

ATPM

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“OpenDoc”

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Welcome

It's September. For students that means back to school. For the rest of us it means back to whatever we do at Summer's end — in the Northern Hemisphere. For our readers down "south" and "down under" we're sure that you're back to something, too, so we think of this as our "worldwide, back to whatever you do, too, companion issue."

News and Views...

The news over the past few weeks have had their fair share of "bytes" into Apple. Of course, were the company called "Peach" we might just "cling" to some of the rumors, but in this case we'll just comment on what we've heard. Think of them simply as "seeds" being planted in the minds of our readers. All set Johnny?

To Be or not to Be...

That seems to be Apple's question. As we go to press there is no new news about the much rumored conversations between Apple and its former executive Jean-Louis Gassée about the Cupertino giant acquiring the much smaller — kind of potential rival but more sort of a friend kind of — company called Be, that just happens to have a native operating system for the PPC platform that can run really cool high-end software. Of course no would think this would be a benefit to Apple in anyway since OS 8 has that definite release date and everyone seems the love the latest beta, right? We'll try and keep you posted.

It's a bird...It's a plane...

No...It's Netscape Navigator for Cyberdog coming to a desktop near you! Netscape — that brash new company that has dared to "spit in the face" of our friends in Redmond and their plans to own more of the web browser market, too — has declared its intention to create a version of its world-dominating internet software specifically for Cyberdog and its underlying OpenDoc architecture. We wondered why Netscape seemed to be throwing our

web walking pup a “bone” but then we realized Apple’s plans to incorporate OpenDoc and Cyberdog into the OS. Smart move, Netscape. Good news, Mac users.

Proof, readers...

We’d like to thank our readers Belinda, Stephen and Joe for responding to our request for a translator/proofreader. Belinda beat everyone to the reply button so we thought it was only fair to let her be the first to try and translate our written stuff into something that resembles the guidelines for the language commonly called English. She’s extraordinarily bright and has more degrees than a Fahrenheit thermometer. Besides, she works with molecules in some kind of a biological setting and we were afraid of what kind of green, growing things might be attached to our parcels if we told her she couldn’t do it...

With this issue Belinda Wagner joins the ATPM all-volunteer staff as our “Human Spell Checker.” She does the work, she chooses the title. We’re kind of cool that way.

Tell a friend about ATPM...

It’s also time for our first annual Tell-A-Friend-About-ATPM campaign. The rules are simple. Whoever tells a friend about ATPM and doesn’t tell us won’t be burdened with receiving anything, especially any notoriety among your fellow readers.

Anyone who tells a friend about ATPM and tells us what they like most about our e-zine may receive honorable mention (along with a copy of their kind words) in our special Tell-A-Friend-About-ATPM e-mail section that may be semi-spontaneously published in a future issue. Decisions made by the editors relative to this kind of stuff are first, foremost and final. Send your contributions to ATPMEditor@aol.com.

Be careful what you write. Belinda very much likes ATPM. In her new capacity she reads everything. You never know where that green stuff may turn up.

Bye, now...and please enjoy!

The ATPM all-volunteer staff





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



FEATURE

OpenDoc Is Your Software Port o'Call

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



Get ready for change.

Get ready for some exciting times.

Get ready for a new way to think about software.

Get ready for a revolutionary approach to software architecture.

Get ready for OpenDoc — It's your software "port o'call."

You may have heard about OpenDoc. You may even have used Cyberdog. But until now very few personal computer users have experienced this revolutionary change in software architecture. Your wait is almost over. Very soon many OpenDoc container applications

will be in commercial release.

OpenDoc is a cross-platform software architecture which will expand and change the way we work with software tools and their applications. For many years software developers have had to make applications more complex and larger in size in order to add new features and greater functionality for users.

Unfortunately this meant that software often became “bloated” with features and also required large amounts of RAM to run the simplest of operations. Software users were forced to pay for features and options that they seldom used and were often compelled to use overly complicated applications in order to complete a series of tasks.

How does OpenDoc change all this?

For starters, OpenDoc works across platforms and across applications. It does this by using what’s called components -- when branded by CI Labs they are called “Live Objects” (formerly known as “parts”) -- that work among OpenDoc container applications. In this way you can add tools and features from different components in an incremental manner and use your favorite tool by “Dragging and Dropping” into any OpenDoc container application or “workspace.” The tools of your choosing can now be used at your convenience and to increase your productivity. No longer will you need to put unnecessary effort into making your software’s tools fit a task, you will now be able to pick and choose the tools you prefer to use to accomplish your work.

Secondly, because you’ll be working with components or “Live Objects” rather than large, monolithic applications, developers will be better able to meet the particular needs of users for specific resources within the OpenDoc architecture. It will also allow users the opportunity to “pick and choose” among a variety of components for a particular function, tool or feature rather than among much larger and more expensive applications to accomplish a particular task. This should reduce the amount of development time for OpenDoc components. And again, because OpenDoc is designed to work cross-platform, developers and users will benefit from the larger market that will be available for OpenDoc components. In addition, OpenDoc will work seamlessly with Microsoft’s OLE. In fact, you will be able to actually embed OpenDoc tools and features into what are called OLE applications and conversely you will be able to embed OLE tools and features into OpenDoc applications.

This article will focus on the benefits of OpenDoc to the computer user and what OpenDoc is really all about. I’m confident that in a very short time most Mac users who choose to work with OpenDoc container applications (such as the upcoming Claris Works 5.0 upgrade) will see the many benefits of this new software architecture.

OpenDoc will allow users to have multiple links, features and resources in a single “workspace.” The best example of this is the Cyberdog 1.1 Starting Point (illustrated below):





Many different components were used to together to create this document. Each of the items placed inside an artistic frame in the above illustration is either a component or small series of components working together to create the Cyberdog “suite” of internet-related activities. This is a prime example of OpenDoc components working together to increase functionality. As you can see from the Cyberdog example, the OpenDoc architecture will reduce the need for large, stand-alone applications. Instead, different OpenDoc components will work together to provide far more functionality and of ease-of-use than many large and overly-complicated software applications.

Users will also have the ability to “mix and match” OpenDoc components to create unique presentations and to be able to use your favorite OpenDoc tool in any OpenDoc workspace. One way to view OpenDoc components is that they are “building blocks” that work together to create and communicate. With the upcoming release of Claris Works 5.0, users will have the ability to create documents which can include such items as photos, video clips and live internet links all in the same document. Better yet, the documents will be able to be shared across a network and across different platforms including the Mac OS, Windows, O/S 2 and AIX.

Many of ATPM’s readers may have recently read that Apple Computer and Netscape have signed an agreement for Netscape to develop a new version of its Navigator internet browser software that specifically supports Cyberdog and OpenDoc. The product is intended to be called Netscape Navigator for Cyberdog and will be a custom component developed specifically for Cyberdog. This also illustrates the level of software industry support for OpenDoc.

What is CI Labs and what do they do?

In their own words: “CI Labs is a nonprofit industry association which adopts, licenses, validates, and registers multi-platform, distributed component software.”

There are many members of CI labs including Adobe, Apple, IBM, Novell, Oracle, and many others. CI Lab members who have components that satisfy the “Live Objects” validation process for compatibility are eligible to license Live Objects trademark and logo (shown below):



Where can I find out more about OpenDoc and Cyberdog?

More information about OpenDoc is available at the following URL:
<<http://opendoc.apple.com/>>

The new Cyberdog version 1.1 is available for free downloading from the web site at
<<http://cyberdog.apple.com/>>

Because Cyberdog is based on the OpenDoc architecture you will need to download OpenDoc 1.1 (also available from the Cyberdog web site). In addition, watch for the upcoming release of Claris Works 5.0 along with other OpenDoc container applications.

It is this writer's view that OpenDoc will revolutionize the software industry. Now that this architecture is available upon which to build applications and create components that are inter-compatible and will work cross-platform, developers will be able to bring products to market more quickly and at lower cost to users such as you and me.

Most importantly, OpenDoc will allow users greater use of their favorite tools and help each of us reach beyond the limits of today's software to new heights of creative expression and effective communication.

To this “software sailor” — OpenDoc truly is your software port o' call.

© 1996 H.M. Fog HMFog@aol.com. H.M. Fog is a west coast computer consultant who sometimes writes articles for ATPM.



ABOUT THIS PARTICULAR
OPINION



APPLES, KIDS AND ATTITUDE, BY ROBERT PAUL LEITAO

A Tree Grows In Ventura

“We came all the way here to see a tree?!” This was Jessica’s bemused statement as we piled in the car and headed back to Hollywood from scenic Ventura, about sixty miles from where we live.

We had spent much of Labor Day in the City of Ventura — walking the beach, checking out the different bookstores, and finally having lunch at a place which served Strawberry milkshakes. It was a nice time for the three of us. Jessica’s statement was simply a reminder that although we had done many things, we had yet to see “the tree.”

On the way out of Hollywood I had mentioned to Matthew and Jessica that there was a very large tree I had once seen in Ventura that I thought was particularly beautiful and majestic. I told them that I was hoping I could show it to them while we visited this ocean-side city. This was more of an outspoken thought than a “mission,” but it was something that seemed to stick in Jessica’s mind. This was also the last day before she was to begin Kindergarten.

Matthew and Jessica had been with me for more than two consecutive weeks for our summer vacation together. Due to my schedule there was very little time to get away except for short day trips to nearby places. During this time they also had a chance to see more of what I do everyday and it was fun having them accompany me on my “daily rounds.”

In the days leading up to Labor Day we used the Internet to track Hurricane Edouard and the beginnings of Hurricane Fran. Hurricanes are the subject of one of Jessica’s newer educational books as well as a real-life drama for many who live in the path of these giant storms. We also found a web site devoted to Matthew’s favorite storytime subject “Thomas the Tank Engine” and his friends. This site allowed us to download pages for Matthew and Jessica to color. We also cyber-visited many other places designed specifically for kids. I mention this because the Internet is now an integral part of our daily life.

The Thomas the Tank Engine site is located at:
<<http://www.pbs.org/shiningtime/onlinefun.html>>

For me, this relatively new form of interactive communication has changed many things about my day. I hardly ever purchase a newspaper anymore because I get most of my news and information from Internet sources. My long distance phone bill is now a third of what it used to be simply because I now use e-mail, which is a much more efficient way to communicate bits of information.

Those who scratch their heads and wonder why more “money isn’t being made from the

Internet” may really be missing the proverbial “forest for the trees.” The Internet and its graphic component, the World Wide Web is not yet (as of September, 1996) where one looks to find local businesses and many consumer-related products. However, this type of consumer-oriented advertising will, I have no doubt, one day find its way onto the Internet or one of its successors.

To find where dollars are currently being invested one must look at business budgets and corporate expenses. First, look at the cost of telephone service such as local and long-distance charges, telephone hardware (including fax machines), equipment maintenance, etc. Secondly, consider just how many dollars businesses currently spend on hotels, airfare, car rentals, meals and meeting places so that two or more persons who live in separate places can communicate effectively with one another. Thirdly, think about how much money businesses spend on next-day delivery of packages that contain nothing more than information printed on paper. Now consider just how much of a financial investment businesses will make in computer hardware and software to completely eliminate some of these above-mentioned expenses and to significantly reduce a few of the others.

Many of the software technologies being developed today will reduce not only the amount of traditional telephone usage, it will soon replace the fax, most document-only overnight packages and in many instances the need for business travel as well. Why travel and take two or three days away from your job or business when a video-conference facility is available in the next room or by the hour at a local video-conference center? “Intranets” will bring world-wide offices or even adjacent office buildings a lot “closer” to each other.

The Internet and its successors will transform the manner in which we communicate and thus the manner in which many of us will work and live. It is my view that this new information revolution will eventually have as much impact on the development of society as did the printing press. The ability to communicate interactively across continents in a virtually instantaneous manner will also broaden the scope of education for our children.

The U.S. and most other nations are no longer in a position to finance great public works programs such as large new airport facilities and expansive new freeway systems. The costs of such programs are staggering and fiscally prohibitive. The “information age” must find new “avenues” or “channels” of distribution.

We’ve recently seen large mergers in the entertainment industry and in industries involving local and long-distance telephone service. Companies are looking to acquire distribution systems that are already “wired” into homes such as cable TV and local telephone service. This way information, entertainment and other services can initially be delivered utilizing an existing communication infrastructure. In short, there will be a big push to bring information, services and entertainment to you rather than vice versa.

America Online has been successful in building its subscriber base because it learned an important lesson early. When you can charge people for something that you don’t need to manufacture (time) and it costs you very little per unit (a minute of time) to maintain, the more profit you make by simply providing an entertaining service. What you simply need to do is make it a worthwhile place to spend the time for which you charge.

Other online services that attempted to attract a broad base of consumers were too busy adding on additional fees for many of their services. They also missed the proverbial

“forest for the trees.” They became so focused on maximizing the average revenue per minute that the user experience was less enjoyable and people felt far more time- and money-pressured. AOL now has well over six million subscribers because it charged less for the service, provided more content without additional access fees and thus created a more comfortable and relaxed user experience. More people were apt to stay online longer because they enjoyed themselves.

AOL also has chat rooms and a lot of them. In my view, chat rooms are a social phenomenon of the “information age.” They illustrate the extent to which people will seek out others to communicate, share an idea, or just find someone with whom to argue. By providing forums for people to communicate in this way, AOL developed a consistent revenue source for the company.

The Internet and “intranets” will continue to grow and transform the way we work, live and access information. As we head into the Christmas season there will be a heavy consumer push on Internet-related devices and items. Consumers will follow slowly. The big change will ultimately be the manner in which we access and share information across town and around the world. As I mentioned, the Internet has already changed the way in which I gather information and now go about my day. It is also transforming some of the ways that Matthew and Jessica learn and play. I’m happy that their idea of a family pet was incorporated into Apple’s browser software design and is called a “Cyberdog.” The Internet truly has opened the entire world to their interactive exploration.

It has been stated many times now that Apple Computer is focusing much of its attention and development effort on Internet-based technologies and products. QuickTime and the continuing development of OpenDoc are examples of Apple’s technology leadership and vision. In my view, Apple is very well-positioned for the continuing information revolution.

As we were heading out of Ventura and looking for that special tree, I remembered the first time I saw it. It was the day after Thanksgiving in 1994. A friend and I took a day trip to the area to do some casual Christmas shopping and to simply walk around by the ocean. I liked the ocean breeze and she enjoyed the gourmet coffee shop. We were walking through a park and we looked up and saw this beautiful, majestic tree which towered above the surrounding square.

We sat under the tree for just a little while and we talked about what it would be like to be a child and grow up in a neighborhood with a park just like this one. It’d be the center of neighborhood communication and the spot for games of “Hide and Seek” and “Kick the Can” on those long summer nights. It’s a place where the ocean breeze blows and the whistle of the freight train can be faintly heard as the engine and rail cars slowly wind their way up the California coast.

Maybe Jessica was right. Maybe we did drive all the way there to see a tree...and feel an ocean breeze, look at bookstores galore, taste a strawberry shake, and hear the faint sound of a freight train as it slowly wound its way up the California coast. These are thoughts that bring out the child in all of us, no matter when it was that we may have started Kindergarten.

Add to this scene a Macintosh with an Internet connection to view the rest of the world and I might never want to leave. Who knows what the future brings. Stay tuned...the information

revolution has begun.

"Apples, Kids and Attitude" is © 1996 by Robert Paul Leitao, rodestar@aol.com



ABOUT THIS PARTICULAR
OPINION

THE PERSONAL COMPUTING PARADIGM, BY MICHAEL TSAI

The Operating System Trickle

MacWorld Expos always seem to have themes. Two years ago, everyone wanted to see the first PowerMacs. For the first time in ten years, Apple had made completely different machines. That was back when people seemed more interested in the 680x0 emulation speed than in the new applications the PowerMac would make possible. Now, it is not uncommon to see applications that *require* a PowerMac, and few people talk about emulation speed anymore.

Last year, the unofficial theme of MacWorld Expo Boston was clones. I remember hearing people saying, "That doesn't look like a Mac!" when referring to the (now discontinued) Radius System 100. This year things were different. Everyone was accustomed to seeing PowerMacs. In fact, I'd be hard pressed to find a booth that *didn't* have one. The same goes for clones. Whatever the reason, it seemed as though most booths were giving demonstrations with clones. People are now so accustomed to seeing Power Computing machines that I don't think I heard one person say, "Is that a Mac?"

This year, the new kid in town was OpenDoc. OpenDoc and Cyberdog have been available to the public for quite a while in one form or another. But MacWorld Expo Boston was the first time that the public really got to see product demonstrations rather than technology proofs of concept. The majority of Mac users won't get these technologies until January, when Harmony (Mac OS 7.6) is released. If all goes as planned, (and I certainly hope it does) next year, MacWorld attendees will be as accustomed to OpenDoc as they were to PowerMacs and clones this year. Of course, people were still wowed by the *latest* clones, and I suspect that this will be true next year for the latest OpenDoc parts.

Perhaps the most encouraging aspect of the Expo was the amount of developer support for OpenDoc. Unlike Publish and Subscribe, Apple's first attempt at allowing different applications to work on parts of the same document, OpenDoc seems to have generated tremendous enthusiasm among both developers and users. Even better, it seems to have attracted the eye of small software companies. The Macintosh platform has always been about innovation, but in today's world, with virtual monopolies such as Microsoft and Adobe, it's hard for even an innovator to get their foot in the door. If someone wrote a specialized graphing tool that was the best in the world at what it did, it probably wouldn't stand a chance of competing with Excel or DeltaGraph because it wouldn't be able to compete as a complete graphing solution. This is going to change soon. OpenDoc will invigorate application development because products will no longer need to attempt to do everything. A spreadsheet container won't necessarily need to contain a graphing component because graphing parts will be available. Word processors will no longer have to include bare bones equation editors because specialized products will "plug in."

This is the promise of OpenDoc, and it stands a good chance of actually begin fulfilled. Digital Harbor demonstrated WAV, their new “work processor,” at MacWorld. Because Digital Harbor used Apple’s OpenDoc Framework (ODF), WAV was created in a very short period of time. In general, OpenDoc containers and parts should be much easier to write than today’s applications. And Apple’s OpenDoc Framework makes cross-platform versions easier. Digital Harbor doesn’t worry about the fact that WAV will not compare well feature to feature with Microsoft Word, because WAV is an OpenDoc container. This allows it to act as a word processor, page layout, and web browser, all rolled into one. And when more OpenDoc parts become available, WAV’s capabilities will expand without any rewrites or bugs tests on the part of Digital Harbor. If you want to find more information about WAV, check out the Digital Harbor web site at <<http://www.dharbor.com>>.

I think that OpenDoc has the power to “save” Apple and the Macintosh way of computing. The reduced development times, will make developers happy. It will also allow applications to have a very clear purpose. To successfully compete in an OpenDoc world, applications (or parts) will need only to do one thing very well. It also promises the end of “bloatware”. You see, OpenDoc will make it possible for new companies to form niches, and allow them to compete with the already established products on their own turf. Since (even though it’s technically cross-platform) OpenDoc is primarily a Mac technology, it will be easier for developers to write Mac programs in conjunction with, or even before their Wintel counterparts. Component Integration Labs will validate all OpenDoc parts to ensure that they will work well together.

Unfortunately, OpenDoc is a critical mass technology. Once enough people start using it, it could really take off and change the entire computing paradigm as we know it. Until then, you probably won’t hear much about it. The main question, is if major companies will introduce OpenDoc versions of their products. ClarisWorks 4 is already a good example of integration, and the soon to be released version 5.0 will make it an OpenDoc container. Many other companies have also announced OpenDoc plans. However, neither Adobe nor Quark have announced plans for OpenDoc support in their page layout programs, and at least in the beginning, it will be difficult for OpenDoc to go head to head with their programs.

The Old and New Deals

I remember years ago when Apple announced that it was working on two next generation operating systems — Copland and Gershwin — that would take Macintosh technologies to the next level. The Copland release was supposed to coincide with the delivery of the first PowerMacs, creating an entirely new machine, with a brand new operating system. Application developers thought that they would have to rewrite their software once, adding both PowerPC native code, and optimizing it to run in Copland’s new memory and tasking environments. Obviously, Copland isn’t here yet, and instead of yet another release date, Apple announced at MacWorld that it was no longer going to ship a Copland in a single release, but would instead ship it piece by piece as individual parts were completed. The press had a field day with this announcements, and the UseNet newsgroups were filled with messages titles “Copland is Canceled.”

The reality of the situation is that nothing has really changed. The part of Mac OS 8 that we’ve come to refer to as the guts of Copland (the preemptive multitasking, and the protected memory), are also the pieces that surveys show people most interested in. This

part will still not reach customers hands until at least January 1998.

In reality, Apple abandoned the monolithic release strategy years ago. As Copland's release date slipped farther and farther into the future, more and more features were stacked on top of System 7.x. Most of this started with the release of System 7 Pro. And finally, with System 7.5 new components such as QuickDraw GX, PowerTalk, and AppleScript became available to everyone. For the past several years, all new components that Apple develops have been available on internet sites for public use downloading. The new versions of QuickDraw 3D, QuickTime, and PlainTalk can be downloaded as soon as they are completed without waiting for the next complete OS overhaul.

This is exactly the new operating system release strategy that Apple has announced as its "New Plan." So at least in my mind, there is still a question about what has changed. New components such as Cyberdog and the Copland Appearance Manager will still become available to the public when they are finalized, and delivery of the interdependent guts of Mac OS 8 is still far in the future. Aside from a new official attitude at Apple, the only difference to consumers is that they will be able to buy incremental updates in addition to downloading them from the internet. This is of course, unless Apple decides to charge net savvy users for the updates too.

Leaving new software components on web servers seems to have worked in the past, and I suspect that this is generally because the people who could find them were experienced enough Mac users to know their purpose and how to install them. These people will continue to get OS updates online. Other users may not enjoy seeing continual advertisements for the latest version of the operating system, and won't be pleased to find out how minor some of the revisions are. They won't like being nickel and dimed for bug fixes or integration of preexisting components. To save people the trouble of ordering upgrade CD's when they become available each quarter, perhaps Apple should institute an update subscription plan. A customer pays a flat rate up front, and automatically has one year's worth of software updates sent to him as they become available.

Hopefully, new updates will contain more complete documentation than the current ones do. I have yet to see a complete manual for OpenDoc or Cyberdog, and betas of the AppleGuides are only now being circulated. If continual updates are truly meant for the mainstream, this is one of the areas that will need to be improved.

When Will Mac OS 8 Actually Arrive?

Apple hasn't said when the version number will change to 8, but it makes sense to do this with the release of the new microkernel and application environment. So far, Apple has been very vague about how the incremental updates will be numbered. But if it announces system updates every quarter, how is the public supposed to know which one is the "big one?" And will all these updates be accompanied by complete OS installers, or will we have to install System 7.5.3 and then apply several updates to get the latest version? The updates must be easy to install, and it must be clear what they do. Apple chose to withhold the release of "Son of Buster," System 7.5.4, for about a week because they noticed a bug in the golden master. And sure enough, an improved version (7.5.5) was released today. This is a very good sign. It shows that even though Apple intends to ship updates more often, it will continue to wait until they are ready. No matter when updates are delivered, quality is the first concern.

Apple thought that rather than announcing another Copland delay, it could announce a strategy of continual improvement. In reality, this will make things even more complicated for Apple, and its customers, and the added resources needed to test and launch updates on a regular schedule are likely to postpone the final product even more.

With Copland still off in the distance, I think that OpenDoc's success or failure will, in a large part, dictate the overall success of the Macintosh platform. The quality, quantity, and timeliness of OpenDoc parts will determine whether users once again wowed by a new paradigm and user experience from Apple, or whether OpenDoc is seen as yet another cool technology that died.

Next month, I will discuss an alternate path towards a modern OS, a mirror universe if you will, in which Mac users gain power and elegance without sacrificing compatibility. At least on paper (or on the screen), there may Be a better solution than waiting till '98 for Mac OS 8. For all those Mac users out there, let's hope so.

"The Personal Computing Paradigm" is ©1996 by Michael Tsai, mjt@sover.net.



ABOUT THIS PARTICULAR
OPINION

MACMAN TO THE RESCUE! BY MIKE SHIELDS



Friday the 13th came on Friday this month. I was all set to write about Open Transport, or maybe do my why the Mac isn't dead column, or simply clean out my mailbox of all the unanswered questions I have, and answer them.

That all changed 12 days ago, as I write this.

My wife's water broke.

Two months early.

The morning of Friday the 13th.

If this starts to sound like Paul's excellent column, I know he'll forgive me, I hope you will too.

I drove my wife to the hospital. We arrived at around 6:30 AM. They immediately got here into a bed, attached the fetal heart and contraction monitors, and gave her a shot to stop the contractions, and another to help the baby's lungs. Then, another shot of the same steroid twelve hours later.

By this time, her contractions had started again. Without going into gory details of incompetent on-call doctors and neo-natal nurses with the bedside manner of your average sea-slug, Scott James Shields was born at 7:18 AM, the morning of the 14th. Weighing in at 4 pounds 4 ounces, and measuring 18 inches. They rushed him up to NICU, (ok, so they walked fast), and informed me that his lungs were fully developed, and his color was good. They lied.

The next day, they put him on a respirator, and under a light.

The day after, they took him off the respirator, and put him on a ventilator. It seems that the original doctor had made a mistake, and there were tiny pin-prick holes in Scott's lungs, and they were collapsed.

They reinflated.

To make a long story short, which is almost too late at this point, Scott is breathing on his own now, and he's starting to nurse. We'll get to take him home when his weight gets up, and his color looks good, and he can eat consistently on his own.

Now, I'm not doing anything grandiose like telling you that I may never write another column again, quite the contrary.

The only way that I'll be able to function, is with your prayers and well wishes at the usual email address. And if you wanna send a Mac question, that'll be ok, too.

This column should return to normal next month. Stay tuned.

Mike Shields is a perspiring Screen Writer who needs \$575,000 to produce his recently finished screenplay. He can be reached at Mshields@ccgate.hac.com or ATPMOPed@aol.com. Or, if you just have a Mac question, that's ok, too.



ABOUT THIS
STUFF

REVIEWED BY MICHAEL TSAI, mjt@sover.net



SpellCatcher™

Publisher: Casady & Greene

Requirements: Mac SE or better
System 7.0 or higher
4MB RAM (total)

Price: \$48.95 (street)

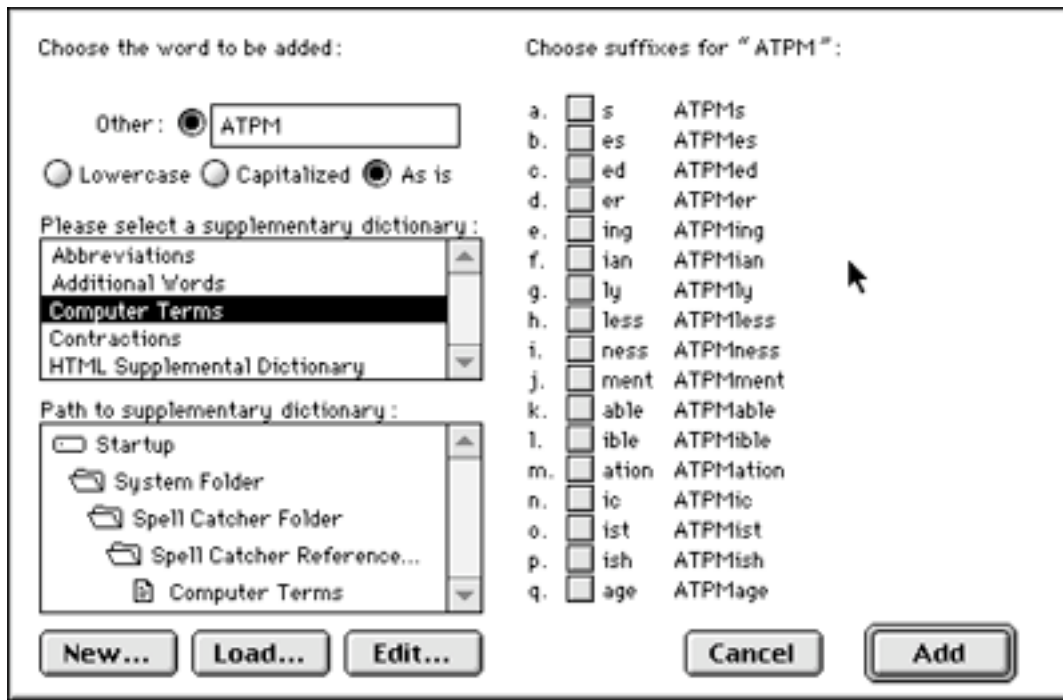
Whi cant peopole on teh internat spel?

Lately, I've been seeing quite a few UseNet signatures along these lines. Either people on the Internet really can't spell, or they can but don't take the time. With written communication, it's very important that words are spelled correctly, and in the case of UseNet postings, thousands of people will notice if they're not. Part of the problem is that most pieces of Internet software do not include spell checkers. Even if your software already does, read on to see how it could enhance your productivity.

SpellCatcher used to be called Thunder 7, and was published by Baseline software. Casady & Greene recently bought the product and is now selling an updated version under the SpellCatcher moniker. I've been using the product ever since Thunder 7 came out, and it's one of the few utilities that I can't live without. The real beauty of SpellCatcher is that it will work in just about any Mac application that supports the copying and pasting of text. It truly is a universal spelling checker — and much more. SpellCatcher adds a menu to each

application for which you activate it. From the menu, you can check the spelling of a document, access a thesaurus, and run text processing macros on a selection.

Once you install SpellCatcher, you'll never need another spelling checker. SpellChecker has saved me over 15MB of hard disk space because I no longer need dictionaries and thesauruses for WordPerfect, Word, Excel, ClarisWorks, BBEdit and all the other programs that I want to check my spelling in. And while I could have used the spell checkers and thesauruses that these programs came with, SpellChecker is a better solution. Because it's the only spell checker that I use, I only need to maintain one custom dictionary. It easily imports custom dictionaries from other programs, and allows multiple supplemental dictionaries. You'd be surprised at how many times you have to enter the same words into different programs' custom dictionaries. Also, when you add a word to SpellChecker, it lets you choose suffixes for that word, so you don't have to add the plural or other variants of the word later on.



SpellChecker comes with one of the more extensive dictionaries I've seen. It includes many common abbreviations, computer terms and company names, scientific terms, and medical terms. It is even smart enough to ignore HTML tags in a document.

Modifying Selections

In addition to spelling dictionaries, SpellChecker comes with some useful text processing features. Any of the commands in the menu to the right can be invoked on a selection of text, and are very useful for cleaning up documents. For instance, you can capitalize sentences, change straight quotes to curly ones (and

Capitalize Sentences
Capitalize Strictly
Capitalize Words
Form Paragraphs
Lowercase
Quote
Search and Replace
Smarten Quotes
Space Runs to Space

vice versa), and remove extra spaces between words. The Quote feature is very useful for email programs that don't support quoting (placing > in front of text in a reply). Finally, the Search and Replace feature is useful because some programs (such as SimpleText) don't have one built in.

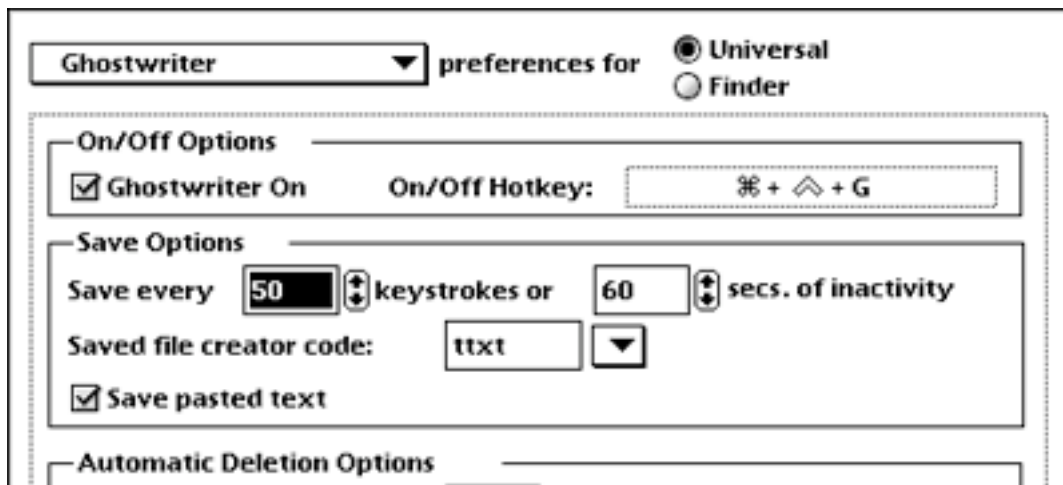
- Space runs to space
- Space runs to tab
- Spaces to tabs
- Straighten quotes
- Tabs to spaces
- Uppercase

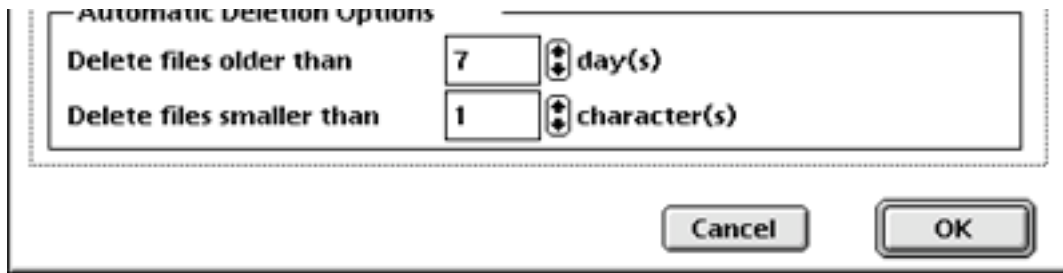
Automatic Changes

What sets SpellCatcher apart from most other spelling checkers is its interactivity. It can be set to beep when you misspell a word as you're typing. This allows you to simply backspace and correct the mistake — a much more efficient method than clicking through the buttons of the spell checker later on. SpellChecker also includes a feature similar to the AutoCorrect feature in some word processors. This Shorthand Glossary has been part of SpellCatcher for years, and will correct common typos automatically, and in just about every application. You can add abbreviations to the Shorthand Glossary as well. For instance, if I type addr, SpellCatcher inserts my complete mailing address. In addition, you can set abbreviations for the date and time so that they are automatically inserted when a special sequence of keys is typed. Finally, SpellCatcher can automatically fix common "style typos" by smartening quotes (as you type), preventing double spaces between sentences, and converting consecutive hyphens to an em dash (-- is changed to —).

Ghostwriter

Perhaps the most valuable part of SpellCatcher is the Ghostwriter. It keeps a log of every key that you type in every program where SpellCatcher is active. These keystrokes are then saved to text files in your System Folder so that if your machine crashes before you have a chance to save a document, the work that you've done isn't be lost. Because of file corruption and crashes, the Ghostwriter feature has saved me from recreating 12 documents entirely from scratch. The only thing that I don't like about it is that there is no option to temporarily disable it with a keystroke. Some other "emergency save" programs such as the shareware SuperSave offer this so that passwords are not recorded. Because of this, you probably won't want to use the Ghostwriter in programs that ask you to enter passwords.





Final Words

SpellCatcher is a very good deal because it contains so many useful features. It is also a very finely tuned product. For instance, each application for which SpellCatcher is active for can have its own set of preferences. The Shorthand and Interactive Checking features are invaluable, and the Ghostwriter feature may save you a lot of retyping someday. Finally, it consolidates all your spell checking needs. No more entering custom words, or memorizing spell checking command keys for each application that you use. Spell Checker is one of the few utilities that I can recommend to any Mac user without hesitation.

This review is ©1996 Michael Tsai.

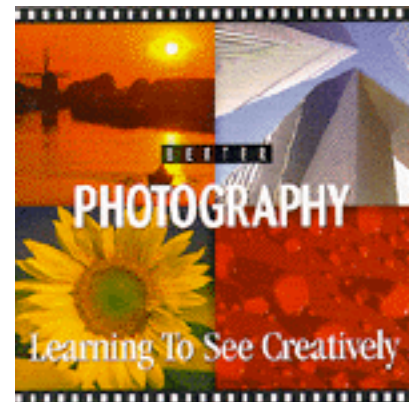
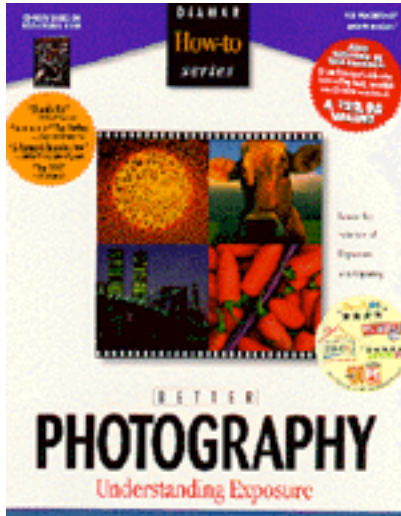
Comments and criticisms dealing with this review may be sent to mjt@sover.net.



ABOUT THIS STUFF



REVIEWED BY ROBERT MADILL, [click here for more](#)



Understanding Exposure & Learning to See Creatively CD-ROMs

Requirements: Macintosh II or greater

System 7.x or higher

4 MB of RAM

13-inch, 256-color monitor

CD-ROM drive (double speed or faster)

Publisher: DiAMAR Interactive Corporation (206) 340-5975

Price: \$52.98 for each CD-ROM and accompanying book

\$44.98 CD-ROM only

Among the games and informational software available on computer store shelves and in catalogues, lurk the instructional or educationally 'pro-active' programs. These items are often placed in the category of 'edutainment' or some such hybrid section which still defies an entirely comfortable niche. This situation aptly indicates the uncertainty with which the software buyer approaches investing their hard-earned pay for an item which may often have dubious 'cost-to-benefit' prospects. Let's face it, it's easy to be tempted, and potentially disappointed, by a CD which targets a hobby or avocation which lurks in the background waiting to satisfy those hours of our lives not claimed by our daily vocations.

Well, there they were: golfing, gardening, cooking, home improvement, body building and even how to do magic. My attention was caught by two CDs dealing with photography. I had a few ulterior motives for purchasing these programs. I am a camera artist by avocation and a photography instructor by vocation. My interest in another photographer's creative

imagery was supplemented by my primary interest in the possibility of incorporating the instructional CDs into a course I teach. I felt I was in an ideal position to evaluate the effectiveness of the programs for student use...so I launched the first CD — *Understanding Exposure — How To Shoot Great Photographs* authored by Bryan Peterson and published by DiAMAR Interactive Corp. Mr. Peterson is an award-winning photographer who specializes in available-light color photographs.



The initial screen offers individual pathways into “Getting Started,” “Interactive Theatre,” “Workshops,” “Photolab,” and the “Gallery.” These sections branch out into further subcategories. An initial alarm went off when I attempted to follow the online manual in the “Getting Started” section. The on-screen action sped along at a pace that was too fast to follow without two or three repetitions. Future explorations of the product would prove that the promised use of underlined text (HyperCard fashion) linking to supplemental information would be limited to less than five terms or concepts for the entire production. Additionally, this portion of the CD contained a narrated QuickTime movie introducing the work and biography of Mr. Peterson. It is difficult not to take this as being the equivalent of a television infomercial of the sort that even the most addicted TV couch potato would blast with the remote control.





My feelings began to warm to the production when I turned to the “Interactive Theater.” The user is to be forewarned that 30 to 60 minutes are necessary to properly complete the exploration of each of three topic areas: coverage of what Bryan Peterson calls the “Photographic Triangle” (Aperture, Shutter Speed and Film Speed or Type), a second section dealing with the “Quality of Light” and its effect on camera imagery, and finally an introduction to “Special Techniques.” A patient and methodical trip through this material left me with a double-edged conclusion.

The material was handled with expertise and insight. The explanations of depth of field, lens types, lighting conditions, exposure times and the full gamut of camera ‘technics’ were handled in a straightforward and informative manner. Both amateur and professional alike would benefit from the ‘course’ of study. Valuable encouragement and advice range from directions on using your camera as an artistic tool, as opposed to a ‘point-and-click’ device, to matching your ‘software’ (film) and ‘hardware’ (camera equipment) to achieve your desired goal - the perfect photograph. At various stages of the explanations a variety of images are offered to illustrate the techniques and principles under discussion. The studies and lengthy exercises suggested on the CDs may appear to take the intuitive fun out of photography. In fact, any professional knows that one has to master the ‘rules’ in order to develop the instincts necessary to frame the right shot without hesitation. Being shown a lesson as simple as: “The Sky is Your Friend,” delighted this seasoned photographer and contributed to my positive feelings about the production. One of the most potentially intriguing and valuable exercise suggestions involved exploring the seasonal effects on the color of light by taking pictures once a week for one year of the same subject at different times of the day under all weather conditions. Talk about dedication! But the results are invaluable. The “Workshop” and “Photolab” sections, serving as reinforcements of lessons learned in the “Interactive Theater,” are more fully developed and with some minimal interaction record individual lessons you have decided to focus on. Exposure variations (‘Bracketing’), filters and multiple exposures are among the effects demonstrated. I did discover a delightful image among Peterson’s excellent examples of macro, or closeup, photography. You get so used to seeing friends’ pictures of flowers and bugs as full frame closeups that it was a real treasure to see the his detail image of the automobile junkyard -- as slick as any abstract expressionist painting! Good stuff!

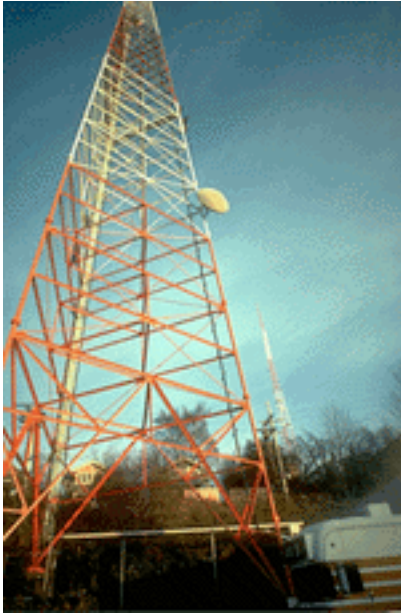
On the other hand, the potential problem with instructional media programs is that the program is often quickly outdated by advances in time and technology. Photography is a good example. Many photographers (read ‘picture takers’) have opted for entirely automatic cameras with no option of controlling aperture or shutter speed. Even the nuances of light metering discussed by Mr. Peterson are not possible with such equipment. A great number of cameras purchased in the recent past have been of the semi-automatic sort, with the choice of having control over one of either aperture or shutter speed. The move toward total automation, as evidenced by the new “Automatic Photo System” cameras, is matched only by the increasing interest in digital cameras. The possibility of the total manipulation of a digital photographic image through the use of your computer and applications such as Adobe’s **Photoshop** or **PhotoDeluxe** applications will tend to convert the new visual paparazzi to a world without conventional film or the usual photographic and darkroom processes.

The *Understanding Exposure* CD is not set up to allow one to stop a section 'mid-stream' and return to that page at a later more convenient date. You have to restart the "Interactive Theatre," and other sections, from the beginning. Fortunately, this problem is rectified in the second CD, *Learning to See Creatively*, through the use of 'Bookmarks'. Both CDs use the professional capabilities of **DIRECTOR** (©Macromedia) processes but do not really push the interactive potential of this authoring application to the fullest extent. I chose to purchase both CDs with the complementary books (advertised as a \$22.50 value). Personally I found that I appreciated the books to a greater extent than the computer media. The book images, of a higher quality of reproduction than their digitalized counterparts, and the accompanying text allowed for a more leisurely absorption of the valuable lessons and theories dealt with by Peterson. I almost felt that I should have paid the CD price for the book and the lower price for the computer disk.

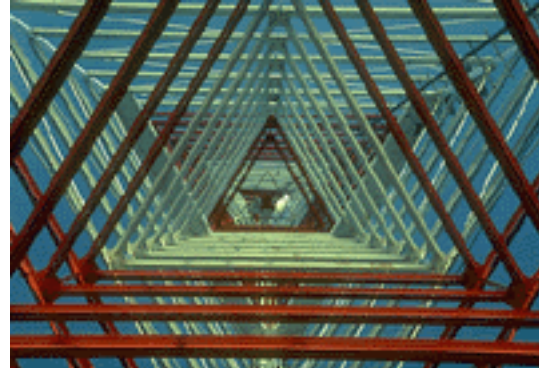


APERTURE	SHUTTER SPEED	FILM	LENS
f/8	1/125 sec.	ISO 25	105mm

The "Gallery" section, of *Understanding Exposure*, contains over 400 photographs with accompanying documentation of exposure settings. The prowess of Bryan Peterson, as a color photographer, is well evidenced in these photographs and in those contained in the second CD dealing with design composition and visual creativity. The core of the *Learning to See Creatively* CD are the over 450 Peterson photographs in the categories of Scenery, People, Closeups, and Landscapes used to illustrate principles of composition, design elements, perception and technical effects. As previously mentioned, there is a better interactive interface on this production. The involvement on this CD is more engaging as one tries to second guess the "Before and After" photographic illustrations of compositional and creative choices and has a greater degree of exploratory latitude in the "Photolabs."



Before



After

As with any artistic media such as painting, drawing or sculpture, history proves that true aficionados will return to conventional processes, equipment and techniques. After grasping the ease with which Peterson manages his material, I wish that he had created a similar product for those of us who, realizing that the artistic and creative battles have moved away from 'painting versus photography' to 'photography versus digital imaging', have returned to a love for straight black and white photography. Dramatic creativity can still be evidenced in black and white photographers who chose to follow in the image traditions of, for example, a "Yosemite National Park" by Ansel Adams or a "New York at Night" by Bernice Abbott.

This material is valuable enough to be included in the library of any avid photographer. Indeed, I shall be using both CDs as instructional resources for my photography course. An alternative option may be to purchase the book Photography by Bruce Warren (West Publishing Company, 1993), now considered to be an excellent textbook for serious photographic instruction. For those wishing a course in the technical issues handled in Peterson's *Understanding Exposure*, I would suggest that you check out the freeware computer application called *Autofocus V1.5* (January 95) by Randy Ayling, an easy download from:

<<http://hyperarchive.lcs.mit.edu/HyperArchive.html>>



This HyperCard program is almost as technically deep as Peterson's presentation (although without the photographic illustrations) and deals with the semi-automatic camera crowd. The same URL will allow you to download another valuable photographic shareware application called *Photomatica*, a useful database tool which assists you in keeping track of your photographs and negatives.



Guidelines

This chapter is the place to turn when you have a question about ATPM. Need to know where to write? Turn to the Guidelines. Need to know how to subscribe or unsubscribe? Turn to the Guidelines. You have this great story for ATPM, but you don't know where to send it? Turn to the Guidelines. If it's not here, you can always get in touch with us at ATPMEditor@aol.com and we'll do our best to help you.

A little bit about ATPM's Mission

Yeah, yeah, yeah. Sounds like we're a bit too big for our sneakers, no? What do we mean, our mission? Well, the way we envision ATPM, it's a place where you can find stories and tips and reviews and stuff that'll help you enjoy your Macintosh. Our tag line says, "About the **personal** computing experience." And that's what we believe the Macintosh is: the most personal of personal computers.

ATPM is about celebrating that, and about sharing just how cool your Mac is with the world of Macintosh users, 58 million strong, according to Apple.

ATPM doesn't make a profit. Yes, we're trying to get some sponsorship, but it's only to pay the bills. Maybe, at some point, we'll try to make some kind of profit, but for now, we're just a little operation out to show the world how cool our computers can be. And we want you to help us. We want you to write to us, with stories, anecdotes, jokes, horrific tales... anything to do with your particular Macintosh. You'll find our writer's guidelines below. Oh, and thanks for reading ATPM.

We want to hear from you!

We've said this before, but we'd like to say it again. ATPM is about your Macintosh, about our Macintoshes, and about the Macs of people who have never seen our magazine. We strive, every month, to give you a taste of what it's like to own a Mac. And for that, we need the stories, reviews, opinions, ideas, and anecdotes of Mac users just like you. We want you to write for ATPM. We'll take prose, poetry, pictures, questions, fanciful imaginings... pretty much anything you care to give. ATPM isn't much good without you, and even with a staff of editors and writers, we'll never represent the Mac user without your input. Please consider sending us your writing.

In addition, ATPM is also looking for people interest in joining our editorial staff. We currently need a **Cover Story Editor**, and a **Shareware Reviews Editor**. Please contact us at ATPMEditor@aol.com if you're interested.

Cover Art: We are proud to display new, original cover art every month. It's one of our most successful sections, and we want to keep it that way. If you're a Macintosh artist and you'd like to do a cover for us, all you have to do is ask. As soon as we have a topic, we'll let you know, and then it's all up to you. Covers are not paid, but we do mention the artist and offer space for your own plug, with an e-mail address, or a web page, or whatever you care to add. Write to: ATPMEditor@aol.com

eMail: Got a comment, a question, or a dig? We publish the most interesting e-mail every month, and would love to have yours. Send it to: ATPMEditor@aol.com

Tech Help: Got a technical question for us? Need some help with something crashing on your Mac? This is all too familiar a problem for Mac users, and we only want to make it easier. Send your problem to Macman! at MShields@ccgate.hac.com

Segments: Slices from the Macintosh Life: This is one of our most successful spaces, we think of it as a guest column. This is where we put your stories, your opinions, your pictures, your kid's MacPaint composition... this is your space. If you want to share something about how much you love your Mac, this is where you can see it published. We really want to hear from you. Send it to ATPMOpEd@aol.com

Shareware Reviews: Is there a piece of shareware you absolutely love? Something you can't live without? Something you think everyone should have on their computer? Let us know! Write up a short review for our "What to Download" section, it doesn't have to be more than a paragraph, or two at most. This is probably the easiest way to help us out. Send your reviews to ATPMReview@aol.com

Hardware and Software Reviews: We also publish full-blown "reviews" of hardware and software products. But we don't want hard nuts & bolts reviews. We want to know what you think about your stuff. We want to know how you use it, if it's useful to you, and what your problems have been. Would you buy it again? Would you let your mother buy it? If you want to write a review, talk to our reviews editor at ATPMReview@aol.com, and he'll get you squared away.

Wishful Thinking: This section appeared in one issue this year, and has been silent since then. In Wishful Thinking we have 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 ATPMEditor@aol.com



Next Time

Next month, we'll bring you the next installments of About *This* Particular Macintosh, Apples, Kids & Attitude, The Personal Computing Paradigm, and Macman to the Rescue. You'll also find more commercial and shareware reviews in our annual Fall Classic issue.

In the mean time, you can show your Apple colors on your car's rear window without the glue and mess of previous logos. These new logos are static cling "no glue" decals for the inside of the window.

Anyone can obtain "5 packs" of the logo free by calling 800-373-0877. Apple reps and resellers can obtain volume quantities free from StartingLine (part L01970A) at 800-825-2145. International orders can e-mail s.line.order@applelink.apple.com.

So help increase Apple's brand advertising by putting one on your car, your friend's car, and anything that moves! Let's show the world the size of the Mac army!

Until then, enjoy the **personal** computing experience.

