

ATPM

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*About This Particular Macintosh™ 3.03: About the **personal** computing experience™*

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“March Forward”

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We need new cover art every month! Write to us!

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Macintosh is published with DOCMaker 4.7.4, and owes its existence to the program's author, Mark Wall. May his camels never have fleas. Thank you for reading this far, and we hope that the rest of the magazine is more interesting than this.

Thanks for reading *ATPM*.

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Welcome

March Forward

The theme for this month's issue of ATPM is "March Forward." For Macintosh users we think this is a really cool thing to do. Why not? Apple's just released the world's fastest laptop computer and the company seems to have found some much needed direction in terms of furthering the development of the next generation Mac OS. Not to mention the corporate changes recently announced.

The reason why we're not mentioning the changes here is because we discuss them in our cover story appropriately entitled "Marching Forward." We think the competition will quickly be left behind. If only the rest of our lives were this simple.

Me and You and A Box Named Blue...

We have "noted" before that we think Apple's musical operating systems (Harmony, Tempo and Rhapsody) will be more than "music to our ears." We think these sweet melodies will play well not only in Peoria, but on our favorite Macs, too. We liked the "sound" of things so much that it reminds us of one of our favorite songs from the late 60's/early 70's. Our 90's version is called "Me and You and A Box Named Blue."

Apple's recent explanation of how future operating systems will perform certain tasks was filled with references to some rather brightly colored boxes. In fact, there were so many boxes referenced that we figure if we mixed all the boxes and colors together they'd create kind of a 60's-style psychedelic montage. Anyone for some old-fashioned tie-dyed T-Shirts sporting the Apple logo colors? How about a commemorative Apple branded lava lamp? We'll know things have hit the proverbial wall if Dr. Amelio is seen sporting a pair of bell-bottoms. We hope all the OS enhancements and multi-colored boxes will bring the Mac's overall performance "Back to the Future."

In This Corner Of The World...

We're happy to announce the latest addition to the ATPM staff. He's from Kuwait which means he'll also heads the new ATPM Middle East bureau (we'll do anything to get our name on a door) . Like many modern artists we refer to him by only his first name, Jamal. Well, it's Mr. Jamal to anyone who doesn't use a Mac. Our newest staff member has offered to provide our readers with some cool design tips and tricks while utilizing the latest in Mac-compatible design software. Check-out his new column. Because appreciation of cool design work doesn't have boundaries, we think our newest column should have a rather international appeal

We've Said It Before...

About This Particular Macintosh (ATPM) was created to celebrate the "personal computing experience." And, we believe that the Macintosh is the most personal of personal computers. ATPM is intended to be about your Macintosh, our Macintoshes, and the creative, personal ideas and experiences of everyone who uses a Mac. We've enjoy bringing you our own brand of analysis, insights and humor.

With this in mind, we'd like to take this opportunity to encourage you to become a part of ATPM. No, we don't mean that you have to become a permanent member of our zany staff, we simply want to hear about you and life with Your Particular Macintosh. We do know that behind all the techno-jargon there are real users who just enjoy what their computer helps them to do. We'd like to hear from you. It's your contributions that help make ATPM fun and interesting to read. We'd like to know, in your words, what makes a personal computer "personal." Send you articles, comments or questions to: editor@atpm.com

As always, thanks for your support. Please enjoy!





Email

Send your e-mail to editor@atpm.com. All mail becomes the property of ATPM.

Dear Mr. Leitao

Thank you for your insightful article "Field of Dreams." [Apples, Kids & Attitude - ATPM 3.01] I enjoyed your memories and your thoughts about Apple Co.

I agree with you, and not only in regard to Apple. In every area of our lives we tend to ask both too much and too little of our leaders. We seem to ask "What can you do for me?" We forget to insist on the simpler basic values of honesty, integrity, compassion.

A few memories and tributes of my own: my daughter gave me my first computer - a Commodore 64 about fifteen years ago. She had gone off to college and said that she didn't want me to be lonely. I had often stated that the concept of computing was as far from my normally inquisitive mind as it was possible to be. The only good think that I could imagine was that it might enable me to understand enough of the language that my children were using so that I could be an intelligent listener. Besides one doesn't reject a gift from a child.

The first part was tough. Commodore was just coming out with its GEOS stuff, when Beth gave me the Mac 128 which she no longer needed. All of a sudden using a computer was fun. Since then I have purchased an SE-30 (which I still think is a super computer) and a Quadra 630.

Through it all, one of my sons who is an IBM and OS2 consultant, has learned the other languages and patiently supported and educated me. When I call him in despair and offer to throw the computer in the James River, he sympathizes and leads me to a more constructive point of view. It was he who downloaded the ATPM with your article and put it on my computer when I wasn't looking for a surprise. My children are wonderful. I wouldn't really trade my Quadra for anything else (except maybe the SE30).

Sincerely,

Anne K. McKenney

...

Dear Heather (pearl@telusplanet.net)

Warm greetings from southern California.

I was reading the February 1997 ATPM when I read of your problems with "Tidy It Up." It looks to me like you have either an old or corrupt version of the program. I have used TIU on a number of computers for years without any problem.

My copy is named "Tidy It Up ! II 1.0" with creation date of 3/14/93 and modification date of 11/22/95. There is also a preference file that is stored in the folder with TIU.

The purpose of TIU is to present a display of your System folder and sub-folders in a logical structure. Its handy work is visible when you look in the System folder or a sub-folder with the small icon view. It creates empty folders as headings and groups files and folders according to a set of rules that are stored in the preference file. TIP does not move anything around on your hard disk. It does, however, set information in the invisible desktop file so that the Finder will present the small icon view in the logical structure.

>From time to time, I have had to update TIU's rules when new sub-folders and document types have been added to the System folder as the Mac OS has evolved.

My System folder contains 3,542 items totaling 204MB. TIU is a great help when I am looking for something.

Get a good copy of Tidy It Up ! II and you should have fewer computer woes.

Dick Sommers

Dick.H.Sommers@kp.org

...

Cool Mag

Just wanted to drop a line and compliment you on your excellent publication. Simply fantastic. I am reminded of a time when I first picked up a magazine, with the words User and Mac in the title, although not necessarily in that order. I had a really neat feeling as I paged through the issue. I felt proud to be a Mac user, proud of the fact that people would create a magazine that cool about a computer that was way off the charts in its coolness quotient. Anyway, that magazine seems to have lost its coolness factor, and seems almost like a PC magazine (sigh). So, I dropped my subscription. Then, lo and behold, I run across ATPM. Wow!, I'm thinking, this sounds pretty cool. But, I think, It probably just sounds neat, and is probably some blah publication. Then, when I realize that it just what I am looking for in a magazine, I get that neat tingly feeling that I got when I first saw that

OTHER magazine. So, I just want to say GREAT JOB! Insanely great job, that is (excuse the pun).

I do have one suggestion. Page turning arrows on the top as well as the bottom of the pages on your web site would be helpful. The pages are so clearly organized, I can tell instantly whether I am interested in that page or not. However, I must scroll down to the bottom of the page to turn it. Other than that, no complaints whatsoever. I look forward to receiving my first issue!

Scott Hammerschmidt
sdh5319@ksu.edu

Thank you for the page-turning arrows suggestion. We're always looking for suggestions on how to make our web site (and ATPM in general) better. —Ed.

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We'd love to hear your thoughts about our publication. We always welcome your comments, criticisms, suggestions, and praise at editor@atpm.com. Or, if you have an opinion or announcement about the Macintosh platform in general, that's ok too.



FEATURE

Marching Forward

BY H.M. FOG, HMFog@aol.com



One year ago, many pundits said it couldn't be done. Six months ago, Apple Computer showed that world that it would be done. Three months ago, the naysayers were again claiming it couldn't happen. In February and March, Apple Computer took more decisive steps toward becoming a more agile and focused company. Today, Apple is marching forward to recapture its former glory and reestablish itself as one of the world's most innovative and admired companies. Nobody said it would be easy. It may take some time. But make no mistake - Apple Computer has not only survived, it will soon begin to thrive.

Last year at this time, Dr. Gilbert Amelio was assembling a new management team to lead Apple Computer into the next millennium. He was charged with the task of reshaping not just a multi-billion dollar corporation, but a real American franchise. Beset with problems that were significant in scope and broad in impact, the new management team began to redesign Apple's organizational structure and reallocate its resources. It was a difficult year for the company, its employees and many of its loyal customers. It seemed that everywhere you went people were talking about Apple's problems. Some people erroneously thought the company would not survive or make the necessary changes.

But a funny thing happened on the way to the computer industry's future - too many people had witnessed the past. They knew the important role that Apple Computer had played in launching the personal computer industry. Apple's market share in key areas, such as Web authoring, could not be denied. Too many people relied on Apple technology. They refused to listen to the pundits and so-called "experts" because they knew what worked. They

continued to buy Apple's products and developers continued to create Mac-compatible applications. Who are the people making these decisions? They are the people in businesses and organizations around the world that are put in charge of getting things done. They continued to choose Macintosh. Why? Because they know what works. They know what works in design, education and science. These are the dreamers, the thinkers, the innovators. These are the people that comprise the Macintosh market.

In a recent report cited by the Wall Street Journal, sales of Macintosh compatible computers to businesses has risen significantly since November. By one account, there has been more than a 40% increase from November to January in the Mac-compatible market share among business-oriented personal computer buyers.

Bolstering the Mac-compatible position in the business market are the new machines recently released by Apple. The Power Book 3400 (pictured at the top of this article) is the world's fastest laptop computer. There is also the new series of Power Macintosh computers, including the 9600, which runs as fast as 233 MHz.

Recent surveys indicate that the Mac OS has over 50% of the market for Web authoring and CD-ROM content creation. Apple's new line of computers are ideally suited for the demands of power users, such as high-end designers and Web authors who work with graphics, digital movies and sound.

In addition to offering new products, Apple continues to revise its own management and structure. In order to become more efficient and nimble, additional corporate changes are necessary. On Friday, March 14th, Dr. Amelio announced a broad-based restructuring program to better focus the company's resources on its core markets: design, science and education. That announcement included the following:

- Apple's world-wide staff would be reduced by 2,700 people.
- A \$155 million charge would be taken in the fiscal 2nd quarter to cover restructuring costs.
- Apple will phase out the Performa brand name in favor of the Power Macintosh brand.
- Apple will release the all-new OS, code-named "Rhapsody," in 1998.
- The upcoming OS release, code-named "Tempo," has been designated Mac OS 8.

The development of a successful Macintosh clone market is changing the way Apple will do business. There had been much speculation in the media about Apple's commitment to licensing the Mac OS (Apple's licensing agreements with clone makers such as Power Computing and UMax are for System 7.x only).

As mentioned above, Apple announced that "Tempo," which is scheduled for release this summer, will be considered Mac OS 8. The significance of this statement is that Apple and its clone makers will be renegotiating their existing OS licensing agreements. It does not mean that Apple has ceased its interest in licensing the Macintosh operating system. It simply means that the licensing agreements will be renegotiated sooner rather than later.

Over the past year, Apple has seen a growth in the overall Mac OS market. The decline in its own sales can be directly attributed to the success of the Macintosh clone makers. Apple can take advantage of the clone makers' success by reducing the number of models it produces, focusing its marketing on high-end users and focusing hardware development on better-equipped, higher margin products.

Clone makers have become a significant factor in Apple's rebirth. By competing for buyers in markets where Apple has had difficulty, clone makers allow Apple to reduce the number of models it manufactures (and its costs) because it no longer needs to "carry" the entire Mac OS market. As Apple reduces its presence in a particular market, clone makers can compete more with Wintel machines than with Apple's products. As a result, Apple may choose to raise the licensing fee paid by the clone makers on each unit sold when the licensing agreements are renegotiated. We will be hearing more on this issue in the weeks to come.

In addition to the company's decision to further reduce its work force and focus its efforts on core markets, Apple has chosen to reduce or eliminate future funding for several projects or technologies under development. Among these are:

- OpenDoc and Cyberdog - Apple will move its component technology resources to developing Java-based component technology, which is becoming the industry standard. OpenDoc and Cyberdog will be included in "Tempo," now called Mac OS 8, but no major updates to OpenDoc or Cyberdog are planned.
- Open Transport - Apple has decided not to "port" Open Transport to the all-new Mac OS under development (code-named "Rhapsody"). The previously announced upgrade to Open Transport has also been canceled. Open Transport will continue to run in the Mac OS compatibility area, or the "Blue Box," in Rhapsody.
- Game Sprockets - Apple will maintain Game Sprockets so that developers can still write to it, but it will not be ported to Rhapsody.
- Pippin - The company will not produce an Apple-branded Pippin product.
- Newton - There has been no change in Apple's stated plans for the Newton technology.

The reason for these changes is simple. Where appropriate, Apple will be adopting industry-established technology standards. This will reduce staffing needs and allow the company to better allocate its research and development resources. The Newton technology, in this writer's view, has significant consumer potential. In the coming months, we will see how Apple intends to develop the market for Newton-related products, which includes the new eMate.

In recent weeks, Apple has stated that it will continue developing the WebObjects software it received in the NeXT Software acquisition. Apple will soon release a new version of WebObjects - effective software tools that help people set-up and manage sophisticated Web sites. Ironic as it sounds, the company is developing versions of the software to run on Mac OS computers.

The WebObjects product line is very popular in the enterprise or business markets. The acquisition of NeXT Software has provided Apple Computer with an opportunity that

otherwise may have taken awhile to develop. By continuing development of WebObjects and releasing a Mac OS version, Apple may further increase its market share among business-oriented computer customers.

With the release of a new line of Power Macintosh computers, definite release dates for upgrades to the Mac OS and further reductions in the company's costs, Apple Computer is marching forward. Make no mistake - Apple Computer is here to stay.

© 1997 H.M. Fog, HMFog@aol.com. H.M. Fog is a west coast computer consultant who sometimes writes articles for ATPM.





Her Baby, Our Kids, My Mac

I had just hung up the phone and my mind wandered back to the middle of the previous conversation. As a divorced parent, the logistics of planning events for my children are exponentially more difficult than if the family were still intact.

For a long time, I made every effort to make a life for my children as if the divorce had never happened. It took a long time to accept that no action of mine could change the circumstances and the best I can do is make a life that helps them adapt to this reality.

The phone conversation had been about my daughter joining an organization that has weekly meetings, a verbal pledge, a sign that you make with your hand while you recite the pledge and activities designed to help her earn the right to wear a variety of different badges. In addition, songs are sung, friendships are developed, skills are learned and fond memories are made. The only group available to my daughter holds its weekly meetings on a night when she is in my care. I made the calls and arranged for my daughter to join a new group being started by a few energetic parents. The group leaders were all mothers.

I remember the first “organizational” meeting. The parents in attendance sat at a long table and discussed how things would be done, how field trips would be planned and what was expected of each child and their parent(s). I was surprised by the number of divorced parents at the meeting, each of us trying to make the best of unfortunate situations. I had wanted to be more involved with the group, but my son is also with me, so I usually only have time to check-in and get updated on the essential news. My biggest task is negotiating with my former spouse so my daughter can participate in field trips when they occur during times when she is in her mother’s custodial care.

The families involved in the group are of many different backgrounds and cultures, each of us having in common a little girl of about the same age. Over the months, I’ve had the opportunity to talk with other parents and we share little bits about our lives and our children. One night, I noticed a woman carrying a newborn baby. I thought this was a bit odd, since I didn’t recall her ever appearing as if she was with child. I am by nature a shy man and not prone to inquire about people unless I think there’s an appropriate reason. General curiosity, to my mind, does not qualify as an “appropriate reason.” As the weeks and months passed, I had several opportunities to feed and play with this little boy, who I’ll call “Nathan.”

Nathan, now more than four months old, is quite ticklish and gives a broad smile if you

gently touch his tummy. He seems to be constantly eating or sleeping, not to mention growing and growing and growing. He's big for his age and has dark brown hair. He loves to jump around in his little romper chair with wheels.

At a recent parents' meeting, I was talking to "Melissa," the woman who brought Nathan to the meetings. She is a group leader and I was interested in talking with her because she had mentioned that she was in the process of getting a divorce. She had recently missed a meeting because of complications in her life and she apologized to the other parents for her absence. I know there are few things in life as painful as the dissolution of a marriage and family and I was concerned for her well-being. In the midst of the conversation, she said, "You know Nathan isn't mine, don't you?" I was startled, but her statement answered some of my questions. I, of course, didn't know nor did I pretend that I did. "Nathan," she informed me, "is a foster child." A happy, generally healthy little boy that his mother didn't want to keep. The explanation Melissa received is that Nathan's mother has a problem with illegal drug use. She has never seen her son and has since left the area without providing a forwarding address. Nathan was preliminarily diagnosed at birth as having a mild developmental disability and he's been in Melissa's care since he was four days old.

Melissa is co-owner of a business that now performs sales over the Web. She knew that I did something with computers, so she asked my advice on a technical question. I invited her to my home office to demonstrate a potential solution to her problem. Her business doesn't use Macintoshes. I suggested that it should. Although we don't have a Macintosh in common we were still able to communicate, even about computers.

We were chatting when she noticed a flyer on my table describing a project I developed to support foster children and families. She thought it was a bit ironic that she was a foster mother and that we had met in such a roundabout way. I thought it was an interesting coincidence. Nathan didn't say much, he was busy sleeping. The project was beginning the following weekend and Melissa asked if she could help. Both my kids enjoy playing with Melissa's daughter and my son has even attempted to feed Nathan. Melissa was a big help that weekend, simply by helping me with my kids.

The project collects items for foster children. Quite often, these special children are removed from abusive circumstances with only the clothes on their backs. Many times they have nothing to call their own - no toys, no blankets, no teddy bears or other items of comfort and familiarity. While no one can change these children's pasts, the project helps them begin a new future by providing a few things to help them adjust to their foster homes. It's also my hope that the visibility of the project, front and center at my church, will raise awareness of the needs of foster children, especially the need for foster homes.

I remember designing the project on my Macintosh. I use my computer to solve problems. It (the computer) shouldn't be one. It's one of the reasons I use a Mac. It's also the computer I use to forget problems for awhile by browsing the Web, writing a story or e-chatting with a close friend. There are other reasons I like my Mac. There's always something to do with it, whether it be installing a software update, reorganizing the desktop or busying myself by learning a new application. I do these things when I want to pause, collect my thoughts or simply spend time by myself while keeping my hands and mind busy. The way I've customized my Mac it's indicative of my personality. It really is a "personal" computer.

The other day I was watching Melissa's daughter so she could take Nathan for a chest X-Ray. He'd been congested for several weeks and antibiotics hadn't eliminated the problem. All things considered, he's a fortunate little boy. He has a loving foster mother and lives in a peaceful home. According to a specialist who recently examined Nathan, there's even a strong probability that the preliminary diagnosis of a mild developmental disability will turn out to be incorrect. For a four-month old, he's seen a lot of doctors.

I took the kids to the park. The three children ran around, played on the swings and ran up and down bleachers next to a field where a team of girls were practicing softball. It was a beautiful March day in Southern California. The sun was shining, the air was warm and the breeze was comfortably mild. I don't know why, but it seems easier to watch three kids than it is to watch two. Melissa met us at the park after the doctor's appointment. The doctor had prescribed a new medication for Nathan. It is administered through a mask that covers his nose and mouth for several minutes a few times each day.

Back at home, my kids settled in on the couch to watch a video. I went into the office, started my Mac, checked my e-mail and did a little client work. Before shutting down my Mac for the night, I spent a few minutes browsing the Web and collecting my thoughts. It had been a long day and I was happy that Nathan was being cared for and receiving appropriate medical attention.

The next morning, my son got up and started the Macintosh he shares with his sister. For a four year-old I think this is very good. He starts the Mac and chooses his own CD-ROM. The other morning he awoke me because the educational game he wanted to play wasn't in the box in the living room. He thought it might be in my closet. He's a no-nonsense kid and was determined that I should find it. His sister sleeps later than he does and he wanted to make the most of his undisturbed computer time. He often sits at the desk, affectionately mimicking my behavior, and claims that he's working. He's learning his ABCs with the help of his sister and the a few good pieces of software. He sometimes wants his printouts placed on the refrigerator alongside his preschool artwork. My daughter uses the Mac to construct rudimentary sentences. She loves Kindergarten and she loves learning how to learn.

Last night I had dinner with Melissa. We talked about Nathan and work. We talked about our kids' next field trip and my project. I came home and started my Mac. I wanted to finish this column and get to some more client work. Through all this I was reminded of what makes a personal computer so personal. It helps real people with real lives work, play and organize their day. Why would I choose something other than a Mac? There's simply too much to do to try and use anything else.

The project to aid foster children is doing well. As a matter of fact, a few people are coming forward to learn more about becoming foster parents. When I left Melissa's house last night after dinner, Nathan was resting well and the new medicine seemed to be working. My daughter has a field trip later today. I'll pick her up at her mom's house and join Melissa and her daughter along with the other members of the group for a nature hike. We need to bring frozen peas to feed the wildlife.

When I get home I'll probably start up my Mac. I've got a lot to do. I'm glad I have a Macintosh. My kids are happy they have one, too. I'll use it to work, to play and maybe, just for a little while, to escape my little world by exploring the World Wide Web. I am glad I have a Macintosh. Why would someone in real life choose anything else?

"Apples, Kids and Attitude™" is © 1997 by Robert Paul Leitao, rleitao@atpm.com.



A Week Without Those “Staccato Signals”

Just after ATPM 3.02 was mailed out to all of our subscribers, I went on a one-week vacation. A vacation away from my Mac — a real vacation — you might say. It was probably the first time in several months that my Mac was “off” for more than 48 consecutive hours. I had mixed feelings about leaving ATPM, my Mac, my life on the internet, and computing in general. All of the above are huge parts of my life and my daily routine. I suspected that my days might feel empty without them; but, as much as I love the Macintosh experience, I thought it really would be good to get away from it for awhile. Finally, I thought, “Maybe it will make me see technology in a different way, from the point of view of Wintel users and the people who are a little bit scared of the ‘information age.’” As it turns out, my return to Macintosh computing was far more educational than was my absence from it.

In the past, I’ve had rather bad luck with leaving my Mac. At least twice, I’ve returned to find that there was a serious problem with my hard disk (leading, of course, to data loss). This always surprised me, not only because I always take good care of my Mac, but because it had been left off. What could possibly have happened? So, this time, I took precautions. I ran all the partitions of my hard disk through MacTools Pro and Norton Utilities; I checked the integrity of the media with Hard Disk Toolkit; I zapped the PRAM and rebuilt the desktop files with TechTool; I optimized all the partitions; and I backed everything up to DAT. As a final thought, I unplugged the whole system. There isn’t much lightning during February in New Hampshire, but you can never be too careful.

My trip was uneventful. At the airport I saw quite a few people who’d brought their notebook computers with them. Some were trying to get work done, but it seemed that a majority were using their color LCD’s for Solitaire. They were all PC notebooks — made by NEC, Compaq, and IBM, but not by Apple. In the W. H. Smith newsstands, there were walls full of PC publications, but only three Mac ones: MacWorld, MacUser, and MacAddict.

I wasn’t really surprised by how many PC notebooks there were. After all, the Mac platform has a single digit market share, and only recently introduced a decent PowerBook. However, the total lack of a Mac presence (outside of the magazines at the newsstands) did surprise me. I live in a predominantly Mac community, and in the past, I’ve almost always seen a few PowerBooks at the airport. Where were they? There weren’t even any Newton’s. It’s no wonder that the general public thinks Apple is dead.

A few days later, I saw Apple’s new multi-page ad in the Wall Street Journal — the “We’re Back” ad with pictures of the new PowerBook 3400, the new towers, the MessagePad 2000, and the new QuickTake camera. Compared to other Apple ads, this one was great; but

I began to wonder if Apple actually expected it to raise sales. There weren't many statistics on the ad — no indication of how fast the towers were — and there weren't any prices. What are readers to think when an ad such as this one appears in a publication that rarely has good things to say about Apple, and appears unaccompanied by facts? Pretending for a moment that I hadn't read all about these new products in MacWeek and on the web, I tried to think of what a normal business person reading the paper would think of the ad. I don't think it would make him any more inclined to buy a Mac over a PC, especially since there was a story in that day's issue about Apple's impending demise. "Feel good" ads are nice, but they only work if they're balanced out by factual ads — especially when the underdog is doing the advertising.

Throughout the week away from my Mac, I didn't pay much attention to the news. At first, I thought that this might have been because I was lazy — too used to having it mailed right to me. But I realized that I was completely sick of the bombardment of news stories from the media. To quote Paul Simon, getting away from the "staccato signals of constant information" was an important part of being on vacation. While I (perhaps) regretted hearing the latest Mac news and bug fixes the day they were released, I felt liberated that I didn't have to (actually, couldn't) constantly check the news web sites for fear of falling behind the times. [Readers of last month's Page o' Links will recall the listing of Mac news sites.] When I returned home, I stubbornly tried to find all the news articles posted while I was on vacation, but most were archived in the "Old News" sections! I never realized that I'd come to think of two-day-old news as "old."

I arrived home at about 10:00 PM. Everything was as I'd left it. With anticipation, I depressed the power key of my Mac. Nothing happened. For a split second, I was surprised, but then I remembered it was unplugged. I plugged in the power strip and turned on the system. When I heard the guitar chime, I started unpacking my suitcase. Meanwhile, the computer started up and began to download the e-mail and newsgroup messages that accumulated during my absence. An hour later, it was still downloading. A few months ago, I stated that e-mail had all the advantages of an answering machine. However, an answering machine runs out of tape after a while. My mail server didn't, and I had several hundred messages waiting for me, despite the fact that I'd told almost everyone that I'd be out of town and away from e-mail.

Sometimes there were three or four messages from the sender with the same subject. It turns out that they were copies of the same messages. You see, people thought that since I hadn't responded, the message hadn't arrived. Some had PS's to the effect of, "I sent this to you yesterday, but you didn't respond so I figured you didn't get it." E-mail is like an answering machine, all right. Messages pile up, and up, and up.

It took a few hours to read and respond to all the mail. After it was all done, I resolved that I would no longer be even the slightest bit annoyed when people didn't reply to my messages immediately. I still respond (when appropriate) to every message I receive. Some really popular columnists don't, and after experiencing an avalanche of e-mail firsthand, I can certainly understand their reasoning. For now, reading my e-mail is a manageable, albeit time-consuming process. As long as I check it daily, it doesn't get overwhelming, and I can take pride in answering all my mail in a timely fashion.

Technology was supposed to be a great liberator and in many ways, it has been. Something like ATPM would not be possible were it not for e-mail. People are communicating more now than ever, but they're also spending more of their time writing and responding to

e-mails. An amazing amount of time is spent simply getting technology to work. While I was away from my Mac, I missed being in contact with people and I missed reading news minutes after it happened. What I didn't miss was the overload that comes through my modem in "staccato signals of constant information."

"The Personal Computing Paradigm" is ©1997 by Michael Tsai, mtsai@atpm.com.





We May Have To Change The Name Of This Here Rag

Let me explain. First, for those that don't know, "rag" is a slang expression meaning "newspaper or magazine." I guess this comes from the fact that, before paper was invented, news was printed on oily and discarded rags.

The point is, for those that have been blessed with MacOS 7.6, or Harmony (if you're keeping up with the code names), a subtle change has taken place. If you open the Apple menu whilst in the Finder and scroll down, the "About This Macintosh" box has become the "About This Computer" box.

I feel like part of my identity has been taken away. For those of you who are "founding readers," you know that our name comes from that box. If this trend keeps up, we'll have to change our name to "About This Particular Computer," or ATPC for short. I hate to associate with anything having to do with PC's (and I'm sure some of our readers feel the same way).

The phrase reminds me of a bumper sticker I saw recently (Allow me to paraphrase and steal.), "PC's — Another reason the criminally insane shouldn't be allowed to make hardware purchasing decisions." Now, I know we have some PC-afflicted among our readers, especially now that we're available on the web. I don't mean to offend you, I'm just expressing truth from my perspective.

Random Huge Happenings...

We have a bronze statue in the lobby of the building I laughingly refer to as our home base. It's a life-size sculpture of a beautifully naked woman, with the head and left foot cut off, and the arms extended into the air. When I first started here, a friend and I named this statue "Discordia," after the Goddess of Confusion. It seems she's been working overtime here lately.

Within the past month, some strangeness has been going on.

I was asked to go to a Huser that supposedly just had his hard drive replaced. He was cranking along fine with his 6100 and his Bernoulli Drive (or is that Brunelli?).

Anyway, he wanted the latest and greatest OS installed on to the hard drive, and planned to then transfer everything himself from the Bernoulli. Or so he thought.

Now, the latest and greatest OS is not the aforementioned 7.6. We can't install that on-site yet (another fine example of your tax dollars at work). They're studying whether or not 7.6 will be viable for this site. Of course, no one knows who "They" are. By the time "They" OK it, 7.7 will be out, and we can repeat the whole process. Technically, we can't even install 7.5.5 either, but all the Mac techs (myself included) are doing it anyway. But I digress.

I arrive at the Huser's machine, connect to our server from whence the install will be done. When I run a SCSI probe, there's no hard drive. I reboot. Still no hard drive. Then the Huser informs me that the hardware tech was instructed to install the new HD, but not to connect it. To which I replied, "Huh???" Fortunately, said hardware tech had left his pager number which I immediately dialed. Now, I know what you're thinking, "Why didn't he do it himself?" Well, I wanted to. However, CSC policy forbids it. Twenty minutes later the tech arrived, hooked up the HD, and the Huser was ready to go. The install went seamlessly from there. That is, he hasn't called back to report any problems yet.

Just last week, a secretary who has become dependent on me for all her Mac needs opened a trouble ticket stating MS-Mail was looping. You heard right. MS-Mail, now QuarterDeck Mail, which we no longer support. She was still using this archaic program, as if we were still installing it. I think it has to do with the forward-thinking nature of higher ups, but I'm just MacMan. I fly where I'm told.

To top it off, this trouble ticket came in as a "Priority 2," which elevates it from an annoyance to, "We've gotta have this fixed in four hours or less!!!!" You see, she knows someone who knows someone else who works for a VIP. I have yet to see a priority one ticket. I think that would mean the problem would have to be fixed before it even occurred.

I arrived at her office and she demo'd the problem. I sat down and couldn't re-create it. Problem solved, right? Well, let's ask the musical question: "How many out there with a Kensington Turbo Mouse (the four button, track-ball version?" It turns out our fearless secretary had assigned double-click to a button and then forgot. Instead, she was thinking it was a single-click. Now, if you have overlapping open windows, and the close boxes line up just right... Well, you get the idea. When you hit the button, the mouse dutifully obeys and sends two clicks. In a row. No breathing room. Try it yourself. Or, do it to a friend's computer (It'll be more fun that way.).

My favorite recent example of chaos theory in action comes from our good friends at Symantec, makers of Symantec Anti-Virus for Macintosh, or SAM. It turns out that the latest version of the defs file, causes a segment loader error on boot up. Now, I've been assured that the patch available on their web site, provided by those fine individuals at Symantec, fixes this problem. However, that didn't help the fifty or so people for whom we had to install an earlier version of the defs file on their systems.

Several of you may remember the original title of this column. Recently, I got assigned a trouble ticket that stated, "Mac freezes on startup." A quick check of the ADB cord that had been stretched to the limit, causing the plug to pop out, fixed this problem. Cost: \$90. Time out, seven minutes. I'm still trying to figure out how to collect that money myself.

It's been quiet here recently, however, just today I was asked to go set an IP address on a computer that didn't exist. Go figure.

...

MacMan to the Rescue!!!

Well, another user out there chimed in on the Eudora question. To wit:

Showing Headers in Eudora

I'm using Eudora Pro 3.0, and I can look at full headers without making that view the default (which is what happens if I turn on "Show all Headers" in Settings, as you recommend in ATPM 3.02). It's very simple:

Underneath the title bar at the top of the window for any incoming e-mail message (not the composition window for outgoing messages) are a number of icons, as well as the Subject: of the message. One of those icons looks like the words "BLAH BLAH BLAH" written very small; clicking once on this icon brings up full headers. Click again to go back to partial headers. I've just looked at a co-worker's copy of Eudora Lite 1.5.3, and the icon is there, too, so I'm assuming this works for all version of Eudora that your readers are likely to have.

You should remind readers that sometimes spammers forge lines in the headers of their messages. The From: line is trivially easy to forge (I've done it myself, in this very message, just because I'm writing this at work, but would rather receive personal mail through my home account), and some of the more resourceful spammers can forge the Message-id: and Received: lines.

Avram Grumer
agrumer@crossover.com

Thanks for the info, Avram. (Your name in lights! Just like I said!) It turns out that the fine folks at Eudora have tweaked this feature with each successive version, and I only claim my answer to be correct for Lite version, 1.4.3. Sorry for the confusion this caused.

...

Disk Doesn't Appear On Desktop

Recently, I installed a floppy into my Quadra 605, and it didn't appear on the desktop. What should I do?

Mike Shields
Mshields@ccgate.hac.com

Recently, I went through this exact problem. Here's what I did. I was able to take a paper clip and eject the floppy manually. That's what the little hole below the floppy drive is for. Then I unplugged my Mac, strapped on my static wrist strap, and went to work. Sliding the top off a Quadra 605 is simple. I immediately grounded myself by clipping the strap to the hard drive carrier. I opened the floppy door and used tweezers to pull out the popsicle stick my two year old daughter had inserted. Problem solved. I didn't have the heart to punish Amanda. However, she wants pancakes for dinner tonite. As it turns out, so do I.

...

Well, that's it for this month. Next month, I want to do another "all question" column. So, I need more user questions. Here's a thought: if your Mac is working, sabotage your friend's Mac, and then have them send a question.

Mike Shields is a perspiring Screen Writer who needs \$600,000 to produce his recently finished screenplay. He can be reached at mshields@atpm.com. Or, if you just have a Mac question, that's ok, too.





BY JAMAL GHANDOUR, zeinah@kuwait.cssgrey.com

Creation of the ATPM Splash Screen

Everyone has a designer inside of them. ATPM wants to release the designer in you.

This section is designed to make working with computer graphics software easier. It will show you how to achieve marvelous results in a few steps (or shall we say clicks?). Hopefully, this will give you more time to design your graphics and take less time to actually do them.

My name is Jamal Ghandour. My goal is to guide you through doing anything from a simple tracing of a logo to full-fledged 3D animations. As you probably know, there are a million ways to achieve the same effect using computer software. So, what I will demonstrate are, to my knowledge, the best and easiest ways, but by no means are they the only ones.

I must say that after all my years of work, very little impresses me. However, ATPM's high quality did just that. I am proud to join the ATPM staff. The people here are "simply the best!"

A special "thanx" goes to Michael, Robert, my colleagues at CSS&GREY, Kuwait (you know who you are), to those of you for whom space and time prevent specific mention (but I mean every single one of you), but I'd especially like to thank my wife, who always gives me the will to go on.

Enough chat, let's get down to work!

Since this is the first installment, I will keep it simple. Remember, your input will determine how complex this section becomes. This month, I will walk you through how I did the ATPM splash screen in Adobe Photoshop 4.0.

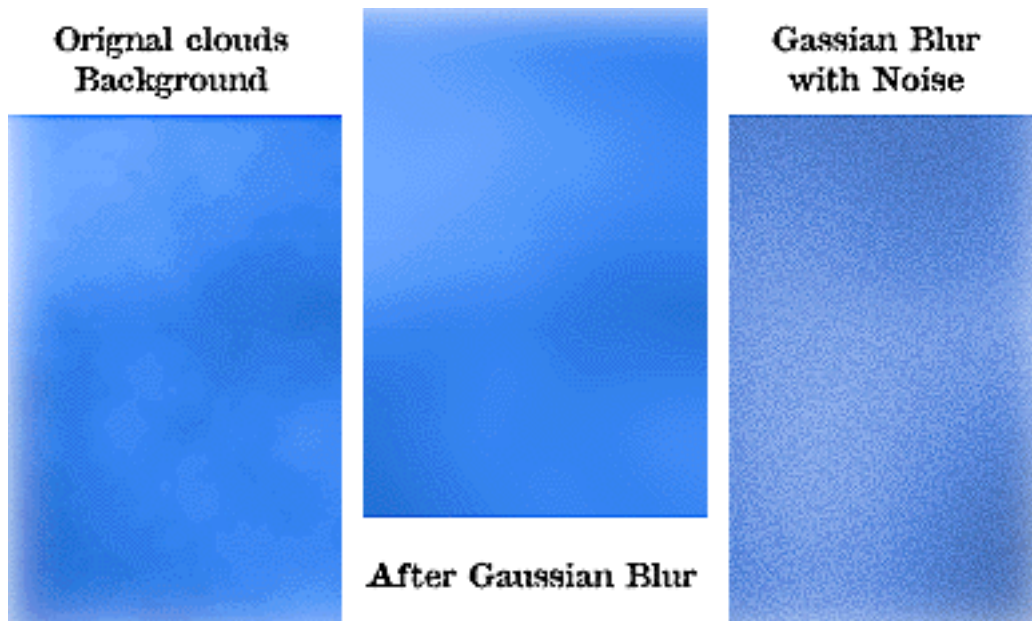
1) I opened a new document with the following dimensions: 393x266 pixels at 72 dpi.
(Found File>New)

2) I chose colors for the Background and Foreground.(e.g., Light Blue and Navy Blue)

3) I used the "clouds" filter. (Found Filter>Render>Clouds)

4) The desired effect was achieved, but the edges were hard. So, I used Gaussian Blur to soften the edges. (Found Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur)

5) Next I used the Noise effect to give it a stylish look. (Found Filter>Noise>Add noise)



6) The background was now nearly ready, only a few steps to go. First, I selected the white color.

Here's a nice tip to get basic colors (e.g., black or white): press "x" on the keyboard.

I set the brush opacity to 30%. Then, using the shift key, I drew white lines on the sides.

7) I repeated step 6, except I used black color for the other sides.

8) With the background finished, all that remained was to get the elements. So, I opened Matt Sanders's splash screen. Here I would like to thank Matt for his excellent work. He can be contacted at <iamgreat@localnet.com> .

9) Matt put the elements on a white background, so it was a fairly simple matter to take them out (also called "dropping out" in graphic artists' jargon). I just clicked on the white background with the Magic Wand tool and inverted the selection (I must stress here that **inversing** the selection is completely different from **inverting** the image in the selection).



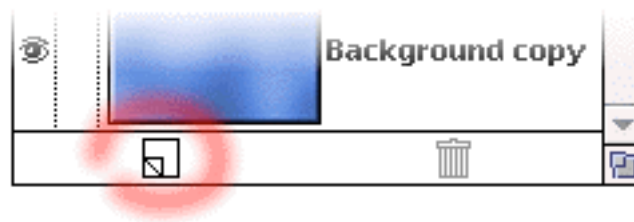
10) After selection, I copied the elements to a new layer on the freshly made background.

11) I typed in white text “About The Personal Computing Experience” on the same layer. Our logo was also added to the same layer.

12) Now all that remained was to give all the elements on the new layer a soft shadow.

13) This is fairly simple. First, I made a copy of the layer.

Hint: an easy way to do this is to drag the layer to the page icon on the layers palette.

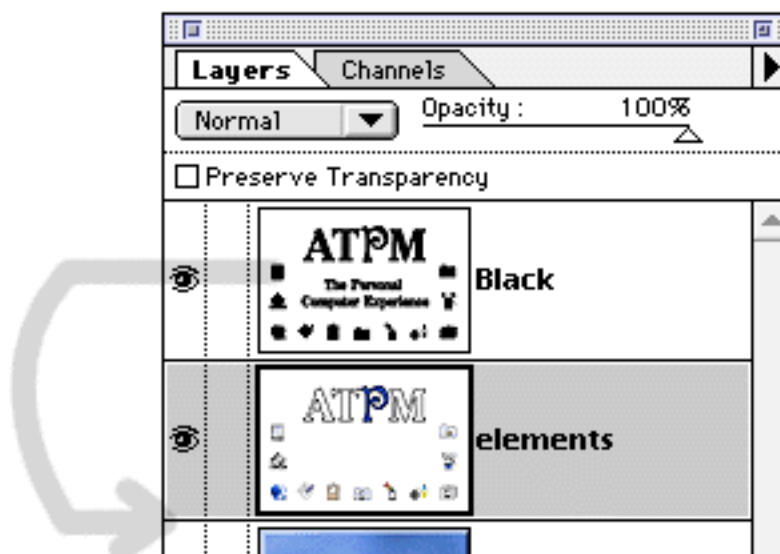


14) Now comes a tricky part. First, I chose black as the foreground color, then chose “Fill” (or press shift-delete). It is very important to make sure of the following:

- a) Under Contents > you have “Foreground Color” selected
- b) Opacity is set to 100%
- c) Mode is set to normal
- d) Preserve Transparency is **selected!**

Then, I pressed “OK.”

15) I now had a copy of my layer all in black. I placed this black layer underneath the original elements layer.

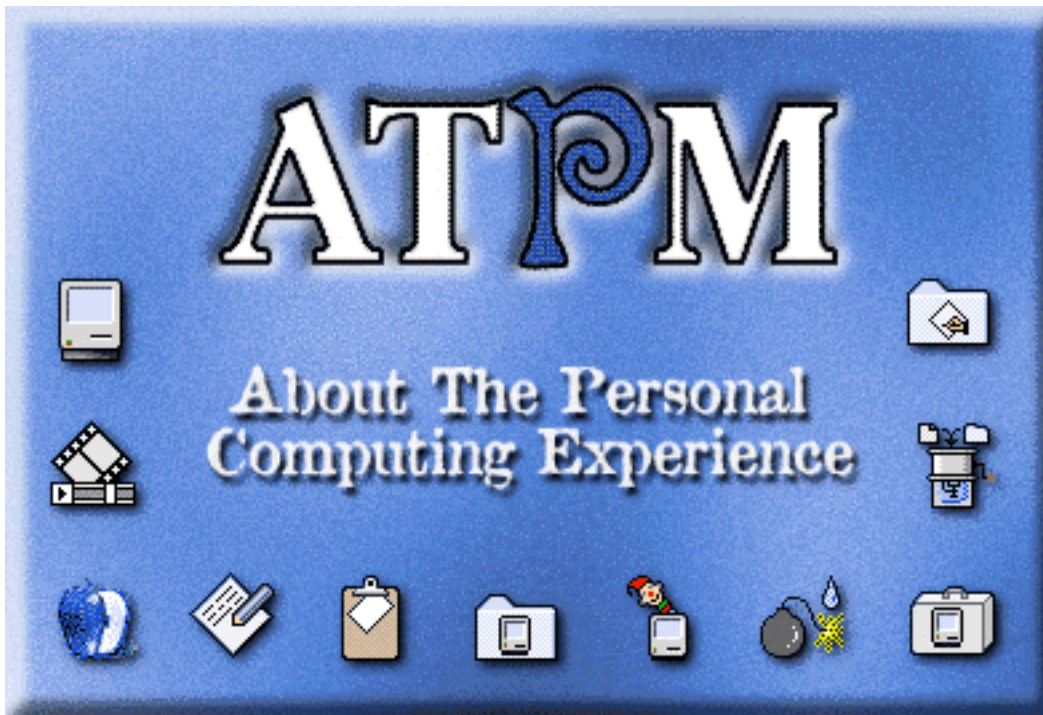




16) Using the Cross tool, I adjusted the offset of the shadow.

17) As a final “tweak,” I used Gaussian Blur on the black layer to give it a soft shadow effect.

18) Voila! The splash screen is ready.



Please feel free to e-mail me with any questions, inquires or comments at ktcssg@ncc.moc.kw.

Software: Adobe Photoshop 4.0

Hardware: PowerMac 9500/180 MP, 256 RAM, 8 GB array hard disk



ABOUT THIS
STUFF

REVIEWED BY ROBERT MADILL, rmadill@atpm.com



*Retrieve It!*TM



Product Information

Distributed By: MVP Solutions©

Phone: (415) 562-3457

Web: <<http://www.mvpsolutions.com>>

Street Price: \$65 U.S.

Requirements

Apple Macintosh® Plus or above

System 7 or higher

307K disk space with Online Help

A good dog should be personable, faithful to its master or mistress, easy to maintain, able to perform masterful tricks with ease and accuracy, have a considerable “bite” disguised by a gentle “woof” and sit patiently in the background ready to assist its owner in any manner possible for such a blindly gentle soul. Well, this animal spirit exists electronically in the application **Retrieve It!**TM 2.5, © from **MVP Solutions**.

Installation is quite simple. While this descriptor may have become predictable for a piece of software to pass muster, remember that so many of today’s software installations demand that you restart your Mac with all extensions off, or with the minimal set-up to run an installation from a CD. It is easy to be lazy and not follow those simple rules. The result is often a damaged System! I must admit that, in my eagerness to install a program or utility, I have broken these basic rules...and lived to regret it!

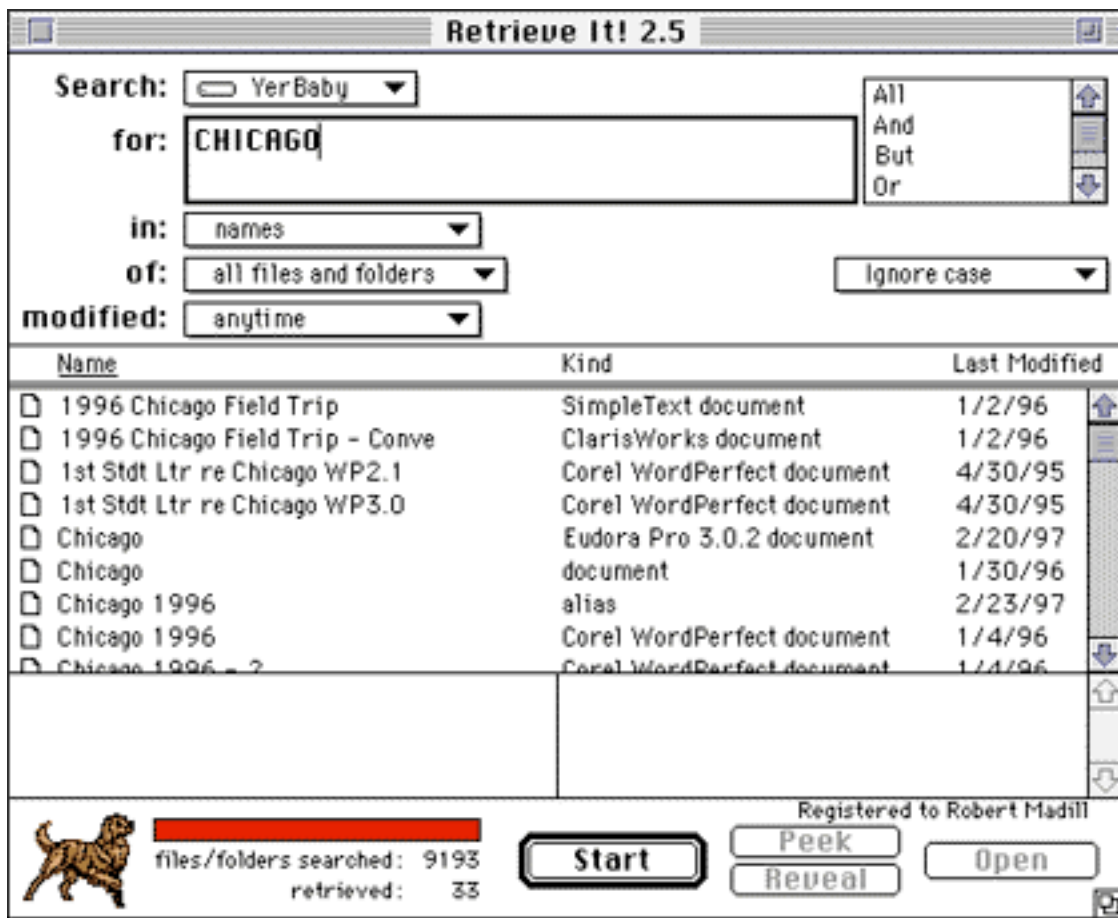
It is easy to drag all 202K of the Retrieve It! application from the floppy disk into the Apple Menu Items Folder nested inside your System Folder without restarting. This lean and mean little “puppy” is not an extension. As such, you can expect a hard drive “pet” with few “dysfunctional family” conflicts. The program, accompanied by a readable and informative hard copy manual, is further supplemented by an equally useful on-line manual which should be deposited in the System Folder.

Before I delve too deeply into the merits of Retrieve It! 2.5, I have to first mention one useful feature. When you launch the program, you can check for software updates by accessing an option called “About Retrieve It!...” from the Apple Icon in your Menu bar. Two clicks later and your Web Browser is launched and pointed to the MVP site for assistance or application upgrade downloads. An update to the 2.5 version was posted on

January 5, 1997. Therefore, this review is really about Retrieve It! 2.5.1.

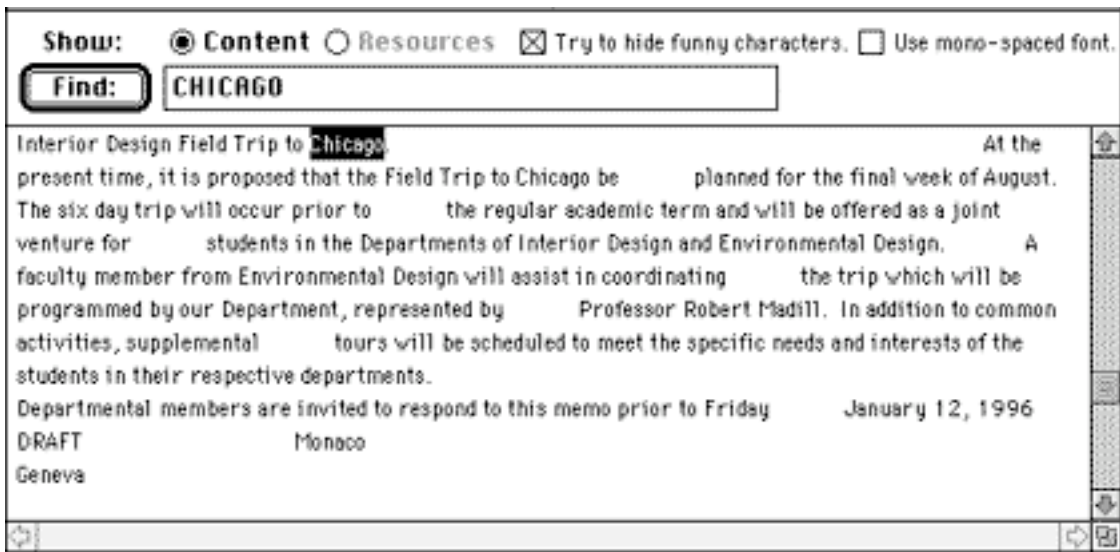
I purchased the original Retrieve It! in 1993 when it was a Claris Corporation product. At that stage, I was amazed by its superiority to the "Find File..." utility that was native to the Macintosh. Years of further development only highlight how antiquated the Macintosh approach to file searching has become. Not only is Retrieve It! faster, simpler to use, and more intuitively friendly, it has a clean and sharp interface with a simplicity that belies the complex "Find" parameters it offers.

Years ago, I was among many members of the Macintosh user community who dutifully paid their shareware fees for a utility called "Window Shade." Macintosh got smart and decided to incorporate that valuable utility into their newer operating systems. Bravo! Perhaps a repeat performance may occur with Retrieve It! Given the starkly dead nature of "Find File..." I would applaud a new Macintosh Operating System that incorporated something resembling Retrieve It! as a standard OS inclusion.

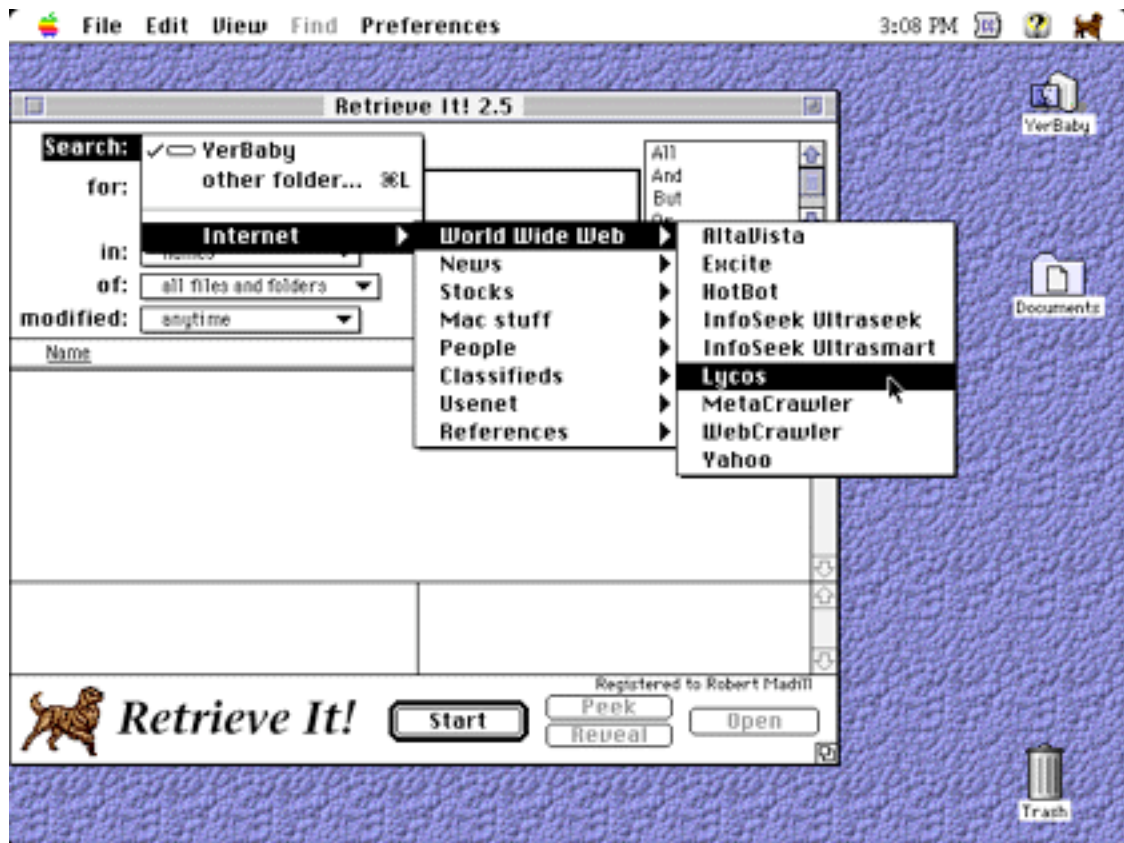


Down to business. Retrieve It! quickly and efficiently searches through any or all of the hundreds of files and folders on your hard drive, removable media, CD-ROMs, and even e-mail correspondence for specific words, phrases, file or folder names. The assumption is that, although you may have forgotten the location of a document, you can quickly and easily narrow your search by using a single word or phrase that you can recall. The search yields a scrolling list of potential candidates.





You may then choose to “Peek” at the file or you can “Open” the file in its creator application and examine the relevance of the find. Once you’ve identified the correct document or file, a “Reveal” command takes you directly to the location of the material. From there you can move, copy, or trash. The sophistication of the program extends itself to using Boolean operators (OR, NOT, AND, BEFORE, etc.) and to specifying the maximum spacing between key search words. If that isn’t narrow enough, you can, among other options, specify creation and modification dates or the most likely “creator” application of the document or file you are “tracking.”



This “hound” is not only speedy at home with your private hard drive, but is a valuable “thoroughbred” when you let it out of your backyard into the world at large. Retrieve It! has the ability to launch your favorite Web Browser, be it Netscape Navigator, NCSA Mosaic, Microsoft Internet Explorer or your AOL service. It then integrates with Internet search “engines” of your choice: AltaVista, Excite, HotBot, InfoSeek UltraSmart, Lycos, WebCrawler and Yahoo, among others. You must remember that Retrieve It! is not acting as the “search engine.” Retrieve It! simply shortens the number of steps necessary to reach the final “query” page from which you select your own final URL destinations (rather like cutting out the middleman in your final “purchase”). The time saved is very noticeable! This feature is one of the most powerful aspects of this utility. Judicious use of the Retrieve It! search “syntax” can obtain speedier results than a standard browser-driven process allows.

Well, this “dog” can take many more “walks” through the vast neighborhood of Web: news, classified ads, stock prices, dictionaries, references, people’s e-mail addresses, etc. The 2.5.1 upgrade provides a new “Mac Stuff” search in its Internet menu. This is a fine adjunct to the listing of the URL’s compiled in the “Page O’ Links you can find in ATPM 3.02! In my opinion this is one utility with an excellent pedigree, great price and a track record worthy of computer companionship. Now if it could only find my car keys, wallet and sunglasses...

This review is ©1997 Robert Madill, rmadill@atpm.com. Mr. Madill is a Professor of Art and Architectural History on the faculty of Architecture at the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg, Manitoba.



ABOUT THIS
STUFF

REVIEWED BY BELINDA WAGNER, bwagner@atpm.com



Scorpio

Product Information

Published By: Abbott Systems Inc.
Phone: 1-800-552-9157
Fax: 914-747-9115
Email: AbbottSys@aol.com
Web: <http://www.abbottsys.com>
List Price: \$19.95

Requirements

1.28MB of RAM
800K of hard disk space including app, dictionary and manual

I admit, when Robert Madill asked me to review Scorpio™, I was a bit skeptical. I'm a diehard MS Word™ 5.1 user. No, I never upgraded to 6.0. I really disliked the "Windows™-like" interface and I felt that a great deal of speed and flexibility were sacrificed - it felt more like a downgrade than an upgrade to me. WordPerfect™ seems as onerous to me as the ancient WordStar (I'm really dating myself now, eh?). Simpletext™ is far too simple for my text.

The only other word processor I even tolerate is ClarisWorks™. Not that their word processing capabilities are more powerful than Word, but I like the ease with which text, graphics and tables can be integrated and arranged in a WYSIWYG interface. ATPM's editorial staff recently adopted ClarisWorks as our standard format for transferring documents during pre-production. As copy editor, I enjoy ClarisWorks' text color option to adapt standard editing "mark-up" characters to a format suitable for electronic communication.

Here I sit "writing" in Scorpio. I'm impressed. The interface is simple. Standard menus are rarely used. Tools for font, text and document manipulation are arranged in a series of

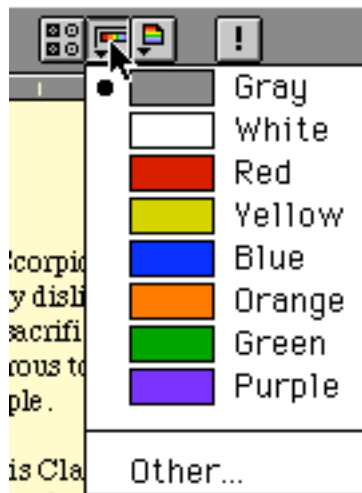
buttons across the toolbar at the top of the window. Most are fairly self-explanatory. However, what impresses me most about Scorpio are its “ergonomic” features. Little things that go beyond “cut and paste” to make composing text on a monitor a little easier, a little more comfortable.

First is the toolbar itself. Although the default “grey” background still has the same low contrast that I find so annoying in Windows applications, Abbott Systems has incorporated a simple fix -- you can change the background color of the toolbar!!

Here’s the standard:



Via the toolbar color button, you can change the background color and significantly enhance the contrast and visibility.



Of the standard options, my personal favorite is purple:

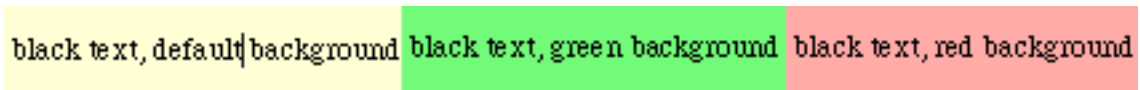


But, my true favorite is a custom color:



Second is the eyestrain that staring at black text on a white background causes. Again,

Abbott comes up with a simple, elegant fix - with a single click, you can change the color of the screen window. Here are some examples:



Notice that these standard colors are muted and transparent. They don't overwhelm the text (like some Web pages which are NOT bookmarked in my browser). Like the toolbar color option, Scorpio lets you pick a custom background color, but I like the standard options. I particularly like changing the color from time to time as I work on text. It saves headaches. (Note: the background color does not print, it's just for screen use.)

If you prefer dark backgrounds with light text, that option is easily implemented in Scorpio. It's also easily changed by the next person who reads it (especially if your options cause them a splitting headache – one of my collaborators and myself have this particular incompatibility and I'm encouraging him to purchase Scorpio to work on our jointly-authored documents).

Third is the ability to speak text using Apple's Speech Manager. I know it is not unique to Scorpio, but the ease and flexibility of implementing this feature is unique in my experience. Choose a voice from the "Special" menu (or use the default). Select the text you want spoken, and click the tool button.

When I write, I mostly gather lots of little pieces: files, e-mails, papers, magazine or journal references, etc. They get shuffled around in my small home office or spread out over three desktops at work. In other words, my workspace soon looks as though a cyclone hit. Now, when I want to step back and see how the document flows, I can use the speak text feature to listen to what I've written, take a break from staring at the monitor and restore a bit of order to my workspace.

I'm impressed with the quality of the speech. Most of the words sound as they should. One noticeable exception in listening to this review was the word "headaches." It came out in synthesized speech as "head-etches."

The only downside to Scorpio is that its document spelling check brings up many correctly spelled, common words. So many in fact, that I think the default option should be "add" instead of "replace." However, this is a minor criticism in light of the overall utility of this program.

My personal opinion is that Apple should trash SimpleText and offer Scorpio as its default word processor. Scorpio is simple enough for younger writers (like my six-year old daughter). However, it is a useful investment even for the most sophisticated writers. I intend to use Scorpio a lot. Why? Because Scorpio utilizes the ClarisWorks/MacLink translators to import and export files. I can import files from any high-end word processing application and use the ergonomic aspects of Scorpio for composing/revamping the text content. Using the same translators to export files after the content is finalized, I can then apply the enhanced formatting capabilities of Word or ClarisWorks to generate even sophisticated documents.

Scorpio makes the most time-consuming aspect of writing — content development — more

pleasant. At the same time, Abbott Systems acknowledges users' needs for more sophisticated formatting. The import and export file options facilitate that process. In my opinion, Scorpio is more than worth the purchase price and will fill a useful niche on any Macintosh, at home or work.

Buy it, you won't get stung (despite the scorpion logo)!!

This review was written in Scorpio and exported to ClarisWorks on a Performa 636CD running System 7.5.3 Update 2.0.

© 1997 Belinda Wagner, bwagner@atpm.com. Belinda J. Wagner, Ph.D. is a molecular biologist and a faculty member of Bowman Gray School of Medicine in North Carolina. She studies how cells respond to their environment during wound healing.



ABOUT THIS
STUFF



REVIEWED BY ROBERT PAUL LEITAO, rleitao@atpm.com

Spring Cleaning

Product Information

Published By: Aladdin Systems

Web: <<http://www.aladdinsys.com>>

Street Price: \$49.95

Requirements

Mac Plus or greater

2 MB of RAM (4 MB recommended)

System 7.x or later

I remember when I first I heard of Aladdin Systems. I was the Chief Financial Officer of a music and film company. One of my responsibilities was to put a Macintosh on every desk. The year was 1989 and our computing life was a bit more simple. Daisy chain was pretty much the standard for small office networks and the Macintosh SE was a common sight on office desks.

We had just purchased a few more Mac SE's for the new members of our expanding staff and we did something we thought was pretty "computer-cool." We ordered machines equipped with two floppy drives (instead of one floppy drive and a hard drive) and we installed external hard drives through the SCSI port. The two floppy "feature" allowed us to quickly copy data from one floppy drive to another. Since this was the late 1980's, we marveled at this for a little while. We also couldn't imagine why anyone would want more hard drive space than the 40Mb provided by our new external drives, they weighed several pounds!

On average, data files were much smaller than they are today and we would often use the 800k floppy disks as the primary back-up for information stored on our hard drives. How did we get so much use from those now-obsolete disks? Enter Aladdin's Stuffit™ software. Then, as now, it is the preeminent data compression software for the Macintosh. I'm happy to say that, over the years, Aladdin Systems, along with its award-winning data compression software, has grown in sophistication and the company continues to develop new applications to enhance and improve our computing life.

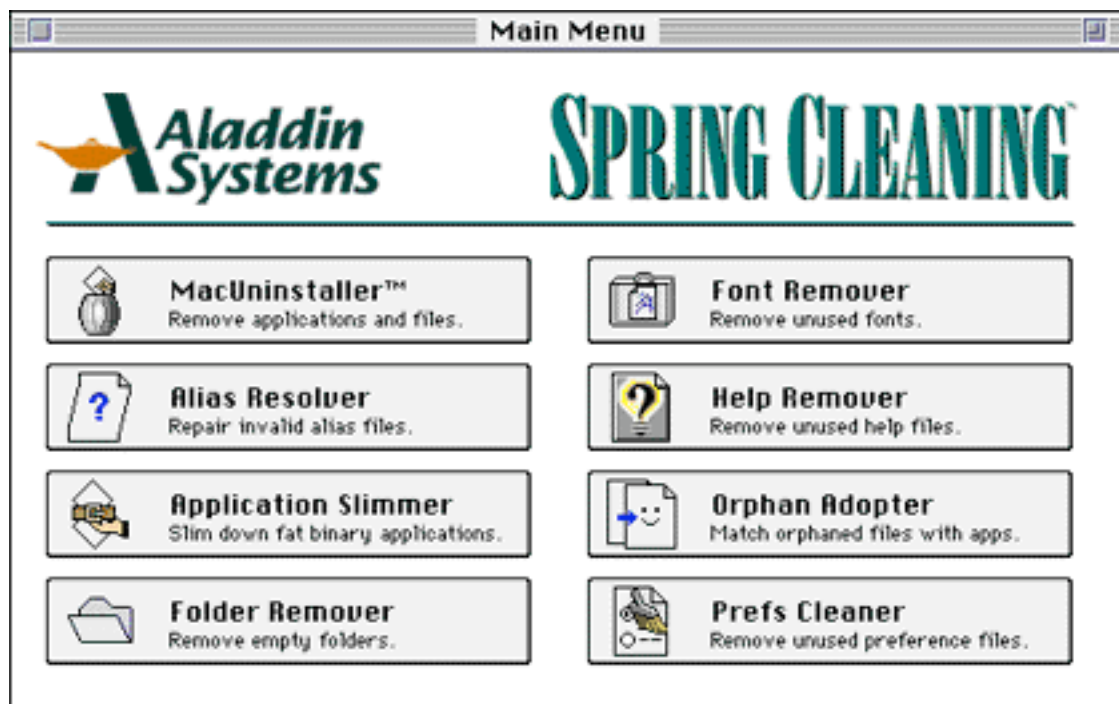
With today's 100 MB Zip cartridges and multi-gigabyte hard drives, my computing problems are marked less by a shortage of storage capacity than by the remnants of old applications. For example, old system extensions can wreak havoc on an operating system

that already includes numerous “patches and plugs.” Today’s challenge is keeping our software operating efficiently with a minimum of freezes and involuntary restarts. Where do we get help? Enter Aladdin Systems’ Spring Cleaning™.

It is far easier to install a new piece of software than it is to get rid of it. This statement may be the “Murphy’s Law” of the personal computer age. I’m often amazed at what’s left behind on my hard drive, even after diligently removing obsolete or undesired applications. For those of us who like to sample freeware and shareware, these “forgotten files” can be a real nuisance in our computing lives; they take up space and can potentially cause problems.

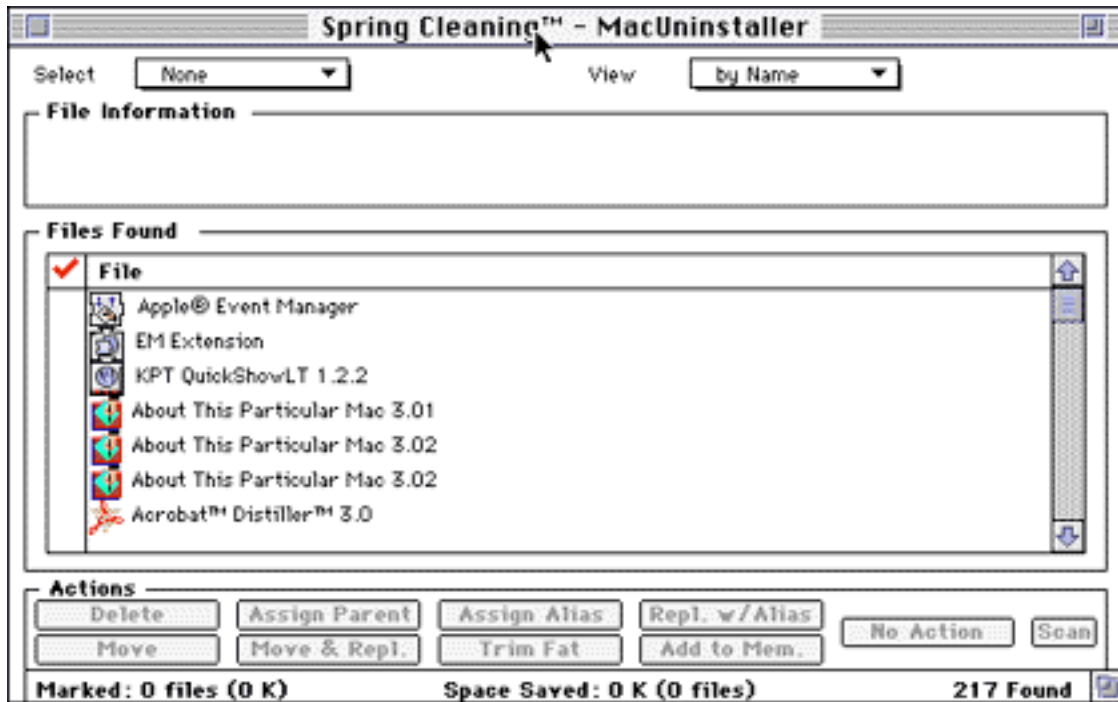
One alternative to using Spring Cleaning to remove obsolete or nuisance files is to reformat one’s hard drive and reinstall all software, including the operating system, from the original disks or CDs. This is not a pleasant alternative. In fact, I think it’s akin to going deer hunting with a surface-to-air missile. While you might hit the deer, you’d also destroy most of the surrounding habitat. That analogy may seem a bit extreme or absurd until you consider the amount of time it would take to reset software preferences and reorganize folders. For this reason alone, I think that Aladdin’s Spring Cleaning is worth an evaluation.

Spring Cleaning installed easily. A quick, double-click brought up the following main menu:



This menu is self-explanatory to most Macintosh® users. In all, Spring Cleaning is comprised of eight utilities: Mac Uninstaller™, Alias Resolver, Application Slimmer, Folder Remover, Font Remover, Help Remover, Orphan Adopter and Prefs Cleaner. Each of these performs a very defined, useful task to anyone who uses a Mac. For this review, I will focus on three of the eight utilities: Mac Uninstaller™; Prefs Cleaner and Application Slimmer.

Spring Cleaning's "Mac Uninstaller™" took only a few moments to compile a list of applications located on my internal hard drive. As the illustration below indicates, 217 applications (including three different issues of our favorite Internet e-zine), were found on my hard drive. It was easy to scroll down the list, find duplicates and other unwanted applications and remove them.



"Prefs Cleaner" was next. Preference files in my system folder were matched to applications and extensions on my hard drive as a means of identifying unused or obsolete files. While the resulting list of "unmatched" preferences did include a few items that I opted to keep (just for the moment while I "research" why they're unmatched), it was easy to discover and eliminate unnecessary preference files that might be taking up hard disk space or potentially create problems.

One of the more intriguing options available in Spring Cleaning is the "Application Slimmer" utility, which builds a list of all "fat" applications on your hard drive:



Fat binary applications contain code for both Power PC and 68k Macs. Depending on your machine, either the Power PC code or the 68k code is unnecessary. Application Slimmer can remove the unused application code for you. After identifying the “fat” applications on your hard drive, you are given the option of putting them “on a diet.” Spring Cleaning will not remove files or application code without your approval. This safeguard allows you to use each of the utilities as a diagnostic tool without requiring you to execute the corresponding action.

Among Spring Cleaning’s other utilities is “Font Remover.” It not only compiles a list of all your fonts, it will help you remove duplicates and seldom used fonts. It will also help you relocate fonts should that be your desire. Spring Cleaning’s Folder Remover, Help Remover, Alias Resolver and Orphan Adopter accomplished each of their respective tasks quite quickly. In summary, all eight utilities and the user’s guide are easy to use and understand.

At a street price of \$49.95, Spring Cleaning is the best computer maid service in town; no matter the season.

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ABOUT THIS
STUFF



REVIEWED BY MICHAEL TSAI, mtsai@atpm.com



Product Information

Published By: Abbott Systems Inc.
Phone: 1-800-552-9157
Fax: 914-747-9115
Email: AbbottSys@aol.com
Web: <http://www.abbottsys.com>
List Price: \$39

Requirements

Macintosh with System 7.5, or earlier version of System 7 with Mac Drag and Drop
Color monitor (thousands of colors recommended)
Netscape Navigator 2.0 or Microsoft Internet Explorer.
1.5 MB of free memory

Perhaps the least-improved aspect of web browsers is their bookmarking capabilities. Both Netscape Navigator and Microsoft Internet Explorer allow you to maintain a bookmarks (or favorites, as Microsoft calls it) menu. You can create categories for bookmarks and group them into submenus. In general, browser bookmarking features are simple and serviceable. However, they don't handle large numbers of bookmarks very well, and they aren't portable between different internet applications.

This is where Surfboard comes into play. Currently, there are more than a dozen utilities available that manage bookmarks to web (or FTP) sites. These programs fall into two main categories: those that let you organize your sites into a database for associating information, keywords, or people with sites; and those aimed at improving the organization and quick-access features of today's browser bookmarks by providing stand-alone replacements. Surfboard falls into the latter category. It is most easily described as a sort of "remote control" for your web browser.

The Interface

Surfboard's only window is a stylishly-colored palette for launching and organizing URLs. Down the middle is a column of popup menus offering quick access to URLs sorted by category. URLs can be added to a quick-access category button simply by dragging them from Surfboard's URL list onto the arrow button. Names of categories can be customized. You can add URLs to Surfboard's main URL list by dragging text onto it. In addition to double-clicking a URL to open it, you can drag a URL out of Surfboard into your browser window to open it in that window. You can also drag a URL onto the desktop to create a text clipping of it.

The "plus" button is used to add the web site currently open in your browser to Surfboard's list of URLs. Unfortunately, you must click this button to activate this feature; there is no keyboard command that can be used from within your browser. Finally, you can add URLs to Surfboard by importing your Navigator or Internet Explorer bookmark files, thus saving yourself some re-typing.



Surfboard keeps track of the date you add a site to its list, the number of times you've accessed the site, and the last time you accessed it. Once a site is added to Surfboard, you can edit its name and URL, and you can add a short description. This is useful if a web site doesn't have a very descriptive name, or if you want a handy place to write down a user name and/or password for access to restricted sites.

Edit URL

Name:

Address:

Description:

Created On: 3/15/96 **Last Accessed:** 3/21/96

Accesses: 1



The blue triangle button allows you to switch between bookmark files with a single click (and drag). This is very handy, since you are limited to viewing only 9 categories at one time. By the same token, Surfboard's display limit of 9 categories doesn't overwhelm you. The button also shows a list of the URLs you visit most frequently for quick access.

Room For A Few Improvements

The right edge of Surfboard's window contains a green strip. Clicking on it expands the window to twice its normal size and adds a scrolling list of all the URLs in the current bookmark file. Unfortunately, the scroll bars are non-standard. There is no scroll "thumb" to drag for quick scrolling, so it can take a long time to get from one part of the list to another. You can use arrow keys to jump to the beginning or end of the list, or letter keys to jump to a specific part of it. The longer you hold down one of the scrolling buttons, the faster the list scrolls. Unfortunately, Surfboard doesn't slow down its scrolling rate when you get close to the area you want. As a result, I still would prefer to have a scroll bar and thumb to drag.



There is no easy way to customize the order of the URLs in the list other than sorting them alphabetically or by the number of accesses. This is one area where Surfboard provides less functionality than Netscape or Internet Explorer. Finally, clicking on the green bar to reveal the complete URL list does not move the window to an optimal position on your screen. For instance, when Surfboard's window is positioned on the right edge of the screen (where I usually place it), expansion pushes the URL list off the edge of the screen. In order to see it, the user has to manually drag the window to a new location.

Final Words

Because Surfboard is an application (instead of an extension or control panel as many bookmark managers are), it will not conflict with software already installed on your Mac. This also means that it can be quit at any time to free up RAM for other use.

Surfboard is very fast, and it does not consume much RAM or hard disk space. It is well-suited to users who want to manage a growing list of web sites and have easy access to them from any open browser. It is easy to organize bookmarks with Surfboard, though it's not quite so easy to control the order in which they are listed.

If you're looking for a bookmark manager whose functionality lies between that of Netscape Navigator and the powerful database-type managers, I recommend Surfboard. It's simple design makes organizing and accessing URLs quick and easy. A demo version is available at Abbott's web site.

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Guidelines

The Official ATPM Guidelines!

The official ATPM guidelines page is the place to go when you have a question about our publication. We can't imagine that you simply wandered in here. That's because the information on this page is very dry and mostly unentertaining (which is why it's on this page and not included in another part of our publication). We guess you could call this the "Relatively Boring But Occasionally Important Page of Information." OK, enough already with the extraneous syntax, now onto the stuff.

What is ATPM?

About This Particular Macintosh (ATPM) is, among other things, a monthly Internet magazine or "e-zine." It's published by Michael Tsai and Robert Paul Leitao (who are still looking for a cool logo for themselves that depicts their joint effort). 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.

We'd like our readers to be involved!

Here, at ATPM worldwide headquarters, we're interested in hearing from you, our loyal readers. We're especially interested in stories about you and Life With Your Particular Macintosh. We guess we could have called this publication LWYPM but it just didn't sound quite right. So we called it ATPM and decided to ask for your stories and anecdotes about our most personal of personal computers. ATPM is also looking for people interested in joining our editorial staff. We currently need a [Cover Story Editor](#) and a [Shareware Reviews Editor](#). Please contact us at <editor@atpm.com> if you're interested.

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MacMan: Got a technical question? Mike Shields offers technical help in his column. While the opinions expressed in his column are his own, and the advice he gives is also his own (not to be confused with any 'official' or 'semi-official' or 'not official at all but might seem official' advice or comments from ATPM), he does think that he provides quality answers to your e-mail questions. Check it out for yourself! Send your inquiries to: <macman@atpm.com>.

Segments — Slices from the Macintosh Life: This is one of our most successful spaces and one of our favorite places. We think of it as kind of the ATPM "guest room." This is where we will publish that sentimental Macintosh story that you promised yourself you would one day write. It's that special place in ATPM that's specifically designated for your stories. We'd really like to hear from you. Send your stuff to <editor@atpm.com>.

Let us know that you know what you know!

Hardware and Software Reviews: ATPM publishes hardware and software reviews. However, we do things in a rather unique way. Techno-jargon can be useful to engineers but is not always a help to most Mac users. We like reviews that inform our readers about how a particular piece of hardware or software will help their Macintosh lives. We want them to know what works, how it may help them in their work, and how enthusiastic they are about recommending it to others. If you have a new piece of hardware or software that you'd like to review, contact our reviews editor at: <reviews@atpm.com> for more information.

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Wishful Thinking: Is the space for Mac enthusiasts who know exactly (if you do say so yourself) what Apple should do with its advertising campaigns and product introductions. Have you come up with a great advertising tag line? What about that Mac campaign that has been stewing in the back of your mind? Send your big ideas (or your art) to

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That's It!

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>.



Wishful Thinking

BY SCOTT HENNESSY, hennessy@AppliedTheory.com

Visualize this:

A young couple is at the baby doctor and are handed the sonogram of their child. The wife turns to her husband and says, "I wish your parents could see this." The scene changes and there is the husband scanning in the sonogram on an apple scanner, on a power mac, and sends it out on the net via Cyberdog.

The scene now changes to an older couple (grandparents) sitting in front of their Mac, and up comes the sonogram with a voice message attached saying, "Here is your grandchild." A voice-over now says, "With a Mac there is no gap."

This commercial is based on my experience when my wife and I had our first sonogram, and I wanted my parents to see it in Arizona.

Wishful Thinking is a space for Mac enthusiasts who know exactly what Apple's advertising should be. Did you come up with a great advertising tag line? Have you had a Mac campaign stewing in the back of your mind for a year now? Send your ideas, or your art to <editor@atpm.com>

