

# ATPM

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*About This Particular Macintosh™ 4.08: About the **personal** computing experience™*

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Info-Mac and all its Mirrors

**<<http://www.download.com>>**

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The CD-ROMs Accompanying:

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Thanks for reading *ATPM*.

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# Welcome

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You've seen the news and read the reviews. Apple Computer is becoming Silicon Valley's favorite hot stock and cool company. It's a story-book ending come true! With all the good news surrounding Apple these days, it's sometimes difficult to separate fact from fiction. Thankfully, the staff at *ATPM* is here to help! We're primed and rhymed to bring you our latest issue!

## Hey, Diddle, Diddle, the iMac's in the Middle!

Apple's iMac—the translucent computer representing the computer company's transparent attempt at gaining market share—is at the center of more than one industry debate. While the iMac's overall design has received a lot of praise from industrial designers, the lack of a floppy drive along with Apple's desire to use USB ports has won it a little bit of scorn.

According to the fine folks at 1 Infinite Loop, eighty percent of buyers purchase a new printer when they purchase a new CPU. Maybe they're right. Maybe they're not. However, by moving to USB from ADB we think Apple's developed a convenient way to sell other people's products and increase third-party support for the platform.

Apple will not guarantee that OS X will run glitch-free on non-G3 machines. Maybe it'll work, maybe it won't. The people most likely to benefit from this scheme are Apple's shareholders. We'll see if the this approach causes sales to “jump over the moon.” Maybe it will, maybe it won't. What we do know is that the resale value of putty-boxed, non-G3 machines has fallen through the floor. Until the iMac's pre-sale numbers are officially announced, we're keeping our feet on “solid ground.” We're not making any predictions. The *ATPM* staff will not be making any calls...except to our stockbrokers. There's talk that the company is retiring Clarus the dog-cow, but we think the company's become a rather heavy “cash cow.”

## Humpty Dumpty Sat On A Wall!

For several years Apples naysayers have claimed the company will be never be put back

together. We agree. All the king's horses and all the king's men could never put the old Apple together again. We're grateful. The new company's slimmed-down product line and laser-sharp consumer focus will win many Wintel converts. It's true that the company lacks six-PCI-slot machines and multiprocessor options. That's O.K. For now. Apple's 3rd fiscal quarter financial results speak for themselves.

In its most recent quarter, Apple Computer succeeded in growing profits while stabilizing sales. The sales slide has ended and the gross margin per unit sold increased dramatically. Most Wall Street analysts are still cautious about Apple and its future prospects. Although the company has been profitable for three consecutive quarters, there's concern that the company has done little to increase unit sales.

However, we'd like to note that the quarter ended with a short-term delay in the shipment of high-end PowerBook's and the release of the much-publicized iMac only about forty-five days away. If you were in the market for a new Macintosh and you knew the release of the \$1,299 iMac was just weeks away, what would you do? That's right. The only thing forestalling a huge increase in Apple's unit sales is pent-up demand for the Bondi-Blue computer. The most recent quarter also ended with lower inventories and a bit more cash. If analysts don't see where things are headed, Humpty Dumpty isn't the only one sporting a few cracks.

## **Jack Be Nimble, Jack be Quick!**

We'll say it. Intel's release of the Celeron chip is a big mistake. The iMac more than holds its own against 400 MHz Pentium II machines. You can imagine the test results that compare the ROM-less iMac with the slow-poke "celery chip." What is Intel thinking? Even PC pundits are expressing disappointment in the Celeron chip, as the August issue of *PC Computing* attests.

Heading into the holiday buying season, authorized Apple resellers are receiving an early gift. There's no competition for the iMac in its market. We wouldn't be surprised if Apple contracted with Umax to manufacture iMacs in order to meet demand. In late August/early September, G3 speeds approaching 400 MHz will establish the Macintosh as the undisputed price/performance leader. It's a wonderful time for Mac users. New games and new products will enhance our personal computing experience.

## **Mary, Mary, Quite Contrary!**

Apple's renewed success and financial health removes a major distraction from our midst. *ATPM* was created to celebrate the "personal computing experience." We're happy to renew our mission. This month's issue celebrates the Mac community's return to normalcy.

Unlike other publications, our goal isn't to bring you the latest hardware test results and esoteric software performance appraisals. Our e-zine has grown because we place our emphasis on the ever-changing, often humorous relationship between human beings and our six-colored logo machines. Even if the Apple trademark becomes more black and white, we intend to fill our pages with colorful anecdotes and a full spectrum of stories and reviews.

## How Much is That Doggy in the Window?

It may seem like we are switching themes, but good news about low-price and high-quality service is always “welcome” on our pages. So stated, the staff of *ATPM* is pleased to introduce our latest sponsor, Small Dog Electronics. Just in case you think we’re “barking up the wrong tree,” Please visit their Web site at <http://www.smalldog.com>. You’ll find the latest in Macintosh hardware and software at very attractive prices. Their caring, low-key approach is satisfying the needs of many Mac owners. You’ll come to know the people at Small Dog Electronics to be a Mac man’s (and Mac woman’s) best friend!

We appreciate your continued support!

*The ATPM Staff*





## Email

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

### The iMac's Place

Differences of opinion are what make horse racing interesting.

My opinion of the iMac is that it will become a very popular intro level Mac. For instance, the fancy case will fit very nicely on Mom's desk in the kitchen, flanked by a vase of flowers and a boombox. It will fit just as nicely on the desk in the daughter's bedroom where she will use it mostly for school work and e-mail.

Her brother will want something that looks like a truck to put in that jungle he calls his room. Make his a low to mid level G3, good 17-inch monitor, and all the bells and whistles that make the world of shoot-'em-ups go 'round. This dolt might not want a Mac, having been brainwashed with the notion that the WinWorld is the place for gamers. The family may have to threaten to disown him.

Dad's G3 will be in the office/den. It will be a mid or high end G3 with an extra hard drive which will be a server on this tight little in-the-home network.

I won't buy an iMac for myself. I presently have a 7100/66 to which I have added extra RAM and VRAM, and an L2 cache. It came in an educational package with a 15" Apple multiscan monitor. A few months ago I bought a 17" Sony 200sf monitor and connected both monitors to the computer.

I'm in no hurry to buy a new computer but when I do it will be a mid-level G3.

Life is good.

**Calvin E. von Weissenfluh**  
cal@comug.org

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## Outlook and Emailer

I read A TPM with interest every time I find it at Info Mac. I was interested in the Outlook Express article.

Your article doesn't specifically say it's **only** available as part of Internet Explorer, but that seems to be the only option I found when searching over at Microsloth.

So What gives?

I **love** Emailer, but am intrigued by something Apple seems so optimistic about that they're including it with their OS.

Thanks for your help and for the intriguing writings!

**Gordon Kelly**  
nodrog@pond.net

Microsoft's ActiveSetup installer allows you to download which ever components you want, to make your own custom installer. —MT

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## Scorpio and Nisus are Nice

Scorpio is a very good light word processor. I use Nisus for high-end.

**David PR Bailin**  
dprb@openix.com

Abbott Systems' Scorpio was reviewed in *ATPM* 3.03:  
<<http://www.atpm.com/3.03/>>

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## Games Construction Kit

Here is some thoughts about building a Games Construction Kit for the Mac. If the iMac and Apple together with it shall successfully break into the home market it clearly needs more games of all kinds. Games like Quake and Final Fantasy VII. I'm sure Apple is working hard to convince developers to release MacOS versions of the top ten Windows games. And I'm sure Apple is encouraging developers to make original games for the Mac and iMac especially. But there is another thing that Apple could do.

In the 80's and early 90's there were two computers companies called Commodore and Atari that had their home computer platforms that were incompatible with each other. But Commodore were more succesful and had many more games than Atari did. Along comes a program called Amos for Commodores Amiga computer and a similar one called STOS for Ataris ST computers and the shareware game market exploded. Now everyone with a some BASIC skills and some talent for graphics could make a decent game or two. And as it supported extensions there were addon packages like STOS 3D for 3D graphics (on a 16bit 8mhz computer!) and better and more advanced sprite routines.

If Apple developed a simplified game language that had built in routines for 3D graphics as advanced as Quake 2 and fast sprite routines as well as scrolling. You should be able to program a game like Unreal as well as a simplfied excel but offcourse it should be optimized for games. All controlled in BASIC style. It could be bundled with the iMac for a limited period and then sold at the price of an expensive game. And apple could release upgrades and extensions. Third partys could also make extensions if they thought their scrolling engine were better than apples or if they wanted to support a new 3D card.

Examples of similar programs is Shoot 'em up Construcion Kit for the C64, Amiga and Atari. Director and mTropolis for the Mac wich is mainly for multimedia purposes and not really fast enough to make a good game. Klick and Play for the PC wich is good for some purposes but reallisticly too limited.

This is just an suggestion but it would be great it it came true and I for one would be making games for the Mac like crazy, all for free.

**Oskar Glauser**  
Sweden

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## Apple Likes Office Just Fine ;-(

What a great publication! Where have you been all my life?

Seriously, this is good, good stuff. As a Mac manager in a Windows shop I particularly enjoyed last month's article on Microsoft Word. I have recently become a reluctant expert on the many important differences between PowerPoint 97 for Windows and the much-celebrated PowerPoint 98 for Macs.

Since my office started using the program I have had to contact Microsoft four times about capabilities available on the windows version but that do not correctly work on the Mac. Each time I was told, politely and efficiently, "that part just doesn't work in the Mac version—tough."

Is there nobody at Apple that has any pull with these people?

At least for Word, Excel and Access there is some decent, equivalent program for the Mac. But PowerPoint is basically it for presentations, especially if you need some degree of

compatibility with the other side.

I used the Microsoft hype about PowerPoint 98's equality to PowerPoint 97 to sell a bunch of my folks off of PC laptops and into G3 PowerBooks. Now that they are learning all of the things they can't do they're about to lynch me.

Y'all keep up the good work.

**Brett Trent**  
vector@cutco.com

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## Microsoft's Tactics

I have come to see very clearly how Microsoft manages to get ahold of markets: Spend time on the features, not the quality. Look at IE and Outlook Express for example:

Outlook Express has the ability to connect to multiple servers, supports rules-based message handling, MIME messages, signatures, multiple users, etc. Great, except it tends to munge enclosures, corrupt its preferences file, and other quirky stupid stuff.

Internet Explorer has great features like archiving your "visited sites" by day, so you can go back and find something you had looked up the other day, plus it remembers passwords for sites, has a nice consolidated "Download Manager," faster display speeds, and some other niceties that make it often preferable to Navigator. Again, Great, until you find things like that it doesn't run Java or Javascripts correctly, rendering many sites useless...

Microsoft always hooks me on the features, but I invariably find myself back with my original pre-MS application, wishing it had some of the features from Microsoft's product.

**Justin Leavens**  
jtleavens@bigfoot.com

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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>](mailto:editor@atpm.com). Or, if you have an opinion or announcement about the Macintosh platform in general, that's ok too.





- A. Subscribe to ATPM DOCMaker (attachment list)
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  - F. Other \_\_\_\_\_
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  - D. 10,000 - 50,000
  - E. 50,000 - 100,000
  - F. 100,000 - 200,000
  - G. 200,000 +
9. Do you forward a copy of *ATPM* to any of your friends and colleagues?
- A. Yes
  - B. No
- If yes, approximately how many people do you forward the e-zine to?
- \_\_\_\_\_
10. How do you purchase your Macintosh hardware and software?  
(Select all that apply)
- A. Mail order catalogues
  - B. Direct from the manufacturer via the internet
  - C. Direct from the manufacturer by phone
  - D. Going to computer stores (i.e. Comp USA)
  - E. Other \_\_\_\_\_
11. Do you subscribe to any of the following?  
(Select all that apply)
- A. EvangeList
  - B. *MacAddict*
  - C. *MacHome*
  - D. *MacToday*
  - E. *Macworld*
  - F. *PC Computing*
12. What is your education level?

- A. Grammar School (Or, up to age 14)
- B. High School (Or, up to age 18)
- C. College (Or, up to age 22)
- D. Graduate work (Or, any age you can get your parents to pay for!)

13. How many years of Mac experience do you have?

- A. Less than one
- B. 1-3
- C. 4-6
- D. 7+

14. If you were offered a million US dollars right now to give up filling out this form, would you do it?

- A. No way! Do you think I am crazy?
- B. I wouldn't give it up; not even for a Doom game.
- C. Of course! But my Mac would have to crash first.
- D. I would think about it if you doubled the amount.

## Optional Written Answers

1. How long have you known about *ATPM*?

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2. What do you like **most** about *ATPM*?

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3. What do you like **least** about *ATPM*?

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4. If you could add one feature to *ATPM*, what would it be?

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5. What is your favorite color? \_\_\_\_\_

6. Do you find the overall design of *ATPM* appealing or you think it can be improved?

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7. If you were given charge of *ATPM's* design for a day, which way would you direct it? More "MTV/*Wired*"? Or a more a "elegant" style?

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8. Anything else you would like to tell us? \_\_\_\_\_

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## “What Do I Do, Daddy?”

“What do I do, Daddy?” My daughter’s words startled me. My precocious seven year-old has been a Mac user since she was a toddler. She knows her way around a Macintosh desktop better than she knows the way around our block. All the more reason her question caught me by surprise. My kids and I were at CompUSA and Jessica was looking at a G3 minitower that was connected to a high-quality monitor. She had no problem seeing what was on the screen and the mouse was responding to the gentle movements of her hand. What was the difference between the Macintosh on display and the computer she has at home? The G3 minitower was running Windows 95 via Virtual PC.

Children have a natural way of knowing the “real thing” from a cheap imitation. The Mac OS has a more intuitive design than Windows 95 and it’s easier to use. That’s not personal bias, it’s computer industry fact. It’s the platform of choice for content creators and designers. It’s also the computer of choice for thousands of educators in America, provided they have the opportunity to make a choice.

I spent the past year as the business manager of a small, non-profit elementary school. I was hired to automate the school’s accounting systems. The school’s directors graciously accommodated all of my resource requests except one: They wouldn’t approve the purchase of a Macintosh. The school’s classrooms and media center are filled with seemingly inexpensive Wintel boxes that were either donated by parents or purchased for what they thought was a low price. The directors were influenced by well-meaning parents who wanted the school to use the same kind of computers in the classrooms that they used at home and at work.

As a business manager it’s easy to see that using Wintel boxes can be a costly mistake. Although many of the computers in this school are only a few years old, the motherboards have already been replaced and many of the replacement boards are quickly becoming obsolete. The cost of third-party networking cards has only added to the school’s expenses. Had the school chosen to use Macintoshes they would be saving thousands of dollars in yearly upgrade costs and the savings would go a long way towards putting new iMacs or G3 All-In-Ones in the school’s media center.

To automate the school’s accounting systems I needed to replace old 386s in the administration offices with Pentium 166s purchased from a major manufacturer at educational discount prices. One of my favorite resellers was able to find high quality 15" monitors at closeout prices. The computers came without CD-ROM drives and Ethernet cards. Additional monies were spent configuring a Windows NT 4.0 server and adding networking hardware. For a few dollars more per unit the school could have purchased G3s.

It's ironic because the best accounting software I could find to fit the school's budget and accounting needs was the Mac standard, M.Y.O.B from BestWare.

This school is not alone. There are parents and administrators all over the country who argue young children should only use Windows-based computers in school because it's the predominant OS where most people work. It's weird logic. By the time today's elementary school students enter the work force quantum computers may be common and the only evidence of Windows 95 and Windows NT might be found in interactive history books. The real concern should be what computer is best suited for today's educational curriculum and what computer represents the best long-term value. If your answer to the above question is anything other than a Macintosh, please recheck your figures. If recent history repeats itself, a Macintosh purchased today will be in original service long after the hard-working folks at Goodwill Industries have recycled its Wintel competitor.

The short time I've worked in a school environment has convinced me it would be a better world if the lessons we learned in grade school came to work with us each day. Can you imagine working in an office where people willingly took turns sharing mundane responsibilities or remembered to put things back where they found them? Why would we want to bring more of the "work world" into the school classroom?

We can learn a lot from children. We can also learn a lot from allowing ourselves to be more like children. Our newspapers are filled with sad stories about grown-ups who get caught doing "childish" things. But our church sermons and history books are filled with stories of great people who had a "child like" faith that inspired them to tame continents and build vast civilizations. The difference between being childish and childlike is a mile wide and ten miles deep. The difference isn't something we learn at work, but it is something we're supposed to learn at school. As adults, it's intended to be part of the knowledge base we bring to work.

For many years the press derided Steve Jobs for being childish. But he and a partner started an industry because they dared to foster a childlike dream. It's no mistake that the first computer in most American classrooms was an Apple product. Apple Computer is primarily a hardware company. Its main competition doesn't come from Microsoft, it's from Compaq, Dell and Gateway. That's been a hard lesson for the people at Apple Computer to learn and understand. But it's a lesson they've learned well. Ask any educator, mistakes can be valuable learning experiences.

It's my prediction that by Christmas over one million iMacs will have been ordered. One of the reasons I believe in the iMac's future success is because in their childlike enthusiasm to create a new computer, the people at Apple have stopped doing something that's childish. Namely, they've aggressively opened the market for iMac peripherals to outside vendors. Third-party vendors will be instrumental in selling the iMacs to consumers. Apple Computer is willing to share its success.

I admire Apple's co-founder Steve Wozniak. He made a lot of money at Apple and he's chosen to make a new career for himself by educating children. I also admire Steve Jobs. He's learned a lot from his mistakes and he's working hard at re-writing his place in computer industry history. I hope a lot of parents and school administrators are watching what's happening at Apple. The G3s represent the best price/performance value in today's personal computer market.

Does Apple have to offer G3s running Windows via Virtual PC? If so, it won't be for very long. The success of the iMac and other G3 models will double Apple's retail market share. Very shortly Apple will again command close to half of all new CPU sales in the education market. In the meantime, Mac advocates need to put into practice an important lesson we all learned in elementary school—if at first you don't succeed, try, try again! Tell your neighbors and tell your friends about the iMac and low-priced G3 desktops. Low prices, high performanc...The equation is rather...elementary!

"What do I do, Daddy?" That was my daughter's original question. "Be patient," is my reply. "In a couple of months you, me and your brother will buy an iMac." Thankfully, Macs are used in my children's school. The increase in Mac sales will prompt more developers to port their products to the Macintosh platform. Virtual PC need not be everyone's reality.

If your local school isn't using Macs or is considering switching to the Wintel platform, please stop by Dan Knight's Web site:

**<<http://www.iserv.net/~dknight/grps/>>**

Thanks, Dan. You're an inspiration to all of us in the OS trenches.

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## A Flicker of Hope

I admit it.

I moved to Florida because I'm a wimp.

There. Ya happy?

I couldn't stand the long winters up north any more.

Sure, the first snowstorm of the season was magical. It was great to get into snowball fights. That first sled run of the winter was a rush. Nothing made the holidays more magical than a blanket of pure white snow.

And then January rolled around. And there were = three more months of winter to go. And all of that magical snow became slush. Or worse—ice. And it only served to make my commute longer and more dangerous. Oh, and the long, dark nights. And spending the late fall, winter and early spring inside the house, shielded from the bitter cold.

Yeah, give me eternal summer any day of the week.

Why, you might be asking, is Tom talking about Arctic chill in the middle of summer?

I'm glad you asked.

First, I just thought you would like a break from the typical summer forecast of "Hazy, Hot and Humid."

The real reason, however, is this: Have you also noticed that the media is no longer calling Apple the troubled computer company?

I mean, let's take a look at that stock price. What are we talking about here? A two-year high? And, just think, the jump in stock value has nothing to do with a takeover by Oracle, Sun, Microsoft, Disney, or any of the other probable suitors mentioned over the past two years. Couple this with three consecutive profitable quarters. Wow. Could it be that Apple is not as sick as everyone in the media was telling us?

And, the Apple on-line store is breaking records for orders placed. And, believe it or not, Apple has been able to deliver its hardware on time and in quantity—a nasty habit they

picked up from clone manufacturers such as UMAX, Motorola, and Power Computing. Who knows, maybe dabbling with licensing cloners was one of the best things Apple could have done. I'm even impressed that Apple is holding firm to the August delivery date for the iMac. I'm pretty sure with this long build up of publicity, Apple has to be amassing quite a stockpile of these units while tweaking the design to ensure that it releases a winner.

And how about this vision thing? G4 chips on the horizon? A coherent plan to develop a next generation operating system that doesn't completely turn its back on legacy applications? You mean to tell me Apple has a plan for the future that doesn't involve a deus ex machina? This doesn't sound like the Apple of old, when I was sure that Bud Abbot and Lou Costello were running the show in Cupertino.

Even Microsoft, which was holding Apple in a death grip just a mere year ago, has reported that the bombshell partnership struck at last year's Macworld Expo has been profitable. Wow. Internet Explorer and Microsoft Office have been retooled to be more Mac friendly. And—best of all for Bill Gates and his crew—Mac enthusiasts are buying these products. I guess this proves the old adage that you can indeed catch more flies with honey than you can with vinegar.

But why bring up winter? How many of you had to read the classic sort story *To Build a Fire* by Jack London? If you haven't, or it's been a long time since your teacher made you read it, here's the synopsis.

This—let's not pull punches here—fool decides that he wants to travel from one town in the Yukon Territory to another in the dead of winter. Why? Who knows? Maybe one of his buddies wants to hold a Doom tournament.

Anyway, he heads out with his trusty dog, a sandwich or two, and a brilliant idea of how to get to the next town—follow a frozen stream. Sheer genius.

Now, the temperature up in this neck of the woods at that time of the year is about 50 below. It's so cold, his breath is forming icicles on his beard. One of the old timers from his little village tells this idiot not to travel alone when it gets this cold. His advice is to use the buddy system and bring someone else along, lest bad things befall him on his journey.

But does our traveller heed this sound advice?

No.

So, we find our traveller merrily skipping through the woods, when he hears the crack of the ice giving way and finds himself knee deep in frigid water. That's a bummer, because at that temperature, you're going to become a popsicle in a real hurry if you get wet. He manages to get himself to the shore, and—amid panicked thoughts of a frozen death—start a fire to dry his stuff out and become warm again so he can continue his journey.

Apple's recent successes seem like that traveller's small flame—a glimmer of hope that grows with each passing minute. While profits in the tens of millions are definitely an improvement over losses in the hundreds of millions, Apple still has a way to go before it gets on completely solid ground in the eyes of the media.

Apple has made great strides in producing for its customers. The G3 chip rocks. OS 8.1 is a far better incarnation of operating software than any flavor of OS 7. The company is finally forking over money to create and run catchy ads which inspire people to go out and buy Macintosh. Reducing the product base has certainly helped the consumer pick the right computer for his or her needs.

I believe that Apple is probably one round of successful upgrades away from having the threat of a media death watch removed for a long time to come. The first test for this will be the release of the iMac. We'll see this month if Apple can accurately predict sales of this new, trendy computer. If successful, and the G4 and OS X build up and introductions go smoothly, and— this is a big one—Apple can capitalized on this success with a sustained, creative advertising campaign, all of the stories about the “Beleaguered Apple” will be a painful memory we can tell our grandchildren.

But a lot of the optimism isn't based on what's currently out there. Instead, Apple's hopes are pinned on what is to come. And that could prove to be a risky proposition.

After all, what if the G4 chips prove to have a bug? What if the iMac doesn't sell as expected? What if Apple changes its OS plan yet again? The future could be fraught with peril. If any of these scenarios were to come true, the media will be sounding the death knell for Apple yet again. And the stock prices would fall again. And software developers would once again become skittish about producing titles for the Mac. Even something such as a change of the status for interim CEO Steve Jobs within the Apple hierarchy could have a dramatic effect on Apple's future.

I'm sure those of you who read the story *To Build a Fire* know what happens next. The traveller built his fire too close to a snow-loaded spruce tree. When the warm air rose from the fire, it knocked loose a large clump of snow which extinguished his source of heat. Oops. Just one little clump of snow stood between him being warm, dry, and ready to travel and a very cold fate.

The traveller spends the rest of the story—which isn't too much longer— frantically analyzing his dwindling options to save his hide. If only things had gone the way he wanted them to. But it was too late.

I just hope that Jobs and company had the sense to build this fire out away from the trees.

*“Apple Cider” is © 1998 by Tom Iovino, <tkiovino@aol.com>.*



ABOUT THIS PARTICULAR  
**OPINION**



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**ON A CLEAR DAY, YOU CAN SEE THE HOLLYWOOD SIGN...**  
**BY MIKE SHIELDS**

Well, as the name of the column implies, usually, I look out the window, and if I can't see the sign, I don't write. Lately, it's been hazy around here, and to top it off, this may be my last column. Really. As opposed to John Dvorak's 'Last Column' that appears in the back of *MicroTimes* each and every month. Most of the time I do want it to be his last. At least we don't have to suffer through him in the back of *MacUser* every month.

Well, I went to the ShowBiz Expo last month. I know that most of you are expecting a report on the Macworld Expo, but that's in New York, and I'm in LA. Too far to walk. I'm sure my colleagues will have a few things to say, and I'll pick up the ball next month, in case they missed anything. Not too much to report on the homefront, as I was only there for a couple of hours. I was able to speak with the fine folks at BCSoftware, and found it interesting that they upgraded the current version of Final Draft on the Windows side to make it look more like the Mac version. This brought a smile to my face, and if I can get out from under my current hell, I'll do an updated review of the new version.

Also stopped by the PowerProduction booth, makers of StoryBoard Artist, and StoryBoard Quick. Spoke with Paul, the CTO (that's chief technology officer), and he may come through with a long-sought after review copy of StoryBoard Artist 3.0. Pray for this one, as he's not returning my e-mails. Paul, are you reading this?

Got a free t-shirt from the Movie Magic people, makers of Dramatica, and Hollywood Screenwriter, among others. They promised me a review version of Screenwriter when it becomes available for the Mac, which they said would be anywhere from two months to the end of the year. Of course, they've been saying this for a year now, so don't hold your breath. They also promised me an update to Dramatica, so I'll review that one as soon as it arrives. And I didn't really have to do anything too degrading to get the free shirt, short of a live striptease in the aisle. Apparently, it was the only way to get out of the thirty minute line. They said I was the best one they had so far, and they even got it on film. I don't know if they've put it up at their website <<http://www.movie-magic.com>>, but a visit might be in order. Let me know if you see me, because they didn't ask for a model release...

The thing that scared me the most was, 99.9% of the demos were being done on Windows machines. And yet, when push came to shove, the companies admitted to selling more Mac software, so go figure.

Stopped by a few booths, just to check locations for my opus, Diamond in the Rough. Some of the people had a rough time navigating their own websites. Jean at Universal Studios was extremely helpful, however, and you can check out their site at <<http://www.UniversalStudios.com>>. I managed to find Los Angeles in 1939, so I'm

happy. Of course, I'll probably end up shooting in Toronto. By the way, the amount each of you readers has to contribute to finance the thing is down to \$6 per. So, if you can find it in your heart to go without lunch one day...

Now, as to why this might be the last you see of me for awhile...well, the other day I was asked if I wanted to accept a transfer to Newport Beach. The implication was, be transferred, or be outta work. Of course, the resulting financial burden a round trip of one hundred miles a day would put on me wasn't discussed, furthermore, I wouldn't see my family anymore. I'm told that one day, my contractor may give me a raise, but who knows?

Now, it hasn't come to a point where I have to make this decision, but the writing is on the wall. And, since I don't have 'net access at home, and probably won't 'til I get a new job, this may be Ta Ta For Now.

Of course, our division has merged with another, so, the Site Manager that offered me this golden opportunity may be himself looking for other work. It turns out that one division doesn't need two Site Managers. I've got a couple of interviews this week, but if it's anything like the one I had at Showtime, I'm not holding my breath. It seems the fine folks that bring you Stargate SG-1 among others, have a one-hundred-and-fifty-person user base. All Windows. '95 on the laptops, NT on the desktops. Somehow, they thought I could do this. Not wanting to go to the darkside, I politely answered all their questions, and received a form rejection letter the next week. Would I have taken this job had it been offered? Hell yes. I'm reminded of the guy that follows parades around with a shovel, cleaning up the elephant droppings. Someone asked him why not find something else, he replied, "What? And give up show business?"

68 and hazy in ElSegundo.

e Ya next month.

Maybe.

*Disclaimer: Mike will accept praise, flames, and job leads at: <mshields@atpm.com>. He wants to stay in the LA area and would prefer some sort of Mac job in the entertainment industry.*



ABOUT THIS PARTICULAR  
**OPINION**

THE PERSONAL COMPUTING PARADIGM, BY MICHAEL TSAI

## Macworld Expo New York

This year, for the first time, the east-coast Macworld trade show was held in New York instead of Boston. Apparently, New York is closer to the center of the “creative world” the show’s revised focus intended to target.

Overall, the show’s atmosphere was upbeat, but this year’s Macworld was probably the most boring I have attended. Unlike last year, there were no big announcements, no major product introductions, and few surprises. Unlike previous years, there was hardly any free stuff. Gone are the days of receiving free t-shirts for listening to a Dantz sales pitch. In fact, there were hardly even any free **magazines**. (Although, *MacToday* magazine did have its biggest Expo appearance to date.)

Though the show floor was full of people, there just didn’t seem to be many places for them to **be**. Last year, for instance, there were a plethora of huge booths that people tended to congregate at. Motorola and Power Computing had elaborate booths to display their speed-demon clones, with competitions that invited audience participation. Not this year. In the aftermath of the cloning debacle the only mega-booths left standing were Apple and Microsoft—whose booths were next to one another, incidentally.



Apple’s booth was full of Think Different banners.





**Microsoft wowed show goers with its Office 98 demos.**

Overall, the show seemed small and empty. Many companies simply were not there: Macromedia, Quark, Be, Netscape, and UMAX were conspicuously absent. In the past, Macworld Expo was a great place to scope out different monitor and printer options—not so this year, since only a few such companies were present. Some developers who used to have large booths were not present because they no longer exist as separate entities: Claris and Fractal Design, for instance.



**Symantec's booth: as small as they get**

Other, large, companies had small booths in the back. When the MetaCreations and Symantec's booths together are about the size of the Bare Bones Software booth, something must be awry. Even Adobe, who one would expect to be at the forefront of the "Creative World" was overshadowed by the nearby GoLive Systems, who inherited Power Computing's unofficial award for the coolest place to hang out at. With the possible exception of Apple, no company seemed as enthusiastic about its products as GoLive.

## **iMac**

Without a doubt, the hottest product at the show was the iMac. Although it was not yet shipping, Apple manufactured a hundred or so—enough so that iMacs could be found all over the show from HP's booth to Microsoft's to, of course, Apple's. I was a bit skeptical of the iMac's look at first, my impression of it having been based solely on photos. In real life, the iMac is much nicer and not quite as bold-looking. It's smooth and sculpted, but not as shiny as I'd been led to believe. The keyboard, though smaller than normal, has all the usual keys; though F1..15, the arrows, and the page up/page down keys are about half their usual sizes. The keyboard has a wonderful feel; it's not slippery like so many of the newer PC keyboards. The mouse is the most comfortable I've ever used, though a bit small (presumably because it's designed for kids). It's circular, and, since it's translucent, you can see the ball roll as you track the mouse. I was relieved to learn that the mouse doesn't light up after all.

The screen is bright and quite sharp for an entry-level machine—a big step up from some of Apple's previous small-monitor offerings. The iMac appears to be exceptionally

well-designed—from the cable routes that reduce clutter to the little stand that hinges out of the front to elevate the monitor (much like the “keyboard feet” on the early PowerBooks). The only part of it that doesn’t look and feel futuristic is the CD-ROM drive, which lacks a motorized loading tray.



This iMac at Apple’s booth was running a QuickTime movie showing how long it took a seven-year-old boy (and his dog) to set up an iMac vs. college-graduate computer professional setting up a Compaq Armada. The video is available for downloading at: <http://www.apple.com/imac/simple.html>.

The people in the photo are acting as most people I saw did when they first saw an iMac. They’re much more fascinated by the machine’s case than by what’s on its screen—examining it (even the back!) almost as if it were a museum piece. Amazing.

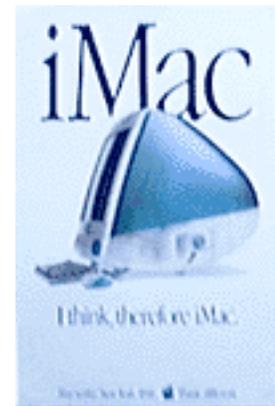




An iMac at C & G's booth displays "Origami: The Secret Life of Paper"

All over the show, vendors were showing iMac peripherals—often designed with the iMac's color scheme in mind. From Zip drives, SparQ drives (so far unavailable for the Mac), and SuperDisk drives, to joystick and printer adapters, USB peripherals will not be lacking. Unfortunately, many will not be shipping until late this fall.

The iMac hype wasn't limited to hardware, though. All over the Javits convention center, and a bit in the city, were banners and posters touting Apple's stylish new computer. Outside a New York subway stop was an ad that read: "Chic. Not geek." At Apple's booth show goers could pick up free "I think, therefore iMac" posters. And the banner atop the entrance to the show stated: "You are entering a beige-free zone."



Best of all were the two large banners—one inside, one outside. I have **never** seen Apple hype a product so much at Macworld.



## Other Highlights

More so than in the past, this Macworld Expo was segregated: games, graphics software, utilities, and developer tools each had their own areas on the show floor. Right at the entrance to the show was the gaming section. Shareware publisher Ambrosia Software demonstrated games from its new CD on a pair of Twentieth Anniversary Macs.



**Ambrosia Software**

Palm Computing made a big splash this year showing off its Palm III organizer. (With the Newton's demise, the Pilot seems to have become the PDA of choice for Mac users.) The original HotSync desktop connectivity kit was a sluggish and bloated PC port. This year, Palm promised an improved "MacPac" derived from Claris Organizer, which it purchased from Apple. Unfortunately, the improved software isn't likely to be shipping until fall, according to the Palm representative to whom I spoke. Since Organizer is already written, the delay is in the conduits—the bits of code that control the data flow from Pilot applications to their desktop equivalents. Hopefully the delay will not be as long as that for the original Pilot Mac connection kit. I remember having to backup my Pilot's databases using the CodeWarrior debugger!

Connectix RAM Doubler made the jump from version 2 to 8. The new version features additional status displays that give details about how efficiently RAM Doubler is working. Apparently, it is also optimized for Microsoft Office 98. RAM Doubler 8 is a free update for RAM Doubler 2 owners, which is good because the changes from version 2 seem to be mainly cosmetic.

Also making the jump to 8 is the Casady and Greene's Conflict Catcher. The new version gains the capabilities to scan for damaged files, rebuild desktop files, and "merge" System Folders. The latter is intended to ease upgrades to later versions of Mac OS by letting you do a "clean" install of the new system, then reinstall your old extensions and control panels

using “merge.” An improved interface and the ability to get information about icons during startup by clicking on them are also welcome additions.

## Coolness Points

Although the iMac certainly was neat—and I think it’s a great machine for many purposes—what really amazed me were the new PowerBook G3s. In the short time I was able to play with them, I was convinced that they are some of the best-designed machine’s Apple has made yet. For more on the G3 PowerBooks see the Segments sections of *ATPM* 4.07 and this issue.

Just ahead of Apple’s DVD kit as my favorite PowerBook enhancement was the ixMicro RoadRocket. Similar to the company’s PCI video cards, the RoadRocket lets you hook up an external monitor to your Mac. The difference is that it works with a **PowerBook**. The rather thick CardBus card plugs into the PCMCIA slot of your PowerBook G3 and lets you drive monitors at resolutions up to 1280 by 1024, complete with 2D and 3D acceleration.

## Last Word

Overall, this Macworld was disappointing. Attendance was down to about 35,000, more than 10,000 less than last year’s Boston show. Still, it seemed just as crowded as in the past because the aisles were narrower and there were far fewer booths. I do not know whether the lack of exhibitors was due to the higher cost of floor space in New York, or whether it reflects less interest in the Macintosh platform. Hopefully next year when Macworld returns to Boston everything will be back to “normal.”

*“The Personal Computing Paradigm” is copyright © 1998 by Michael Tsai, <mtsai@atpm.com>. Digital photographs taken with an Apple QuickTake 200. More and higher-quality photos of the expo are available on the ATPM Web site at: <<http://www.atpm.com/4.08>>.*



# SEGMENTS

SLICES FROM THE MACINTOSH LIFE

BY MARK ZEEDAR, [marc@designwrite.com](mailto:marc@designwrite.com)



## Tales of a G3 Quest: Apple's PowerBook G3 Series Part II

I press the power key. The screen flickers. The “bong” startles me because it’s so deep, nearly as impressive as my 8500. There’s a long pause, and then the familiar smiling face. Booting continues quickly. In less than ten seconds I’m looking at the Mac OS desktop pattern.

The screen is magnificent. I cannot imagine the 14.1" could be any better. I run to my room and grab my Apple “shark” *Macworld* pullout. I unroll the huge actual size picture of the 14.1" G3 and place it over my laptop. I am impressed. It’s only about an eighth of inch bigger on each side of my screen. A test quickly shows that a standard 8.5" x 11" piece of paper floats on my screen with room to spare around it! This is truly a monster screen.

Early on in my testing I notice a dead pixel about two inches down from the upper left corner. It glows a faint green. Fortunately, it’s only noticeable when the screen’s black, like in certain games. I’m disappointed, but dead pixels happen with active matrix screens. After all, with nearly a million pixels to light up, there’s no way to guarantee perfection. Usually there are two or three bad ones and they are so tiny they are barely noticeable. Apple’s policy is not to replace screens with defective pixels unless there are several within a inch of each other. If you are really concerned about this, find a dealer who will let you test the machine before you buy it.

To my surprise, however, a few days later the bad pixel was gone. It hasn’t returned, and running the LCD Screen Tester program I got from <http://www.download.com> showed I now have **no** bad pixels. I heard several reports on the ‘net about this—it seems others

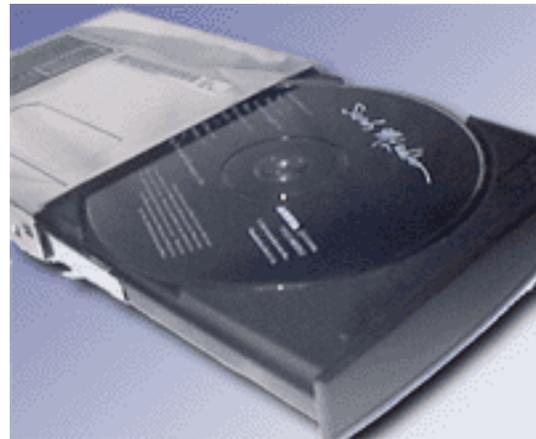
have had bad pixels “cured,” too. Perhaps it will come back, perhaps not.

Overall, I’m amazed at the screen’s quality. It doesn’t have the curved surface of my 21” monitor, and while text is smaller (because of the LCD’s fine pixels-per-inch), you tend to sit closer to a laptop than to a large screen. I like my menus and icons tiny—it keeps them out of my way. For word processing I usually set my font to 14-point until I’m ready to print, but I do that on my 21” monitor, too. There is some color shifting depending on your viewing angle: from above things are washed out and from below too dark. Things look great from the sides, though dimmer and with some glare. Looking at my 190cs from the sides was terrible: everything looked inverted, like a photo negative.

I look through the installed software. Pretty standard OS 8.1 affair. Webwacker’s the only new bundle I see. It apparently lets you download entire Web sites in one go so you can browse them off-line. Sounds interesting.

First disappointment: no ClarisWorks 5.0. I received 4.0 with my 190cs and I’d put off upgrading thinking I’d get a new version with my new computer. Kind of chinsey, Apple. Perhaps this means ClarisWorks is dead or dying. Who knows? But for three grand I would have expected it included.

Now to try out the CD-ROM drive. When I first heard of including them in laptops I thought the idea ludicrous. They seemed bulky and awkward, and what was the point? Now, however, most software is distributed on CDs. Not having a built-in CD-ROM drive is a huge liability. You can always connect one via SCSI, but that’s a hassle, especially when traveling. This is, after all, a PowerBook.



Getting my first CD installed took me a few seconds. There are three tiny spring-loaded tabs around the center hub. You have to press the disc down with a bit of force to get the tabs to snap onto to the CD. Once locked, the CD isn’t going anywhere, even if you turn the ’Book upside down. Nice touch. They should do that on portable audio CD players.

As the CD-ROM drive spins up it’s pretty loud—not obnoxiously so, but noticeable. The Mac OS 8 CD mounts quickly. Inside, I find similar stuff to what’s on the hard drive. I stumble across a couple of QuickTime movie samples, including an MPEG. Double-clicking it launches MoviePlayer which plays it perfectly—no stuttering or missed frames. Even setting it to full screen works fine, and the picture is impressive. The audio, through the dual stereo speakers, is loud and clear. Now I am becoming excited! This laptop is even better than I expected.

I notice another nice touch: a button on the battery lights up a series of tiny green LEDs to show the current charge. If all four



are lit, the battery is fully charged. This

works even when the battery is out of the computer, which is great if you have several batteries and can't remember which one you already used. When you plug in the AC, the battery automatically begins charging. The cool thing is that while it's charging, the lights on the battery glow accordingly, so just looking at the outside of the 'Book tells you if the battery's finished charging or not.

In the past, Apple's Nickel-Cadmium batteries suffered a "memory" problem. If you used up half a battery's charge and then refilled it, from that point on it would begin to think that half-full was full. You had to be careful to discharge the battery to nothing before recharging. Thankfully, the new Lithium-Ion batteries are not supposed to suffer from that problem.

A few more tests and experiments and I'm ready to customize. I restart while holding down the "C" key to boot from the CD. It works perfectly. I find Drive Setup and, in about five minutes, I've erased and partitioned my two-GB hard drive into four volumes: Boot (500), Apps (900), Data (350), and Scratch (289). For a number of reasons, I like my software separated. (I like my food the same way.)

The Mac OS CD includes a "restore hard drive" application which quickly recreates the entire original PowerBook G3 Series hard drive from a huge disk image. It takes about five minutes—far less than a clean install of a brand new OS.

That done, I boot from the newly partitioned hard drive. Works fine. I quickly go through the Mac OS Setup assistant, and begin to customize my OS with my own preferences and Finder settings, and pick a cool desktop picture that looks amazing in full 24-bit color.

The next step is to set the PowerBook SCSI Disk Mode ID to 2 and shut down. In my room, I shut down my 8500 and connect the 'Book, using a standard SCSI cable and my handy adapter. A switch on the adapter lets me set the cable to act as SCSI-to-device or SCSI Disk Mode. I choose the latter and connect it to my SCSI chain. Turning the PowerBook on gives me a bouncing SCSI icon with the number "two" floating inside it. Booting the 8500 works. In minutes, my PowerBook's four volumes join the numerous hard drives on my desktop machine.

Copying all the material from my desktop machine takes nearly an hour and it fills up my G3's hard drive! But it's a wonderful way to get all my desktop material to my PowerBook. If I had to do that with Zip disks or even via Ethernet network, it would have taken a whole day. The 2G hard drive now seems small—but that's because I installed 3D graphics programs and other high-end software I would have never thought of doing on my old laptop. Oh, it's manageable, but I suppose someday I'll want a bigger drive.

To test out the video system, I ran Doom II, Duke Nukem, Quake, Virtual Pool, and few other games. Now I'm not much of a game player, but with this system, I just might become one. Most of those games could be set to full-screen mode, and with the stereo speakers right below the screen, the overall multimedia effect was inspiring. Monsters growl to your right and when you turn, bam! They are right there, in your face! Not being a gamer I can't judge how well these played compared to other systems, but I found nothing slow about them. Everything happened as fast as I could move, and I had everything set to maximum: largest screen, most sounds, most detail, etc. The games that permitted it I ran

in thousands of colors (16-bit) and the graphics were spectacular. Virtual Pool spins the table around so fast if you aren't careful you end up back where you started—a full 360° in a fraction of a second!

For another performance test, I ran Connectix's Virtual PC 2.0. I was conscious I didn't have enough RAM to run it without RAM Doubler, so I suspected it would be slow—it was. I allocated 25MB to VPC (which meant 18MB for W95). Not only was my Mac memory virtual, but Windows 95's own virtual memory kicked in! Running Word Pad, every time I selected a menu, the disk would thrash. At least Solitaire ran fine. (What else is Windows good for, anyway?)

Still, VPC 2.0 is optimized for the G3 chip—performance was on par or better than on my 8500 (which has 114MB of RAM but a tiny 256K L2 cache). When I ran a demo of EA Sports World Cup 98 game—unfortunately PC only—on my 8500, it was so slow I couldn't even get the game's controls to work. On the G3, however, it was able to respond to my clicks and enter game mode. Completely unplayable, but the graphics weren't bad to look at. I'll have to try it again after I upgrade my memory.

Settling down for some actual work, I discovered the ideal use for the CD-ROM drive: audio CDs. No more need to lug a portable CD player with you when you go on trips. Just pop in an audio CD and hear gorgeous sound from the built-in speakers: at high volume this thing can double as a stereo system! The speakers certainly sound better than most of those mini-speakers you attach to portable CD players. While I'm no audiophile, I could sense a lack of bass and certain tinniness in some high notes, but I still found it more than satisfactory for a laptop. For richer sound, just plug in a good pair of headphones or connect to your stereo. A nice touch: the headphone jack is not hidden behind the rear door with the other ports.

Even better, playing audio CDs uses very little battery power. When using the drive to read CD-ROMs you can hear it spin up to 20x speed: it's noisy and there's some vibration. With audio CDs, however, it's smooth and nearly silent. In one experiment, after running on battery power for nearly three hours (including game playing and lots of CD-ROM use), I set the screen to turn off instead of dim, and let the hard drive go to sleep. The only thing running was an audio CD with the volume up to nearly maximum. It played the entire CD (about 45 minutes) and still had some juice left!

One nice touch is that Apple included volume control right on the keyboard. Pressing up or down instantly adjusts the volume. Because you often use your PowerBook in public environments, this is essential and far more convenient than software volume control. There's even a handy mute button—great if the telephone rings and you need instant peace and quiet. One warning, however: the volume control is only available on the 13" and 14" models! This is because on the 12" model the control acts as a contrast adjustment instead. For me, this alone is a strong argument in favor of the larger screens.

## Other Amenities

One of the nice features of the PowerBook G3 Series is dual drive bays. The right bay handles 3.5" or 5.25" drives, like the CD-ROM drive. The left bay only accepts 3.5" drive or batteries. You can even install two batteries and double your battery life. Best of all,

everything is hot-swappable—you don't even need to put the 'Book to sleep to exchange things!

My first experience with this in action was confusing. Every time I ejected the battery, the computer immediately turned off. It was plugged in, so power shouldn't have been this issue. After fussing with this for a few minutes, even double checking all my connections, I discovered the power cable had become disconnected from my surge strip! Once everything was plugged in, removing the battery and popping in the floppy drive, worked flawlessly. Note that you need to push the device all the way in until you hear it click in place. Once I didn't press in the battery all the way and when I disconnected the AC cable, the computer turned off.

Ejecting devices is easy and cool: there are hidden levers on each side at the front of the PowerBook. Pulling the lever toward you pops out the device. My 190cs' removable floppy drive had a tiny latch underneath the 'Book—you nearly had to flip the thing over to get to it. And that latch didn't do anything but unlock the drive—you still had to forcibly drag it from the bay. With the G3 Series, the lever pops the device out a good quarter-inch or so, and it removes easily. Assuming I can find the floppy drive, I can swap out the battery and have a floppy disk mounted in less than ten seconds.



Be aware that you can eject devices while they are in use—not a good idea. If you do so, an alert immediately advises you to reinsert the device or lose data. I tried this while playing an audio CD and it didn't hurt anything (except it forgot which track it had been playing).

It is interesting to note that in the Read Me that ships with the 'Book Apple mentions that copy protected programs that require key disk authorization might have trouble recognizing disks if the floppy's in the left bay. I don't know why this is, but sure enough, my attempt to authorize my copy of Final Draft screenwriting software failed until I moved the floppy to the right-hand bay. I'm glad they mentioned it, otherwise I would have been frustrated. (Copy protection is a vile enough practice as it is.)

All G3 Series PowerBooks come with a 4Mbps infrared port. Though I had no way to test mine, it will be more useful as Apple builds infrared into more computers (like the forthcoming iMac) and manufacturers include them into devices like printers.

My digital camera is a Nikon Coolpix 100 I picked up a couple of months ago for a mere \$99. It's not high-resolution, but the pictures are clear. It's innovative in that its built on a PC Card. To transfer pictures from it, you simply pop into a PC Card slot (upper or lower) and the camera's 1MB flash RAM mounts as a PC hard disk volume. The images are in standard JPEG format—open or copy them at will. It worked fine with my 190cs, and just as good with my new G3—except that now the pictures actually look good on the laptop screen!

I tested out the S-Video Out port, just to see how it worked. I used the S-Video-to-composite cable Apple included and connected it to a TV. Using the Control Strip's resolution options, I tried both 800x600 and 640x480 NTSC modes. The television picture was clear and remarkably stable (TV tends to flicker). Menus and small text, especially italic type, were difficult to read. The only real disadvantage of this mode that I could see was that since none of the TV resolutions match the PowerBook's 1024x768, it can cause havoc repositioning your desktop icons and windows. Still, for outputting movies or presentations to videotape, this feature is great.

I didn't test the monitor-out port, but it works similar to TV-out. One disappointment with both is that you cannot setup your PowerBook to support dual-screens. It's one or the other, or the external monitor simply duplicates the PowerBook screen (video mirroring). (Note that for video mirroring, your external monitor must support the same resolution as the PowerBook screen: 1024 x 768. It obviously won't work with a TV.) But I have heard that a couple third-parties are busy creating add-in devices for the G3 Series that will give you true dual-monitor support, so that option may be available for an extra cost.

## The Future

So what's next? Well, I didn't get the built-in modem, so probably at some point I'll order a cheap PC Card model. That's not quite as convenient as a built-in one, but it shouldn't cost much and will work fine.

The first thing on the agenda will be more memory. There are two memory slots on the PowerBook G3 series. The lower one is filled with 32MB module. The max that slot will hold is 64MB, and Apple requires an authorized technician to do that upgrade as it is underneath the CPU daughtercard. The upper slot you can fill yourself. I upgraded the RAM on my 190cs, which wasn't difficult, and it sounds like Apple made the upgrade process even simpler on the G3 Series. You empty both bays to access hidden latches inside the bays which releases the keyboard. With the keyboard removed, you can do any internal upgrades, including removing the hard drive. The maximum size upgrade for the upper slot is 128MB, meaning a total of 160MB or 192MB, depending on whether or not you replace the lower module. Adding 64MB would only give me 92MB—probably enough, but I'd be limited if I later needed more. So I'm thinking of waiting until the 128MB modules reach closer to \$200. Currently I've seen them for about \$250–300.

I'll also want an extra battery at some point, a case, and now that VST's Zip drives for the G3 expansion bay have gotten down to a street price of \$219, one of those is tempting. VST also makes expansion bay hard drives for the G3 Series (note that older ones for the 5300-series are not compatible with the new laptops) which I might want in the future. And Farallon's infrared printer adapter that lets any infrared-equipped PowerBook print without wires sounds intriguing. By any measure, that's more than enough expansion options to keep me busy for quite a while!

## Overall Impression

Am I satisfied with my purchase? Definitely. Any gripes I have are tiny, minute things. For instance, the little modem door on the left side of the 'Book tends to catch on things and open inadvertently. Also, the latch that holds the computer shut is a little stiff and hard to

get open. But it's better to have it too secure than not secure enough.

Overall, Apple has a winner. I do hope that they will offer CPU upgrades eventually—it's not fair to penalize early adopters who simply can't afford the initially high prices of the faster CPUs. I would have loved to have gotten the 250/13.3" model—that one strikes me as the perfect system (without being exorbitant)—but I just couldn't afford it.

These laptops are the first I've seen that conceivably can replace your desktop machine. They offer enough speed, convenience, and expandability for nearly anyone. For intense Photoshop work you'd want an external monitor, but just about any other user would be happy with the built-in screen. If I hadn't invested so much in my 8500, I'd seriously consider replacing it with a G3 Series 292-MHz model. Keeping in mind that laptops are more fragile than desktop systems, prone to thievery and data loss, and more expensive, however, I'm more than content with my choice.

I recommend going with at least the 13.3" screen if the you can. I haven't seen the economical 12" model, though it's larger than the screens of the 1400- and 3400-series. It's nice when Apple's new low-end exceeds its previous high-end!

Finally, remember that laptops are extremely personal creatures—what's perfect for one person is another's irritation. For instance, I've heard others complain about the new trackpad and trackpad button—some going so far as saying that you need to connect a mouse for optimal use—but I really like the button and pad. Others are really bothered by excess heat. It rarely bothers me, but a fully-loaded G3 Series with CD-ROM and battery does get quite hot. Some heat is dissipated via the keyboard, which makes the keys warm. Nice in winter, but in summer I wouldn't use this thing on your lap while wearing shorts! I know some people empty the bays and run off AC just because it's cooler.

If you're finicky, or if you've never owned a PowerBook before, I highly recommend you check out the new G3 PowerBooks at your nearest Apple dealer. Examine the different screens, feel the keyboard, test out the weight, run a few applications, and decide which model your pocketbook best gets along with. Unlike desktop models, PowerBooks aren't as easy to customize if you don't like something, but with the new G3 Series, Apple makes it easier to do just that.

*Images and text copyright © 1998 Marc Zeedar <marc@designwrite.com>.  
All photos taken with Nikon Coolpix 100 PC Card camera and edited and/or  
retouched on a PowerBook G3 Series 233/13.3" laptop.*



# SEGMENTS

SLICES FROM THE MACINTOSH LIFE

BY BELINDA WAGNER, [bwagner@bgsm.edu](mailto:bwagner@bgsm.edu)



I appreciated your recent *Personal Computing Paradigm* columns about Microsoft and its products. However, there is an important functionality that Microsoft has provided to the Wintel congregation. Because of this functionality, I find myself choosing the NT machine at my disposal over my Mac more and more. The reason? Microsoft, through its software and its operating system, has recognized an important reality of large, corporate entities that generate unimaginable amounts of data via a plethora of different software producing databases that are similar in structure and purpose, yet incompatible between some systems.

Large corporations still have a wide variety of Wintel hardware in their network. In our department alone most computers are still running Windows 3.1 with no more than 16Mb of RAM. For secretaries who are focused on word processing, some elementary spreadsheet work, and accessing patient appointment and surgery schedules, these machines are sufficient. However, we are finding it essential to have at least one NT machine that can handle more global projects that pull data together from a variety of sources.

It is essential that any clinical data generated by the hospital be collected electronically by us for use in departmental projects involving both patient care and research. The alternative is to physically pull charts and search manually for the data. In this age of decreased funding, efficiency is paramount. Clinical researchers are being asked to see more patients, garner more grant funds, and teach more, with less administrative support because of the ever-increasing burden that reimbursement issues place upon their assistants (yet the hours in a day have not been increased).

To get information about hospital stays, I need to access SAS datasets warehoused on a UNIX server. To get information about clinic visits, I need to access databases generated by a proprietary software—actually, the only thing that works is to generate a delimited text file, which is imported by Excel 97 with ease. These two situations are only the tip of the iceberg.

Normally, this situation would be a nightmare by anyone's standards. However, Windows 95 and Windows NT operating systems introduced a godsend of a concept—dynamic data exchange. Microsoft and developers of high-end statistical, data warehousing and enterprise software (SAS, Oracle, etc.) have teamed up to make communication and exchange of data between products a relatively easy process. There is no equivalent in the Mac OS, I'm sorry to say.

As you might expect, Microsoft Office components feed well into this data communication network.

I find myself setting up very simple Excel spreadsheet templates on secretary's and lab

technician's computers so they can quickly and easily update specific components of the larger database I am managing. Alternatives to Excel include Access, Lotus, FileMaker Pro (Windows version), and others. Unfortunately, Mac files cannot seamlessly feed into this system.

Files created by administrative or technical support are saved to the network drive and can be pulled up by the NT machine. In less than 5 minutes, I have incorporated updates from 6 attending physicians located in two departments, pulled relevant data from hospital and clinic data warehouses and spit out reports—exported back to one or multiple, personalized Excel, Lotus, or FileMaker Pro spreadsheets. The power of this system is being noticed by other departments in our division, so I imagine the number of attendings contributing to our database and the number of separate projects that incorporate this interface design will increase dramatically in the next few years.

Using dynamic data exchange, the power of a variety of statistical and enterprise software can be used to quickly analyze data collected via low-tech Excel spreadsheets. This makes for a user-friendly system and only **one** high-end NT workstation (equipped with large RAM, fast processor, and expensive software applications) is required. Administrative and technical support staff need learn the basics of only one or two applications—usually Excel and Word—to productively contribute to complex multi-center research projects. Their Windows 3.1 machines are sufficient. The whole system is marvelously cost- and time-efficient. The strengths of diverse personnel are emphasized and duplication of effort is minimized.

Fortunately, Macintosh is not totally excluded from cashing in on this goldmine. Microsoft is the engine. Maintaining that partnership and enhancing the Mac OS to include dynamic data exchange would be a big plus. It would also solve a major problem in the whole Mac vs. Windows feud. While it's true that Mac users can access many files produced on Windows machines without prior "translation" by the Windows user, the converse is not true. This sets Mac users apart in a negative way. Dynamic data exchange tools would break this barrier.

As you so correctly point out in your articles, Mac software has historically included high-quality products that are focused on easily performing common tasks. The one complaint I have about the system I work with is that we still need to load (and pay for) full-featured Excel, Access, or FileMaker Pro software on each networked machine (Network computers will not be a viable option for several years, if ever). Many individuals do not require the range of features offered in these applications. Businesses would choose machines that offered a scaled-down set of applications, but only if those machines could seamlessly feed into a networked system such as I've described above. So, Apple has an opportunity to increase its market share in large corporations if Apple and Mac software developers will seize it by adopting the dynamic data exchange paradigm.

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Send your Segments submissions to <editor@atpm.com>.*





# 'Twas the Night Before iMac



BY FRANK PETRIE, [phranky@jersey.net](mailto:phranky@jersey.net)

'Twas the night before iMac, when all through the house  
Not a hard drive was whirring, not a click of a mouse  
Young William was nestled all snug in his bed  
In a house situated on a mound that was red

His dreams were all filled with world domination  
Which brought to his heart several mild palpitations  
The technology, the information, he'd ebb the flow  
That would make it to the people in the village below

But all of a sudden sprang from his grey matter  
Something that made all his dreams break and shatter  
When, what to his wondering eyes should he see  
But a computer designed for you and for me

He sprang from his bed and he flew to the stand  
To see with his eyes this vision firsthand  
The moon on the breast of the bondi-blue case  
Gave the lustre of oceans or a magical place

More rapid than eagles, it ran at great speed,  
And to locate a plug there was nary a need  
No BIOS, no DOS, no Execute Bats  
He soon expected gremlins in cute pointy hats!

Its case—how it twinkled! Its colors so merry!  
Its industrial design seemed so light and so airy!  
His droll little mouth was now drawn in a frown  
In the words of Mike Tyson, "We're going down."

A wink of his eye and a twist of his head,  
Soon gave him the proof he had something to dread  
This was no illusion, this wasn't a dream  
This was for real and did not fit his scheme

He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work  
Hoping to unmask some flaw or some quirk  
But to his surprise as he worked through that night  
He discovered this wonder made computing seem right!

Could it be possible? Could this be true?  
Computina's not really a hard thing to do!?!

“This is great fun,” as a smile played his face  
And he felt all goose-bumpy as he hugged the blue case!

So on August 14th in the year '98  
We're on the approach of something so great  
That Bill might exclaim, with sadistic delight,  
“An iMac for all and for all a good night!”

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# Wishful Thinking

## Wishful Thinking ...



BY TIMOTHY GARTON ASH, [timothy.gartonash@st-antonys.oxford.ac.uk](mailto:timothy.gartonash@st-antonys.oxford.ac.uk)

With the launch of the iMac any day now, I'm sure that Apple has an ad campaign lined up. In fact I remember hearing someone at Apple saying that they do. Well, with all modesty, I can say that I have thought up the best campaign they should launch. Well, maybe not the **best**, but I, at least think it's pretty good.

Apple's "up to twice as fast" ads have certainly been very successful, and many PC users have seen them, but I get the impression that they do not wholly believe them. The "up to" sounds rather suspicious. I think Apple could do an advert for the iMac and at the same time prove its claims. They should have a side-by-side demonstration of a top spec PC and the iMac competing at some complex task. The iMac would of course beat the PC. Then Dreyfuss would tell the viewer the prices of both machines (the PC would cost something like \$4499.) Personally, I think that ad would help iMac sales to no end.

*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](mailto:editor@atpm.com)>*





BY JAMAL GHANDOUR, [jghandour@atpm.com](mailto:jghandour@atpm.com)

I admit that for this issue of *ATPM*, I was so excited about Photoshop's newest version that I didn't really concentrate on the art section. However, one of our dear readers sent me an e-mail asking for some Web design guidelines. It was then that it hit me: I remembered compiling a list of Web tips to help me design better Web sites (if only I could read my own chicken-scratch handwriting...err here.. :P ). After some tweaking around, they shaped up enough to be published. The more you stick to these guidelines, the more efficient your site will be. Enjoy...

## 5 Essential Tips for Effective Websites

1. Visually Appealing
2. Easily Navigable
3. Timely
4. Useful
5. Innovative



### Visually Appealing: It is a Joy to Behold

- Images should be simple, yet convey immediate meaning.
- Text should be clear.
- Animations can be very eye catching.
- Overall color of text and images should contrast nicely.

**Pitfall:** Webmasters tend to opt for beauty over clarity. Always make sure that your first concern is to keep everything clear and easy-to-read.

**Example** of a visually appealing site: <http://www.metatools.com>





## Easily Navigable: Simple and Accessible

- Avoid frames whenever possible.
- Make sure you provide text links in addition to the graphical ones.
- Try to have an intuitive on-page navigation system.

**Pitfall:** Frames, Frames, Frames, Frames, Frames, and more frames. Ever heard of tables? :D

**Example** of an easily navigable site: <http://altavista.digital.com>



## Timely: The Web Site is Speedy

- Smaller images make for faster downloading.
- Avoid unnecessary Java applets, sounds, and other time-consuming items.
- Animations can be fun but don't over do them.
- An image may convey a million words but it also downloads a million times slower.

**Pitfall:** New technologies may be spiffy, but how much interest does an end user have in a video life-stream of the back of your bedroom?

**Example** of a timely site: <http://www.apple.com>



## Useful: The Web Site is Useful

- The only reason an end user will keep coming to your site, is if he/she finds it useful (depending on the purpose of your site).
- Make sure that your site serves its purpose instantly. If you are selling cars, you don't have to show the corporate identity of your company first; show the prices! Anyway, whoever considers buying from you will probably go through the corporate identity anyway.

**Pitfall:** Give end users what they want and not what you want them to see.

**Example** of a useful site: <http://www.downloadnow.com>



## Innovative: Thrill Me

- Always have in mind that the end user has seen it all. A ready made Java applet won't be enough to make you site innovative.
- Always try to bend the rules. Example: You learned about animated GIFs, but have you ever tried them as a background for you page? Check out <http://www.atpm.com/4.08/example> for a cool example.
- Everyone raved about Apple's "Toasted" campaigns, because they were head-on collisions with Intel-based machines. Although I loved them myself, I still think "Think Different" campaigns were good, at least different. If that doesn't do it, think "iMac"!

**Pitfall:** There is a fine line between being different and being confusing. Make sure that even with the heluva of chaos that you design, everything is comprehensible.

**Example** of an innovative site: <http://www.ozones.com/~drozone/>

...

Hope you found it an interesting read! Please feel free to drop me an e-mail at [jjghandour@atpm.com](mailto:jjghandour@atpm.com) with any comments, thoughts, criticisms, or simply topics you would like discussed in here.

*Copyright © 1998 Jamal Ghandour, <jghandour@atpm.com>. Jamal Ghandour is currently the Executive Manager at SwiftAd international. His motivation for completing his masters degree in computer science was to research a device to clone many Guy Kawasakis! The research continues...*



# ABOUT THIS STUFF



REVIEWED BY MIKE SHIELDS, [mshields@atpm.com](mailto:mshields@atpm.com)



## Product Information

Published by: December Fifth Creations

Web: [<http://www.dfcreations.com/cns.html>](http://www.dfcreations.com/cns.html)

Email: [<dfcreate@SoCA.com>](mailto:dfcreate@SoCA.com)

Street Price: \$30

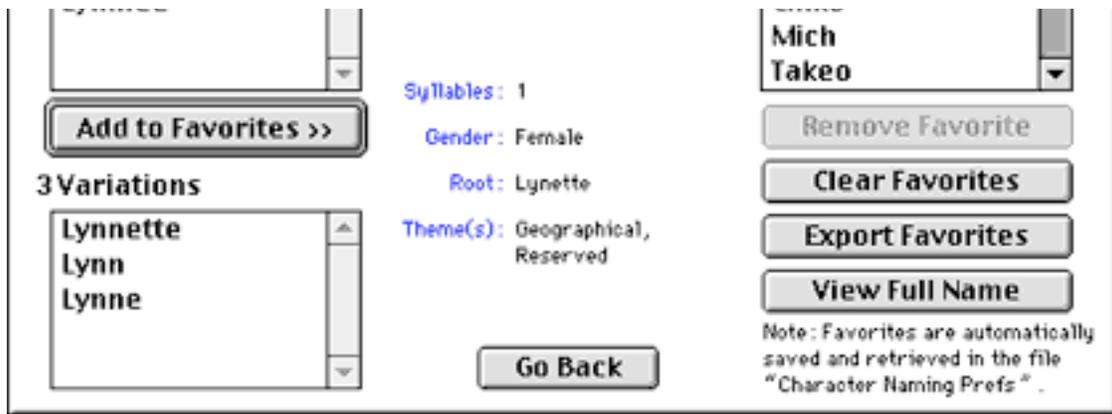
As most of you know, I'm a writer. As such, I need to name characters. So, it would seem that this software was created specifically for me. Well, not really.

I'd seen the announcement of this on the EvangeList and thought to myself, "Self, you've got to try this!" So, I gave the fine folks at December Fifth a call, and they sent me a copy. It turns out that, originally, this was simply a baby naming software tool. However, they'd gotten many requests to do last names from guys and gals like me, writing the next greatest American screenplay.

It installed easily enough. The icon has a few too many holes for my taste, so even if your cursor is directly on top of it, double-clicking to launch doesn't always produce the desired result. Annoying, but I got over it.

You're presented with a splash screen, followed by a startup screen. Remember where you go from here, 'cause you have to get back here to exit. A pain. Command-Q, anyone?





The name database itself has 12,000+ first and last names available for your perusal, grouped by various nationalities, as well as themes. Want an All-American name? Reserved? Continental? These are just some of the themes available, to give your character additional depth.

The screenshot shows a search interface titled 'Search'. At the top, there are two radio buttons: 'First Names' (selected) and 'Last Names'. Below this, the text reads 'Search for first names that:'. The search criteria are as follows: 'start with: Lynn' (text input), 'contain: ' (empty text input), 'end with: ' (empty text input), 'have definition: ' (empty text input), 'have origin: Any' (dropdown menu), '# of syllables: Any number' (dropdown menu), 'have gender: Female' (dropdown menu), and 'have theme: Any' (dropdown menu). A mouse cursor is pointing at the 'have theme: Any' dropdown. Below the search criteria is a checked checkbox labeled 'Search name variations too'. At the bottom of the form are two buttons: 'Go Back' and 'Start'.

Lookup was quick. Definitions of names were shallow, at best. Definitions of last names non-existent. I wanted to look up Horseshack to see if it indeed meant "The Cattle are Dying," but no luck.

So, in conclusion, if you're a writer, and you need character names, this software is for

you, by virtue of there being nothing else out there, that I know of. Just don't expect too much.

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# InformINIT 8.1

## Product Information

Published by: Dan Frakes

Email: [<frakes@kagi.com>](mailto:frakes@kagi.com)

Web: [<http://www.informINIT.com>](http://www.informINIT.com)

Shareware Fee: \$15

The System Folder.

Ten years of using the Macintosh, and this is the one place I still fear to tread. There are so many files with cryptic names and bizarre icons that my palms get sweaty when I open the folder. What I really need is a guide to get me through the twists and turns of this no-man's land.

One of the most comprehensive guides to the Macintosh OS, in its current and many of its former incarnations, is Dan Frake's **InformINIT**. In fact, this stand-alone DOCMaker document is used as a reference tool by Apple's support staff.

InformINIT provides a listing of Apple and third-party extensions and control panels with their current version numbers, tips on startup file management, a history of previous versions of the Mac OS with a hardware compatibility chart, step-by-step instructions on how to upgrade your system software, and reviews and suggestions of helpful software packages that do certain things for your system.

While at first you may be intimidated by the sheer amount of information contained in InformINIT, you have to remember that you don't need to read all of the information in one sitting! This guide just about has it all, and I'd be hard pressed to find a jam that it couldn't help you out of. I'm sure the majority of Mac users out there may not really give a hoot as to—say—the exact loading order of startup files. But, if you ever find yourself completely frustrated by a problem at startup, this level of detail becomes an asset.

If InformINIT just did what I described above, it would be an almost indispensable tool to keep on your hard drive. But, the author takes the service provided by InformINIT one step beyond. If your browser is running while you have InformINIT open, and you see a link near the topic you are reading, you can click on the icon and your browser will retrieve the page. This is a very handy feature—eliminating the need in some cases to have to cut the URL and paste it into your browser. OK, it saves only a few seconds, but hey, time is money, right?

If I had to make a wish list for InformINIT, it would be pretty short. I would add

descriptions of systems older than 7.5.3. While the author focuses on the latest versions of the software which support all of the older Mac platforms, you never know when you may stumble across an older Mac running 7.1, 7.0, or, heavens forbid, System 6, and need some documentation.

I would also have the author add icons of the control panels and extensions. I know it would jack the size of InformINIT, but it would prove invaluable to those of us without **Conflict Catcher** identifying the icons. Perhaps the author could provide InformINIT in two flavors, the graphics heavy version and a 'light' version for those of us who still have hard drives measured in megabytes or who surf below the 28.8 threshold.

Finally, I would recommend that the author add a list of system errors and their numbers. I mean, who knows what the heck a -23 error is offhand (openErr Requested read/write permission doesn't match driver's open permission, or Attempt to open RAM serial Driver failed, for those of you playing at home)? Maybe a quick primer on what you should know about system errors and how to avoid them would be nice too.

All in all, InformINIT is a solid piece of shareware that I would love to have with me when my Mac starts act funny.

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## Online Army Knife 1.4

### Product Information

Published by: JEM Software  
7578 Lamar Court  
Arvada, CO 80003  
Web: [<http://www.jemsoftware.com>](http://www.jemsoftware.com)  
Email: [<rbJEM@aol.com>](mailto:rbJEM@aol.com)  
List Price: \$70



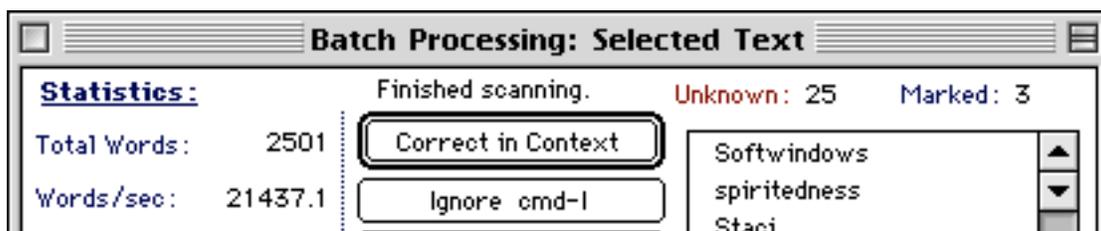
### System Requirements

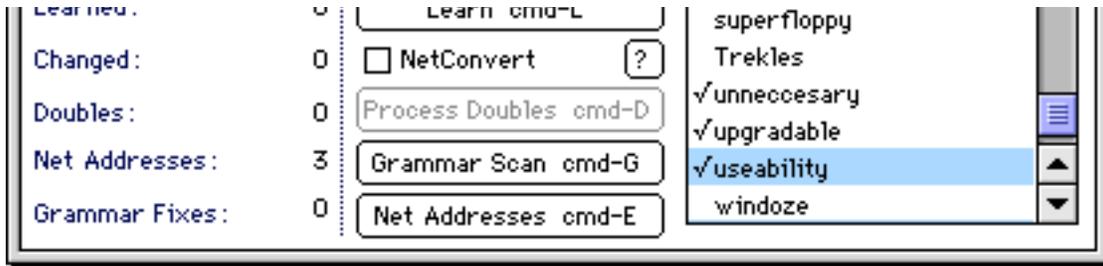
System 7.1 or later  
About 1 MB of free RAM

Though you would never know it from the name, **Online Army Knife (OAK)** is a universal spell checker. This means that it is available in every application that supports copy/paste and that you can use the same user dictionary for all applications. Plus, there is only one interface to learn and one set of keyboard commands to memorize. In addition to two different methods of spell-checking, OAK includes numerous Internet-related utilities and a real-time glossary.

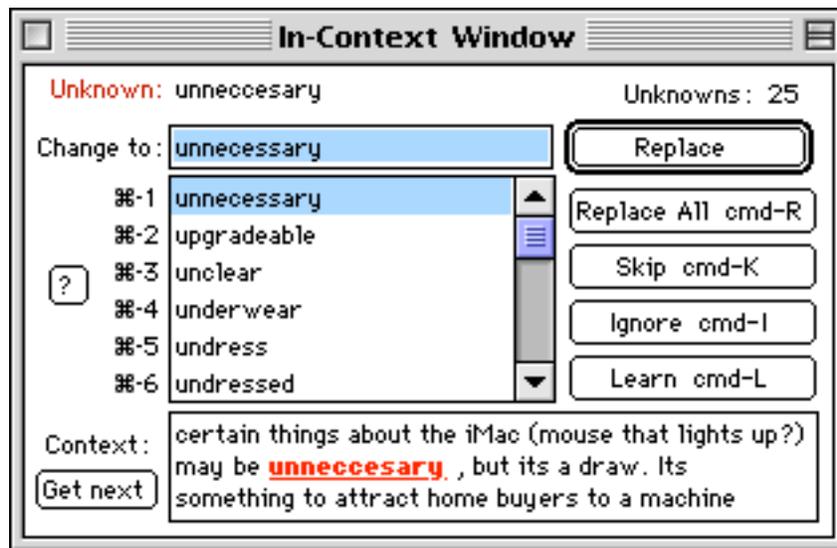
## Batch Checking

OAK's primary tool—its knife—is its spelling checker. There are two different methods of spell-checking: batch and real-time. OAK's batch mode is the best spell-checker I have ever used. Most spell-checkers are linear. That is, they search until they find an unknown word. Then the user is prompted to ignore it, correct it, add it to the dictionary, etc. Then the checker Searches for the next unknown word and prompts you again. You continue this inefficient process of reading the word on-screen, deciding what to do about it, and waiting for the spell-checker to display the next word. It takes a long time.





In contrast, OAK scans your whole document at once. It creates a list of unknown words (removing duplicates) and displays them in its batch window. Pressing <spacebar> marks an item in the list. After marking several items, you can decide what to do with them. First mark the words that need to be corrected and click on “Correct in Context.” This brings up the “In-Context” window, which shows suggestions for the word and works much like a normal spell-checker. The difference is that it only prompts you with the words you marked. After you finish correcting the marked words, you return to the “Batch Processing” window. Words that you’ve corrected are removed from the list. Next, you can mark words that should be added to OAK’s user dictionary and click “Learn” to add them all. You wanted to ignore the remaining words anyway, so can just close the Batch window and return to your document. The order of these steps is unimportant. You can do any combination of correcting, ignoring, and learning words.

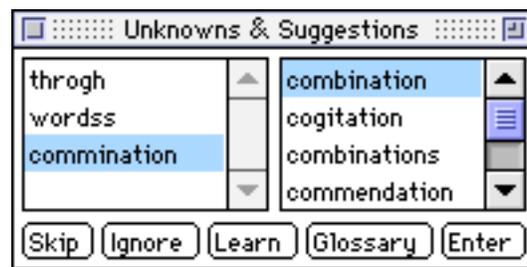


Spell-checking with OAK is fast. The initial scan was nearly instantaneous for every test document I tried. The batch method of spell checking is much faster than the normal way, plus the “Batch” window and “In-Context” windows can be completely controlled via the keyboard, for added speed. And, because you can use OAK in any program, you quickly adapt to its interface and keyboard commands.

## Real-Time Checking

In addition to batch spell-checking, OAK offers real-time checking. This is similar to, but better than, SpellCatcher’s interactive mode. With real-time checking active, OAK

displays a floating “Unknowns & Suggestions” window. While you type (no matter what the program), OAK checks to see if you’re spelling words correctly. When you make an error, OAK (optionally) beeps to notify you. Questionable words are listed on the left side of “Unknowns & Suggestions”; suggested corrections are on the right. Double-clicking on a correct word in the suggestions list makes the correction in the original document. Unfortunately, this **only** works immediately after making an error. Since OAK inserts the correction at the cursor’s position, you cannot go back and make corrections with real-time checking.



There’s no way for OAK to know whether you’ve gone back to correct a word manually. For instance, if you were typing the word “through” but first typed “throgh,” then clicked between the “o” and the “g” to add a “u,” OAK wouldn’t know you’d fixed the word on your own, and it would still flag it as unknown. However, OAK is reasonably smart about the arrow keys, so if you had “arrowed” back to make the correction, OAK would know what you had done.

## Automatic Corrections

In addition to the above methods of spell-checking, OAK automatically can fix common mistakes such as transpositions and lowercase letters at the beginnings of sentences. It also supports real-time glossary substitution. You can make common typing mistakes into glossary entries so that, for instance, “teh” will automatically be changed to “the.” The glossary can also be used to enter boilerplate text such as addresses and e-mail signatures with only a few keystrokes. My only complaint is that it does not support application-specific preferences for whether these automated services are active.

## Other Tools

Like every Army Knife, OAK comes with a host of additional tools, many of which are accessible from the OAK Options floating window. They include:



- A simple **grammar checker** that can correct doubled spaces and flag commonly

misused words (like “you’re” and “your”). Unfortunately, it can only flag words; it has no idea whether or not your usage is correct.

- **Net Conversion:** Converts characters and wraps text for transmission over the Internet.
- **Encryption:** Uses a proprietary algorithm to scramble text so it can only be deciphered with the appropriate password.
- **URL Finder:** Sifts through text to find Uniform Resource Locators.
- Tools for viewing and playing common **Internet graphic and sound** formats.
- **Memo:** A simple styled-text editor with support for OAK’s net conversion and encryption abilities. It can also speak text using Apple’s PlainTalk.
- **Key Saver:** Records your keystrokes to a file so that, in the event of a crash, you can recover work, even if you hadn’t saved.
- **Crossword Wizard:** Helps you with crossword puzzles.
- **UltraLaunch:** Can automatically launch selected applications and/or documents at specific times.

## Nice Touches

OAK’s spelling checker is smarter than most. It correctly ignores e-mail addresses and URLs. It’s also smart about ordinal numbers (like 1st, 2nd, and 25th). It can even correct comma placement in numbers like 6,5536 and tell you to add an extra zero at the end of dollar amounts like \$6.5.

Another nice touch is that if you’re in OAK’s suggestion window and begin typing a correction, OAK dynamically improves its suggestions with each letter you type. Often, it comes up with the right correction before you’ve finished typing, in which case you can just type <return> to accept it.

At first, OAK is a bit confusing because it offers so many seemingly unrelated tools. In addition, the real-time and batch spell-checkers do not work like any you’re accustomed to (after getting used to them, you’ll find them an improvement, I think). Fortunately, OAK comes with a fantastic manual that explains all the program’s functions—both in a series of tutorials and in reference form. The manual is personal and humorous; I actually enjoyed reading it.

## Online Army Knife vs. Spell Catcher

Although they serve similar purposes, Online Army Knife and Casady & Greene’s **Spell Catcher** are very different products. OAK is an application, so it does not cause extension conflicts. It uses about 1 MB of memory when open, which is more than Spell Catcher, but uses very little when the application is not open. A small control panel called Mission

Control intercepts the keyboard commands that activate OAK's spell-checking. (You can also copy text to the clipboard and spell-check it from within OAK's menus.) In contrast, SpellCatcher adds a special menu to each application's menubar.

Spell Catcher generally makes better suggestions than OAK, but, so long as you're a decent speller, OAK's increased speed more than makes up for this.

The main advantage Spell Catcher has over OAK is that it is better at maintaining formatting and styles of a document. Although OAK usually works flawlessly, it occasionally messes up style and ruler settings. Unlike Spell Catcher, it lacks compatibility module files, and cannot make its changes using an application's find/replace command; instead it always uses the clipboard. This is somewhat less reliable in heavily styled documents and means that you cannot always spell-check whole documents that contain graphics. (Instead you must check the document in pieces that do not include graphics.)

Finally, I found Spell Catcher's text-manipulation tools more useful than OAK's assorted utilities, though this is certainly a matter of personal preference. Overall, OAK is the best Macintosh spell-checker available. It is amazingly fast, works in every application, and offers an innovative batch spell-checker, against which all others seem inefficient and downright backward. I recommend OAK to all Macintosh users.

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# ABOUT THIS STUFF



REVIEWED BY JAMAL GHANDOUR, [jghandour@atpm.com](mailto:jghandour@atpm.com)

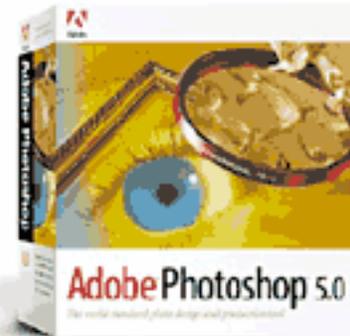
## Photoshop 5

### Product Information

Published by: Adobe Systems

Web: [<http://www.adobe.com>](http://www.adobe.com)

List Price: \$990



Adobe rightfully describes it as “The world-standard photo design and production tool.”

**Adobe Photoshop** is simply the best professional image editing software around (not to mention most expensive.) So, does the latest version (5.0) keep up the reputation? Or is it just an over-hyped resource-hungry upgrade?

At version 5.0, Adobe Photoshop is definitely in its best shape ever. The transition from 4.0 to 5.0 was very well-executed (unlike the awkward 3.0 to 4.0 transition, which left many end users confused and angry, due to radical shortcut changes.) Adobe has also, carried a complete face-lift to the code engine (which runs considerably faster now). Last, but not least, are the slew of new features, which are more than just a last day wrap-up. These babies rock!

So, where is the catch? Well, everything comes at a price, and in this case the prices to pay are huge. To work with the new features efficiently at high resolutions, tremendous amounts of both RAM and hard disk space are required. I mean **tremendous**. If you're still uncertain, just look at Adobe's stated system requirements:

#### Minimum

Mac with PowerPC processor  
System 7.5.5 or higher  
32 MB of application RAM  
80 MB of available hard-disk space  
CD-ROM drive

#### Recommended

24-bit display adapter card  
64 MB or more of application RAM  
Large-capacity hard disk

Can you see how large Adobe recommend your hard drive be? I will leave the rest to your imagination.

Although Photoshop is pretty good at what it does, various “wish list” features were (again!) omitted. The most shameful is the lack of more “Web-savvy” features (I smelled that it had to do with Adobe's ImageReady which is supposed to be Adobe's solution to Web images). If you think that is weird, then can you believe Adobe added just one new filter

this time? (We know quantity doesn't matter, but I would have loved a squeeze filter in there somewhere.) How about a plug-in management system? Why can't we manage our filters like we manage our extensions?

Another point, which everyone might find silly, is numbering. One of the things I liked most about Adobe "was" its ability to number its version correctly (at least Photoshop-wise.) While some programs were in their 20th version, Adobe was still in its fourth.

So why does this bother me so much? The Adobe we know would have named this version 4.5 (at most) because most of the improvements were good but not to the extent of jumping a whole version up. I guess either Adobe's goals are changing (release a new version: make'm pay more for the upgrade, now let's think of version 6.0) or they are trying to catch up with their Illustrator program version (as in number :P).

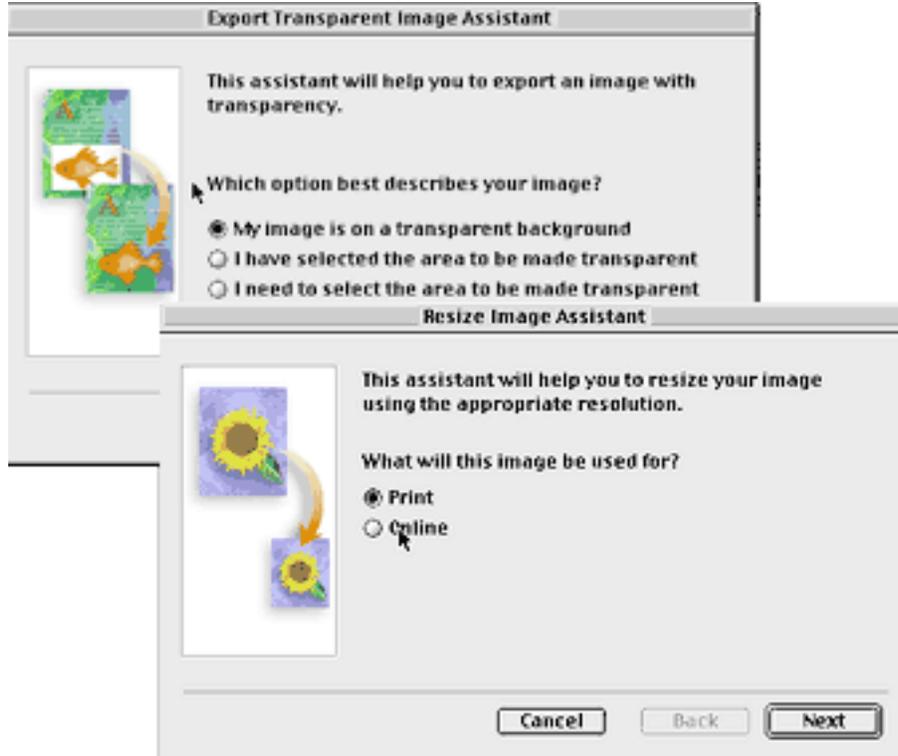
If you think, that I am just imagining things and Adobe has not changed, can anyone tell me how long it took Adobe to release Photoshop 3.0 from 2.0? Even then we passed through 2.5, and while 3.0 to 4.0 was unexpected (we were really expecting 3.5), the features were enough to justify the jump. Don't get me wrong, Adobe Photoshop 5.0 is a most welcome addition to my hard disk, and I still think that Photoshop is the role model for all the imaging software (but I would have gladly waited a few extra month for even better features). Anyway, enough opinions and let's get to the core: listed below are the new features:

- **History Palette:** In our graphic lingo often called multiple undos . Sure, it is very handy (especially that I can configure the steps of undos required) but poorly implemented. Although it works seamlessly at 72 dpi, it is a real hard disk muncher at high resolutions (not to mention slow). Excuse my ignorance, but since Adobe is making **ImageReady** the "Web-savvy" program, shouldn't our first concern in Photoshop, be high resolution images? Personally, I thought that Adobe would get the license for the "FITS" technology used in programs like **Live Picture** to overcome this problem.
- **Online Updates:** Adobe has incorporated a direct link with the web providing latest updates automatically via the net.
- **Editable Text with Character-level Formatting:** This is the feature I like most. Although it has its limitations, it is really a good implementation in such a complex program like Photoshop. The new text engine is indeed a winner.
- **Complete Color Management Including ICC Support:** Discussing color management systems (CMS) would take a whole graphics section by itself (I am willing to do it, if I get enough e-mails rolling in). All you need to know here is that Photoshop is more color-compliant than never before. This means that end-users get better overall calibration.
- **Spot-color Channels:** Photoshop 5.0 delivers the ability to specify spot-color channels for any image. With this capability, users can incorporate varnishes, metallic inks, and other specialty colors into their print jobs, and even add bump plates to their CMYK images to produce richer colors.

- Expanded Support for 48- and 64-bit color: Photoshop has long supported 8-bit color channels that produce 24-bit RGB image and 32-bit CMYK images. However, version 5.0 extends this support to include 64-bit CMYK images, for better-fidelity color ranges.

## AUTOMATIC EFFECTS

- Layer Effects: This impressive and nifty feature serves as a pre-made box of chop (channel operations) effects. Simply select the text and choose the desired effect to get some startling results.
- Image Assistant: Think of it as the Apple Guide of Photoshop. These smart little assistants guide you through “some” tasks in Photoshop. Too bad they are so few. Not as useful as Word 98’s assistants (far less pesky too), but they do the job.



- The lone warrior: Actually, it is called the 3D transform filter—the sole new addition to the filters menu. Don’t expect results you would get from a program like Adobe Dimensions, but the plug-in does some amazing results (considering its simplicity).

- Fine-tuning: Too trivial and too many to mention. Examples are: magnetism (trust me, it sounds much better than it performs) feature implemented in most tools to automatically trace images, and the previewing of duotones.

## Verdict

If you are a professional designer, with lots of hard disk space and RAM to spare, then Photoshop 5.0 is for you. Otherwise, you're better off staying with your current version. I don't really think dashing out to upgrade (both in terms of software and hardware) is really worth a few pre-saved chopped actions or even the multiple undos (you've lived without them long enough, you can do it for the next 10 months too.)

Lastly, I am interested in **your** opinion: do you think Adobe's latest release is really worth the 5.0 or just the 4.5? Just drop me an e-mail with the subject "Adobe Photoshop 5.0 or 4.5." I think it will be interesting to see the results; they will probably be published in the next issue of *ATPM*.

*Copyright © 1998 Jamal Ghandour, <jghandour@atpm.com>. Jamal has been heard screaming all over the place "no no no NO!! How could they do this to me!!" (Poor soul, the Windows version of Photoshop 5 was delivered to him three weeks before the Mac version.)*



# ABOUT THIS STUFF STUFF

REVIEWED BY ERIC BLAIR, [blair@seacoast.com](mailto:blair@seacoast.com)



## The X-Files

### Product Information

Published by: Fox Interactive

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

Rated: Teen 13+

List Price: \$54

### System Requirements

120 MHz PPC (180 MHz recommended)

12 MB RAM w/VM, 18 MB RAM w/o VM (32 MB recommended)

QuickTime 3.0 (included), 250 MB hard disk space

Thousand of colors (Millions recommended) at 640 by 480

4x CD-ROM (8x recommended)

In a move that could only be conceived by somebody's marketing department, **The X-Files** game was released almost concurrently with the movie. If you're a fan of the hit television series (as I am), this is good news for you. You'll have more than enough of *The X-Files* to get you through to the next season. If, however, you are the type of person that is only passively interested in the show, you might think that this is a bit too much. For those of you in the latter group, let me put your minds at ease: The X-Files game is a wonderful game and anybody who is a fan of **Myst**- and **Journeyman Project**-style games should pick up a copy of this game immediately.

In the game, you play the role of Agent Craig Willmore, an agent in the Seattle, WA, branch of the FBI. You have been selected to aid Assistant Director Skinner in the search for the missing Mulder and Scully, who were following a lead in the Washington area. As opposed to other games, in which all that matters is solving the puzzles presented throughout the course of the game, your actions also influence Agent Willmore's personal and professional life. The way you treat people influences everything from your partner's willingness to assist in your search to your estranged wife's attitude towards you.





Unlike many other games of this genre, *The X-Files* game uses actual sets, as opposed to computer-generated imagery. The sets look like they came directly from an episode of *The X-Files*. The sets are exceptionally complete, and you can examine just about any object that is present. The objects range from the journal in Agent Willmore's bedroom to the leftover orange juice and vodka in Mulder's abandoned hotel room. The sets are also filled with references to *X-Files* episodes. Any 'true' X Files fan will recognize these references. (I'll admit, I cheated. I used the excellent Prima Strategy Guide, which lists all the aforementioned references and explains their significance. I never would have found half of the references without the book.)

Pay attention to the little things littered throughout the game and don't be afraid to look around. I spent a good deal of time trying to figure out Agent Willmore's computer password when it was sitting in plain sight—I just never bothered to look for it.

No review of the X-Files game would be complete without mentioning how you can interact with characters. First, you can choose from numerous questions to ask the people you meet. When you speak with somebody, the game pulls together the correct QuickTime movies. I really only have two complaints with this scheme. First, there is a minor lag between QuickTime movies. It's not really noticeable on a G3, but I would guess that it is the main reason for the game's requirements: 120 MHz PPC (180 MHz PPC recommended).



My second complaint is more of a nit pick: since the game does not know in which order the questions will be asked, the discussion loses the feel of a conversation. Like I said, I'm really just picking nits, but it does cause the game feel a bit less polished than a TV episode read from a script. Another unique feature is the ability to use emotion in your dealings with people. During some conversations, you will be presented with three icons. Each icon represents an emotion. What you say to the person you are speaking with will be determined by the emotion that you click. Likewise, their response to you will be dictated by your emotional state. This is another time when the game pulls together QuickTime

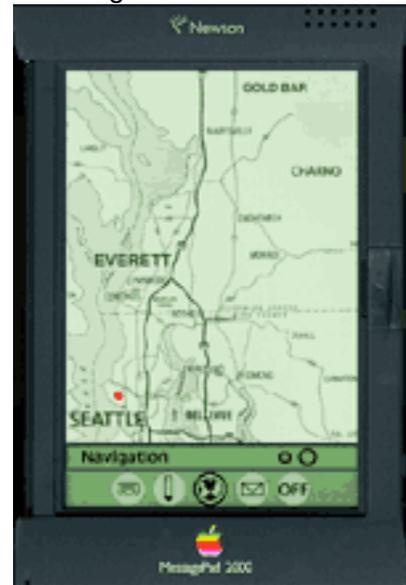
movies on the fly. Although there are some negative aspects to the swapping of QuickTime movies, they are far outweighed by the positives: namely emotions and non-linear conversations.

Several other features of the game deserve mention. First, there is the Intuition feature. If you have intuition turned on, a small blue icon will appear in the top right corner of the screen. Clicking on this icon will give you a hint to what you should do next. The second feature is Subliminal Messages. Supposedly, turning this feature on will occasionally flash messages on the screen, although I have yet to see any of these messages.

Another feature is the direct result of Steve Jobs trimming of Apple's product line: buy the game for \$50 and get a Newton Message Pad and a QuickTake Camera for free! Well, not exactly, but both the Newton and the QuickTake play prominent roles in your bag of spy tools. I must admit, it's nice to see the Apple logo prominently displayed (but I must imagine it irks Mr. Gates to see these devices used in the Windows version included on this hybrid disk).

The X-Files game is an excellent game that will please both fans of the show and fans of the Myst-type games. Granted, the Myst fans may not get some of the jokes, but they will enjoy the game. *The X-Files* fans will enjoy this game because it holds true to the series. Even though Scully and Mulder are not present until the end, there are still appearances by Skinner, CSM, and the Lone Gunmen. Also, the game begins the same way as the television episodes: a short introduction followed by the opening credits. Do yourself a favor and watch the intro—don't just hit escape. The intro shows you some things that come in handy during the game.

Remember—the truth is out there. It's up to you to find it.



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# Guidelines

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## 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 [Shareware Reviews Editor](#) and an [Interviews Manager](#). Please contact us at [<editor@atpm.com>](mailto:editor@atpm.com) if you're interested.

**Cover Art:** We enjoy the opportunity to display new, original cover art every month. We're also very proud of the people who have come forward to offer us cover art for each issue. If you're a Macintosh artist and interested in preparing a cover for *ATPM*, please e-mail us. The way the process works is pretty simple. As soon as we have a topic or theme for the upcoming issue we let you know about it. Then, it's up to you. We do not pay for

cover art but we are an international publication with a broad readership and we give appropriate credit alongside your work. There's space for an e-mail address and a Web page URL, too. Write to <[editor@atpm.com](mailto:editor@atpm.com)> for more information.

## We Want To Hear From You

**E-Mail:** Got a comment about an article that you read in *ATPM*? Is there something you'd like us to write about in a future issue? We'd love to hear from you. Send your e-mail to <[editor@atpm.com](mailto:editor@atpm.com)>. We often publish the e-mail that comes our way.

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## 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.

**Shareware Reviews:** Most of us have been there; we find that special piece of shareware that significantly improves the quality of our Macintosh life and we wonder why the entire world hasn't heard about it. Now here's the chance to tell them! Simply let us know by writing up a short review for our shareware section. Send your reviews to <reviews@atpm.com>.

**Your Stuff:** If you or your company has a product that you'd like to see reviewed, send a copy our way. We're always looking for interesting pieces of software to try out.

## Wishful Thinking

**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 <editor@atpm.com>.

## Sponsorship

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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>](mailto:editor@atpm.com).





This is the latest in *ATPM's* series of Trivia Challenges. Answers to this month's Trivia Challenge will be found in the next issue of *ATPM*. If you have any suggestions for future Trivia Challenges, or wish to comment about almost anything, please e-mail me at [<egoss@atpm.com>](mailto:egoss@atpm.com).

Little Johnny was ready! He had studied his Geography lessons in preparation for the big Final Test. He was confident. But, when he opened his test book, he discovered that the teacher had added a new question to the ones he was told to prepare for! The teacher asked the students to list a series of state mottos! Little Johnny had not studied this! So, he did the best he could to come up with some answers. See if you can match up Johnny's guesses with their respective states as you take part in:

## Trivia Challenge 4.08—Mangled Mottos

- |                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| 1. Arizona       | A. Please Don't Pronounce The "s"              |
| 2. Colorado      | B. Cook With Coal                              |
| 3. Connecticut   | C. More Than Just Potatoes...Well, Maybe Not   |
| 4. Florida       | D. WyNot?                                      |
| 5. Idaho         | E. Like The Play, Only No Singing              |
| 6. Illinois      | F. But It's Dry Heat!                          |
| 7. Indiana       | G. If You Don't Ski, Don't Bother              |
| 8. Kansas        | H. 10,000 Lakes-10,000,000,000 Mosquitoes      |
| 9. Maine         | I. First Of The Rectangle States!              |
| 10. Michigan     | J. Ask Us About Our Grandchildren              |
| 11. Minnesota    | K. Just Like Massachusetts, Only Higher Taxes  |
| 12. Oklahoma     | L. We're Really Not An Island                  |
| 13. Pennsylvania | M. 2 Billion Years Tidal Wave Free!            |
| 14. Rhode Island | N. Really Cold, But The Lobster Is Cheap       |
| 15. Wyoming      | O. First Line Of Defense Against The Canadians |

## The Rules

Each question has only *one* correct answer. The answers are stored in a hermetically sealed envelope guarded by a fierce Lhasa Apso named "Hammerli" who lives in our house.

## Last Month's Answers — #9 - Who's The Boss?

- |                           |                    |
|---------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Rob Petrie             | A. Alan Brady      |
| 2. Stephanie Vanderkellen | B. Dick Loudon     |
| 3. Ted Baxter             | C. Lou Grant       |
| 4. Diane Chambers         | D. Sam Malone      |
| 5. Deanna Troi            | E. Jean-Luc Picard |
| 6. Bobby Wheeler          | F. Louis DePalma   |
| 7. Rochester              | G. Jack Benny      |
| 8. Herb Tarlek            | H. Arthur Carlson  |
| 9. Luther VanDamme        | I. Hayden Fox      |
| 10. Lowell Mather         | J. Joe Hackett     |
| 11. Newly O'Brien         | K. Matt Dillon     |
| 12. Miles O'Brien         | L. Benjamin Sisco  |

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