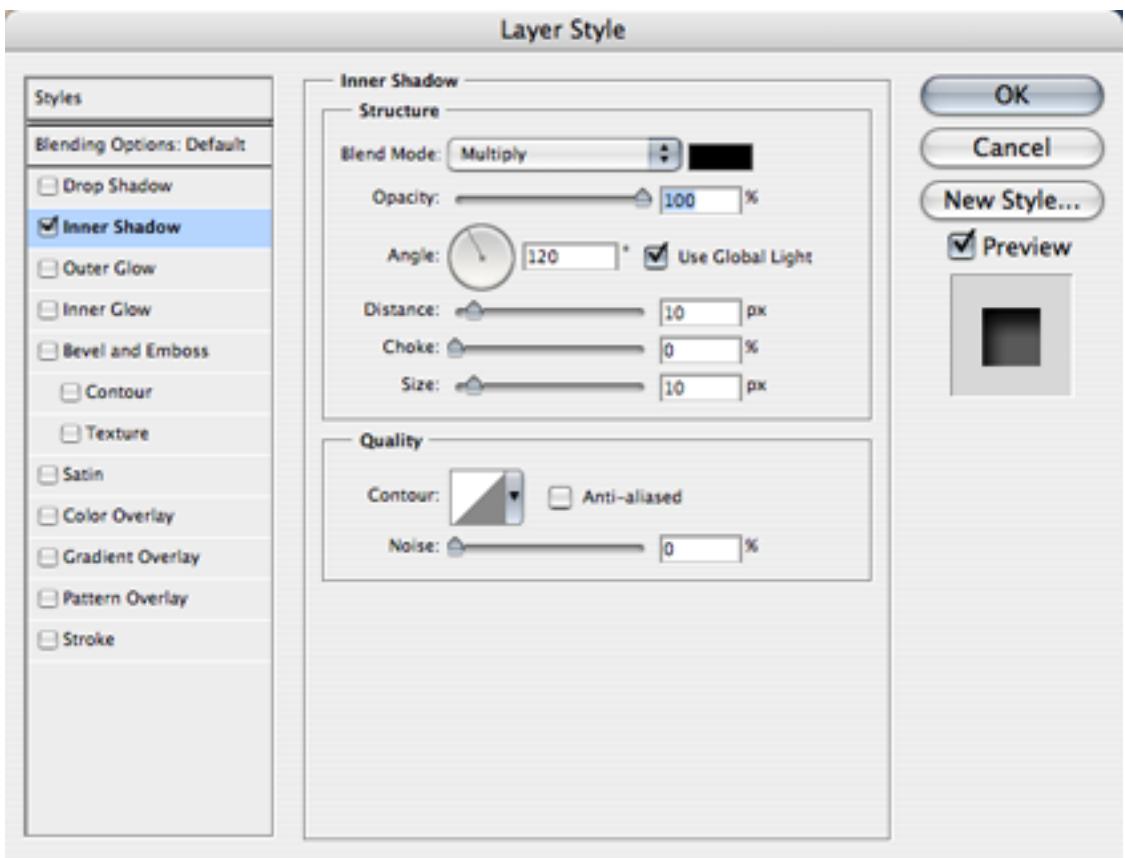
Unless you deal with commercial offset printing, the Layer Knocks Out Drop Shadow checkbox will probably be of absolutely no consequence to you. Just leave it on.

Inner Shadow

The Inner Shadow Style settings are mostly identical to Drop Shadow. The difference is that the shadow appears within the confines of the graphic instead of on the outside. The result is usually a shadow that makes the object appear to be cut out of whatever background is surrounding it.

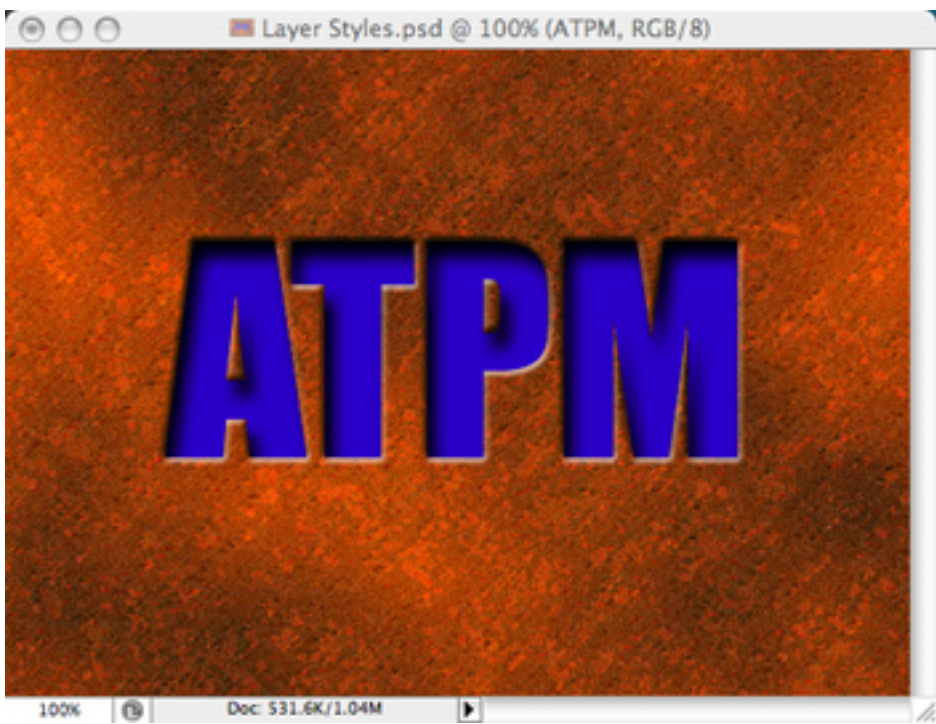


The Inner Shadow Style has made the letters look as if they were cut out of the background.

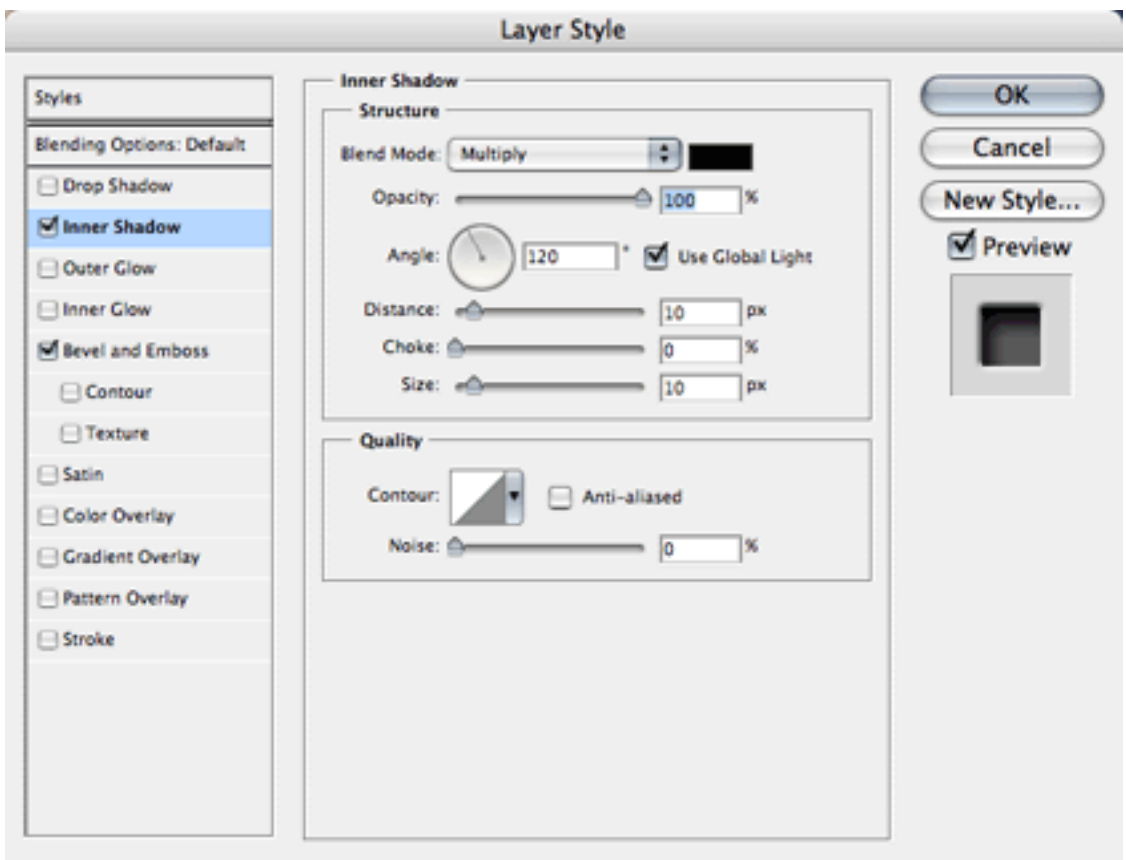


Inner Shadow settings.

I'm going to briefly get ahead of myself here and demonstrate that Layer Styles can be combined.



The same Inner Shadow Style plus the addition of a Bevel effect.

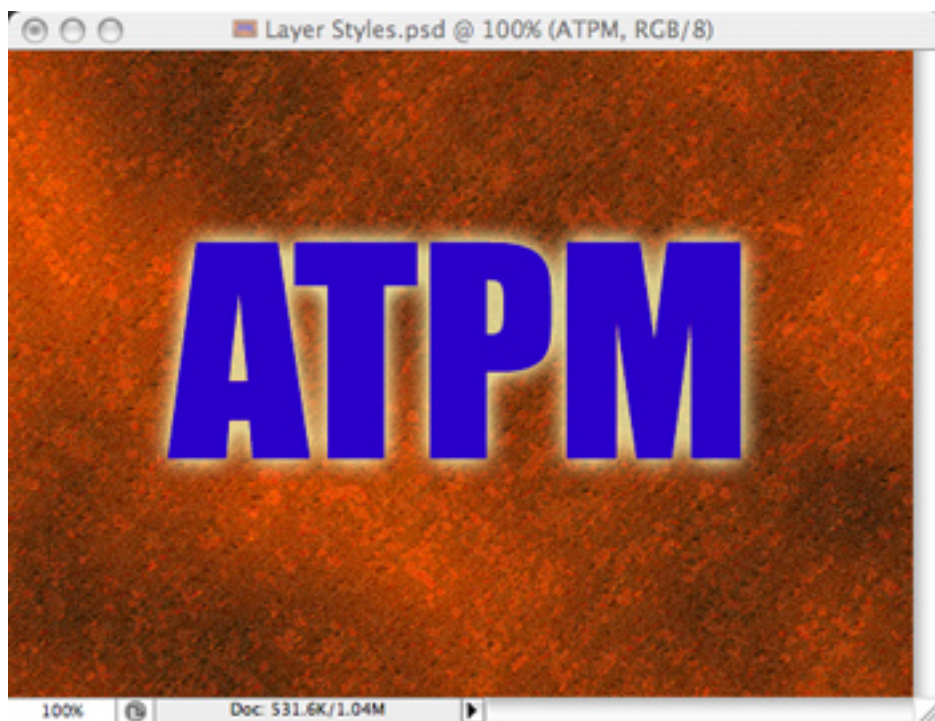


Note both Style checkboxes are enabled. Any or all Styles can be applied to an object.

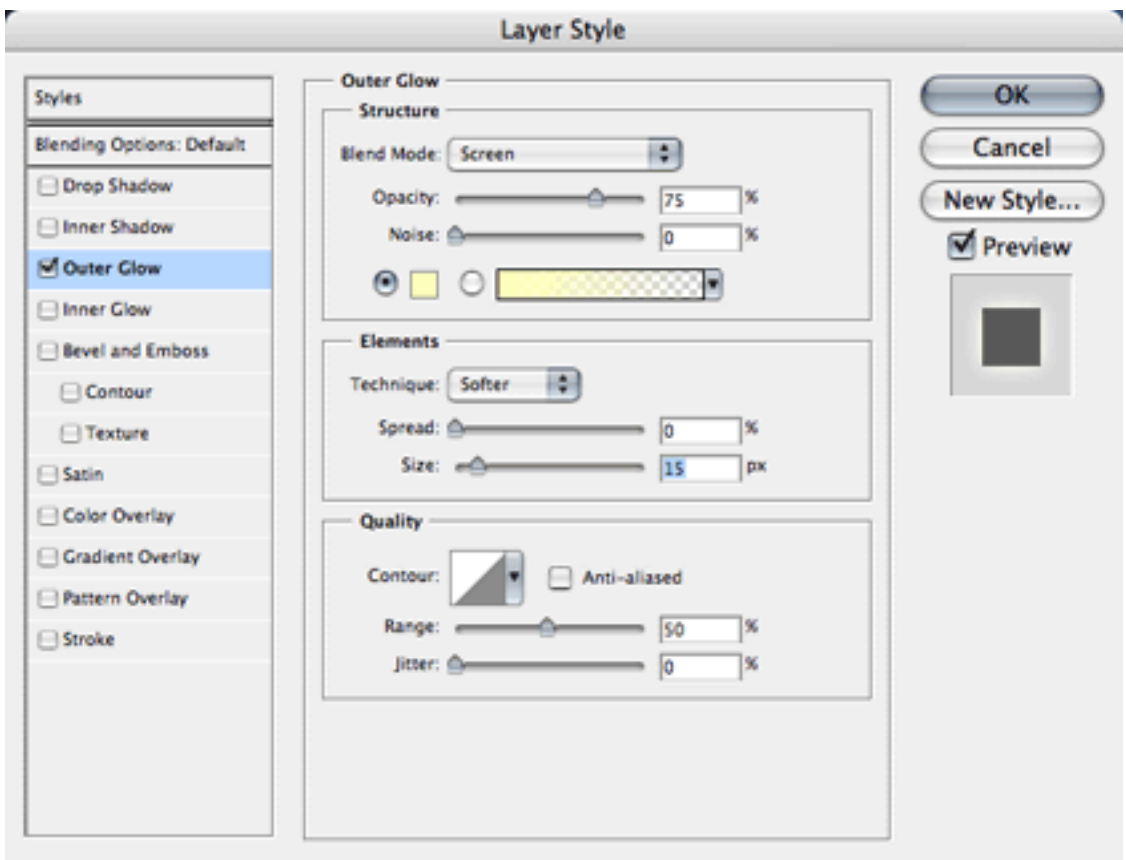
Cool, eh? The Bevel effect makes the edges of the letters look even more chiseled out by simulating the light source catching the edges. We'll look at the Bevel and Emboss Style a little later.

Outer Glow

I said above that Layer Styles were really pretty straightforward. The Outer Glow Style is no exception.

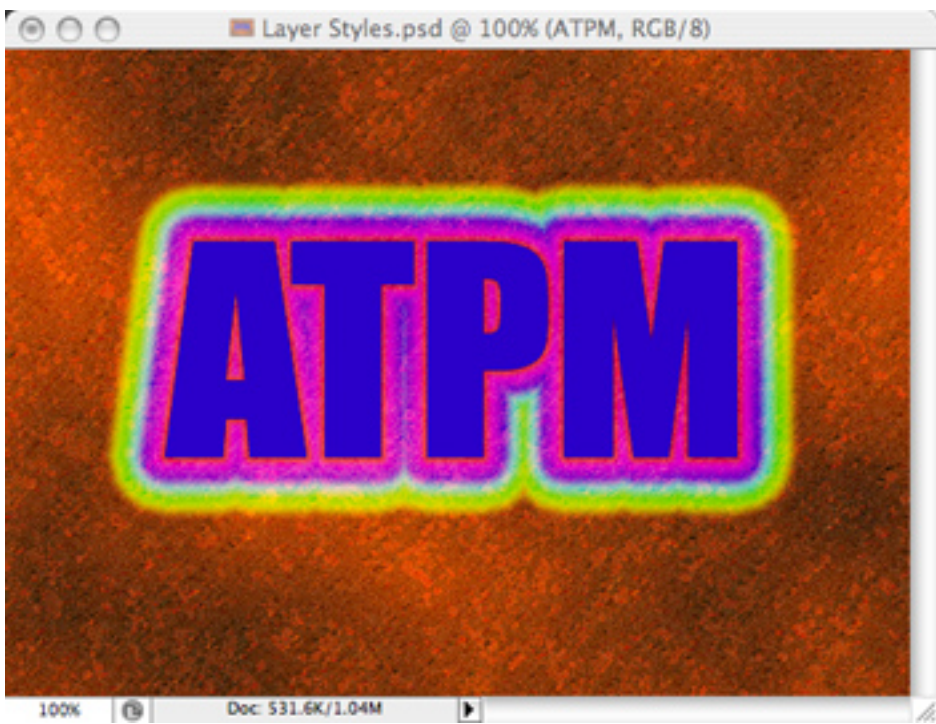


The Outer Glow Style.

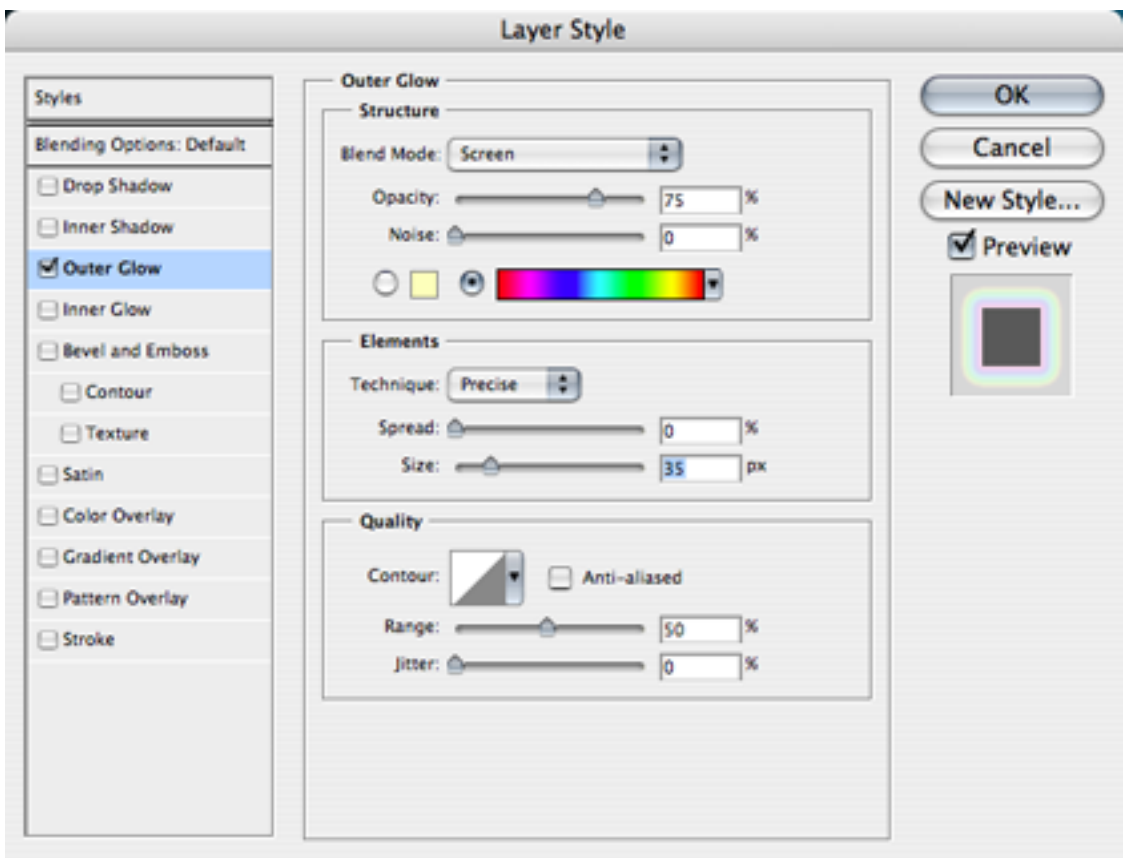


Outer Glow settings.

I really can't say why the cream color is the default Outer Glow color, but if you want something different, such as white, you can change it by clicking that little yellow square. Or, you can use the gradient color selector instead to create some wild effects.



Funky Outer Glow using gradient colors.



The gradient selector is identical to the one when using the standard Gradient tool. Any gradients you may have previously saved are available here.

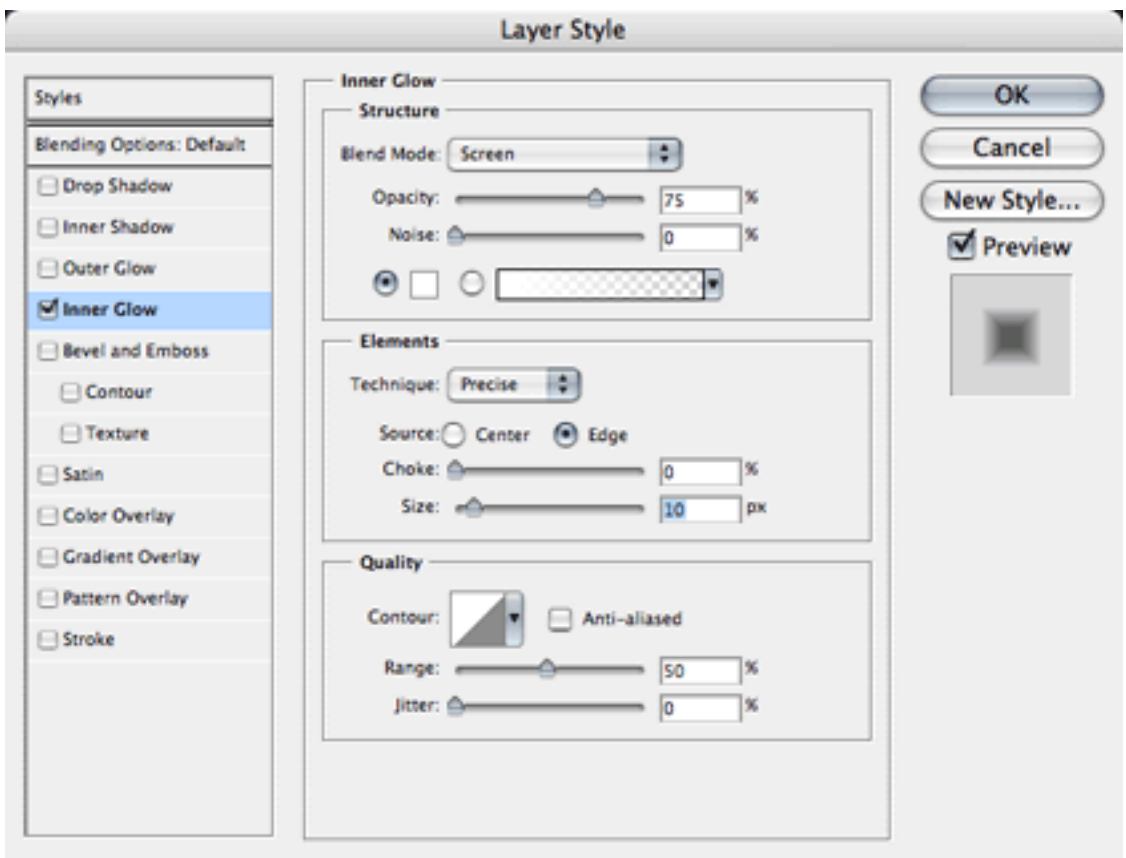
As with the previous Styles, you can adjust the opacity, spread, and size of the glow. You might like the results of the Precise Technique better than Softer.

Inner Glow

Just like Inner Shadow, the Inner Glow Style works from the inside instead of the outside.



Inner Glow with the edges as the light source.



Inner Glow settings.

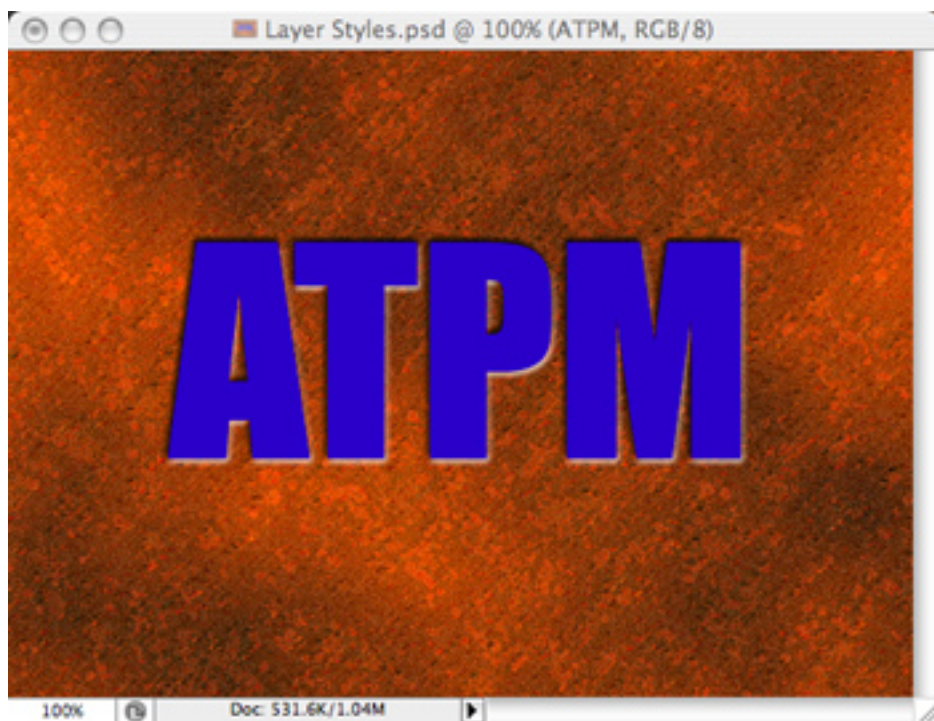
Inner Glow adds a new adjustment for the light source, Edge and Center. I must advise, however, that I don't specifically recall this adjustment in Photoshop CS2. If you're not using CS3 and you don't see this option, you'll know why.



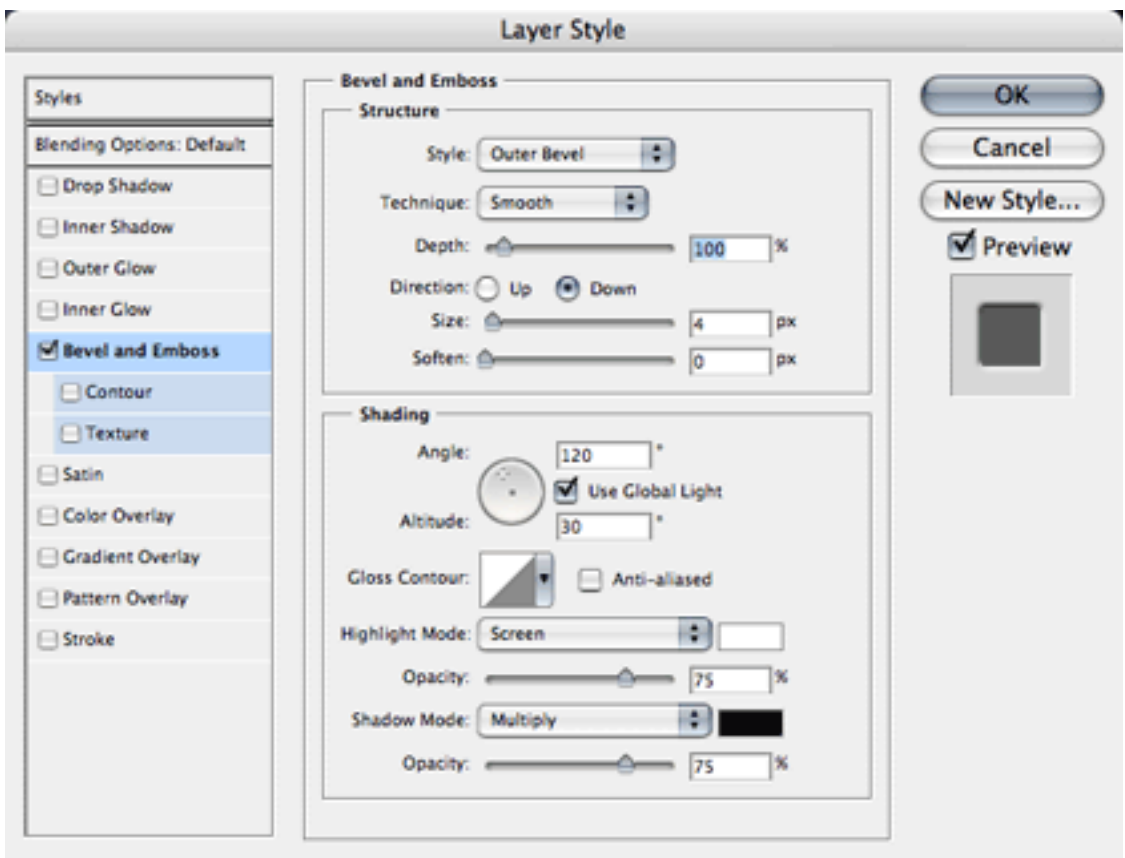
Inner Glow with the center as the light source.

Bevel and Emboss

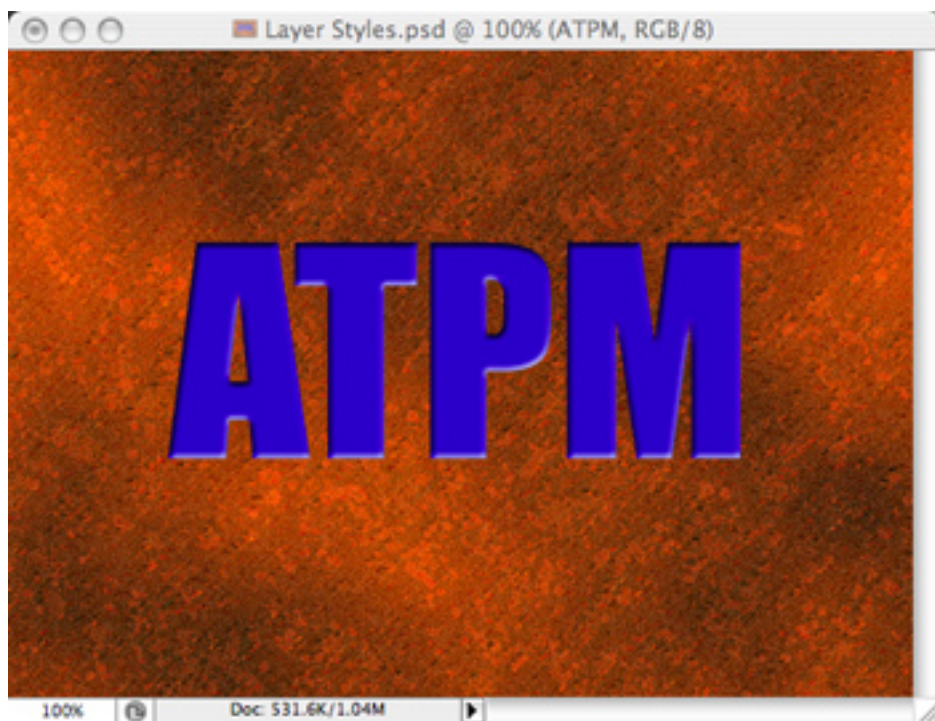
Here's the Layer Style I used to accompany the Inner Shadow effect, seen above. There are five different modes to the Bevel and Emboss Style, depicted in the next screenshots.



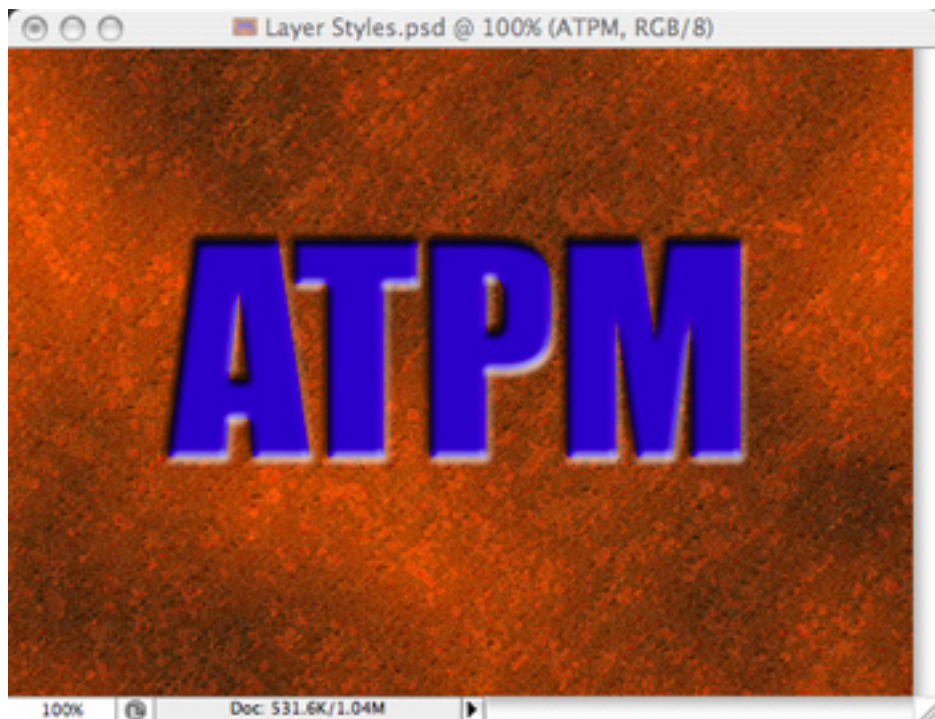
The Outer Bevel mode is the specific effect used earlier in the Inner Shadow section. Note the Technique selector. Choosing one of the Chisel options instead of Smooth gives an even greater impression that someone physically chiseled out the letters.



Outer Bevel settings.



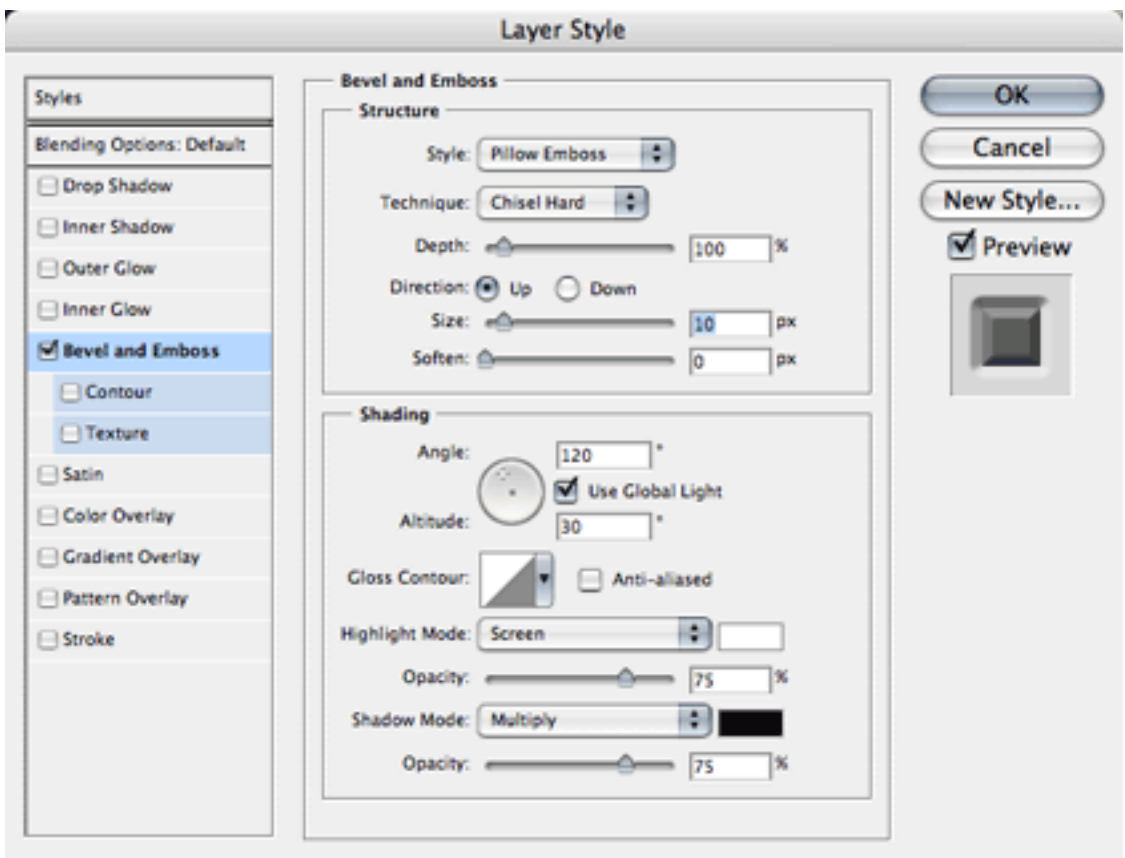
Inner Bevel.



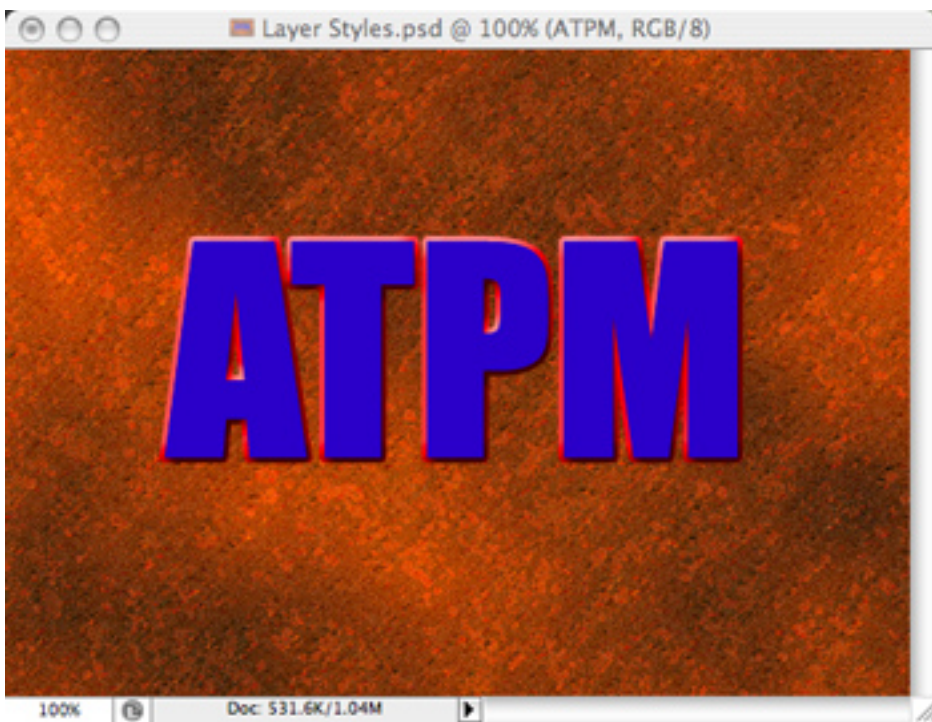
The Emboss Style is like applying both an Inner Bevel and Outer Bevel simultaneously.



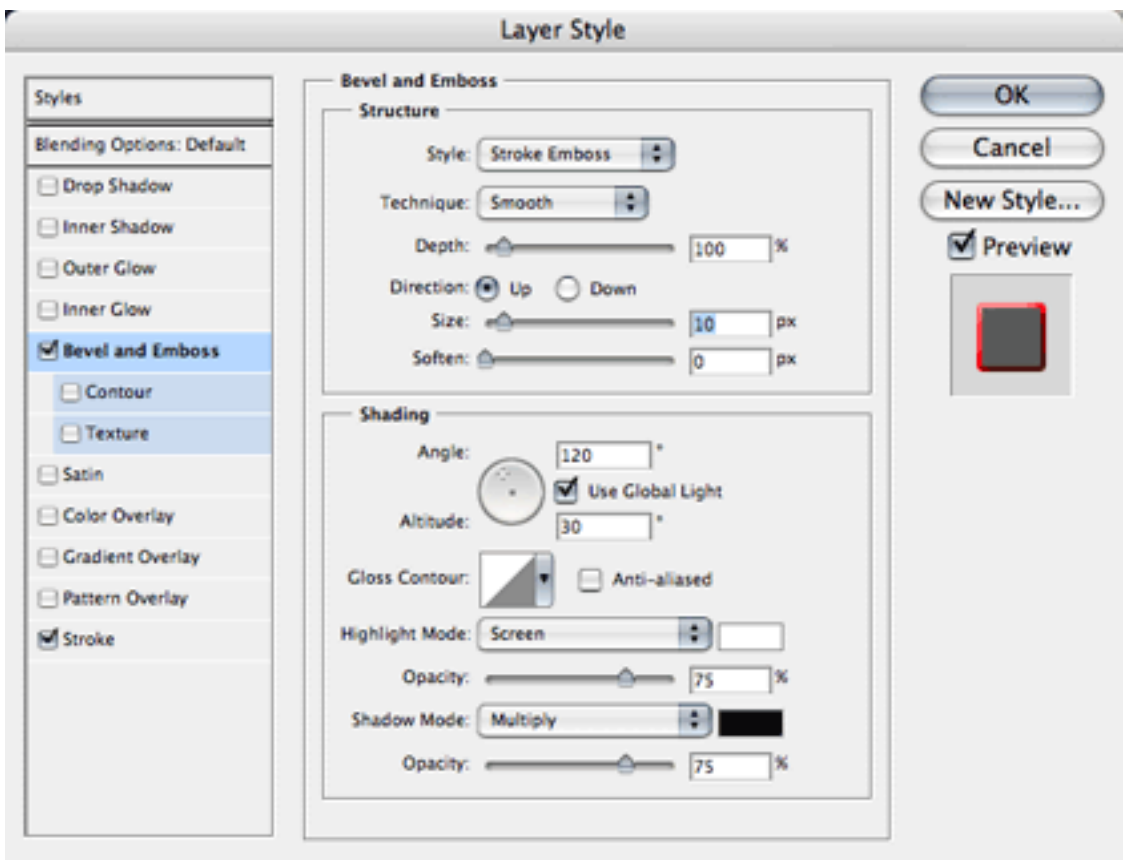
Pillow Emboss with the Direction set to Up makes the edges appear as though they've been stamped into the background. Note also that I changed the Technique from Smooth to Chisel Hard.



Pillow Emboss settings with Chisel Hard Technique selected.



Stroke Emboss applies an emboss effect only to the outline of the object if the Stroke Style is applied.



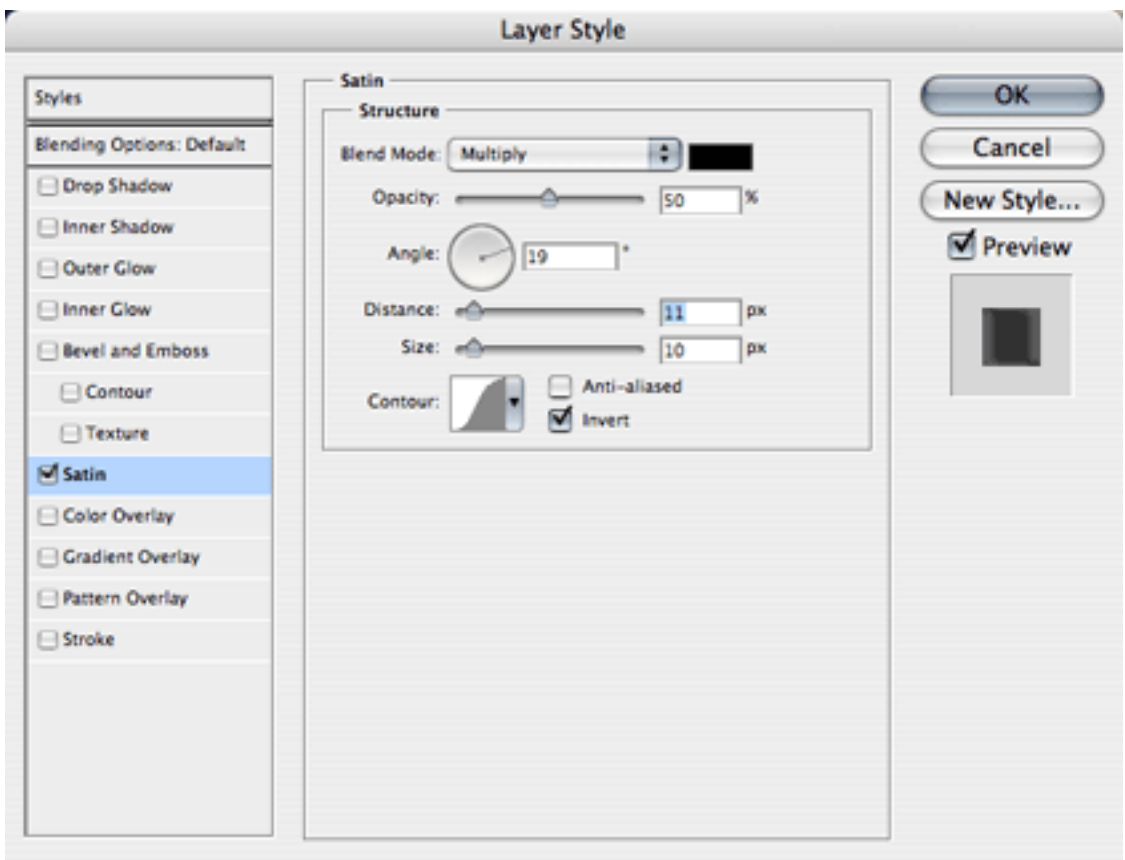
Stroke Emboss settings. The Stroke Style you see enabled is set for a red outline and 3 pixels width.

Satin

Supposedly, the Satin Style is makes the object look like it has a shiny/satin-like quality. Your mileage may vary.

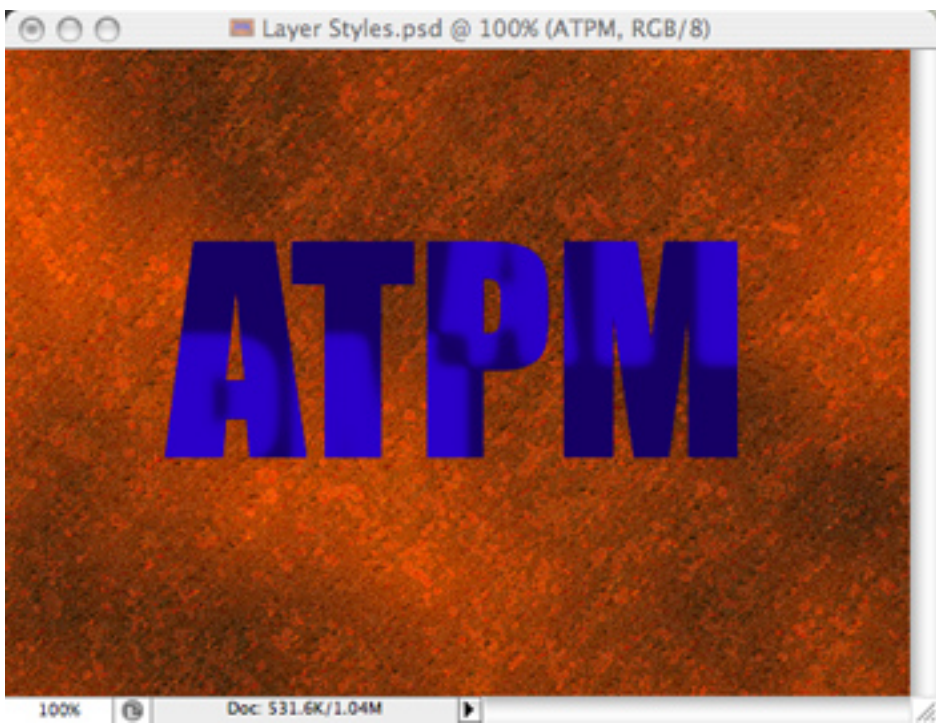


Satin Style.

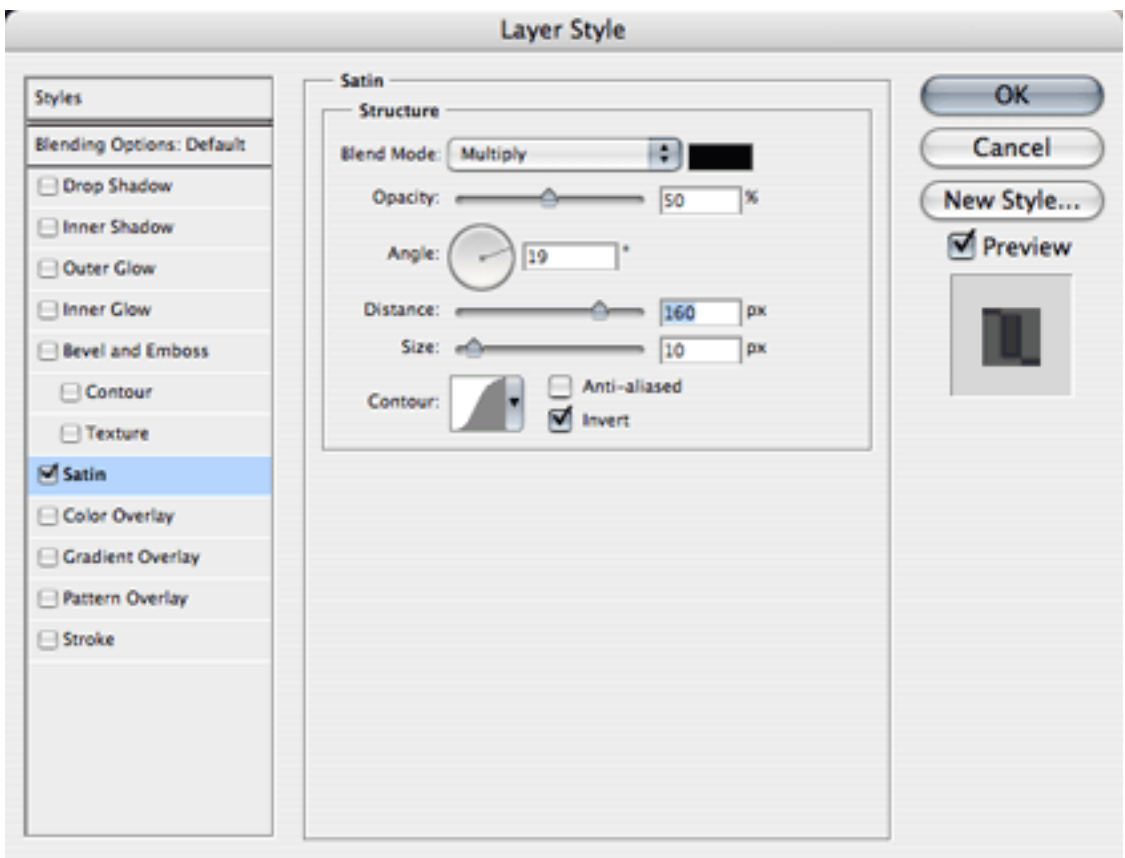


Satin settings. Note that this Style uses, by default, a rounded Contour curve to soften the edges of the highlights.

Increasing the Distance by a large amount reveals exactly what is being done to achieve this effect.



Satin Style with large Distance setting.

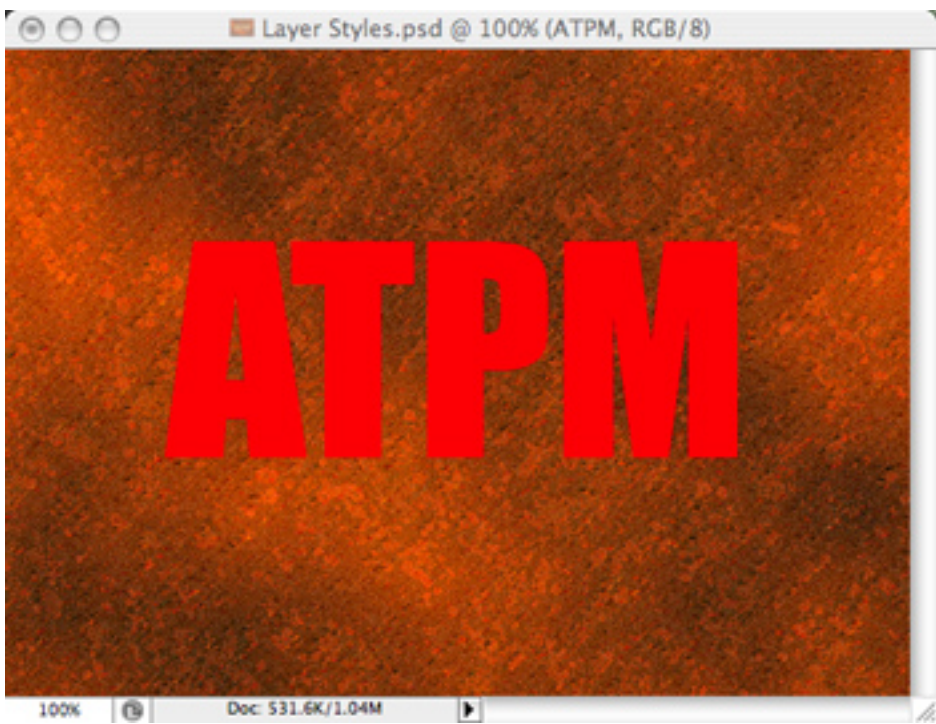


The same Satin Style settings, but with the Distance ran up very high.

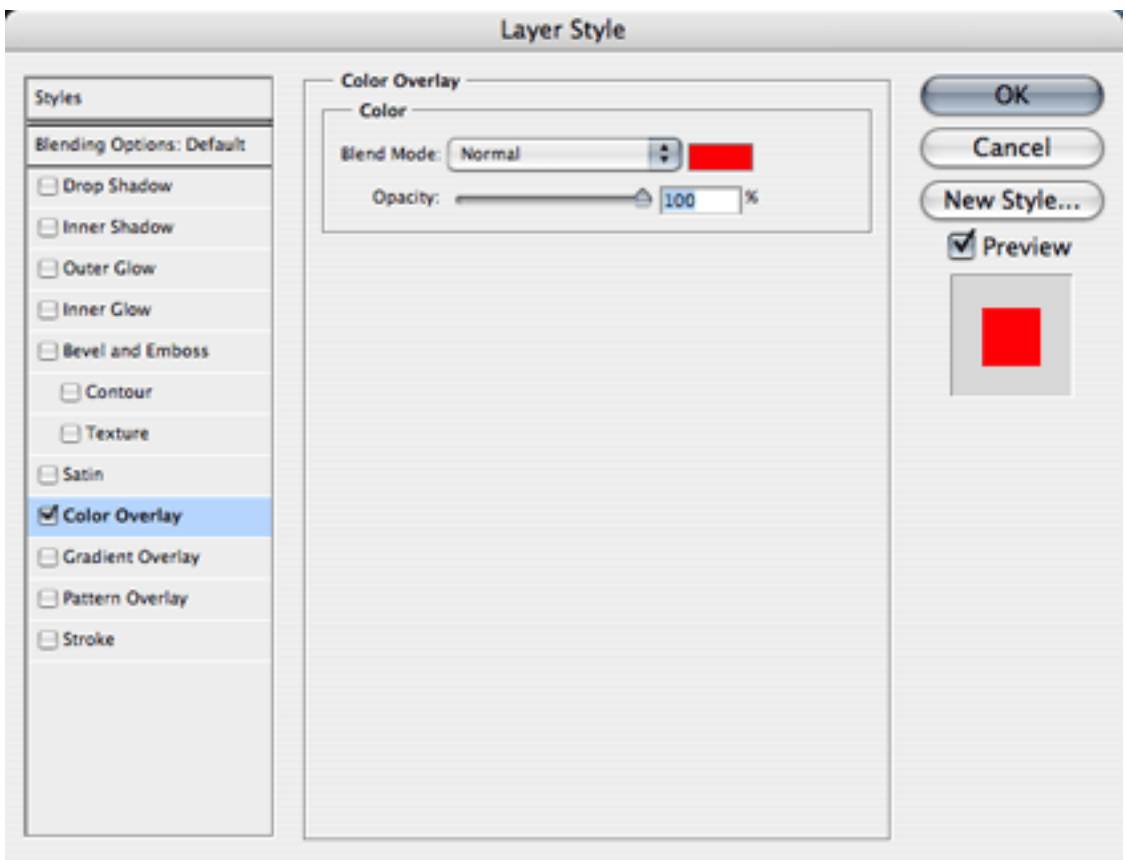
As you can see, the original image has been darkened, and the original lighter color has had the edges softened and the letters doubled and spread apart along the angle defined in the Style settings.

Color Overlay

Probably the simplest Layer Style, Color Overlay applies any color with any Blend Mode at any Opacity. Do not pass Go, do not collect \$200.



Color Overlay Style.



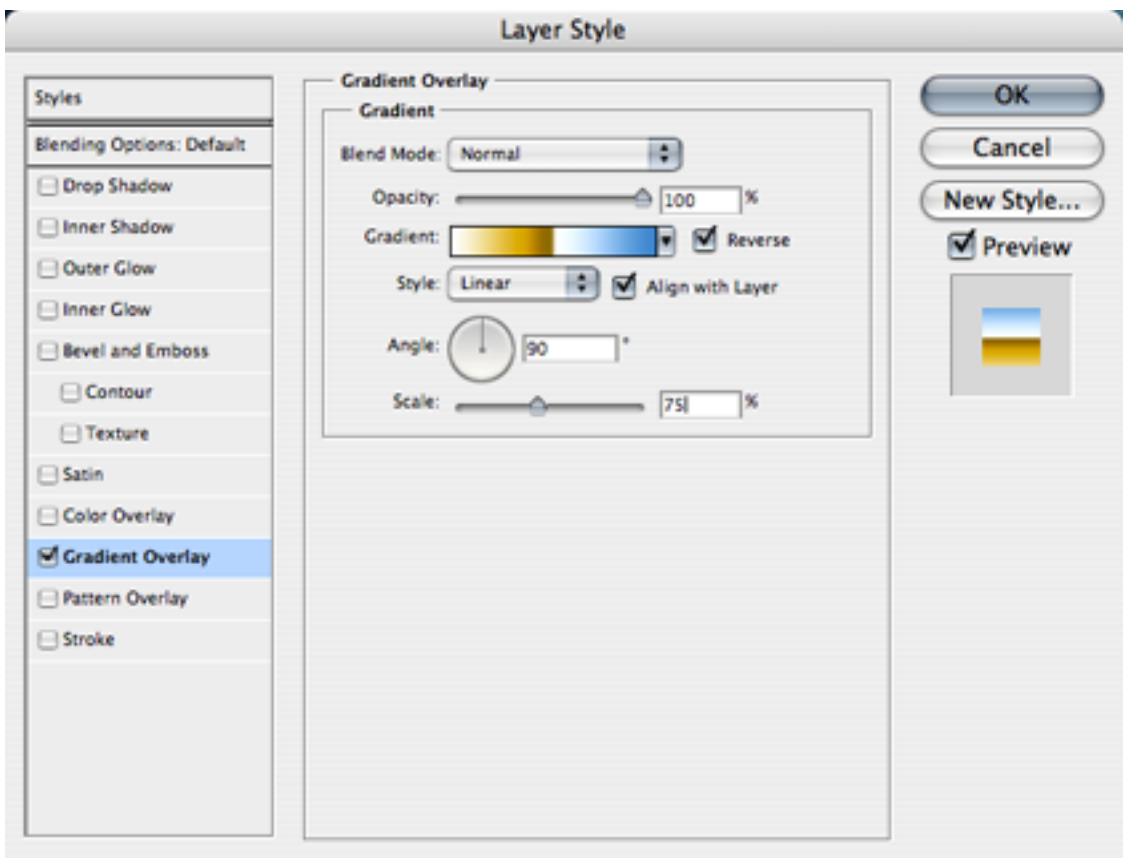
Color Overlay settings.

Gradient Overlay

The Gradient Overlay Style works just like Color Overlay, only that you can now apply gradient colors instead of a single, flat color.



In this Gradient Overlay Style, I chose a preset gradient that is supposed to make an object look like chrome, reflecting back the ground and a blue sky.



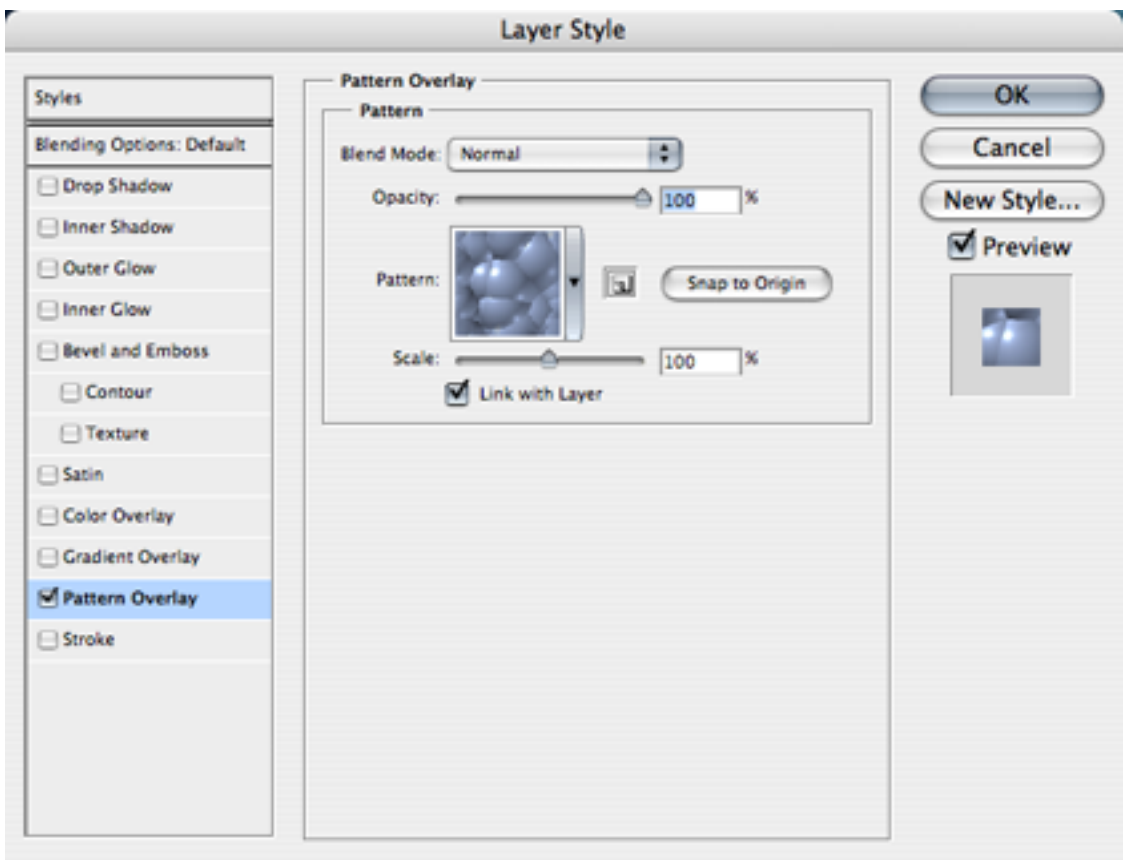
Gradient Overlay settings. Once again, the same Gradient selections are available.

Pattern Overlay

The last overlay uses tiling patterns to overlay instead of colors and gradients.



Pattern Overlay Style.

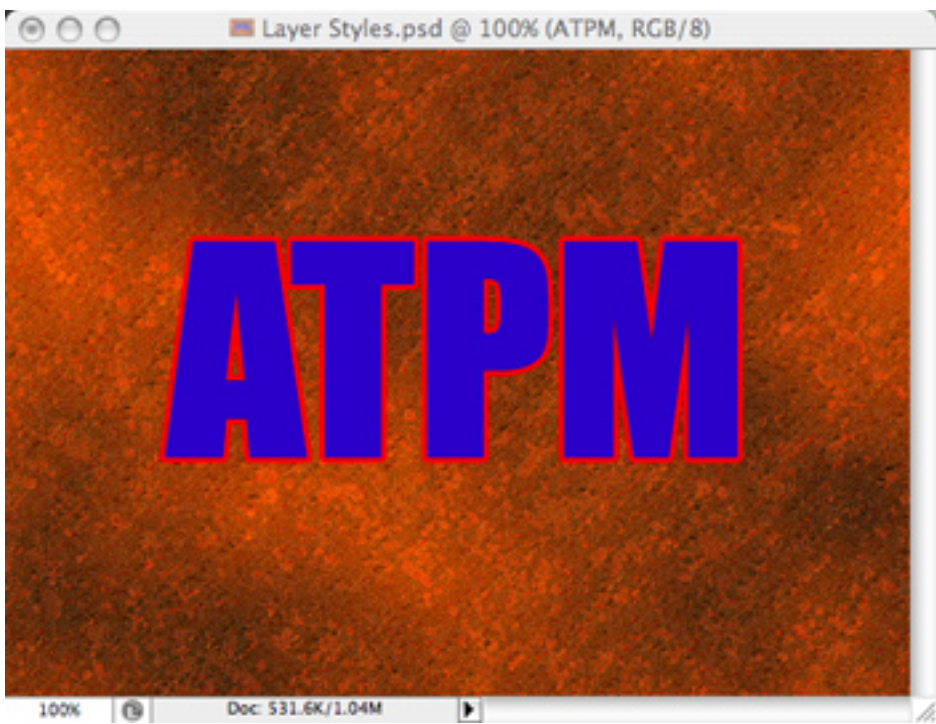


Pattern Overlay settings. From here, you can enlarge or reduce the size of the pattern with the Scale slider. While the Style window is open, you can move your mouse pointer to your image and drag the pattern around to position it exactly where you desire. The Snap to Origin button will return the pattern to its default position.

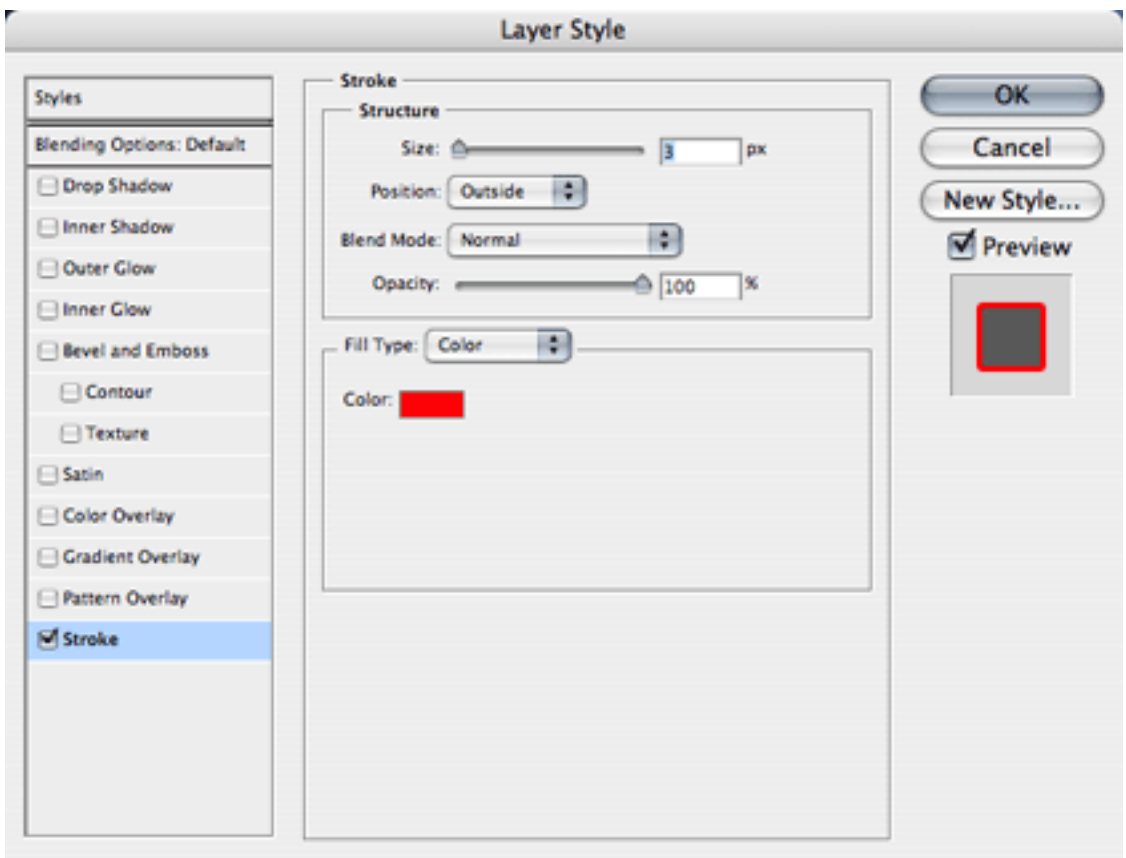
There are several included patterns, but any image can be saved as a Pattern. One of my upcoming *Photoshop For the Curious* topics will teach you how you can make almost any graphic tile seamlessly when multiple copies of the image are placed adjacent to each other. This will enable you to create your own patterns that can be saved and used in the Pattern Overlay Layer Style, as well as part of other Photoshop functions.

Stroke

You've already seen the Stroke Style used in the Stroke Emboss Style discussed above. When Stroke is used by itself, it simply outlines your object.



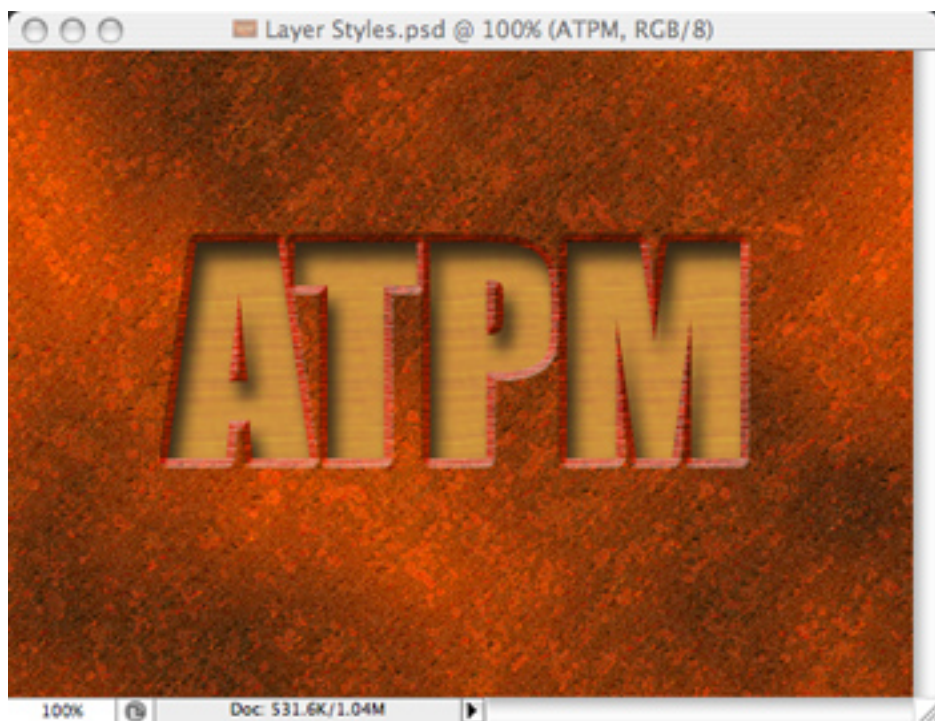
Stroke Style.



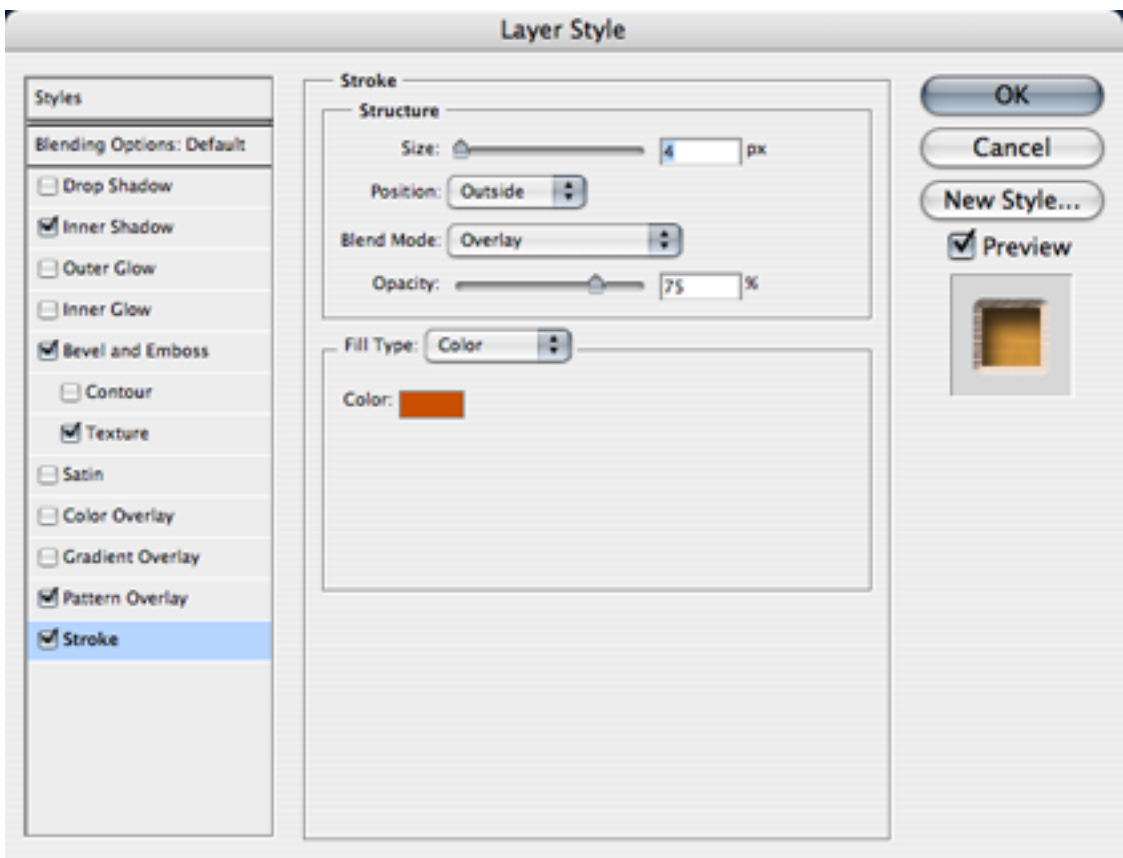
Stroke settings. With the Fill Type selector, you can use a gradient or a pattern instead of a solid color.

Homework Assignment

Once you start to get the hang of what each Style can do, you can start combining them and creating some amazing effects. You may have thought that it takes months or even years of graphic design school to create images like this:



My final Layer Styles treatment to the ATPM acronym...

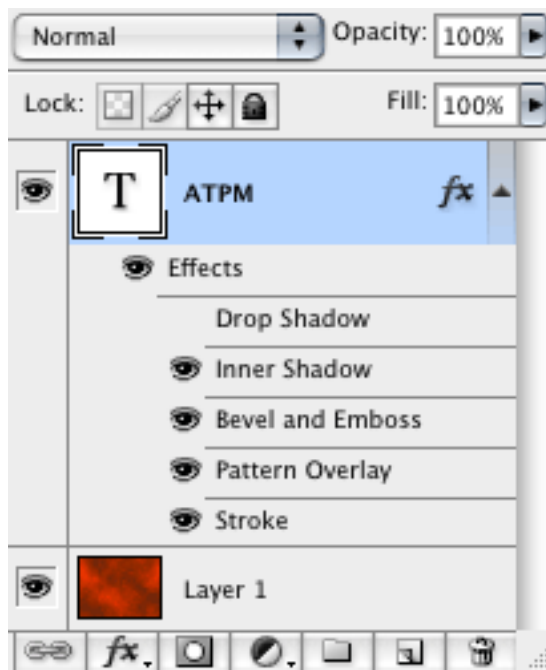


...and I only needed four Styles to do it (plus a Texture setting to the Bevel Style).

In reality, all you have to do is apply a few Layer Styles, monkey around with each Style's settings, and you'll quickly come up with some wonderful results. That's your homework assignment. Crack open that Layer Style palette and get busy.

Final Word

I'd be remiss to not mention one more thing about Layer Styles. We've already established that the effects are nondestructive and that you can change the settings on a whim. With this in mind, notice what happens to the object's line item in the Layers palette.



You may have guessed that something that is named Layer Styles would somehow be represented in the Layers palette.

Each Layer Style you enable will appear as an indented item to the layer being affected. In this example, you can see that I had tried a Drop Shadow Style, but later decided I didn't want to use it and simply clicked the visibility icon (the little eye) to disable it. But any adjustments I made to the Drop Shadow Style settings are remembered if I re-enabled the Style. Alternatively, I could drag the Drop Shadow item to the trash can icon to permanently remove it. As you might deduce, clicking the visibility icon next to Effects (this is why I habitually call them Layer Effects instead of Layer Styles—seems to me Adobe goofed here) will disable all the Styles simultaneously.

But even more cool is that little *fx* icon on the right side of the layer. Suppose you came up with a composite set of Layer Styles that you really like and you want to apply those Styles to another layer. You don't have to make note of each Style's settings and enter them all over again on the new layer. Just hold the Option key and drag the *fx* icon to the second layer. Voilà, it's copied. Similarly, if you drag without the Option key, you instead move the Styles to the new layer.

Topics For Upcoming Months

- What Does “Dots Per Inch” Really Mean? (A Tutorial on Resolution)
- Creating Seamless Tiles
- Mask-erades

- Fun With the Automate Menu
 - Photomerge
- Fun With Filters
- File Format Fever

If you have a topic suggestion, please [share it](#). I'm definitely interested in expanding this list with topics that are of interest to you.

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Segments: Slices from the Macintosh Life

by Lee Bennett, lbennett@atpm.com

About This Particular Upgrade

On June 5, 2007, Apple released an [updated version](#) of their high-end laptop computer—the MacBook Pro. That same evening, I aimed my car toward the [Apple Store Millenia](#).



My new MacBook Pro greets the world—or at least my living room.

But I'm getting ahead of myself. Let me back up a year or two.

I'd been using a 15" [1GHz Titanium PowerBook G4](#) that I purchased approximately a week after they were released in November 2002. Unless Apple does something radically different with the successor to these "Santa Rosa" MacBook Pro laptops, this "TiBook" marked the last in my streak of buying the final incarnation of various Macintosh computers.

The first Mac I owned was a [Performa 577](#), which was the end of the 5xx all-in-one series. Next, I owned a [PowerBook 3400](#), which was the last laptop model before the G3 processors.

My [G3 “Pismo”](#) followed and turned out to be the last G3 laptop model before the G4s. Finally, the “TiBook” came into my possession. Though perhaps a little bit of a stretch compared to the past machines, my “TiBook” was the last laptop model with the Titanium style casing. It gave way to the Aluminum PowerBooks, which sported a new, backlit keyboard and relocated the ports from the back of the machine to the sides.

By early 2006, I had already been clamoring for a new laptop. Even though the MacBook Pro had just been introduced, I decided to bide my time. I’ve never been one to spring for brand-new Apple hardware, and I preferred to sit back and see how these new Intel-based Macs were going to fare.

As you surely know, they fared very well, and I became increasingly jealous of anyone who had one. But even when the MacBook Pros were updated with the Core 2 Duo processor, I still waited. The reason was a simple truth of economics—I didn’t yet have the money to afford an upgrade and, unlike prior laptop purchases, I refused to buy my next one on a credit card.

Through the first half of 2007, I frequently reviewed my finances to find a way to pay for an upgrade and was steadfastly determined to find a means to do so by the time the next revision was released. By early summer, I had my plan. With no firm hints on when Apple would release the next revision, there was a strong sense to buy a [2.33 GHz MacBook Pro](#).

But then, Apple issued a [press release](#) that indicated they would be transitioning to LED-based displays. The rumor mills immediately cranked up with speculations of exactly how much battery life would be saved as well as speculations that the next MacBook Pro revision would very likely come out too soon to be using the new technology.

I chose to wait, and I haven’t decided yet if doing so was a good thing, a bad thing, or if it was of no real consequence. I waited because it wasn’t too long into the summer that, LED backlighting or not, a new laptop revision was coming and a couple of months would not be critical to me. So, it made sense to just hold out for a faster machine.

But, are the latest MacBook Pros all that much faster? While the CPU clock speeds are only marginally higher, the new “Santa Rosa” chips are supposed to be a better-performing design. Plus, the new 800 MHz frontside bus is also purported to make a big impact on performance.

Or, maybe the reward for my wait was not so much a faster machine, but rather a more energy-efficient machine. The new frontside bus is not only rated faster, but is labeled as “dynamically adjustable.” Truthfully, I’m not sure what that means, but reports would have me believe that it makes much better use of power. Apple claims this improvement, combined with the more energy-efficient LED backlighting, should translate to as much as an hour of additional battery life compared to the previous MacBook Pro models.

I’m waiting to see some real world data on the improvements. I’d welcome [links from readers](#) that give unbiased numbers. Can I *really* get up to six hours out of this battery? How much

faster is the 2.2 GHz model compared to both the 2.16 GHz and 2.33 GHz models that came before?

Speaking of the 2.2 GHz speed, that's my segue to why I purchased it instead of the 2.4 GHz model. Even in the price range of these laptops, a \$500 difference is pretty significant to my budget. Had I decided to not wait for these Santa Rosa machines, deciding whether to buy the lower or higher model would not have been any easier. In addition to the difference in processor speed, the better version of the pre-Santa Rosa laptops had double the RAM, and double the video RAM. All other specs were identical.

For the current MacBook Pro, Apple didn't quite follow the same pattern with the specs. This time, both versions shipped with 2 GB of RAM while the better model has double the video RAM and comes with a 160 GB hard drive instead of a 120 GB drive.

Comparing those specs, I decided that for someone like me, coming from a 1 GHz PowerBook G4, the difference between a 2.2 and a 2.4 GHz Core 2 Duo would be practically imperceptible. The increase of hard drive size was hardly worthwhile. I can install a larger drive for much cheaper at a later time, and still have the original 120 GB drive for use in an enclosure.

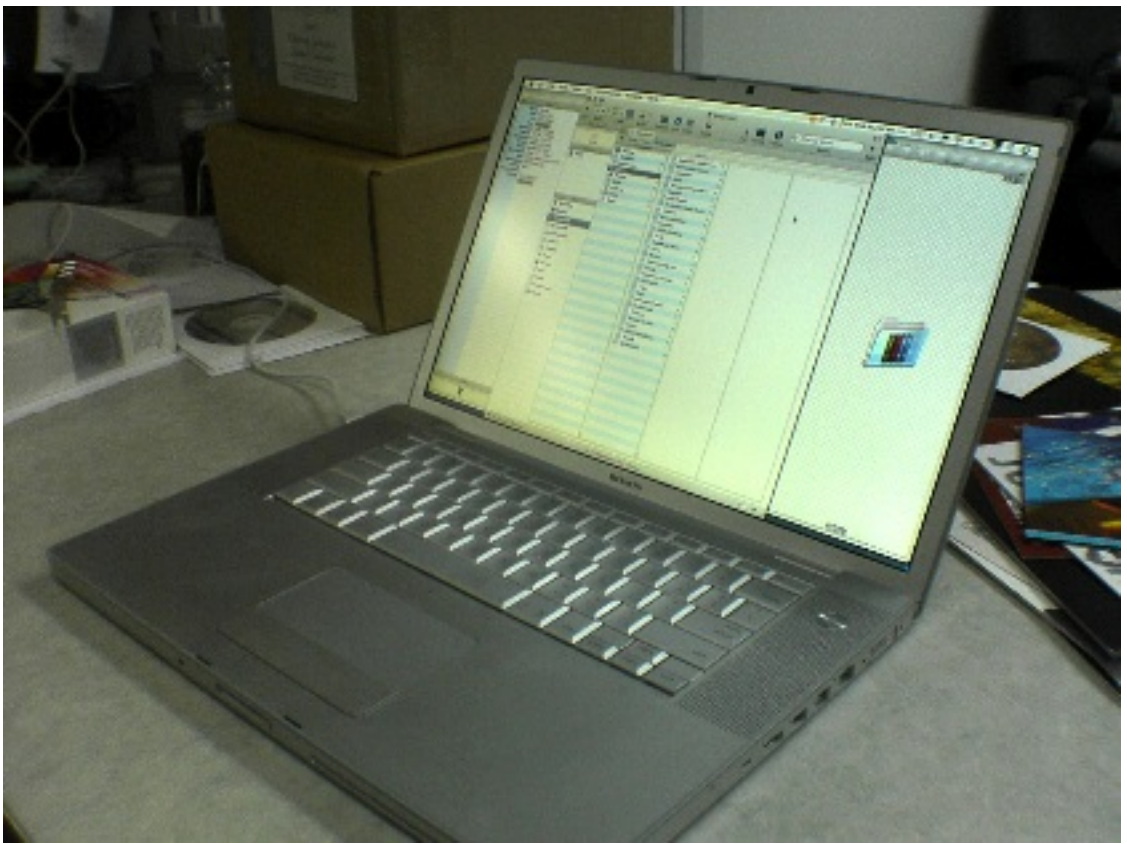
Then, there's the video RAM: 128 MB or 256 MB. Once again, I welcome [reader opinion](#) on my decision. Yet, I am fairly well-convinced that since I am not a gamer and don't plan to do a whole lot of work with [Motion](#) (a little, yes, but not a lot), the 128 MB video card is quite adequate.

Thus, I only spent two grand instead of two and a half. Consider, also, that I dropped three grand on the "TiBook" back in 2002! So, spending \$500 less for the 2.2 GHz model helped me feel better about also picking up accessories like a second power adapter, S-video/composite video adapter, USB modem, and the AppleCare warranty. Yes, I have found occasions where dialup is my only option on the road—even in this age of free WiFi in most hotels—and I am part of a monthly project where I need to output an S-video signal from my laptop to a television.

That brings us back to June 5, the day I confidently strode into the Apple Store, reached the sales counter in the back, and announced I was there to purchase a new MacBook Pro. Less than a half hour later, my new laptop was riding home, anxious to learn of the Mac-computing adventures it would be sharing with me.



She's a good little traveler.



The maiden voyage to my office for the purpose of allowing my jealous coworker to drool—at a distance!

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Segments: Slices from the Macintosh Life

by Christopher Turner, cturner@atpm.com

The Hunt for an iPhone

For me, the hunt for an iPhone began two and a half years ago. *Two and a half years ago?* you might be thinking. *What is Chris smoking?* *The iPhone wasn't even announced two and a half years ago.* You're right. But what happened two and a half years ago was that my Sony Ericsson T616 was starting to fail. It was dropping calls, and this wasn't because of Cingular's service. The Bluetooth was failing to stay connected with my headset. The phone was dying, and I needed a new one.

My hope was that under my phone insurance plan that I could get a SE T637, the at-the-time replacement for the T616. Alas, the insurance provider had no Sony Ericssons to offer, so I was given a "feature-compatible" phone, a Motorola v551. It was hate at first use. The user interface, and especially the address book, really stunk it up in comparison with the T616. And the keypad felt second-rate, too.

In the intervening time, the v551 failed, and was replaced by a v557, which was in use until Friday, June 29, 2007. That date may mean something to you, since it was the release date for the latest from Disney and Pixar, [Ratatouille](#).

Oh, and Apple happened to start selling the [iPhone](#) that day.

Back in late December, I was about to pull the trigger on a new Sony Ericsson phone. However, a friend who closely monitors the mobile phone biz hinted that I should at least wait until Macworld Expo in early January. "Just in case."

So Steve announces the iPhone, tells us it's coming in June, and my wait for a new phone increases by six months. When you've waited two years, what's another six months, right? Well, when you know what's awaiting you at the end of those six months, it can be as torturous as the previous two years!

Needless to say, the morning of the 29th saw me pretty antsy, but unlike thousands across the country, I wouldn't be camping in line outside an Apple or AT&T store. No, I would be taking care of the lawn maintenance for the homestead. You see, I live in the Dallas/Fort Worth area, and Friday the 29th was the first day in ten that we didn't have any rain. (We were set to beat a record for June rainfall that's stood since the 1920s, but ended up falling short by four-tenths of an inch.) So a good chunk of my day would be spent edging, weed-whacking, and mowing.

However, the mower did require gas, which required a trip to the gas station, which led to a roundabout drive past the local AT&T store: already about seven people in line. No problem, I thought.

Problem. By the time I was able to get away from my husbandly and fatherly duties at home, it was 9:00 PM. The AT&T store was open until 10, but they were completely sold out of iPhones. A call to the [Southlake Apple Store](#) revealed they were out of 8 GB units, but still had plenty of 4 GB models. I went to the next closest Apple Store on my call list, the one at [Willow Bend](#), and this time struck gold. Plenty of 8 GB units, a good number of people in the store, I was told, but no line.

I arrived at the store about ten minutes to ten, and without any hesitation, walked right up to the counter in front, telling the young lady behind it, “Eight gig me.” She laughed, reached down, and came up with an iPhone box in her hand. She used a handheld register to check me out, offering me the option of printing a receipt, or having it e-mailed to me. I went with the e-mail option, more for the novelty of it than anything else. The message was in my in box by the time I got home.

I briefly wandered the store, amazed at what the staff hath wrought earlier in the day, when the store was shut down. All of the art and photographs on the side walls had been replaced, with every panel featuring the iPhone. It seemed just about all of the product islands, normally reserved for MacBooks, Pro and regular, iPods, printers, and hard drives, had been overhauled to feature iPhones, iPhones, and more iPhones, and there were people gathered at each and every one.

So that was it. No long hours spent waiting in line. Just a couple of phone calls and about an hour’s worth of round-trip driving. My hunt was over, my game bagged, so all that was left was to head back to camp to dress it. Er, head back to the house to activate it, as it were. While the activation process wasn’t as [short as it’s been for some](#), it certainly wasn’t as [long as it’s been for others](#). It took about fifteen minutes, and the phone I’ve waited two and a half years for was live.

Watch for a full review next month in the pages of ATPM!

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Desktop Pictures

We need new desktop pictures each month. [Write](#) to us!

This Month's Desktop Pictures

This month's pictures, by Forrest Brown, are photos of Crowders Mountain, NC, on a cold, clear February day.



Previous Months' Desktop Pictures

Pictures from previous months are listed in the desktop pictures [archives](#).

Downloading All the Pictures at Once

Some browsers can download an entire set of desktop pictures at once.

iCab Use the Download command to download “Get all files in same path.”

OmniWeb Choose “Save Linked > Images...” from the File menu.

Safari Use [this Automator workflow](#).

Contributing Your Own Desktop Pictures

If you have a picture, whether a small series or just one fabulous or funny shot, feel free to send it to editor@atpm.com and we'll consider publishing it in next month's issue. Have a regular print but no scanner? Don't worry. E-mail us, and we tell you where to send it so we can scan it for you. Note that we cannot return the original print, so send us a copy.

Placing Desktop Pictures

Mac OS X 10.3.x and 10.4.x

Choose “System Preferences...” from the Apple menu, click the “Desktop & Screen Saver” button, then choose the Desktop tab. In the left-side menu, select the desktop pictures folder you want to use.

You can also use the pictures with Mac OS X's built-in screen saver. Select the Screen Saver tab which is also in the "Desktop & Screen Saver" System Preferences pane. If you put the ATPM pictures in your Pictures folder, click on the Pictures Folder in the list of screen savers. Otherwise, click Choose Folder to tell the screen saver which pictures to use.

Mac OS X 10.1.x and 10.2.x

Choose "System Preferences..." from the Apple menu and click the Desktop button. With the pop-up menu, select the desktop pictures folder you want to use.

You can also use the pictures with Mac OS X's built-in screen saver. Choose "System Preferences..." from the Apple menu. Click the Screen Saver (10.1.x) or Screen Effects (10.2.x) button. Then click on Custom Slide Show in the list of screen savers. If you put the ATPM pictures in your Pictures folder, you're all set. Otherwise, click Configure to tell the screen saver which pictures to use.

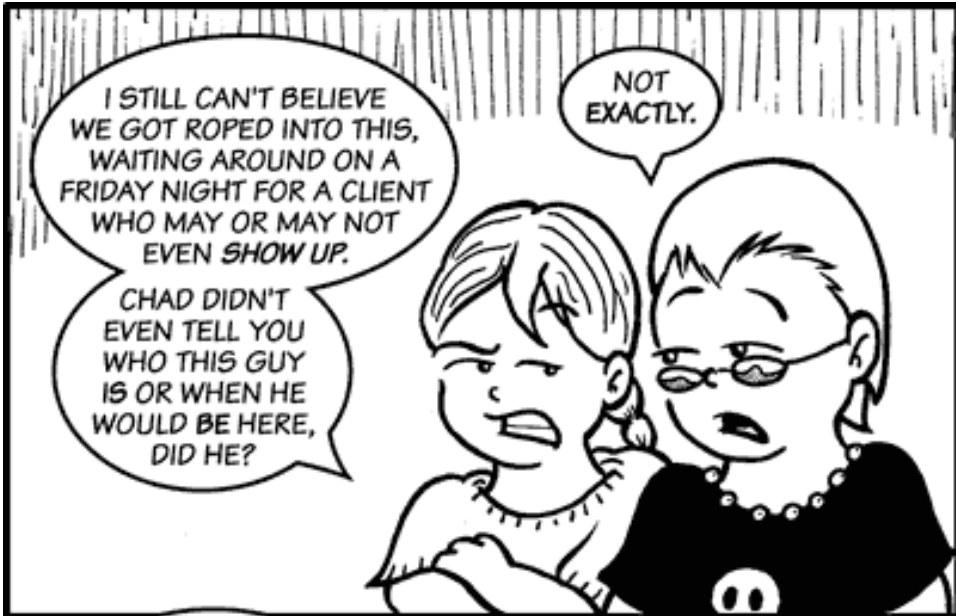
Mac OS X 10.0.x

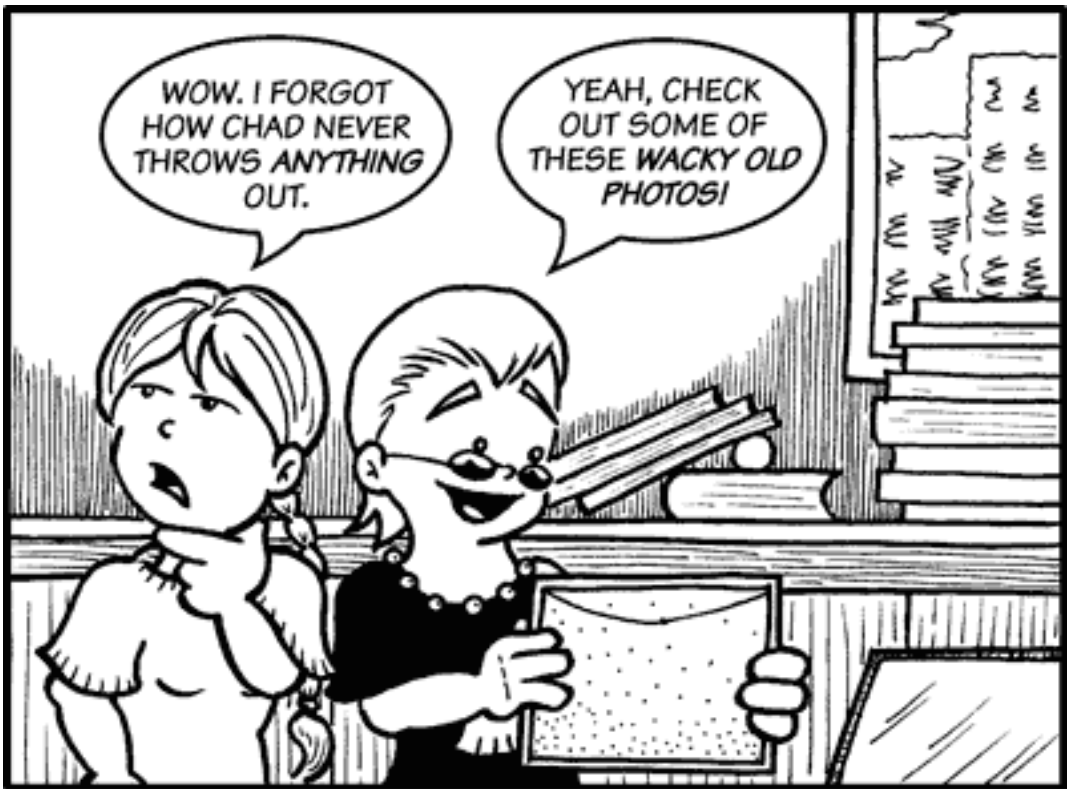
Switch to the Finder. Choose "Preferences..." from the "Finder" menu. Click on the "Select Picture..." button on the right. In the Open Panel, select the desktop picture you want to use. The panel defaults to your ~/Library/Desktop Pictures folder. Close the "Finder Preferences" window when you are done.



Cortland

by Matt Johnson, mjohnson@atpm.com





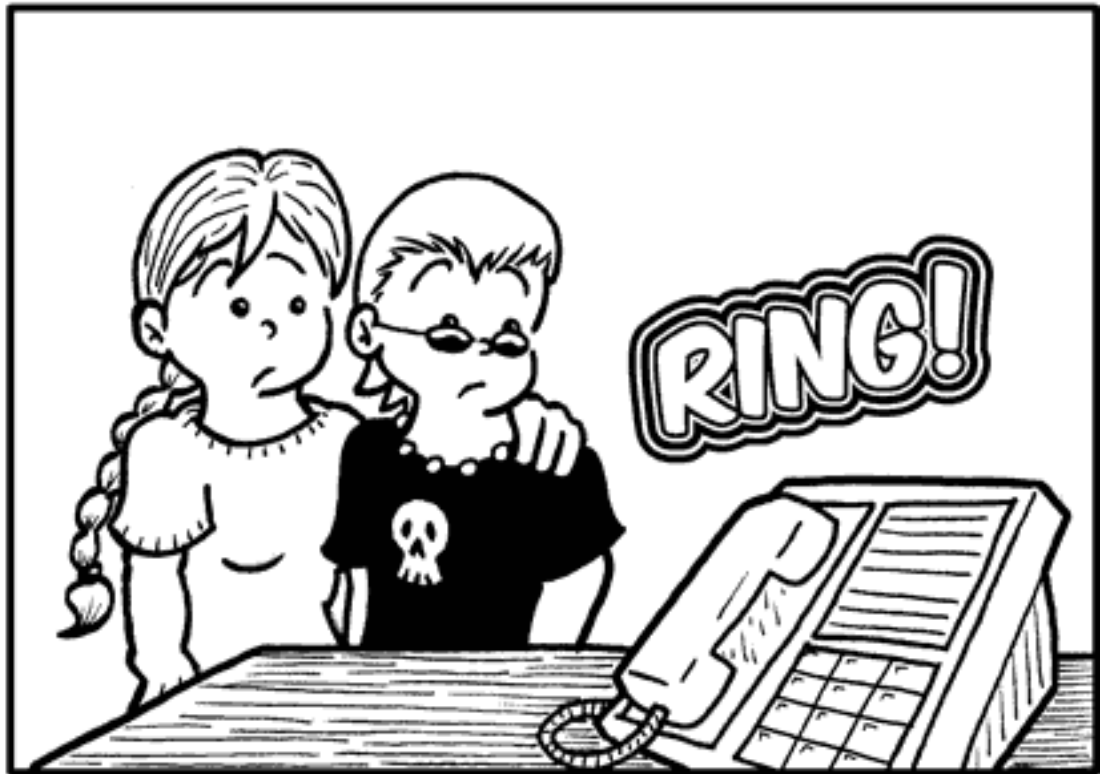
WOW. I FORGOT HOW CHAD NEVER THROWS ANYTHING OUT.

YEAH, CHECK OUT SOME OF THESE WACKY OLD PHOTOS!



IS THIS ONE FROM SOME 80S-THEMED PARTY?

SORRY, NO. THAT'S ACTUALLY FROM THE 1980S.



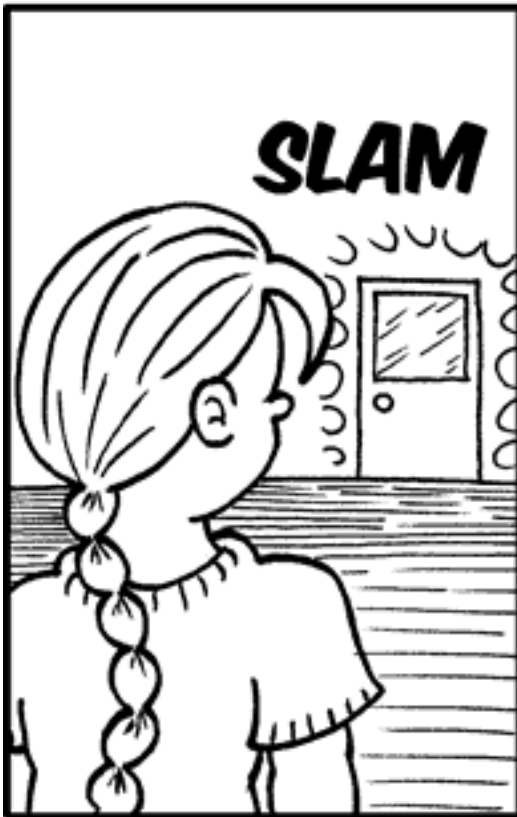
DON'T
GET IT, TODD.
WHY WOULD
ANYONE BE
CALLING THIS
LATE?

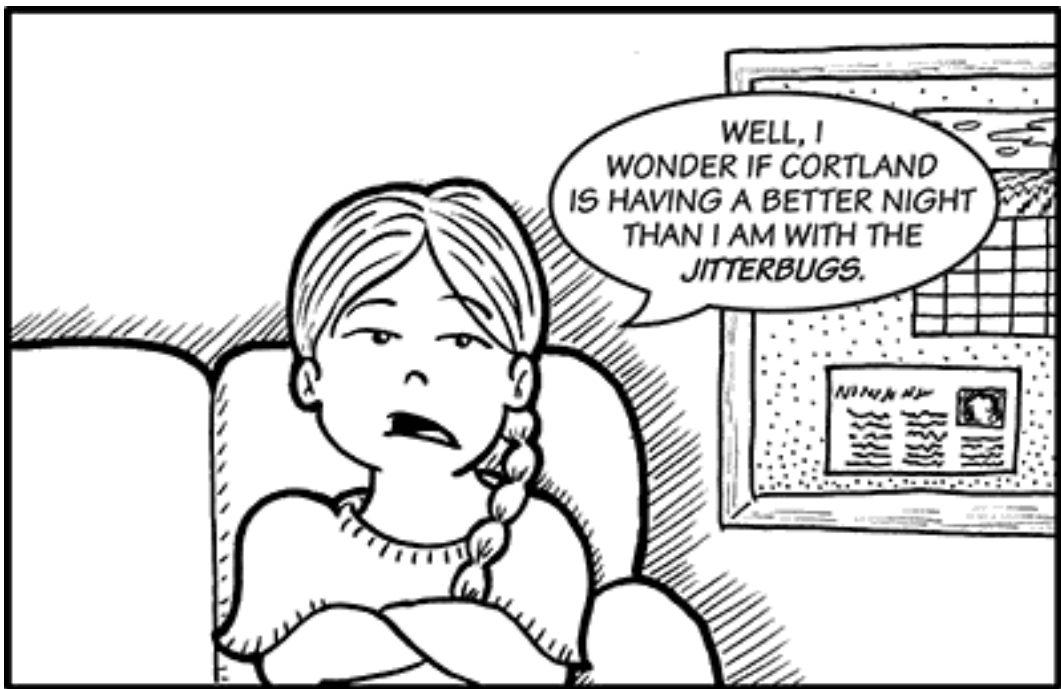
I HAVE TO PICK
IT UP. IT MIGHT BE
CHAD CHECKING
ON US.

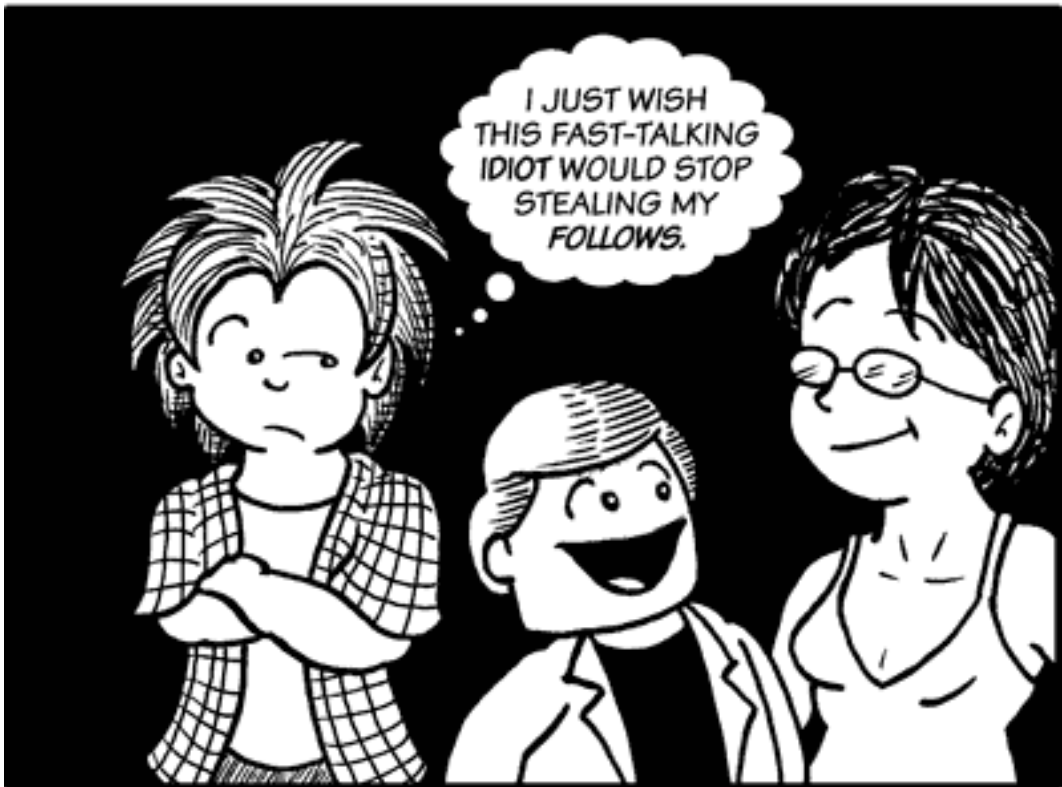
WIESER
GRAPHICS,
THIS IS
TODD.

BUONA SERA,
AMICO MIO.



















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Captain Qwerty

by Linus Ly, <http://qaptainqwerty.blogspot.com>

Coming up next - The
Man Who Waited Too Much!

Well, I want the best bang for my
buck, so I kept putting off upgrading.
I was tempted by AppleTalk, AppleScript,
and aliases. Then Sherlock, USB, FireWire,
and HFS+ looked very attractive, too. Keychain,
Multiple Users, and Software Update piqued my
interest for a while. Next, Unix stability, Spotlight
protected memory, Wi-Fi, Bluetooth, iSight,
and more, all appeared worthwhile but I'm
still waiting for that One More Thing...



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Software Review

by Linus Ly, <http://qaptainqwerty.blogspot.com>

Crossword Express 7.4d

Developer: [AUS-PC-SOFT](#)

Price: \$35 (Lite); \$140 (Pro)

Requirements: Macintosh (68K, PowerPC, or Intel). Not [Universal](#).

Trial: Feature-limited (only saves and prints 10×10 and smaller puzzles)



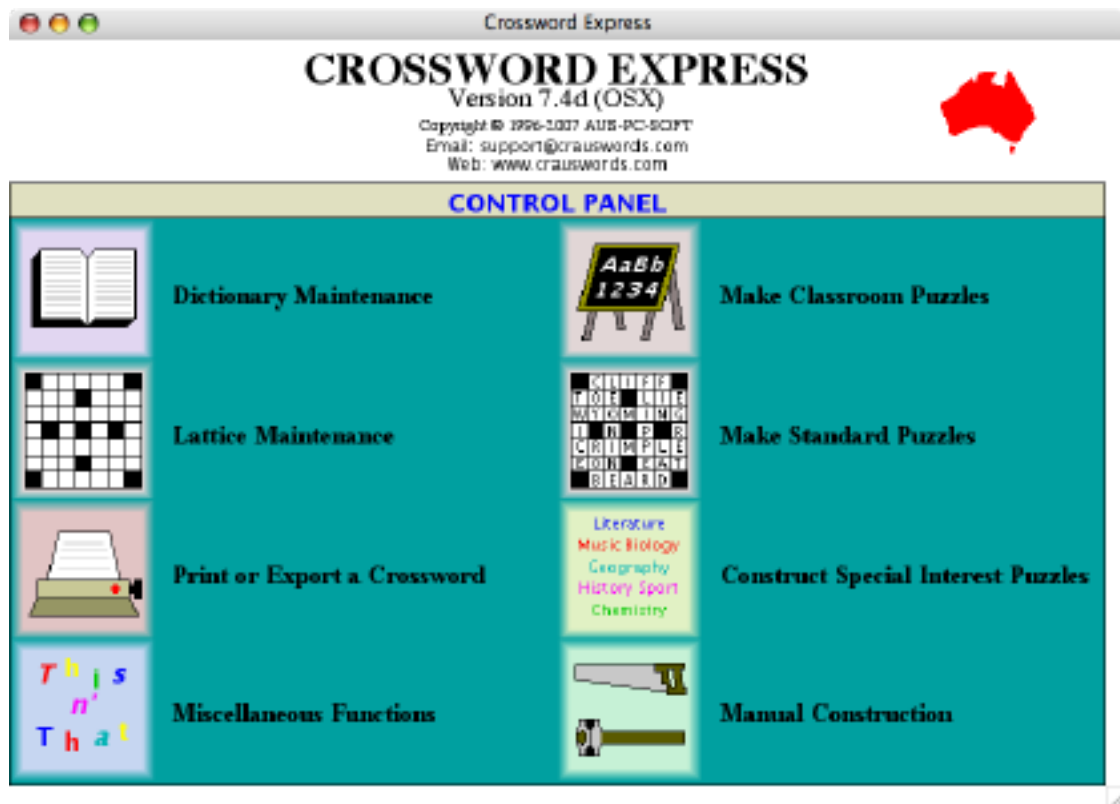
Years ago, when I prepared for the Scholastic Achievement Test (SAT), my main focus was the English portion of the test, as English was not my first language. I got the idea of playing crossword puzzles as a fun way to reinforce my study. At one point, I wanted to make them myself, and got nowhere fast. It was mid-1980s, and the personal computer revolution was well under way, but I was just a high school kid and didn't own a computer. I suppose master makers usually have all the words in their heads, but for others the task of making crossword puzzles is best relegated to computers.

Fast forward to 2007. Through some free local daily newspapers, I had a renewed interest in doing crossword puzzles. Naturally, I wanted to make my own puzzles now that I own a Mac. I wanted to make puzzles just like those I played in the papers, in which the shortest word length is three, the lattice design is symmetrical, and all the words have clues. There are Web tools, such as the [Puzzlemaker](#), but the puzzles made via the Web tools do not meet my expectations. I came across a few Mac programs and settled with Crossword Express (CWE) OS X from AUS-PC-SOFT.

Installation is a matter of moving the uncompressed files, in their own folder, to wherever you normally keep applications. CWE has different Mac versions, going way back to support the Motorola 68K chip. There's a PowerPC version for OS 9 users and an OS X variant for all OS X versions. No Universal version of CWE is planned at this time. This review was made on a PowerBook G4 running Mac OS X 10.4.

Featurewise, CWE also has different versions. With the \$35 Lite version, you can make crossword puzzles and word search puzzles up to a size of 47x47. You also have access to a set of Java applets on the CrausWords Web site to Web-enable the puzzles you made. The Lite license allows you to keep CWE on only one computer at any one time. On the other hand, the \$140 Pro version lets you have CWE installed on unlimited number of computers at a physical location. With CWE Pro, you can also make many other types of puzzles, such as sudoku, kakuro, and acrostics. Likewise, with the Java applets available on the CrausWords Web site you can publish all such puzzles on the Web. With both versions, you are entitled to all future upgrades of CWE for free.

Registration is done via PayPal. In my case, I got the necessary info to unlock the demo version of CWE in five hours. I think the people who want to make crossword puzzles are patient, so a wait of a few hours is not a long time.



Crossword Express works mostly from the Control Panel.

The master puzzlemaker can dive straight for the Manual Construction button. Pick an existing lattice and off the master would go. Should he need it, the Suggestion button is readily available in the window. One click on it and he gets a list of words that fit into the current location. If you are an amateur or wannabe maker like me, it's best to head for the Make Standard Puzzles button. Again, you would select a lattice from the many built-in. Enter a few words and clues, and when stuck simply click the Start Make button. CWE will fly into action, and it draws from the selected dictionary to best fill out the rest of the puzzle for you.

Relying on CWE's many built-in dictionaries can churn out puzzles quickly, but the puzzles thus made are not really yours. A great portion of the puzzle should be words and clues you made up. This is when you need to click the Dictionary Maintenance. The built-in dictionaries—English, French, German, Spanish-English, etc,—are yours to edit, but the fun begins when you create your own. The idea is that you build your own dictionaries, with your own words and definitions. For example, I am trying to make an ATPM-themed

dictionary, using names of software reviewed in ATPM and staff members' names. One of the words is "Dudar," and its clue is "Dude who does 3D."

Be patient and enter many words, say 200 or more, then re-visit Make Standard Puzzles. Even with what you think is a big dictionary, it may not be enough for the selected lattice and you may need to choose a smaller lattice or go back to the dictionary and enter more words. The work of building a dictionary is tedious, but it is a controlled tedium you deal with. I much prefer building a dictionary of a few hundred words then letting CWE use brute force to squeeze my word list into the puzzle. It is much less frustrating than doing the work manually. Making a good crossword puzzle takes time and patience. If you have neither, you are better off playing shoot-em-up games or some gem-switching game.

The creator of CWE correctly surmises that lots of times one custom dictionary just doesn't cut it. With Make Standard Puzzle, you can use a second dictionary to fill the puzzle, but the second dictionary can be used in only one direction. You can have the second dictionary handle either all the DOWN words or all the ACROSS words, but not both. To use a dictionary to fill in any gaps, DOWN or ACROSS, you need to resort to Construct Special Interest Puzzles. You build Special Interest dictionaries the same way as standard ones, except that you name them with a leading dollar sign (\$), e.g \$ATPM instead of ATPM. You can choose up to four special interest dictionaries to have words drawn from, then specify a back-fill dictionary. For example, I can have an ATPM-themed dictionary called \$ATPM, then a Mac-themed called \$Mac, and yet another one for general computing called \$Computing. I would then choose the English dictionary as back-fill. I still can manually insert words and clues, perhaps those I want to show up in the puzzle. Click Start Make, and CWE would quickly plow through the special interest dictionaries and the English dictionary to find the best possible match for the selected lattice.

Naturally you should be able to save and print the dictionaries and puzzles that you create. CWE offers many printing options. You can print everything—puzzle, clues, and even the previous puzzle's solution, just like your typical newspaper's puzzle. You can also print just the puzzle or just the solution. Dictionaries and puzzles can be saved only in the same folder where CWE is stored. This arrangement can be a problem if you share your Mac with someone who has restricted access. In such cases, you may need to re-permission the CWE folder in order to allow the restricted user the right to create his own dictionaries and puzzles.

In this day and age, most programs need some degree of interaction with the Web. With CWE, there are a number of ways to publish the puzzles on the Web, with varying level of user-friendliness. The simplest option is to export puzzle and clues to the clipboard. A picture thus produced can be easily shared, either in a blog or even in Flickr. The next option is to export the puzzle and clues as an HTML file, but it takes a little more work. Because CWE relies on having a GIF file called `black.gif` in the same folder with the puzzle, the HTML version looks all wrong when `black.gif` is not present, such as when you export the HTML file to somewhere other than CWE's folder. To put the HTML puzzle on the Web requires the upload of the file `black.gif`. This requirement rules out the use

of the HTML version on blog sites like Blogger, where you have little control over graphic elements unless you know some intermediate HTML coding. Surely you can update the HTML code to fetch `black.gif` from somewhere else on the Web, but again the average user wouldn't know enough HTML programming to carry out the extra work. See the two classroom puzzles below to see the difference the presence or absence of `black.gif` makes.



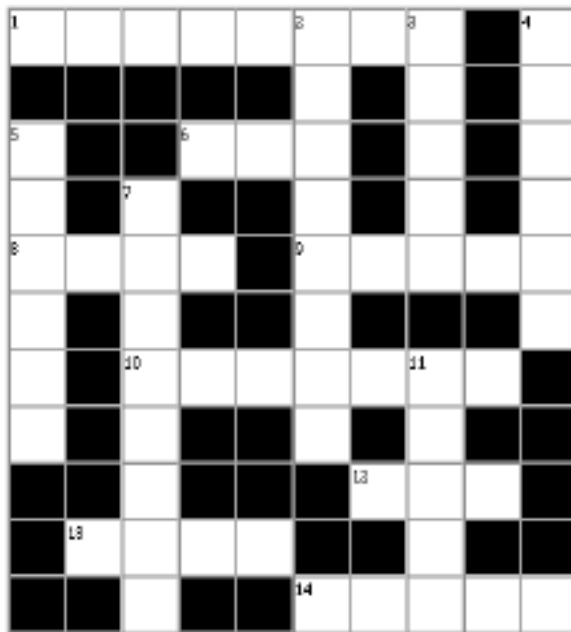
ACROSS

- 1. Matt Johnson's creation.
- 6. David Allen's work-life management system (abbr.)
- 8. His program, SpamSieve, can filter out email offers of Cialis, OEM software, and Nigerian bank accounts.
- 9. Popular ATPM first name.
- 10. He writes about blogs.
- 12. HomeDock Deluxe's maker.
- 13. _____ Quartet (SimpleMovieX maker)
- 14. Web service for sending large files.

DOWN

- 2. Open source sound editor.
- 3. Dude who does 3D.
- 4. Product offered from www.crauswords.com
- 5. Reviews Editor
- 7. Mark Tennent's column.
- 11. First name of she who was on Jeopardy! and Who Wants To Be A Millionaire.

Without `black.gif`



ACROSS

- 1. Matt Johnson's creation.
- 6. David Allen's work-life management system (abbr.)
- 8. His program, SpamSieve, can filter out email offers of Cialis, OEM software, and Nigerian bank accounts.
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DOWN

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- 7. Mark Tennent's column.
- 11. First name of she who was on Jeopardy! and Who Wants To Be A Millionaire.

With `black.gif`

Lastly, for the serious coders, there's the CWE Java applets. You are supposed to upload to your Web server the file `cweapplet.class`, the puzzles with the `.cwe` extension, and the sample HTML file(s) edited to refer to your carefully crafted puzzles. While the applets are very powerful and allow for plenty of customization of the puzzle, making use of them does require a degree of programming skill. One misspelled word and the applet just won't work, such is the way when you write codes by hand.

I believe neither the HTML export option nor the Java applet appeals to the average CWE user. CWE would have a much better Web integration if it included the option to publish to .Mac or iWeb. Better integration with iLife would be beneficial, too. Supposedly there's a way to include a picture as the background for CWE puzzles, but I haven't figured it out yet (if only CWE could read iPhoto's database and offer a simple way to pull in the pictures...).

Based on the fact that CWE's built-in dictionaries' filenames are limited to eight characters or fewer, I assume that CWE started out as a Windows application. As a matter of fact, there is a version of CWE for Windows, and the puzzle files created by either the Mac or Windows version can be used on either platform. While I am grateful that the Mac platform has a powerful crossword maker in CWE, using it is a very un-Mac-like experience. On top of the lack of integration with .Mac and iLife, the Control Panel looks very unattractive. The pictures have no shadows, are not anti-aliased, and are flat.

With the ability to generate many kinds of crosswords, plus many other kinds of puzzles with the Pro version, many built-in or downloadable dictionaries, the use of customized dictionaries with built-in ones, CWE is a very powerful puzzle maker. However, given its extra requirements to publish puzzles on the Web and the lack of any Mac integration, I can only give it a Good rating.

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Accessory Review

by Frank H. Wu, frankhwu@mac.com

i-Volution Shell

Developer: [Vaja](#)

Price: starting at \$359–392 depending on laptop model

Requirements: MacBook or MacBook Pro

Trial: None



As soon as I clicked “Submit Order” on the Web site, I knew I had purchased the most decadent object I have ever considered acquiring. In the weeks I waited for the Vaja i-Volution Shell for my MacBook Pro, I dreamt about how it would change my life. If I always had my laptop with me, I would be better organized, more efficient, and thus more productive and more successful. . .

Of course, I knew that the allure of the custom-made leather case would wear off soon enough. And I always have my laptop with me anyway. So like all other hopes we have for this acquisition or that object, our desires lead only to material gain and not life fulfillment. But it can be quite impressive material gain.

I had previously owned PDA cases from the Argentinian manufacturer, which claims to use only the best hides from a nation known for its cattle and to offer more than a thousand custom combinations of features and colors. The PDA cases were terrific. The leather was as advertised, the highest quality. The fit was perfect.

Trendspotters have theorized about the meaning of women’s purses as status symbols. Women once were regarded as higher class if they weren’t burdened by the need to carry their own goods, having servants who did so, but now fashion demands that they change bags every season.

Perhaps carrying cases for laptop computers are the geek equivalent in conspicuous consumption. They certainly are a necessity for using a laptop computer to its full potential. It isn’t clear, however, why leather still has its allure. Ballistic nylon, neoprene, and various other synthetic materials are lighter, more durable, offer greater levels of protection, and can be had more cheaply—not to mention avoiding the sacrifice of animals. Yet leather has an exquisite feel and smell; it offers a sensual pleasure even as it ages.

Vaja seems to have progressed rapidly as a company—deservedly so. It now has a full range of products, including briefcases and wallets. To my eye, their corporate aesthetic—the color combinations they feature, the soft corners, the silver logo—look distinctively more European than North American. I am too inexperienced in this, as in most matters, to

offer more than a hunch, but I'd wager others who looked at their offerings would discern the same style.



My i-Volution Shell arrived after a month. It came in a tasteful, albeit plain, box, inside which it was wrapped inside a plastic bag. It was gorgeous, but it also reeked. It looked exactly as it had been depicted on the Web site, black with a yellow stripe. I'd selected black, out of the misguided advice of an ex-girlfriend who insisted one's leather accessories should always match one's hair, with the yellow accent, because I'd written a book by that title. The smell was overpowering. It is to be expected, I suppose, from the tanning process or whatever is the appropriate term. From past experience, I expect the look to continue to be captivating over the long term, just like Apple's designs. The odor dissipated after a day.

This is a magnificent carrying case. Every surface is leather. It comes with or without a carrying handle; mine is sans handle. The exterior has nothing extraneous, except that Vaja logo in the corner, which I didn't care for originally but which I've accepted. The interior has ridges in the corners that hold the laptop in place. There also are padded inserts, which are made of a contrasting perforated leather (i.e., matching the exterior accent). The center insert can be personalized.



There must be some thin, stiff material between the exterior and interior layers of leather, to maintain the shape. The zipper is a heavy-duty plastic type with smooth action, including around the corners. For some reason, the little brochure that comes with the carrying case warns that the zipper should be pulled shut only with the MacBook inside.

The design seems to provide enough protection to be used by itself, with nothing else. The leather offers enough texture for a good grip. It is not an ideal surface upon which to place the computer while it is in use, because the rubber feet on the MacBook will leave deep imprints that do not fully fade away. I initially decided I should flip the case over if I was using the case as a heat shield, to avoid leaving a permanent indentation. I subsequently acquired one of those laptop desk contraptions to use as well, because I don't know how the high level of heat will affect the case over the long term.



The i-Volution Shell has a few flaws. It is bigger and heavier than other cases. Its design also makes it difficult—but not impossible—to use with the MacBook still inside, because the sides are just a smidgen too high to allow easy access for the MagSafe power adapter and to the ports.

I don't believe I can buy another carrying case for my MacBook Pro. Thank goodness, this is virtually perfect, because it is so expensive. If you want the best, however, this is it. There is no excuse to leave your laptop at home, if you can transport it in such style.

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Hardware Review

by Lee Bennett, lbennett@atpm.com

PocketDock AV

Developer: [SendStation](#)

Price: \$37

Requirements: 4G or 5G iPod, 1G or 2G iPod nano, or iPod mini.

Trial: None



In May, I reviewed SendStation's [PocketDock Line Out USB](#). I noted at the end of the review that SendStation would soon ship an alternative version of the PocketDock that included video output.



A respectably long five-foot cable comes with the PocketDock AV and includes a USB connector, line level audio output to stereo RCA connectors, and video output to either a composite RCA or S-Video connector.

As the name suggests, the PocketDock AV is an ultra-portable substitute for Apple's dock. In addition to the USB jack and the line level output jack found on the PocketDock Line Out USB, this AV version adds the additional jack to tap the video output from a 5G iPod.

Unlike its predecessor, the cables that are included with the PocketDock AV are combined into a single wire, which breaks out with the appropriate jacks on each end. Overall, I liked this because it means the cables won't get separated. The minor downside is that in order to run the USB connection to a different location than where you've connected the audio and video jacks, you'll need a separate USB cable anyway. Fortunately, standard peripheral USB cables are the type of thing most everyone has lying around.

When I first saw mention of the PocketDock AV in May, I incorrectly assumed that it only had an S-Video output jack. It turned out that the jack is the same type found on older Apple laptops, with pins for both composite and S-Video. The breakout cable includes both an RCA composite video plug and an S-Video plug.

Absent from the cable bundle is a 3.5 mm straight-through connection. The PocketDock Line Out USB ships with two cables—3.5 mm to dual RCA and a 3.5 mm to 3.5 mm. With the PocketDock AV, if you want to connect the line output to a 3.5 mm mini jack input, you'll have to acquire your own cable.

The possible need to acquire separate USB or 3.5 mm mini cables is a very minor issue—one that probably won't even bother most people. In all other respects, the PocketDock AV is a handy asset to any iPod road warrior.

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Software Review

by Paul Fatula, pfatula@atpm.com

Redline 1.0.3

Developer: [Ambrosia Software](#)

Price: \$25

Requirements: Mac OS X 10.2. [Universal](#).

Trial: Feature-limited (only a few cars and tracks)



I don't own a car or have a driver's license, and the last auto-racing game I played was [Night Driver](#) on my Atari 2600. But one night I felt like trying something new, and so I found Ambrosia Software's Redline. The next day my right middle finger still felt funny from hours of holding down the "accelerate" key, and I knew I had to write a review.

Redline, like Night Driver, challenges the player to race a car around a track in the fastest possible time. Visually, your car stays pretty much in the bottom center of the screen, and as you steer the track moves around you. Accelerate, brake, crash: it's pretty simple. That was enough in 1980, but modern computer racers require more. Redline delivers with options galore.



See that wall? Yeah, you might want to turn.

First off, there are several different cars you can race in, each with its own characteristics. Ambrosia was aiming for realism here, and while I can't say whether their Diablo handles like a real Diablo, I can easily tell the difference between, say, a Diablo and a Golf. As I tried out different cars, I quickly found I had a strong preference for the control of four-wheel drive vehicles; I'm happier driving a car that I can control well than one that goes wicked fast and then spins like crazy on corners.

When you play the game for the first time, you only have access to a few of the cars Redline has to offer. Instead of making all of the cars available right off, Redline makes you earn them in Challenges: you drive the car you want to earn along a piece of track, sometimes swerving around cones, in a predetermined amount of time to earn a Bronze, Silver, or Gold medal. If you can do it (they're all doable, though some are much harder than others, I've won several Silvers but never a Gold), you earn a new car, which you can then use in any of the races in the game. Though at first I wished I could just race any car I wanted to, I came to like the idea of the Challenges: they made me get to know each car a bit before taking out for some loops around a track.

You also have a choice of tracks to race around, and weather conditions to race in. As with the cars, I found myself developing track-preferences. Each track has not just different

graphics but different curves and straightaways, and most interestingly, surface conditions: there are city streets and rural roads, rolling hills and level ground, one track even has snow. After playing for a while, though, I started wishing Ambrosia had provided more tracks to choose from: there are only six. A few users have created additional tracks (available as plug-ins on the game's Web site), but most of the plug-ins are for additional cars.



Hint: Don't try to drive and take screenshots at the same time.

Other than the challenges, there are three basic kinds of races you can try. The Time Trial—my favorite—lets you keep racing round and round your chosen track, trying to beat your best time. A ghost of your car from your previous loop races around the track, offering a visual clue of how well (or poorly) you're doing against yourself. The other two options are to race against computer-controlled opponents (you can choose which cars you want to race against, and how many opponents you want) or against other players on the Internet. Both of those options perform reasonably well on my relatively old PowerBook G4.

If all of those options aren't enough, you can also choose how realistic you want your game play to be. There are two Arcade modes, designed to give you insanely high speeds coupled with unnatural levels of control. They're great fun, and you can get into some spectacular crashes. Drive up the side of the Canyon track and watch your car fly up into the air and spin on three different axes—or if you've got a strong stomach, switch the camera view

and put yourself inside the car when it happens! There's a third mode which offers more realistic speeds and responsiveness, but I quickly found that in the Simulation mode, I could frequently save time by crashing against the walls of a course instead of carefully braking and steering. In response to that problem, a fourth mode with Strict gameplay was added, but it hasn't changed the way I play the game. (Maybe I just like crashing.)



No, really, I'm fine.

Redline's weak point, unfortunately, is game control. It's pretty easy to see the problem: you can accelerate and brake and turn left and turn right, but a real car offers degrees of all of those things. I had a school bus driver once who drove like he was playing Redline: he'd floor the accelerator, then take his foot off the gas and coast for a while, then floor it again, then slam on the brakes...you know, it wasn't the smoothest ride. Real cars have pressure-sensitive pedals, but keyboards don't work that way. So unless you buy a supported joystick or steering wheel, you're stuck driving like my bus driver.

In Ambrosia's defense, there's not much that can be done in software to mitigate this problem. They could require a suitable controller, but that would keep the majority of Mac users from ever discovering the game. I did come up with one idea, however: a "maintain speed" key—equivalent to keeping even pressure on the accelerator, which is how most people drive most of the time—would be a great help. Ideally, you could hold down such

a key while accelerating: then, take your foot—no, your finger—off the accelerator and instead of slowing down gradually, you can keep going at the speed you accelerated to.

My only other complaint about the game is that when it runs in full-screen mode, it sometimes messes up the icons on my desktop after I'm done playing. (This doesn't always happen; usually the icons are fine.)

Car-racing games sure have come a long way since 1980. The basic idea hasn't changed much—I don't see how it can, at least until we have flying cars—but Ambrosia has given desktop racers a heaping helping of options: choose your car, your track, your opponents, your physics. Whether you like impossibly fast Cooper Minis or hopelessly uncontrollable Deloreans, Redline offers a safe and fun alternative to driving a real Viper into a brick wall at 160mph.

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FAQ: Frequently Asked Questions

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About This Particular Macintosh (ATPM) is, among other things, a monthly Internet magazine or “e-zine.” ATPM was created to celebrate the personal computing experience. For us this means the most personal of all personal computers—the Apple Macintosh. About This Particular Macintosh is intended to be about your Macintosh, our Macintoshes, and the creative, personal ideas and experiences of everyone who uses a Mac. We hope that we will continue to be faithful to our mission.

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Shareware Reviews

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What is Your Rating Scale?

ATPM uses the following ratings (in order from best to worst): Excellent, Very Nice, Good, Okay, Rotten. Products rated Good or better are ones that we recommend. Okay products get the job done. We recommend avoiding Rotten products.

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If you or your company has a product that you'd like to see reviewed, send a copy our way. We're always looking for interesting pieces of software to try out. Contact reviews@atpm.com for shipping information. You can send press releases to news@atpm.com.

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What If My Question Isn't Answered Above?

We hope by now that you've found what you're looking for (We can't imagine there's something else about ATPM that you'd like to know.). But just in case you've read this far (We appreciate your tenacity.) and still haven't found that little piece of information about ATPM that you came here to find, please feel free to e-mail us at (You guessed it.) editor@atpm.com.

