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*About This Particular Macintosh™ 6.04: About the **personal** computing experience™*

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Info-Mac and all its Mirrors

<http://www.macupdate.com>

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The CD-ROMs Accompanying:

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# Welcome

Welcome to the April issue of *About This Particular Macintosh!* We'd like you to know that our expanding staff of Mac advocates have combed the earth to bring you the best news, views and reviews available on the Internet today. Despite Apple's best efforts to "lock down" information leaks and embargo important information about yet-to-be-released products, our crack team of Mac specialists have compiled an awesome, fact-filled issue of **Audacious Tidbits** and **Puckish Musings**. We lead off this issue with an important socio-fashion statement.

## Geek Chic

Mac geeks have brought about a transformation within the geek community. We have single-handedly created a new class, which can only be described as "geek chic." It's marked by a nonchalant or matter-of-fact competence in terms of our understanding of technology and its applications. In short, we don't get hung up on MHz and hardware specs, but find delight in understanding how technology can play a role in enhancing one's quality of life.

## Larry, Can You Spare a Dime?

Media reports indicate that Oracle chairman and Apple board member, Larry Ellison, is quickly closing in on Bill Gates in the who-has-the-most-money-in-the-world contest. In addition to his 24% stake in Oracle, Mr. Ellison owns and flies his very own disarmed fighter jet. What is it about Apple board members and aircraft? Mr. Ellison's personal fortune by one estimate stands at about \$57 billion, compared to about \$80 billion for Mr. Gates. So what's \$23 billion between enemies? Oracle's stock has had a stellar 52-week run. If its share price continues to rise at its current pace, Mr. Gates will soon be dethroned as the world's wealthiest person.

Oracle is the world's largest developer of database software. It's Mr. Ellison's belief that his company will benefit in a big way from the explosive growth in e-commerce in the same way Microsoft benefited from the growth in desktop PC sales. Although known for his grandiose

boasts and often-outrageous prognostications, Mr. Ellison may have a point this time. E-commerce is in an explosive growth phase...and at the center of this growth is Oracle software.

## We're #1

According to Apple Computer, IDC has rated the company tops in the education market for both the fourth calendar quarter of 1999 and the year itself, with market share numbers of 30.6% and 23.6%, respectively. It doesn't take a third grader with an iMac to realize that Apple's education share continues to rise. The release of the iBook and DVD iMacs helped Apple outpace its closest rival during the fourth quarter by about 2 to 1. Combining the power of the G3 processor with DVD, USB and FireWire, Apple's iMac is the most popular personal computer in American primary and secondary education. We expect further gains in the education market in 2000.

## Tech Data

In a reversal of Apple's recent trend toward reducing the number of wholesalers who distribute its products, Apple has returned Tech Data to its former position as a major distributor of the company's wares. The fact that Apple saw a need to increase its major distribution partners in the US from two to three (in addition to Ingram Micro and Pinacor) indicates that the company is seeking to expand its sales into new markets. While Tech Data's European and Latin American subsidiaries already carry Apple products, the company's return as a US distributor portends good news for Apple's efforts to increase its US market share and presence in the traditional distribution channel.

## Like It Ever Was an Issue?

A US District Court has dismissed a suit by Microware Systems to stop Apple Computer from using the name Mac OS 9. Apparently Microware Systems has a product called OS 9; not a product sold for desktop PCs, rather an operating system that runs on products few of us can name. It appears that the court ruled that no one would be confused if two products had a somewhat similar name but did not compete in the same markets. As a result of the ruling, Microware Systems has chosen to change the name of its product to Windows 2000. Just kidding...

## First the Best, Now the Rest

Shares of Gateway and Compaq have had a little slow going as of late. Gateway has a loyal base of installed users, but has had trouble maintaining its historical rate of sales growth (sound familiar?). On the other hand, Compaq has been making great strides to change its product line and revamp its distribution systems in the face of tough competition. Notably absent from the news stories about Gateway and Compaq, however, are the dire predictions of collapse that plagued Apple Computer when it faced a tough transition following Microsoft's Windows 95 release.

Once viewed as a competitive disadvantage, computer industry analysts are now viewing Apple's proprietary operating system as a competitive advantage. Apple does not pay Microsoft a licensing fee on each unit sold. This savings reduces the company's cost per unit and sales of the Mac OS to owners of older Macs provides Apple with a source of high margin revenue. Perception is a potent force in the minds of buyers; no longer concerned that Apple is here today but will be gone tomorrow, first-time computer buyers and former Mac owners are purchasing new Macs in very large numbers. Where does all this leave Gateway and Compaq? It leaves them with the challenge of developing better products while reducing costs.

Both Gil Amelio and Steve Jobs saw the need to slash Apple's costs by reducing the number of different products manufactured and refocusing the company's efforts on key markets. Compaq, despite its recent efforts, still has a bloated cost structure and has continued to try and maintain market share at the expense of profits. This cannot go on forever; Compaq may face another round of write-downs on its PC business before it returns to healthy profits.

Gateway, which was an innovator in the direct-to-consumer market, is facing tough competition from Dell and Apple who have recently done a much better job of reaching consumers through Web-based sales. It's no wonder Gateway's management is looking away from hardware sales in order to grow sales and profits. We see tough times ahead for both companies as they work diligently to realign their product and business strategies.

## Mighty Multi Macs

Rumors come and rumors go, but good ideas tend to stay. Apple has a problem of sorts with the lack of faster G4 chips from IBM and Motorola. This is most likely a short-term problem

but power users are always hungry for faster Macs. Mac OS X, scheduled for release this summer, may accommodate multi-processor Macs and allow Apple to ship faster, better computers while waiting on IBM and Motorola to produce G4 chips with faster clock speeds. Please don't start a rumor based on what you read here, but our guess is that multi-processor Macs will debut around the time that Mac OS X Consumer becomes available.

Please enjoy our latest issue!

The ATPM Staff



# Email

## Hi-Tech Theme

Well first, congratulations for the awesome magazine. It's really nice, simple, correct, informative.

I have a simple question: I don't normally use desktop themes, mainly because I don't know where to find **the** theme I like, which is Hi-Tech (or Vader). I met that theme many years ago, but I was disappointed when I got Mac OS 8.6 (because I jumped from an LC 475 with System 7.5.5 to a PowerBook G3/333 with Mac OS 8.6) and it didn't have the theme.

So, if you could give me an indication where can I find the theme, it would be really appreciated. In [the last issue](#)<sup>1</sup> I saw [a picture](#)<sup>2</sup> of your desktop with that theme. If is hard to find on the Net, could you send it to me please?

### Luis Flores

The Appearance theme 'hi-tech' (as well as 'Gizmo' and 'Drawing Board') was only available as part of pre-release developer versions of the Mac OS before Apple pulled it from the public release. It can still be found around the net, but Apple does not sanction its use, and its distribution is illegal. So you may have a hard time finding it.

If you want to use the Appearance theme feature of your computer, you can get some other themes legally from the [Mac Themes Project](#)<sup>3</sup>. (Click on 'Themes on the very right and then 'Theme Archive' on the top.) None of them are exactly like hi-tech, but you might find something similar.

But there is another possibility, one that is used by many Mac users: [Kaleidoscope](#)<sup>4</sup>. There is a nearly endless variety of Kaleidoscope **schemes** available. Here is [a selection of the most popular](#)<sup>5</sup>.

—Daniel Chvatik

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1. <http://www.atpm.com/6.03>
  2. <http://www.atpm.com/6.03/guijunkie.shtml>
  3. <http://www.macthemes.org>
  4. <http://www.atpm.com/5.10/roundup.shtml>
  5. <http://www.kaleidoscope.net/schemes/schemespotlight.shtml>

## Jobs's Compensation—Bad

I tire of reading about how Steve Jobs selflessly led Apple for the past two years for just \$1 a year in salary and no bonuses or stock options. Has everyone forgotten just how Steve Jobs came back to Apple? They bought his NeXT Software company for \$430,000,000 in 1997. That is far more than the company was worth, since the only products useful to Apple were WebObjects, OpenStep, and the pieces of NeXT's operating system that could be applied to Rhapsody (now Mac OS X).

Later, in a PR move to express displeasure with how CEO Gil Amelio was running Apple, Steve Jobs sold all but one of the Apple stock shares he received for NeXT Software. If he had held on to those shares, they would have quadrupled in value, and Steve Jobs would have added another billion or two to his net worth.

The current Apple board of directors grossly overcompensated Steve Jobs for his two years as interim CEO. The personal jet alone is said to be worth 60 to 90 million dollars. Jobs also received the phenomenal offer of options on ten million shares of Apple stock at less than \$88 per share. If he exercised his options today (AAPL closed at \$128 per share), Jobs would net over \$400,000,000! Not bad for a couple of years of part-time (Jobs also heads Pixar) work.

Apple's board of directors should be sued by shareholders for gross malfeasance for giving Jobs a compensation package better than that of any corporate executive in history. If Jobs had kept his Apple shares, their rise in value would have handsomely compensated him for his successful efforts as iCEO. Essentially, the board allowed Jobs to recover from his personal financial blunder (selling Apple shares before he became iCEO) and added a hefty profit besides.

**Gregory Tetrault**

## Jobs's Compensation—Good

I think that the man who “saved” Apple almost single handily deserves a one-time **big reward**<sup>6</sup>, just for that historical fact alone.

For the future, however, I think it should not become the rule. I think that in general a lot of bigheaded Bobo's get a lot more than their fair share of the money. One should and could give the other workers of a successful company a fair bonus as well.

But history learns us that people who are sitting closer to the money usually end up with more than their fair share.

E. Geers

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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.

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6. <http://www.atpm.com/6.03/welcome.shtml>

# Deep Space Mac

Have you ever stopped to think about space exploration?

Although some of us may think the money we spend studying the cosmos could be better spent helping the poor or working towards a cure for cancer, the scientific advances made by the space program have helped us a great deal here on Earth. Perhaps you have heard about a little life-saving process called magnetic resonance imaging? Portable telephones, even?

Yes, even the venerable TANG breakfast drink got a boost from space exploration.

All of these items, and thousands more like them, have been created, improved, or modified to survive the extreme conditions involved in loading them on top of a rocket and shooting them into the most extreme conditions known to man. Progression of technology has generally gone in one direction—from NASA, to the public. Recently, however, there has been a change in the direction of this flow.

In late 1999, as NASA was preparing to launch the Space Shuttle on a mission to repair the Hubble Telescope, serious concerns were raised. Launch attempt after launch attempt was scrubbed due to various mechanical failures. Failures due, perhaps, to the mileage the shuttle fleet has been put through over the years. One oil change every six thousand miles won't cut it anymore, guys!

Other than the deteriorating state of the shuttle fleet, there was concern about the aging software that controls the shuttle's systems. Long ago, when the space shuttle was still on the drawing board, the software that controls the millions of functions that have to happen on a typical shuttle mission was written. Sure, when Jimmy Carter was in the White House, this software was state-of-the-art, but the times have changed.

During the intervening 25 years, processor power and hardware sophistication have increased exponentially. Although the software has so far performed admirably, NASA officials have begun looking for something equally as powerful as we start to enter a new millennium.

Yup, according to rumors, NASA is going Apple.

Let me begin by telling you how I came by this information. One of my good friends from my college days is an employee with the Jet Propulsion Laboratories. His duties at JPL involve the ground guidance package of the Hubble Space Telescope. We have kept in touch since graduation, and, every so often, I give him a call just to make sure the telescope hasn't crashed or anything strange like that.

The last time I called him, though, he seemed pretty excited about something. Now, I'm not the type who likes to call California to talk work, but I had to ask just what the heck was going on. He wasn't quite sure, but he thought he overheard some folks in their software division talking about a major overhaul for the space shuttle fleet which involved Apple Computer.

Recognizing an opportunity to get the story which could lead to a paid position with a computer industry magazine, I began to make a number of phone calls. The Public Information Department at JPL didn't know much about this, but I wasn't one to be easily deterred. My next calls to NASA initially didn't pan out; however, once I was forwarded to the Shuttle Operations Division, things started to become pretty apparent.

Due to the Federal Government tightening the budget on space exploration, NASA officials are going to have to economize. New reusable spacecraft system programs on the drawing board are being put on hold, so NASA is going to have to get more mileage out of the existing fleet.

To that end, there is going to be an extensive overhaul program. Long-time problem components, such as fuel flow valves (recently helped in aborting their fair share of launch attempts) are going to be replaced with new, efficient components which should drastically reduce the number of aborted launch attempts. This will also save money, as it costs millions of dollars each time a mission is scrubbed late into the countdown.

While these improvements will reduce the number of mechanical failures, other, more drastic overhauls are being planned.

First, the aging computer hardware in the shuttles will be stripped out and replaced with brand new G4's. NASA is looking for the beefiest components they can get their hands on while holding the line on expenditures—and the G4 fits the bill nicely.

Seeing as NASA is going with the Motorola processor, they have hired a private consulting firm to completely rewrite the ageing software to run on Mac OS 9. The belief is that this combination of hardware and software will greatly improve how well the shuttle will perform, cutting unnecessarily aborted liftoffs by two thirds.

Of course, one question which begs to be asked is “Why Apple?” With all of the other powerful, modern operating systems, chips and software out there, what made NASA go with Macintosh?

“Ease of use,” said Roger Macisgreat from NASA's Computer Operations Division. “Why would we want our astronauts to waste valuable time in orbit trying to reconfigure .ini files when they should be conducting their experiments or resting? When it comes down to it Apple truly has the superior software, plus the Motorola G4 chip allows us to bring super-computing into orbit. I believe the taxpayers will appreciate this move.”

So the next time you watch a shuttle launch on TV, or look into the deep, dark night to catch a glimpse of the shuttle as it soars through the sky, you can feel proud to know that it is powered by a Mac.

*“Apple Cider: Random Squeezings from a Mac user” is copyright © 2000 Tom Iovino, [tiovino@atpm.com](mailto:tiovino@atpm.com).*



# What I Really Think

It's now April 2000. AT<sup>PM</sup> has entered its sixth year of publication, and I've entered my fifth year of writing for this e-zine. I've written about the IIGS, the Newton, and plenty of Macs in between. I've weighed in on what Spindler, Amelio and Jobs should do, and criticized Microsoft more than a few times. But mostly I've talked about software products: what they do, how they work, and how we interact with them. Software is at the heart of Macintosh life, for why bother with these non-standard machines if they are not more pleasant to own and use? As I was preparing to write this column, though, I realized that I've been too reserved in my criticisms and suggestions as far as software is concerned. It's time I let loose and told you what I really think—writing [at the speed of thought](#)<sup>1</sup> if you will. What follows are some thoughts on products that I use often.

## Nisus Writer

From a user's perspective, at least, not much has been happening on the Nisus Writer front. People have requested a bevy of features, from integrated table and outline editors to zooming and sections. Surely if Nisus added a few features that users of competing word processors take for granted, they would take the consumer and business markets by storm; on the other hand, looking at the entrenchments of Microsoft Word and AppleWorks, maybe not.

So how did these two competitors sew up their respective markets? Both AppleWorks and Word have their own languages. You can control Word with Visual Basic, and AppleWorks 6 is apparently more AppleScriptable than previous versions. Visual Basic can also control the rest of the Office suite, and AppleScript can control just about everything on your Mac,

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1. <http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/0446675962/>

especially when combined with [Player](#)<sup>2</sup>. As for Nisus Writer, it has a macro language of its own (check), but few people use it (no check).

I can see two alternative paths to market domination.

- Nisus could re-channel its resources into developing Nisus Office (the powerful office suite). The company would then have its own community of applications sharing a common, proprietary language. Users would flock to it.
- Nisus could threaten Apple to [knife the baby](#)<sup>3</sup>, i.e. AppleScript, and replace it with the Nisus macro language. If Apple refused to comply, Nisus would cancel development of its QUED/M text editor and double the frequency of its company newsletter. Without text file compatibility, the Macintosh would become useless in Apple's core markets. Apple would have to give in.

No matter what, Nisus should **not** make its word processor fully AppleScriptable. That would be seen as a sign of weakness and would escalate its decline into irrelevancy.

## Microsoft Office

Microsoft Office 98 is a fantastic achievement in software engineering. Among Macintosh office suites with animated help assistants, it has by far the lowest number of bugs. Office is so easy to use that its users have no need for a manual. It's even easier to use on the Mac than on the PC. Although this is mostly attributable to Microsoft's [strong adoption](#)<sup>4</sup> of the [Macintosh Human Interface Guidelines](#)<sup>5</sup>, there is something else to consider.

Unlike Office for Windows, Microsoft Office Macintosh Edition does not include the database application, Access; the multimedia encyclopædia, Encarta; or the Web development tool, FrontPage. Such features would only confuse Mac users, who care little for relational databases, multimedia, and the World Wide Web. Kudos to Microsoft for providing this "Simple Office" safety feature. Even the most knowledgeable Mac users are unable to locate the hidden Access, Encarta, and FrontPage components on the Office 98 CD—just as adults often have trouble unscrewing child-proof caps.

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2. <http://www.atpm.com/6.03/player.shtml>

3. [http://www.usdoj.gov/atr/cases/ms\\_findings.htm](http://www.usdoj.gov/atr/cases/ms_findings.htm)

4. <http://www.atpm.com/4.06/page8.shtml>

5. <http://developer.apple.com/techpubs/mac/HIGuidelines/HIGuidelines-2.html>

All that's needed now is for Microsoft to provide a "Use MDI" check box in the Office Preferences, which are located in the Tools menu just where you expect to find them. With this checked, Mac Office would take over the desktop and provide a "Multiple Document Interface." Since no other Mac applications allow multiple windows to be open at the same time, this would be a big hit.

## BBEdit

This text editor is [powerful and versatile](#)<sup>6</sup>, and I probably use it more than any other piece of software, except maybe [Mailsmith](#)<sup>7</sup>. Therein lies the problem: I've just become sick of BBEdit. See, I understand that part of its philosophy is getting the job done without a lot of flash or bloat, but if I'll be using this piece of software day and night, I want it to be entertaining!

As the number of functions in a program grows, so should its on-screen appearance. BBEdit has a huge set of menus, but it hides cool features, like shifting by spaces and reverse searching, behind the standard menu items until you hold down modifier keys. How drab.

Bare Bones could start by adding icons for each menu item. Pulling down the Markup menu could be like a trip to [Le Louvre](#)<sup>8</sup>. Hover over the "Inline Elements" submenu if you like impressionists. Hold down the Option or Shift keys to reveal hidden commands and their icons. Commands you seldom use would gradually move towards the bottoms of menus, eventually disappearing into the store rooms of the museum. Each month the featured commands at the tops of the menus would change, rather like a rotating gallery. Individual menu items could play unique sounds when selected; write an AppleScript to automate a task and hear the notes for each command come alive as [music](#)<sup>9</sup>.

BBEdit should have customizable toolbars just like Word's. It might be difficult to design icons for commands like "Enter Replace String" and "Find Again (Reverse)," and I'd probably have trouble remembering them, but that's not the point. When I'm working in a text editor, I don't care much about getting work done. (I have Office for that.) I want to look at pretty icons, miniature works of art. Think about the joy of creating sets of toolbars with related buttons. They'd have to be flat, not look like buttons, to avoid becoming eyesores, of

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6. <http://www.atpm.com/5.02/page11.shtml>

7. <http://www.atpm.com/5.01/page8.shtml>

8. <http://www.atpm.com/2.06/page13.shtml>

9. <http://www.atpm.com/5.10/music.shtml>

course. Then there could be a “concentration” mode where the icons disappear, leaving empty grey rectangles; click around to reveal and match pairs of icons.

I’ve been putting up with BBEdit since version 4.0, but at last Bare Bones seems to be getting with the program. When I ran into [the president of Bare Bones Software](#)<sup>10</sup> in the Apple booth at Seybold Boston, he confided that big changes were underway. “It’s time we gave customers the eye candy they’ve been clamoring for,” said Siegel. “BBEdit 2000 features fully customizable toolbars with five fruity ‘themes.’ The status bar will be ribbed like the iMac’s case.” Also, the product will finally play well with the Windows and Unix worlds. According to Siegel, users will “no longer be burdened with control over DOS, Unix, and Macintosh line breaks.” Instead, a wizard will guide the user through seven easy steps to perfect cross-platform breaking. (Stereo speakers are recommended.)

This is good news for a company that’s never been known for listening to its customers. Perhaps the hiring of technical support guru [Robeson Kitchin](#)<sup>11</sup>, who brings extensive experience from the customer service departments of Quark and Symantec, can be credited with the change of heart. In any case, Macintosh users can be assured that BBEdit 2000 will continue to suck less than competing text editors with five-letter names.

## Conclusion

As you can see, even some of the most popular Mac programs can benefit from a thorough rethinking. I applaud Apple for encouraging us all to [Think Different](#)<sup>12</sup>, because although “different” is not necessarily “better,” at least it’s different. If you can’t beat ’em, at least don’t copy ’em.

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10. <http://www.apple.com/hotnews/features/mwny99/mwpics4.html>

11. <http://www.robeson.org>

12. <http://www.atpm.com/4.04/page11.shtml>

# The Icons, They Are A-Changin’

OK, OK, I **know** I said we would talk about changing both icons and desktops in this month’s column, but it’s simply too much info to cram into one month. So this issue, we’re talking icons.

One of the great features of the Mac OS is the ability to easily change the icons of folders, documents, applications, even those of your hard drive and trash can. In the early days of the Macintosh, the only way to do these things was to haul out your copy of ResEdit and hack the icon resource of said file, even today a scary proposition for most folks. Fortunately, as the Mac OS has grown, so has the ease of which any user can change an icon. If you know how to cut and paste, you can change an icon.

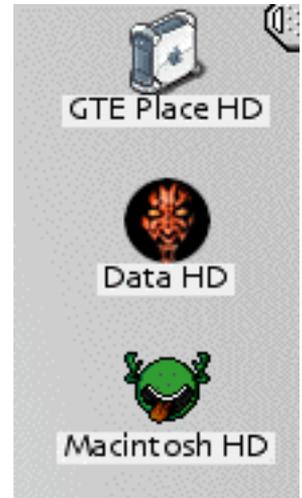
## Icon Switcheroo

One of the ways Mac users personalize their computers is by renaming their hard drives and slapping on custom icons. Since the introduction of OS 8, we have had 3D-ish drive icons, represented by the icon to the right.

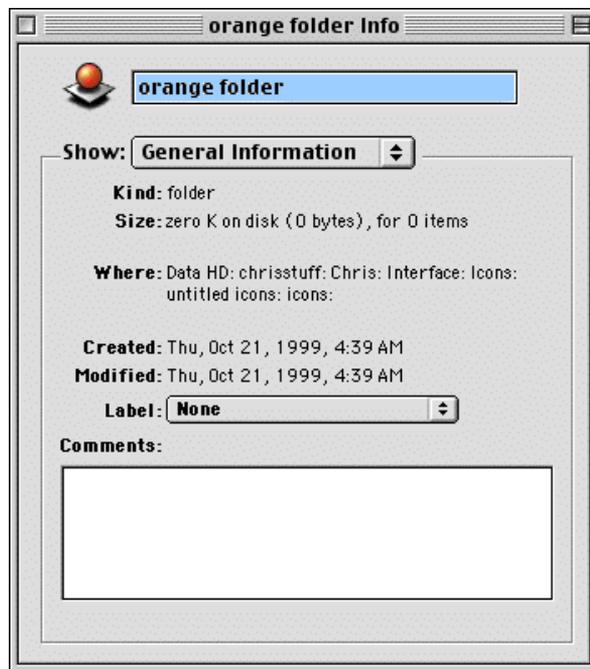


Pretty boring, huh? Yes, that will look cool to everyone moving from System 7.x to OS 8 or higher, but you'll tire of it quickly. It's much more fun to look at something like this (see right).

So how do we go from the one to the other? It's a very simple process. First, you'll need an icon to place on your boring ol' hard drive. For the above "for Darwin" partition, I have chosen this icon:



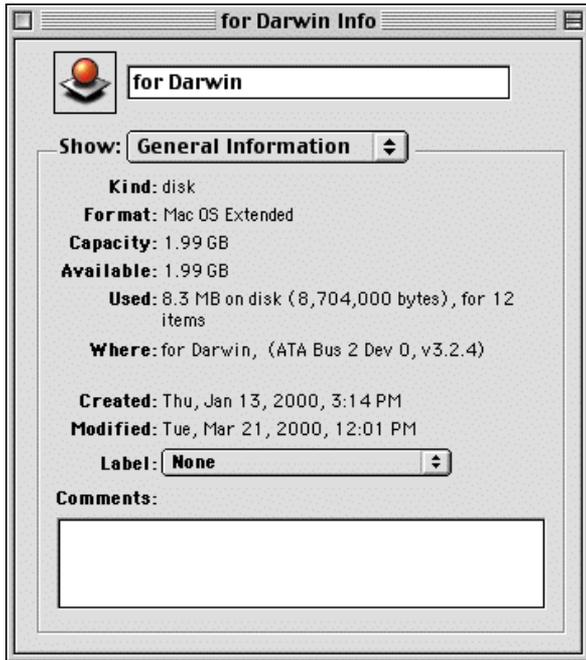
Next, click once on the icon you're going to use to highlight it, then open the Get Info window, either by going to the File menu in the Finder, and selecting Get Info>General Information, or by using Command-I on the keyboard. You will then be presented with the Get Info window for your icon, which will look a lot like this:



Click once on the icon next to the name, and you will see a box appear around the icon, like so:



Now you need to copy this icon to the Clipboard by going to the Edit menu and selecting Copy. You can also use the keyboard command, Command-C. Close the Get Info window for the icon, and open the Get Info window for the hard drive you want to use the custom icon on.



Once that window is open, click once on the hard drive's icon, so you see the box around it, just as you did above. Here, you will use the Paste command from the Finder's Edit menu, or Command-V on your keyboard. This will paste the custom icon from the Clipboard onto the hard drive, and should look like this when you're done:

Close this window, and you're done!

Congratulations, you've customized a hard drive with its own unique icon. This process will also work for folders, applications, and other files. It is recommended, however, that you not perform this action on your System Folder. You can change the icons within the

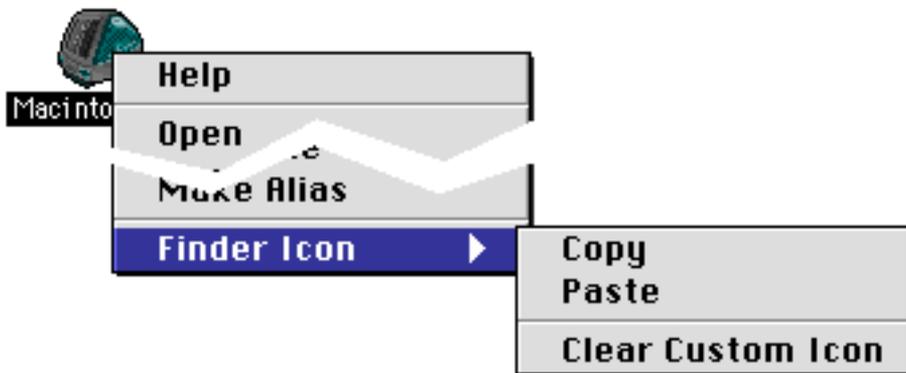
System Folder, as well as that of the System Folder itself, but it is best to get your feet wet performing these actions on folders and files that are not so necessary to your Mac's continued survival.

## Different Strokes, Different Folks

There are alternative utilities available that can automate the above process. My personal favorite is a freeware contextual menu plug-in from Hide Itoh called, simply enough, [Finder Icon](http://www.pixture.com/mac-fic.html)<sup>1</sup>. Using Finder Icon, which requires Mac OS 8 or newer, you can simply control-click

1. <http://www.pixture.com/mac-fic.html>

on the icon you wish to use, select Copy from the Finder Icon sub-menu, then control-click on the item you wish to use the icon with and select Paste.



As you can see, you can even use the Clear Custom Icon command to revert to the item's original icon! Finder Icon is malware, which means the utility is free to use, providing you let Hide hear your comments regarding it. So if you download and use Finder Icon, let Hide know how much you appreciate his providing this great utility!

## iControl, uControl, With This Utility We All Control

Not only do the guys at the [Iconfactory](http://www.iconfactory.com)<sup>2</sup> turn out some kick-butt icons for you to use on your Macintosh, they code some pretty cool software as well. [IconDropper](http://www.iconfactory.com/id_home.asp)<sup>3</sup>, their first utility, facilitates drag-and-drop icon control. They followed this up with their icon building utility, a Photoshop plug-in named, appropriately enough, [IconBuilder](http://www.iconfactory.com/ib_home.asp)<sup>4</sup>.

Their current tour de force, however, is [iControl](http://www.iconfactory.com/ic_home.asp)<sup>5</sup> ([reviewed](#) in this issue). With iControl, you can easily change all of your System icons in one go, even the Trash can, or alternatively mix and match System icons as you please. One click reverts them all to their original conditions. It even works with Kaleidoscope to give your desktop interface the look you've always dreamed of. Combined with IconDropper, iControl lets you change any icon on your entire system.

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2. <http://www.iconfactory.com>

3. [http://www.iconfactory.com/id\\_home.asp](http://www.iconfactory.com/id_home.asp)

4. [http://www.iconfactory.com/ib\\_home.asp](http://www.iconfactory.com/ib_home.asp)

5. [http://www.iconfactory.com/ic\\_home.asp](http://www.iconfactory.com/ic_home.asp)

## Trash 'n' Apple

Finally, [iMacolor](#)<sup>6</sup>, from our aforementioned friend Hide Itoh, is a handy little freeware control panel that alters the look of the Apple menu and trash can icons.



As you can see, you can choose from any of the iMac colors, from the original Bondi to the graphite of the iMac DV Special Edition and the G4 desktop, plus “Java Brown” for Lombard and Pismo PowerBook users. Curiously, the right-most golden color isn’t available in the control panel.



6. <http://www.atpm.com/5.09/imacolor.shtml>

It's very easy to use iMacolor. Simply choose your preferred color in the popup menu for each item, and you get a preview, as shown above. Restart your Mac, and voila! A new colored Apple menu apple and trash can.

As an added bonus, Hide is nice enough to include iMac icons for use with iMacolor by iMac owners. The iMac icons are up to Hide's usual high standards, and are offered in a wide range of poses. Alas, they have not yet been updated to reflect the new iMac range, but all of the colors are there, save graphite.



As you can see, there are a myriad of uses for custom icons, from expressing your personality by marking certain folders or files, to just using them as plain ol' eye candy. One caveat, however, with regard to the use of custom icons: the more custom icons you use, the more your system performance decreases. This rings especially true when rebuilding the desktop (you do rebuild your desktop at least once a week as preventive maintenance, don't you?). The more custom icons you have, the longer it will take for your desktop to rebuild, so choose your icons and choose them well.

Finally, here is a shot of my iBook's desktop:



Rather plain, compared to the Star Wars desktop from my G3 mini-tower featured [last month](#)<sup>7</sup>, I know, but there is more there than meets the eye. While I am using the standard

Apple Platinum theme, there are some slight modifications. The desktop itself is a grape pattern upon which is centered a cute graphic from the [eCards section of MacLaunch](#)<sup>8</sup>. My two hard drive icons came from different icon sets I found online. The 32-bit tangerine iBook came from the freebies section of the Philadelphia PowerBook Users Group, [PPUG](#)<sup>9</sup>. The Calvin Spaceman Spiff icon came from an unidentified Calvin & Hobbes collection I found while browsing. I'm sorry I cannot point you in the direction from which it came, but there was no Read Me attached to the icons. The Mail and Internet icons come from John Marstall's excellent [Perfect Yosemite collection](#)<sup>10</sup>. Finally, I used Hide Itoh's iMacolor to change my Apple menu and Trash icons to tangerine, to match my iBook.

**Next Month:** desktops.

*When he's not fighting an allergy-based cold to churn out articles and press releases, Contributing Editor Christopher Turner tries to explain that Mac OS X isn't finalized yet and that everyone should just chill concerning the new Aqua interface. He's looking forward to it.*



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7. <http://www.atpm.com/6.03/guijunkie.shtml>
  8. <http://www.maclaunch.com/e-cards.html>
  9. <http://www.PPUG.net>
  10. <http://www.perfectyosemite.com>

# Who Needs Musicians When You've Got General MIDI?

I've been a musician for many years now, and until recently I spent most of my spare time and energy being frustrated with other musicians. First came the many failed attempts to start the next great rock band in my garage. Actually, it was usually the drummer's garage, but that's beside the point. The musicians I worked with fell into one of three categories: those who were terrible; those who were really good, but spent too much time and energy in unrelated pursuits, such as chasing loose women and planting bombs; and Jeff.

Jeff was my always reliable bassist, and like me, he eventually got sick of all the losers we found ourselves stuck with. We took two very different paths. He found a nice girl and settled down, while I put the guitar away and became a composer.

As a composer I thought my life would be easier. I could write exactly what I wanted, and highly trained musicians would play it exactly like I'd tell them to. Well, I soon discovered how wrong I was. First of all, I suffered from an extreme handicap for a composer—I was still breathing. Most classically trained musicians won't even consider playing your music until you're dead.

Since dying is only a good career move for a composer who's actually written something, I ruled out that option right away. That left me with a small group of performers who were into "new" music. At least I figured they'd be dedicated. Soon, however, I discovered how temperamental some musicians can be despite their "training." I just wanted them to play the notes, rhythms, dynamics, and articulations that I had written clearly on the page. Instead, they would keep talking about "interpretation." After all the hours I'd spent meticu-

lously calculating interlocking pitch class/attack point matrices, they had the nerve to talk about interpretation? The dots are all there. What else do you need?

Then I made a critical discovery that changed my life. This discovery involved something that had been sitting on my desk for years, but with its true potential unfulfilled—my Macintosh. I had no idea at first that I could make music with my Mac. I had used Microsoft Word for word processing. I had even used Finale to write scores, but I had no idea it could play them. Then one day I accidentally opened the playback window. My world changed forever.

General MIDI and my Mac gave me the creative outlet I had always dreamed of. I finally had an unlimited ensemble of instrumentalists, all dutifully playing exactly what I asked them to play. The best part, though, is that the same ensemble resides in every Mac as part of the Quicktime Musical Instruments extension. So let's say I write a symphony. I could send the score out to various orchestras and, if one of them actually programmed it, maybe a few hundred people would hear a woefully under-rehearsed performance. Or I could post the same score on the Web as a Standard MIDI File for performance by the "MIDI Philharmonic," available for any interested listener to download for his or her own "Command Performance."

You might think that General MIDI had become passé, given the recent popularity of MP3. I disagree. Unlike General MIDI, MP3 is not a creative medium. Its sole purpose is to copy existing recordings. Plus, I don't have the patience to download 4 MB MP3 files when I can find the same tune as a 40K Standard MIDI File. Others have tried to talk me into switching platforms. They rave about a Windows compatible program called Acid that creates dance mixes of other people's music. I mean no offense in saying this, but that's not real composition. I struggle with every note I write, as much as my G3's internal speaker struggles to squeak out each note. It may not be pretty, but it's real. Okay, it's not real, but it's my art and it's the best I can do. God, I'm so depressed.

*Copyright © 2000 David Ozab (<http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/%7Edlo>). David Ozab is a Ph.D student at the University of Oregon, where he teaches electronic music courses and assists in the day-to-day operation of The Future Music Oregon Studios. **Note:** The opinions expressed in the above article are not those of About This Particular Macintosh, or the author, or anyone else with a small measure of musical understanding and/or common sense. In other words...April Foolz!*



## But I Ordered Steak

I **was** going to talk about the [lawsuit](#)<sup>1</sup> the Motion Picture Association of America is filing, and I might even get to that, but until an actual decision is made it doesn't really affect me, or any of my three readers for that matter.

We've had an interesting situation pop up at Rocket Science Central. The PC-afflicted people I work with use and support Windows '95 on laptops, and NT 4 on the desktop machines. The make is irrelevant. Now this is all fine and good, and the System Administrators (SAs) that I work with handle this with little or no problem. This is our policy. We have it, and that's what comes installed when you, the Rocket Scientist, order a new PC from us.

Of course, this won't stop the more technical among you from asking for NT on your laptop, which I understand is a bear to do. Furthermore, we don't support it, unless of course you ask really, really nicely...in which case we'll go out and install it for you, over and over again, until we get it right. And even after that, if you have a problem with it, it's fully supported.

The best analogy I can come up with here is that it's like going into Kentucky Fried Chicken and ordering steak. Instead of them giving you a funny look and telling you to go away, they ask, "Would you like it rare, medium, or well done?" and they proceed to serve you steak.

We have these on our platform too, which I will dub "KFC moments." They happen all the time in the service industry, from what I hear; the customer asks for something that you don't normally do, and since you believe the customer is always right, you try to accommodate them. From what I've found, the customer isn't always right, but on the other hand a customer **is** a customer.

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1. <http://www.maccentral.com/news/0002/08.mpaas.shtml>

Anyway, for the sake of a good story, let's say that Rocket Science Central is, oh, six months behind the rest of the planet when it comes to OS upgrades. After all, we have to make sure that all our software, or at least the Core Products, work with each new OS. We have a guy that does this—he's very good at it—for which he receives the esteemed title of Core Products Manager. After he pokes and prods, twists and genuflects, he produces a Core Release CD with which the SAs can do OS and software upgrades, for which we each get the esteemed title of Install Monkey.

Unless a customer wants to do the installation himself. Apparently, he wants his steak rare. Two months and several meetings and exchanged emails later, instead of us simply telling him he can't do it, he now gets to fill out a form, and we provide a temporary server for him to access the CD Image.

I got the signed form back last week.

This is almost as good as a service call I had back in July. The caller was getting a virus check error when he attempted to create a new document in MS Word. Upon further inspection, he was running ten applications at the same time. A quick install of an Alsoft utility later, I discovered that he had 346 open files. Using Mac OS 8.6 and lower, the open file limit is 348, due to OS restrictions. So, I went into his Startup Items folder, and had him pared down to a manageable 262 open files on startup. I explained the situation, asked him to wait patiently for OS 9, and closed the case.

This customer, however, wanted fries with his steak; two months later, he called back to reopen the case. He says he's reconfigured his system, and the same problem is coming back. Obviously, I didn't fix it the first time. Never mind the fact that the fix was still another month away at that point, with the release of OS 9 and a nice, comfortable upper limit of 5,169 open files. OK, KFC does serve potato wedges, but go with me on this. Why anyone would **want** 5,169 files open is beyond me; nevertheless, this guy needed this capability yesterday if not sooner.

Some unfortunate SA gets to do this install next week. I fully expect to see the batsignal in the skies above Pasadena shortly thereafter.

## I Want My iMovie, and I Want It Now

Apple is having a KFC moment of its own, regarding iMovie. When you buy an iMac DV, the iMovie software comes included on a CD of its very own. So far, the only way to obtain iMovie is through purchasing an iMac DV, as I briefly went into last time. We all waited—OK, I waited with breathless anticipation at Steve’s Macworld Expo keynote for the announcement of iMovie being made available as a stand-alone product.

It never came.

Here we are almost three months later, still waiting. On the MacDV mailing list I recently exposed you to, every once in a while someone will post something along the lines of “I’m running iMovie on a [insert your favorite non-iMac here] and I’m experiencing [any one of several issues]. Anyone out there having similar problems?” Inevitably, two or three posts later, another ’lister will respond with the answer. Currently, Apple maintains that iMovie is only supported on the iMac and, conversely, Final Cut Pro shouldn’t work on an iMac; yet we, the consumer, want A-1 with our steak.

So, when will we be able to obtain iMovie for ourselves? The answer is “I don’t know.” We may never get it. I’m not one to participate in conspiracy theories, however I did pick up a copy of *Catcher on the Rye* last week, so I won’t speculate that this is an effort on Apple’s part to drive up the sales for Final Cut Pro. My long-time readers know that I would never do that. I would simply imply or infer it, because when I go into KFC, I order Original Recipe.

72 and sunny in Redondo Beach.

e You next time.

*Disclaimer: Mike is currently searching for a female lead for “Diamond in the Rough,” as the woman he originally cast is nowhere to be found. For this and other sad stories, Mike can be reached at [mshields@atpm.com](mailto:mshields@atpm.com).*



BY LEE BENNETT, [LBENNETT@ATPM.COM](mailto:LBENNETT@ATPM.COM)

## DSL and the Mac

What is it that makes DSL the most popular technology not available to most Macintosh users—or at least those of us in the Southeastern states?

Sprint and Earthlink are business partners of sorts. They've joined forces to provide people with broadband Internet access; Sprint provides the bandwidth, and Earthlink fills the role of ISP. If that was a true statement, then it has the makings of being the worst business partnership of recent months.

I've held my breath waiting for Earthlink to make DSL available to the central Florida area. All they've managed to tell me is that it would very likely be a very long time before that happens—probably not even this year.

Yet, last November, Sprint announced DSL availability in the metro Orlando region. Indeed, a coworker of one of my friends actually has DSL service from Sprint, though that person uses a Windows machine. I contacted Sprint to inquire about getting it installed at my home. To my wonderment, the Sprint representative confirmed that my line was good for DSL and began the process of signing me up. Not one minute passed before my excitement turned into disappointment. "Are you running Windows 95, 98, or NT?" the representative asked.

I truthfully replied, "I'm running Mac OS."

"I see, well, I'm afraid we are not offering DSL service to Macintosh users at this time."

"Why is that? Macintoshes use the exact same TCP connection that PCs use."

"I'm not a technician, and I don't have the details about this, except that we can't support Macintosh computers right now."

I was seething, but I did my best not to let it show. As a fellow ATPM staff member confirmed, there is nothing to support with Macs and DSL. The same data is placed into both platforms' TCP/IP control panels. However, after a number of phone calls, and after a **lot** of telephone Muzak, the best answer I was able to obtain was that the reason for nonsupport is related to one or more of three issues. These issues may or may not be plausible, but they're what I came up with:

1. Many broadband technologies are using authentication software that must run on the computer using the service. Some companies have developed their own authentication software for both platforms, but many have developed it only for PC with a "Mac version forthcoming" claim.
2. Many broadband technologies are using the new transport protocol known as point-to-point protocol over Ethernet (better-known as PPPoE), and this protocol isn't as easily implemented on the Mac as it is on Windows (or so they say).
3. Many broadband technologies not using PPPoE are using DHCP as the connection protocol, and we all know that the Mac OS has had documented problems with DHCP. Not that I'm saying the problems aren't solvable...just that various broadband providers themselves haven't solved them.

Totally for my own amusement, I invented a fourth choice:

4. Many broadband technology providers are full of cr@& and just don't think the Mac community is large enough or easy enough to service.

Sprint service representatives repeatedly tried to explain the situation to me, but without saying anything that Sprint brass probably considers taboo for discussions with customers (subjects such as the truth). During my last call to Sprint, I ultimately spoke to the director of customer relations. I pointed out that I'd had conversations with Earthlink, and that their tech support people had said that not only are they offering Earthlink DSL over on the west coast in many areas, but that Earthlink specializes in Macintosh support.

When she said that they're still researching and testing connectivity for Macs, I casually (though I was getting irritated at this point, and again doing my best not to show it) suggested that it looked like a case of the right hand not knowing what the left was doing, and that Sprint should better interact with the ISP they've partnered with—i.e., that they should

get their heads together and resolve the Mac issue, since Earthlink obviously had accomplished it. At that, Sprint's director of customer relations said, "Ohhhhh, that's definitely some information I'd not heard before. I gotta check into that." She didn't sound sarcastic, but I could be wrong. Either that lady is a very good actress, or she doesn't belong in her position.

This rant doesn't have a closing because the saga isn't over. I probably made a mistake, but a little over a month ago, Flashcom informed me that they not only serviced Orlando, but also supported Macs. Because they had a very tempting offer that included no setup fee, free hardware, and the first month of service free for a two-year contract, I ordered it. The sales representative said it would take four to five weeks for me to receive a call to schedule an installation date. They also said I'd be charged \$100 in advance, but this covered the second and third months of service, and I wouldn't be charged again until it was time to pay for the fourth month. All this troubled me a little, but I said "okay."

Five weeks have come and gone without a call from them. Instead, I called to find out what was going on, and was told by a Flashcom representative that he wasn't sure why I was signed up for the particular package I was signed up for, because that particular bandwidth package was not yet available in my area. Even worse, they've already charged me the \$100. Even as I write this, I'm planning to pick up the phone and cancel my order.

All I have to say is, come **on** people! Don't wave this neat-o technology in our faces and then make us pull teeth trying to buy it from you.

*Send your Segments submissions to [editor@atpm.com](mailto:editor@atpm.com).*



BY BROOKE SMITH, [BSMITH@ATPM.COM](mailto:BSMITH@ATPM.COM)

## Into the Light: From PC to Mac

I love my Mac. In fact, I couldn't survive without it. Take the heat from my apartment, take the clothes off my back, but please don't take my Mac.

I didn't always feel this way, of course. I was a die-hard PCer back in 1990, when I bought my first computer—an 8086 IBM clone. It was slow, but it processed those university essays without a quibble.

I continued to process more words with the clone, eventually upgrading to a 386. I lived through MS DOS, Windows 3.1, and even started up Windows 95. But my PC days shut down when I bypassed Windows 98, and, in November of that same year, saw the light and invested in a beige G3 Macintosh. [Apple](http://www.apple.com)<sup>1</sup> had tempted me.

How I saw the light, I can't truly recall—it remains shrouded in mystery. I was definitely in the market for a new computer; my PC had come crashing down with the monkey virus, and like all computer junkies I wanted a faster machine. I didn't really want to think different (I wasn't even aware of Apple's slogan), but I guess I thought it wouldn't hurt to try a different brand. Hey, why not?

It's not that I loathe the PC—I learned HTML on a PC, and my Mum has my old 386 (sans virus), which I still use when I visit—but I certainly have not been amused that PCs get many more viruses than Macs, and have many more buggy programs, such as Windows. (I laughed out loud in the SouthPark movie when Bill Gates was shot because Windows wasn't running up to scratch.)

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1. <http://www.apple.com>

Overall, I think the Mac is a smarter machine—fewer viruses, no Windows, and its mouse is certainly a southpaw’s dream. This may not mean much to the majority of the population, but as a lefty, I appreciate the simplicity. When I used the PC mouse (with my left hand) I had to get used to clicking the right or left mouse button. The Mac mouse only has one button.

And the Mac has keyboard shortcuts that are simple and fun to use: Command-Q to quit, Command-C to copy, and so on. Once I learned the shortcuts, I kept using them—sometimes forgetting the mouse was even an option.

And remember the fuss about Y2K? Macs rolled over to the new date with ease. PC users, on the other hand, had to make sure their computers were Y2K compliant. Many companies, and individuals with PCs at home, spent thousands of dollars getting their systems ready for the changeover. (Actually, on New Year’s Eve, I thought it would be neat to get a PC and watch it crash at the stroke of midnight, but I held back.)

Aesthetically, the Mac just looks better, too. Granted, my G3 is beige and may look a little PCish, but have you seen those colourful iMacs? And what about the luscious laptops (iBooks) in blueberry and tangerine? Then there are the G4 and the iBook Special Edition in graphite—very sleek indeed! I’m already thinking about a tangerine iBook in the very near future.

Because of my Mac, I’ve even taken to reading computer books! Anyone who has any doubts about the Mac, or computers for that matter, should look no further than [The Little Mac Book](#)<sup>2</sup> by Robin (not “Mork”) Williams. Clearly written, with a witty tone, it makes the Mac look even easier to use than it is. And I’m reading Mac magazines, too. [MacAddict](#)<sup>3</sup> and [MacHome Journal](#)<sup>4</sup> let me know what’s new in software and hardware, and they’re easy to read—not too full of technical jargon. When I used a PC, I never read any PC mags; they were too complicated, too confusing.

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2. <http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/0201354330/aboutthisparticu>

3. <http://www.macaddict.com>

4. <http://www.machome.com>

I can truthfully say that the PC has had its day in my home. The Mac is the only computer I'll have on my desk from now on. I've crossed over from the dark side to the greener pastures of Macintosh computing, and have never looked back. I have seen the light.

*Send your Segments submissions to [editor@atpm.com](mailto:editor@atpm.com).*



## Welcome To ATPR

As a special feature, ATPM has gone to great pains in contacting its sources all over the globe, and even aboard the international space station. The staff spared no cost, went without sleep for days, and lived exclusively off root beer and dried chipmunk sandwiches to gather these confirmed facts. Our correspondents under the White House desk have hacked the CIA files to confirm every little detail, and we are proud to break these news items first, right here, right now. You might see this on AppleInsider a month from now, but remember, you saw it **here** first! If any of these news stories turn out to be wrong, it wasn't our fault. We reported the truth, but to cover their tracks companies might have maliciously altered their products and services make us look bad. Don't be fooled; they are trying to trick you. What follows is the truth, and nothing but the truth, so help us Gil.

## PowerBook 105: Iceberg

By now it is of course common knowledge that a new series of PowerBooks, featuring the G4 processor, will be announced by Apple shortly, probably at Macworld Expo San Francisco in early 2001. (See [this page](#)<sup>1</sup> for details.) But let's face it: G4s are old hat. Who wants old technology that's been available for months and months? Fortunately, we have some good news for all of you who are thinking about buying a PowerBook, but want to wait for a truly stunning product.

An ATPM source high up in Apple's hierarchy (we naturally can't give his name, but he uses the same coffee machine as Steve Jobs himself!) informs us that Apple is already hard at work designing the PowerBook G5. With a built-in 2 MB level 2 cache and SuperRage 264 graphics card, this thing really flies! Motorola is totally incapable of manufacturing them at this time, but Apple has gotten a few test units from IBM, running at 1.2 GHz. That clock speed is much slower than what IBM hopes to have ready when the product is released, though.

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1. <http://macweek.zdnet.com/2000/03/19/0324g4laptop.html>

The technology is very young, and it is quite difficult to manufacture such an amazing chip at high speeds.

My first question on hearing this exciting news was, how can Apple even think about putting such a fast chip into as small an enclosure as a PowerBook? Won't it overheat? Nope. Apple plans to use Peltier Effect technology to keep the chip super-cool. In fact, Apple hopes to finally break the 1" thickness barrier with this machine, currently code-named 105, or "Iceberg." Early prototypes have completely transparent casing, and if that wasn't enough the hard drive enclosure is itself in a transparent high-impact case, so you can actually watch it spin while it searches for your data.

Our source at Apple said that it is too early to guess what Iceberg will cost, but I expect he's just saying that because it will be amazingly inexpensive compared to today's offerings, and he's afraid that if people find out that they will be able to get an Iceberg for \$1099 a short year and a half from now, they will refuse to purchase the old and outdated Pismos that are currently clogging up Apple's distribution channels.

If you really and truly must have a PowerBook now, a Pismo is a good choice: in fact, it's the best portable on the market! On the other hand, if you think you can wait a little longer before buying your next machine, hold out for Iceberg. It'll be well worth the wait.

## Apple's New Pro Strategy

Due to production shortfalls of high speed G4 processors at Motorola, Apple will announce that it is abandoning its current 350/400/450 MHz computers. Instead, Apple will sell a single professional computer. The processors in the professional computers will be whatever Motorola is currently able to ship to Apple. Apparently, there will be no way to specify a faster processor—your only guarantee is that the processor will be no slower than the 350 MHz.

## Apple, Gibson, and OMS

As [reported in last month's issue](#)<sup>2</sup>, Doug Wyatt, father of "OMS" and motivating force behind the Save OMS campaign at last February's NAMM show, was recently hired by Apple. This lends credibility to earlier rumors of Apple's interest in either purchasing OMS

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2. <http://www.atpm.com/6.03/omssegments.shtml>

or developing a similar and compatible feature within Mac OS X. The latest rumor goes far beyond this, though:

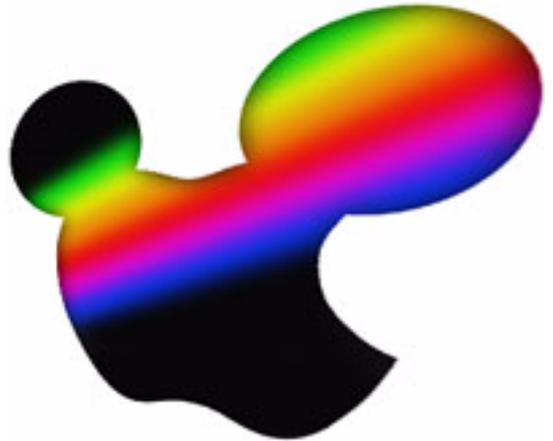
According to reliable inside sources, Apple will shortly announce their purchase of Gibson Musical Instruments, who presently own and operate Opcode systems. Apple's intent is to break up Gibson, keeping OMS and Vision DSP, along with Gibson's own GMICS (Global Musical Instrument Communication Standard), which they will combine with Quick Time Instruments into a new MIDI and digital audio standard, QTOMIDSPGCSIS (Quick Time Open Musical Instrument Digital Signal Processing Global Communication Standard Interface System).

They will then sell off Studio Vision to Twelve Tone (the makers of PC sequencer Cakewalk Pro Audio), and the Musical Instrument Division (they make the guitars) to Yamaha Music, Inc. of Japan. We can only hope that Yamaha will keep the Gibson name, and continue to manufacture guitars in the US. As for Henry E. Juskiewicz, Gibson's CEO, his plans are to splurge a little on a new Gulf Stream Jet ("just like Steve's!") and then focus his aggressive management style on new and innovative business ventures. "I'm not sure yet," he said "but it will probably involve selling sugared water to children."

## Disney and Apple

As most of you know, Steve Jobs has been sighted on the Disney lot lately, fueling speculation that Apple would in fact be bought by Disney, lock, stock, and barrel. Nothing could be further from the truth. By the time you read this, the sale of Disney to Apple Computer, Inc. for \$57.6 billion of cash and stock will be complete, however, the official announcement won't be made until the World Wide Developers' Conference. Steve Jobs will come out on stage, wearing mouse ears.

Sporting the new combined Apple/Disney logo (see right), the company will focus on diversification. As part of the move, go.com will merge with iTools, to form The Go Apple Network. The new ad campaign will replace Jeff Goldblum with Mickey Mouse, and Richard Dreyfuss with Donald Duck. "Think Different." will be replaced with, "Go, Apple!," and Steve will of course head up the new company as MiCEO.



# New iMacs and iBooks More Than Good “Looking”

Let it never be said that Apple doesn't titillate the senses.

When the original Bondi-blue iMac hit the streets, the world was taken by storm with a computer that genuinely looked awesome. The storm showed no signs of subsiding when the variety of iMac flavors came on the scene.

After years of pleasuring the senses of sight, sound, and even lingering flirtations with the sense of touch, it seems Apple engineers are now targeting the olfactory senses. That's the sense of smell, for the lexicographically-challenged.

According to ATPM's anonymous sources, the next generation of iMacs and iBooks will look no different than the current models. The standard anticipated improvements to the processor's speed, the increased RAM, and the larger hard drives will likely be modest. But the transparent cases will be created using an experimental technique that will make the material behave much like a Scratch-N-Sniff™ sticker.

Each machine's aroma will correspond to its visual flavor, and while you won't have to actually use your fingernails to scratch the case, a gentle rub will cause it to give off its intended smell for a minute or two.

It is probably for the best that the cases don't produce their aromas perpetually. Sources agree that no two different flavors smell good when experienced simultaneously. For this reason, Apple will consider making nonodiferous versions of the iMac for the benefit of schools and computer labs.

“Orange” and “cherry” were most popular with ATPM's sources, while lime was quickly ruled the least favorite. One source commented that the “lime” flavor should be recalled and replaced with “kiwi.” Another said he wished there were a “peach” flavor.

The “charcoal” cases of the special edition iMacs were notably absent. Apple engineers are probably scratching their collective heads as to what they should smell like.

When asked whether the idea ever surfaced for Apple to cater to the remaining sense of taste—the sources recalled the movie, *Willie Wonka & the Chocolate Factory*, and his lickable wallpaper. “Anything's possible,” they agreed.

## Rumormonger Takeover

Disappointed by their constant inability to correctly predict Apple's upcoming hardware releases, Jason O'Grady and Doug Landry have commenced a hostile takeover of Apple Computer, Inc. It is rumoured that once they have control over Apple, they will sue all non-rumours-based Web sites for maligning Apple by their incessant reporting of what is actually going on.

O'Grady told this reporter, "I estimate that Apple has lost nearly \$800 million this year alone because of their [Mac News sites'] constant placation of Mac users, and their refusal to help Apple get customers excited about upcoming products."

## Alpha Syntauri: Affordable Digital Synthesis System

Mountain Hardware is set to announce the release of the Alpha Syntauri, an affordable digital synthesis and sequencing system. The Alpha Syntauri is a two-card system that interfaces with Apple hardware and software (and only Apple, there are no plans for a PC-compatible version). The Alpha Syntauri promises a "hip 80's retro sound," reminiscent of Brian Eno, David Byrne, Herbie Hancock, and others. Unlike other software packages, though, the Alpha Syntauri includes hardware: a five-octave keyboard and a light pen interface that allows the user to draw waveforms directly on the screen. One potential problem, the system may not be compatible with the most recent Macs. If this is true, we hope that future upgrades will deal with this issue. In the meantime, a rare picture of this innovative digital synthesizer is available [here](#)<sup>3</sup>, and detailed tech specs are listed [here](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## Apple Takes a Bite Out

After the successful non-attendance by Apple at the London Apple Expo (31 March-1 April) and the cutting back of Apple UK staff, Apple has confirmed that they will be pulling out of the UK altogether. By April 1st 2001, Apple will have stopped all UK distribution of its proprietary and third party products. All warranties will become invalid one year after that date.

An Apple spokesman, who wishes to remain nameless, commented "It's not like Britain is a very big country, and we have got enough money now."

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3. <http://www.synthony.com/vintage/alphasyntauri.html>

4. <http://machines.hyperreal.org/categories/misc/info/alpha.Syntauri>

If the scheme is as successful as Apple hopes, they plan to pull out of Europe altogether, until eventually the whole of Apple is operating on a small fishing boat, just outside of Steve Jobs' cosy house.

## Apple and the FAA

Well-placed sources at Apple tipped us off to secret meetings between Apple and the FAA, where discussions of replacing aging aircraft communication systems with Apple-branded AirPort-based wireless network devices are moving forward, with possible in-the-air testing to begin by Q3 2000. As an added bonus, AirPort-enabled iBooks and PowerBooks will be able to piggyback on this signal to communicate with terminal concierges to prepare transportation, show reservations, and other services.

## Net Granny Nears Beta

Reliable sources confirm the long awaited adult offering from Net Nanny (we broke the story some time ago, but noooo, you weren't paying attention or maybe you forgot) is about to go beta. A person close to an associate of Mahatma Kane Jeeves, who was recently interviewed for the position of promotion intern for this product, tells us, "... [name of Net Nanny employee] tells me they've dropped the name 'NetNumbskull' because it fails to obfuscate the product's position in the market. We're going with Net Granny, not only because grandmothers are notoriously bullbleep resistant, but because granny rhymes with nanny. Get it?"

Net Granny, which sounds very much like Net Nanny, deletes hoaxes from your email. Like the email and site sex-and-spam filters that block anything with 'sex,' 'XXX,' 'hot,' 'money,' 'free,' or '!!!' in the subject, Net Granny scans the first paragraph of your email messages for 'true,' 'research proves,' 'experts confirm,' 'reliable sources,' and any reference to gangs, the Centers for Disease Control, or Arizona State Troopers.

Filtered mail is removed and replaced with an alert from Net Granny, such as "Someone out there must think you're a real idiot," "I heard that one when I was your age," or, "If your friends think you're stupid enough to believe this, maybe you need different friends."

The full-featured Net Granny Pro(active) also filters any email the user forwards to other accounts, adding headers such as, "Your so-called friend [sender] thought you'd like to read this groaner one more time. Click here if you don't want any more of this rubbish." If clicked,

the message will be bounced back to [sender] with the comment, “You may not have a life, but [recipient] does. Think twice before you click ‘forward.’”

## Microsoft Simplifying Text Management Products

Due to the high level of sophistication among modern computer users, Microsoft is removing the word “gullible” from the MS Office and MS Word spelling checkers. “Research proves the Internet is creating a well-informed public. Unlike consumers of earlier days, who were raised on print, radio, and television communication, this new breed is not easily duped. And since experts confirm that obsolete words are a major contributor to so-called ‘bloat’ in Microsoft products, removing such offending terminology as ‘gullible’ adds room for more useful features, such as tracking user purchasing habits with Internet Explorer.”

The unnamed but highly reliable source also noted Microsoft’s commitment to entry-level Internet users, through bundling its Internet browser and email programs with everything from the ubiquitous iMac (Apple) to the so-called “Windows” operating system which is popular with several other CPU manufacturers. “Our strategy is based on faith in the consumer. We believe there is an Internet user born every minute.”

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Every day is like April Fool's Day on the Internet. You never know what's real or what's a sham. Either way, it's usually absurd. That's what makes this month's column especially fun to present!

The Web sites mentioned here are not endorsed by AT<sup>PM</sup>; they are simply suggestions for your own browsing endeavors.

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## Packin' Potty—The Ultimate Portable Toilet

**Web Address:** <http://www.packinpotty.com>

*"Emergency" Survival Gear*

When nature calls, the Packin' Potty will be there for you—anytime, anyplace. Just imagine: you can carry around your very own emergency toilet. It's carried just like a briefcase. It's white and, well, looks like a folded up toilet under your arm. Here's a side benefit for you iBook owners—people will stop staring at your new brightly colored laptop. They'll be too busy focusing on your new potty.



# DogDoo.com

**Web Address:** <http://www.dogdoo.com>

*Smell your mail before opening*

Ever play the dog doo in a burning paper sack prank on your neighbor as a kid? The scariest part of it all was running up to the porch (I know from experience!) without being seen. Dog-Doo.com brings this defecating brand of humor to a new level. DogDoo.com will mail out moist, fresh dog waste to any address you choose. The packages are sealed and wrapped in such a fashion that it forces the recipient to actually handle Fido's present before realizing what it is. There are three dog "sizes" to choose from: 20 lb, 50 lb or 110 lb. Obviously the larger the dog, the larger the finished product.



## Air Sickness Bag Virtual Museum!

**Web Address:** <http://www.airsicknessbags.com>

*Nauseating memorabilia*

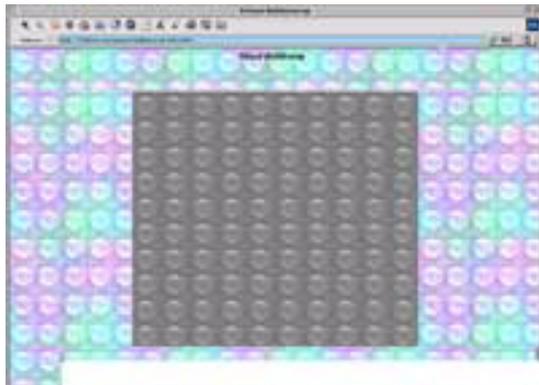
Yes, there is an actual museum dedicated to motion sickness bags! The curator, Steven Silberberg, has assembled a massive collection of barf bags from airlines, ocean liners, trains, and even the "Vomit Comet," those astronaut training jets that simulate weightlessness. What an historical treasure trove!

# The World's Best Bubblewrap Homepage

**Web Address:** <http://www.fathom.org/opalcat/bubblewrap.html>

*Pop! Pop! Pop! Crinkle, Crinkle, Pop!*

For those of you who love to play with bubblewrap, here's a Web site where you can learn everything about the stuff. Did you know that there's a proper etiquette to popping bubblewrap? There are certain methods and styles to popping it that you can try at home as well. You'll love the guestbook where there's an active discussion about bubblewrap. Things really get popping when there's a controversy!



## YETI@Home

**Web Address:** <http://www.phobe.com/yeti/>

*Join the search!*

Harnessing the power of hundreds of Internet-connected computers, YETI@Home hopes to discover the whereabouts of a yeti. With this soon-to-be-released software, your computer (equipped with a camera) will scan your backyard for yetis. With the power of so many computers pouring over the images, surely somebody will track down the whereabouts of the mysterious Yeti.

## Aliens for Hire Web

**Web Address:** <http://www.aliensforhire.com/index2.html>

*They're just trying to make a buck, not enslave us!*

For an out-of-this-world party, hire these guys and girls (or whatever genders aliens have)! These aliens have come from all over the galaxy to be your entertainers. All of these aliens are friendly, social, and promise not to eat your brains.



# Genetic Savings & Clone

**Web Address:** <http://www.savingsandclone.com/>

*Man's best friend can be reborn*

When your beloved pet dies, you can have its DNA stored at GS&C. When science advances far enough to clone your pet, you can have Fido regrown. Even if we have the ability to do this kind of procedure, there are some serious ethical considerations. In any event, GS&C promises to wait it all out and when (and if) society accepts this kind of cloning, you can have your pets reborn.

# Boogie-cards.com

**Web Address:** <http://207.236.110.69/boogie-cards/>

*Home of irrelevant postcards*

Everybody is sending e-cards these days. There are all kinds of beautiful and clever cards out there to suit any occasion. Boogie-cards.com has lots of e-cards that are just plain meaningless. There's a collection of fire hydrant cards, piles of rocks, and bread, just to name a few. My favorites are the cows at night.



# iCards

**Web Address:** <http://icards.mac.com>

*Apple joins the e-card craze*

As long as I'm covering e-cards and this is a Macintosh e-zine, it only makes sense to mention iCards. We all love our Macs, and anytime we can display our love, we usually do it! iCards is a great way to send a beautiful e-card and tastefully include an Apple logo with the post-mark "Hello from Cupertino, CA" in the corner.



## Personal Postcards

**Web Address:** <http://www.knopfler.com/cards.htm>

*Artistic e-cards*

If you want a little more creativity than what iCards offers, check out Personal Postcards. Right now, there are only nine cards available, but they're all excellent, and the site is worthy of a bookmark. Oh and by the way, check out the card in the lower right-hand corner. It's the best, by far!

## Dave & Stu: The Premiere Performance Duo of the 90s

**Web Address:** <http://homepage.mac.com/dspencer/dns2/index.html>

*America's Newest Entertainment Duo*

Everybody knows Dave & Stu. They're the entertainment duo that draws great crowds whenever they put on a show. They follow in the footsteps of entertainment duos such as The Smothers Brothers. The Web site is a bit outdated, but it's still worth seeing. Check out the site to find out all about them, what they do, and learn about their worldwide tour. (Check out the "Tour" section and click on "Bringing Home The Magic" to learn more!)



*Copyright © 2000 David Spencer. David Spencer has been a Mac advocate since 1991, when he traded in his IBM PC Jr. for a Mac Classic. He can be reached at [dspencer@atpm.com](mailto:dspencer@atpm.com). The Web sites mentioned here are not endorsed by ATPM, they are simply suggestions for your own browsing endeavors.*



## Part III: Software

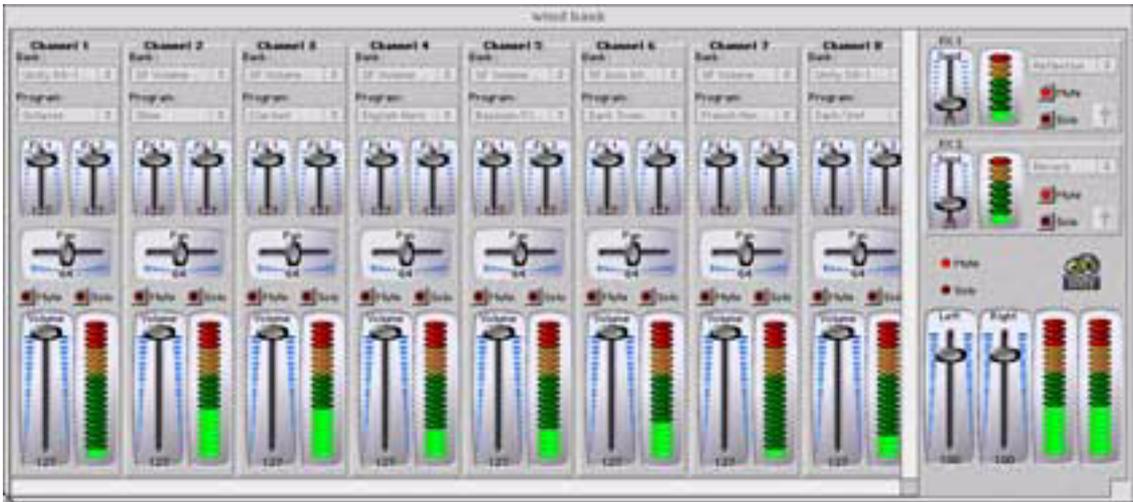
What's out there? Before we start, we have to know what we're looking for. There are different kinds of digital audio applications. The first step is understanding what they do. To help matters, I've divided the programs into two main categories: samplers and hard disk recorders. Although samplers and hard disk recorders both record, edit, and output digital audio, the user interacts with them in different ways. I've also subdivided hard disk recorders into stereo and multi-track applications and added a third category for CD burners and MP3 encoders.

### Samplers

A sampler is an electronic instrument that uses digital recordings to either reconstruct existing instruments or build new ones. Commercial digital samplers have only existed for about twenty years, beginning with the Fairlight in the early 1980s. As the technology both improved and became more affordable, samplers decreased in price from about \$20,000 for the first Fairlights to an average of \$2,000 for Akai and Ensoniq samplers manufactured around 1990. The advent of rack-mounted tone modules, made possible by MIDI, lowered the price even further. Keyboards could be dispensed with, in deference to the musician's favorite keyboard controller.

The next step was to bring samplers into the computer, either through PCI cards, such as Digidesign's Sample Cell II, or directly into the computer's resident memory. As you'd expect, the software sampler is the most affordable solution of all.

Bitheadz's Unity DS-1 is an affordable and powerful Mac-based software sampler. It loads into resident memory when launched and is recognized by OMS, Free MIDI, and



QuickTime. Once launched it runs in the background and appears in your sequencer as a MIDI output, along with your hardware modules.

Memory allocation, polyphony, MIDI setup, and ReWire are configured in the DS-1 control panel. Individual applications access the Keyboard (virtual keyboard for auditioning), Mixer (sixteen-channel multi-timbral sampler with effects), Editor, and MIDI Processor. The sampler is compatible with AIFF, WAVE, SD II, and Sample Cell. A demo version is available at the [Bitheadz Web site](http://www.bitheadz.com)<sup>1</sup>, and a more extensive review can be found in the June 1999 issue of Macworld. In my opinion it's a great buy, but only if you have a lot of RAM.

## Stereo Hard Disk Recording

Along with sequencing, hard disk recording was the other principal area of electronic music pioneered on the Mac. Digidesign's venerable Sound Designer was the pioneer, but it was discontinued a few years back. The new flagship Macintosh audio editor is Bias Peak. The only drawback is that Bias has yet to update the software to OS 9 (see my [Segments](#)<sup>2</sup> in ATPM 5.12 for more on OS 9 incompatibility). Since I made the upgrade myself, I haven't purchased Bias Peak yet. Instead, I've been using Felt Tip Sound Studio, a shareware audio editor that provides the basic functions I need.

With Sound Studio, I can open, edit, and save AIFF files, as well as convert sample rates, apply equalization and effects, and normalize tracks. Add SoundApp PPC as an audio for-

1. <http://www.bitheadz.com>
2. <http://www.atpm.com/5.12/segments.shtml>



mat converter, and I can work with SD II, and WAVE files as well. Sound Studio is available through [Felt Tip](http://www.felttip.com)<sup>3</sup> for a \$25 shareware fee.

## Multi-Track Hard Disk Recording

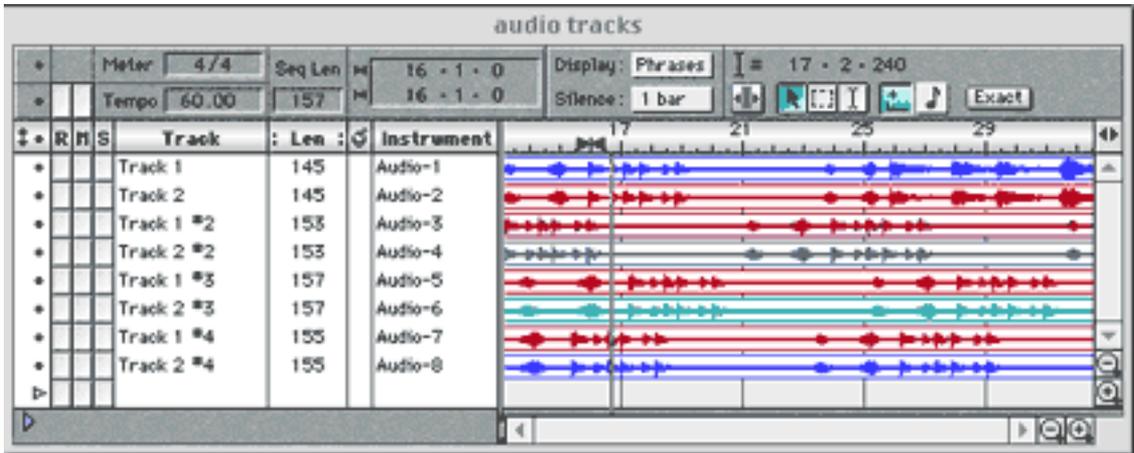
While programs like Bias Peak and Sound Studio place a stereo tape deck on your hard disk, other applications provide multiple tracks for overdubbing audio and mixing it later. Again, Digidesign has set the standard with Pro Tools (recently upgraded to version 5.0), but when hardware and plug-ins are added, the total package can reach thousands of dollars.

For the home studio on a budget though, the three top Mac sequencers also include digital multi-tracking. Mark of the Unicorn's Digital Performer might be the best long-term investment, given the success MOTU has had with its digital audio interfaces (more on those next month). Steinberg's Cuebase VST has the advantage of cross-platform support. Opcode's Studio Vision and Vision DSP are great programs, and they're the most affordable as well. The uncertainty over Opcode's future under the present ownership of Gibson Musical Instruments should encourage buyers to proceed with caution.

That said, I already own a copy of Vision DSP 4.5, which I bought for \$59 in a download version. With it, I can combine digital audio tracks (as shown in the "audio tracks" example) with sequenced MIDI information, which I route to the Unity DS-1. Both Vision DSP and the Unity DS-1 are ReWire compatible, so I can route the sampler's outputs back into Vision DSP and mix them all together. Vision DSP also includes a set of VST plug-ins (note: Digital

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3. <http://www.felttip.com>



Performer is now also VST compatible), allowing me to add effects and automate a professional quality mix on my G3 350.

## CD Burners and MP3 Encoders

Rippin' and burnin' CD burners and MP3 encoders are definitely closer to digital audio recorders than samplers. Given their prominence as of late though, I felt that they deserved their own section. Adaptec's Toast is, of course, the CD burning software of choice for both audio and data. Its audio burning options are limited, though.

Jam is Adaptec's professional audio CD burning software. It allows waveform editing, PQ subcode editing, crossfades between tracks, and other pro touches. Digidesign's MasterList Pro is another professional level CD burner application, but it has a steeper learning curve. The catch, so far, is that none of these programs are OS 9 compatible. Since I burn CDs at a production studio (Future Music Oregon), this wasn't a concern for me. For others with burners though, the wait is inexcusable.

As luck would have it, my colleague Daniel Chvatik is in the middle of a series on MP3 [players](#)<sup>4</sup> and encoders. He's been very thorough so far, so I won't bother to repeat what he has already said. Since players are free, my quest last fall was to find an application to encode CD recordings of my own music. I wasn't interested in skins or playlists, or in maintaining large databases of pirated music; instead I wanted speed, flexible settings, and track info editing. After some research, I chose Xing's AudioCatalyst, and I'm very happy with it.

4. <http://www.atpm.com/6.03/mp3roundup.shtml>

But that's just my stuff...there's a lot more out there. My advice is to research comparable products to find out which will work best for you and, above all, shop around. Make sure the price you pay is the best one you can find.

Copyright © 2000 David Ozab (<http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/%7Edlo>). David Ozab is a Ph.D student at the University of Oregon, where he teaches electronic music courses and assists in the day-to-day operation of The Future Music Oregon Studios.



Welcome to a new ATPM series, “Graphics and the Internet.” We’ll be looking at the various issues involved in creating images for the Web. If you have any questions, comments, or anything you’d like to see discussed in this series, please email me at [gosborne@atpm.com](mailto:gosborne@atpm.com).

## Part I: Copyright

**“Hold on a minute! I thought this was supposed to deal with Web graphics. What’s the issue of copyright got to do with all this?”**

Quite a lot, really. First of all, let’s play a game. Go to any Web site—for example, [the ATPM Web site](http://www.atpm.com)<sup>1</sup>. Drag the ATPM logo to your desktop. That was easy, wasn’t it? Want another go? Why not log on to the [Buffy the Vampire Slayer Web site](http://www.buffy.com)<sup>2</sup>. See that picture of Sarah Michelle Gellar? Let’s drag her to your desktop, too. Simple!

Well, that was useful, wasn’t it? If you’ve been playing the game, you should now have a copy of the ATPM logo and a nice picture of Ms. Gellar. Oh, and—um—I’ve just made you break the law.

**“Oh, thanks a lot! How did I break the law?”**

OK, but first drag the ATPM logo and the *Buffy* picture to your Trash can and empty it.



The ATPM Web site.  
Go on, take the logo!

1. <http://www.atpm.com>

2. <http://www.buffy.com>

**“Done!”**

Good! You’ve destroyed the evidence! The copyright laws of most countries protect artists, and anyone else who creates something, against the unauthorized duplication of their work. A moment ago, we made copies of the ATPM logo and Sarah Michelle Gellar. The reason I chose the *Buffy* picture will become apparent later. I chose the ATPM logo for the free advertising!

**“What’s the issue of copyright all about, then?”**

Well, without copyright laws, you or I could create a piece of work, spending lots of time and money on it, only to have some evil person copy the work and use it for any purpose they saw fit, without any payment or credit to the creator. Copyright laws make it illegal for this to happen.

Without copyright laws, writers, artists, musicians, and other creative people would be discouraged from creating work, as anyone could profit from this work. Without copyright laws, we might never have had Steven King, Andy Warhol, or Alanis Morissette.

**“No Alanis Morissette! That’s a nice thought! Are you going to tell me how this relates to my Web site? I’m trying to learn about graphics here.”**

The Internet (and in particular, the World Wide Web) is often thought of as a “Big Freebie,” and to a certain extent this is true. There’s a vast amount of information out there, available for zilch. You can find out what’s happening in the world, do research for a project, or watch some hamsters dance up and down.

Because of this apparent freedom of information, many people think that the Internet is easy pickings. But the fact that you can drag it to your desktop and stick it on your Web site doesn’t make it right. Along the same lines, you could go into a shop, take a few CDs without paying, then sell them to a third party who’ll buy with no questions asked.

Copyright laws protect an artist’s right to several things, such as reproduction, distribution, display (in galleries, etc.), adaptation, and performance (of plays, movies, etc.). If you breach one of those rights, then you’re infringing on the artist’s copyright.

**“OK, what if I ‘borrow’ a button from Amazon’s Web site and credit Amazon for the image?”**

No, don’t do it.

**“What if I ‘borrow’ an image of Sarah Michelle Gellar, give credit, and provide a link back to their site?”**

No, you cannot use any person’s or company’s image without written permission to do so. Imagine you’ve spent hours on your Web site graphics, giving your site a unique look. How would you feel if one day you found another site featuring your graphics? Even if they had credited you, the unique look that your site once had has been lost. On a similar note, if you’ve constructed a business site and you’ve taken images from another site, how honest and trustworthy will your business look to potential clients?

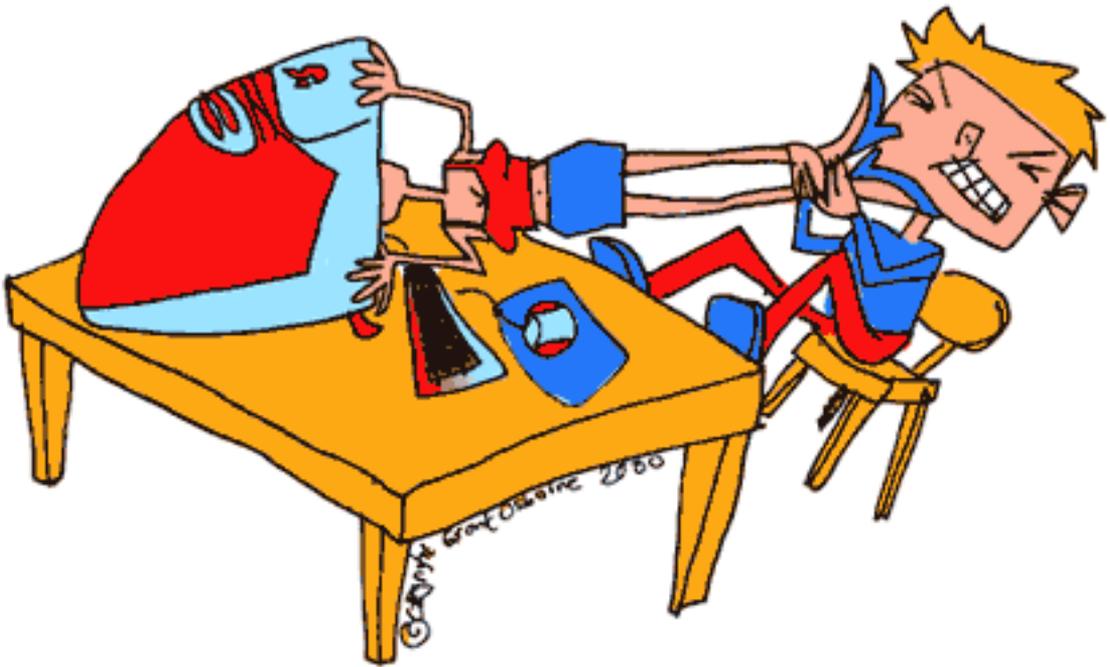
**“OK, I can understand not taking images from personal pages, as these people have spent a lot of time on these pages. But companies like Yahoo! and Fox have loads of money—they aren’t going to miss a few images taken here and there. And besides, I’ve seen millions of Web sites with pictures taken from Fox’s official Buffy site.”**

You’re right. Fox, Yahoo!, Disney, and the like have stacks of cash—they also have some very good lawyers! Your second point is right too. There are lots of fan sites out there, featuring *Buffy* pictures and the like—and right now many of these sites are receiving a certified letter from Fox’s lawyers asking them to remove those images or face a copyright infringement suit. A similar thing happened in 1997 when Fox got heavy with the *X-files* fan sites.

**“Whoa! That’s heavy! So what, exactly, am I supposed to put on my fan site?”**

Admittedly, it’s difficult. Let’s say, for example, we have a Tom Jones fan site. We can’t use any images we haven’t created ourselves.

- So we can’t use official publicity shots. We would have to get in touch with Tom Jones’s record company, or whoever owns the rights to these pictures.
- We can’t use shots from magazines. Again, we would need to get permission from the magazine and/or photographer.



Dragging Sarah Michelle Gellar onto your desktop.

- No copying of articles from magazines. Again, get permission from the magazine and/or author.
- We can't reproduce Tom Jones's lyrics. We would need to seek permission from the publisher. (I know these last two points aren't related to graphics, but I feel it's important to include them.)

This isn't an exhaustive list of what you can't use, but it should just be enough to give you an idea.

**“What can I include, then? This Tom Jones site is going to be a bit dull!”**

You can basically include anything that you've created yourself or have permission to use. This may include:

- The photo you took of Tom Jones when you met him on holiday. (Note, however, that in the US and some other countries you may need to obtain permission whenever you reproduce someone's likeness for any commercial purpose, and most non-commercial purposes, regardless of whether you own the copyright. This is a different issue from copyright, so I won't be covering this here. Seek legal advice for more information.)
- A picture you've drawn of Tom Jones.
- Any written work you've produced about Tom Jones.

One thing I'll say about written work is that although you own the copyright to anything you write, you still have to watch that you're not publishing anything libelous, or infringing anyone's trademarks. (For example, Mickey Mouse is a trademark of Disney.) These are different matters from copyright, so I won't go into these here.

There are also "Fair Use" clauses to most countries' copyright laws, which are, unfortunately, not very clear-cut. Such clauses generally allow you to quote small parts of a work, for the purpose of, for example, a review or comment. This is the part of the law that allows Amazon to print pictures of album covers on its site.

I admit this all makes it difficult for anyone who runs a fan site and wants to stay on the right side of the law. It's a difficult area. One good thing, though, is that your site will have lots of original material. This will make it a site worth visiting, and make it stand out from others.

**"What can I do, though? I can't draw or anything, and I really want to use that button from that Web site."**

You have a few options. Why not send an email to the webmaster of that site? Explain that you like the button, that you'd like to use it on your site, and that you'll provide a link and credit. You may be surprised. Many Webmasters will be flattered and say, "Go ahead!"

When I'm not writing and directing graphics for ATPM, I draw caricatures of celebrities. I put these up on my own Web site for people to look at. Occasionally, other webmasters email me and ask if they can use my (for example) Britney Spears caricature on their Web site. Most of the time, I'll say "Yes" on the condition that they credit me and provide a link. But if I find one of my images on a Web site where the webmaster hasn't sought permission, I'll be

on them like a ton of bricks. (We'll be covering the protection of your own copyright later.) So just ask. They may say no, but there's no harm in trying.

**“That’s all very well with somebody’s homepage, but I don’t think Fox will let me use their Buffy pictures.”**

No, probably not. But remember, Fox doesn't own the right to every picture of Sarah Michelle Gellar or Anthony Giles Head. Magazines will often carry articles and features on Sarah Michelle Gellar, where they have some lovely photographs of Ms. Gellar. Why not contact the magazine and ask their permission to use their pictures? A magazine isn't as likely to allow you to use their images as keenly as an amateur webmaster, but persevere.

In your request, make it clear that you don't intend to make a large profit from these pictures or your Web site (but only say this if it's true). Make it clear that you'll credit the photographer and magazine, and provide any links to any relevant Web sites. Make sure that the letter is professional looking, too. This will help your cause. Again, you may have no luck, but just keep trying—one day you may hit the jackpot!

**“OK, I’m convinced. What if I’ve created some of my own work. How can I stop others from ‘borrowing’ it?”**

There are a few things you can do, but due to the nature of the Web, a lot of it boils down to trust.

One important thing you can do is put a copyright notice on every Web page and every large image. Although you own the copyright to any work you create the moment you create it, it's still important to include the copyright notice. In most countries, it may not be needed, but in other countries, the lack of a copyright notice can make your work “fair game.” As the Web is world wide, your best bet is to cover all eventualities.

A copyright notice consists of the name of the copyright owner, the date of first publication, and either the word **copyright** or the © symbol. Note that you cannot use (c) instead of ©—this is fairly tempting in HTML, I know. You can use the word **copyright** instead of the symbol, but this may not cover you in all territories.

This doesn't physically stop people from taking your images, though. There are a few other tricks you can employ. Please note that these won't stop everyone, but may deter some "casual thieves."

- Use JavaScript to disable the right mouse button. Okay, I know we don't have them on our Macs, but the majority of surfers are using Windows-based machines, which use the right mouse button to save images to the desktop.
- Cut the image up into squares, and rebuild them into a table. This will require a bit more effort to rebuild the image into something usable.
- In Photoshop, you can watermark your images with a unique key. You can use this to prove your ownership, or trace these images, if they turn up elsewhere on the Web.

These are just a few ideas. Again, these such tricks won't stop people from taking your images altogether, but they can make it that much harder.

US readers may also want to register their work with the Copyright Office. This will give you extra protection, especially if the case goes to court.

### **"I've just seen some of my work on another Web site. What can I do?"**

Chances are, the webmaster of the site where you've found your image may not realize he's done something wrong. Initially, write to him explaining that his site contains copyrighted material belonging to you. Ask him politely to remove the images within 14 days, or you will take further action.

### **"OK then, what's this further action?"**

Well, you may not need to take further action, as this will be enough to make most people remove your images.

If this doesn't work, you could try writing to the ISP that hosts the site. Most ISPs have a section in their terms and conditions that prohibits the use of copyrighted material on their servers.

Politely write to the ISP, explaining that they are hosting a Web site containing copyrighted material. The ISP will then probably ask the infringer to remove the images or they will stop hosting his site.

Most home page domain names contain the name of the server. If not, enter the domain name (without the “http://www.” part) at [Networks Solutions’ WhoIs site](#)<sup>3</sup>. The domain name shows up as unavailable for you to buy, and you’ll be given the name of the domain name owner, his address, and the ISP.

## Search WHOIS

Look up a domain name in WHOIS:

To look up a NIC handle, host name, or registrant, use one of the keywords below:

- To search by [NIC handle](#) (or [contact](#)), type "handle WA3509"
- To search by [name](#), type "name lastname, firstname"
- To search by [company name](#), type "name The Sample Corporation"
- To search by [domain name](#), type "example.com"
- To search by [IP address](#), type "host 121.23.2.7"
- To search by [host](#) or [nameserver](#) name, type "host ns1.worldnic.com"

For advanced search instructions please see our [WHOIS Help](#).

The NSI Registrar database contains ONLY non-military and non-US Government domains and contacts. Other associated WHOIS servers:

Finding out the domain name owner.

If this still doesn’t work, your only next step is to take legal action. Get a letter from a lawyer and send a copy to the ISP and the infringer. This will stop most people. If not, you can take them to court. However, dragging it through the courts will take up a lot of your money and time, so you’ll have to decide whether it’s worth it.

In summary, if you want to stay out of trouble, the best option is to make everything on your site yourself. If you have no artistic ability, next time we’ll be looking at “creating and obtaining images for your Web site, even if you have no artistic ability.”

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3. <http://www.networksolutions.com/cgi-bin/whois/whois>

## More Information

- [Copyright](#)<sup>4</sup>
- [More information about copyright](#)<sup>5</sup>
- [Digital Watermarking](#)<sup>6</sup>
- [The Buffy copyright infringement story](#)<sup>7</sup>
- [Finding out who owns a domain name](#)<sup>8</sup>

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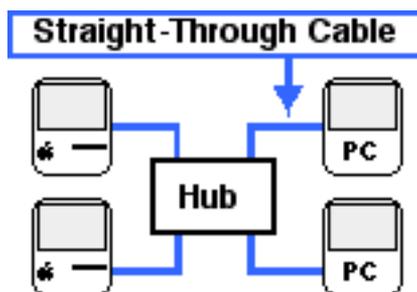
- 
4. <http://www.copyright.net>
  5. <http://www.gag.org/copyrite/htm>
  6. <http://www.digimarc.com>
  7. <http://www.wired.com/news/print/0,1294,34563,00.html>
  8. <http://www.networksolutions.com/cgi-bin/whois/whois>

## Part VII: Mixed Networks Make Strange Bedfellows

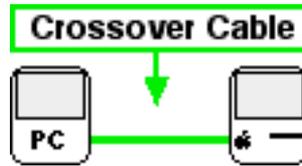
As computers invade our homes in increasing numbers, many people find themselves using more than one computer platform. In my home, for example, there's a do-it-all Power Mac 8500, but also a PC laptop from work. I work on both, and I sometimes need to share files between them or move files from one to the other. Both computers have floppy drives, so I **could** swap files 1.4 megabytes at a time—but that soon becomes cumbersome. Connecting them both to a network will solve the problem, but only if I can also overcome the obstacle of different network and file formats.

### Connecting Macs and PCs to the Same Network

Although many Macs can use both Ethernet and LocalTalk networks, Ethernet is the only real option for PCs, so it's best to connect Macs and PCs using Ethernet. For each computer, you'll need an Ethernet adapter and a piece of straight-through category 5 Ethernet cable. Most Macs and many PCs have Ethernet support built-in. You'll also need a hub or switch to act as the central connection point, as shown in the figure below.



If you're trying to connect one Mac to one PC, you can use a crossover Ethernet cable instead of the hub and straight-through cable. This kind of connection only works for two computers.



You can find Ethernet adapters, cables, hubs, and switches at most “real” and Internet computer stores. Ethernet adapters, hubs, and switches come in 10Base-T, 100Base-T, and 10/100Base-T varieties. The number refers to the data transmission speed, so 100Base-T is faster. 10/100Base-T devices can handle either Ethernet speed. Note that your Ethernet adapters and hub (or switch) must share a common speed to work together.

## Setting Up the Network Software

Once you connect your computers the same network, you need to make them “understand” each other. Macs and PCs use different network “languages” to share access to files and printers, so you need to add translation software if you want them to play nicely together. There are several options to choose from, depending on what you need to do.

DAVE from [Thursby Systems](http://www.thursby.com/)<sup>1</sup> installs on a Mac, allowing you to interact seamlessly with a Microsoft Windows-based network. You access the Windows network through your Mac’s Chooser (or Network Browser), just like on a Mac-only network. You can exchange messages with Windows users, use Windows printers, and perform any other network functions. The latest version of DAVE is 2.5, which is compatible with Windows 95, 98, 2000, and NT. You can download a demo version from the Thursby Web site. The single user version costs \$149.

PC MacLAN from [Miramar](http://www.miramarsys.com/)<sup>2</sup> installs on a Windows-based PC, enabling you to access shared files and printers on an AppleTalk network. PCs can access the AppleTalk network through the Network Neighborhood, and Macs gain access through their Chooser (or Network Browser). PC MacLAN includes Dataviz’s MacOpener, translation software that lets you access a wide variety of Mac formats from your Windows PC. There are versions of PC

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1. <http://www.thursby.com/>
2. <http://www.miramarsys.com/>

MacLAN for Windows 95, 98, and NT. You can download a demo version from the Miramar Web site and email [sales@miramarsys.com](mailto:sales@miramarsys.com) for pricing information.

TSSTalk from Thursby Systems is basically equivalent in function to PC MacLAN, enabling your Windows PC to access an AppleTalk network. You can download a demo version from the Thursby Web site. The single user Windows 95/98 version costs \$149 and the Windows NT version is \$169.

MacNFS from Thursby Systems installs on a Mac, allowing you to connect to UNIX NFS file servers. This is primarily for education or corporate users, as home users are less likely to have UNIX boxes around. You can download a demo version from the Thursby Web site. The single user version costs \$149.

Macs and PCs both support TCP/IP connections, so it's also possible to set up a TCP/IP-only connection between them. Although TCP/IP is free, it's also more complicated to use than the programs mentioned above. Next month's *Network Guru* column will cover setting up and using TCP/IP connections between Macs and PCs.

## Converting Between File Formats

Before you go about setting up your network and sharing files, keep in mind that Macs and PCs are still different beasts. Using one of the network translators above doesn't necessarily solve the problem of opening Mac files on a PC, or vice versa.

When it comes to opening files from other computer platforms, [DataViz](#)<sup>3</sup> is pretty much the *de facto* translation standard. If you need to open Windows PC files on your Mac, use MacLinkPlus. To view Mac disks and open Mac files on your Windows PC, use MacOpener or Conversions Plus. If you routinely work with a variety of file formats and platforms, these translators will save you big bucks on headache medication.

*Copyright © 2000 Matthew Glidden. Matthew Glidden is the webmaster of [Threemacs.com](#)<sup>4</sup>, a guide to constructing and maintaining home and small-office Macintosh networks. He can also tango and juggle, not necessarily at the same time.*



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3. <http://www.dataviz.com/>

4. <http://www.threemacs.com>

## Desktop Pictures XII: Northwest

ATPM's assistant webmaster, Lee Bennett, provided this collection of new desktop pictures. The images are of various terrain Lee photographed during his autumn 1999 vacation through the northwest states and British Columbia, Canada. Additional images at 1024 x 768 resolution will be made available in future months. All the photos from the trip can now be viewed in his [online photo album](#)<sup>1</sup>.

This month's pictures feature the San Bernadino Mountains in southern California (the first stop prior to touring the northwest); two shots taken along Interstate 90 near Anaconda, Montana, approaching a snowstorm; Mount Rainier in Washington State, taken from a ferry on the Puget Sound; the Pike Place Public Market in downtown Seattle, Washington; and several images taken at the Mount St. Helens National Park in Washington state.

All photos were taken with a Canon AE-1 using a 35–200mm zoom lens and Kodak Gold 200ASA 35mm film. Digitizing was performed on [Kodak Picture CDs](#)<sup>2</sup> at the time of film processing. Resampling and retouching was performed with Adobe Photoshop 4.01 for Macintosh.

You can get these images from the [download page](#)<sup>3</sup>. Prior collections of desktop pictures are available there.

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1. <http://www.dtpbylee.com/vacation/>
  2. <http://www.kodak.com/go/PictureCD/>
  3. <http://www.atpm.com/6.04/northwest/>

If you haven't seen the older parts of the series, they are: [Yellowstone National Park](#)<sup>4</sup>, [Drops](#)<sup>5</sup>, [Toronto](#)<sup>6</sup>, [Niagara Falls](#)<sup>7</sup>, [Monaco](#)<sup>8</sup>, [Montréal](#)<sup>9</sup>, [Bahamas](#)<sup>10</sup>, [Clouds](#)<sup>11</sup>, [Aerial](#)<sup>12</sup>, [Made with Macs](#)<sup>13</sup>, [Landscapes](#)<sup>14</sup>, [Northwest](#)<sup>15</sup>.

## Placing Desktop Pictures

**Mac OS 8.5 and Newer** Go to the “Appearance” control panel. Click on the “Desktop” tab at the top of the window. Press the “Place Picture...” button in the bottom right corner, then select the desired image. By default, it will show you the images in the “Desktop Pictures” subfolder of your “Appearance” folder in the System Folder, however you can select images from anywhere on your hard disk.

After you select the desired image file and press “Choose,” a preview will appear in the Appearance window. The “Position Automatically” selection is usually fine. You can play with the settings to see if you like the others better. You will see the result in the little preview screen.

If you are satisfied with the selection, click on “Set Desktop” in the lower right corner of the window. That's it! Should you ever want to get rid of it, just go to the desktop settings again and press “Remove Picture.”

**Mac OS 8.0 and 8.1** Go to the “Desktop Patterns” control panel. Click on “Desktop Pictures” in the list on the left of the window, and follow steps similar to the ones above.

**Random Desktop Pictures** If you drag a folder of pictures onto the miniature desktop in the Appearance or Desktop Pictures control panel, your Mac will choose one from the folder at random when it starts up.

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4. <http://www.atpm.com/5.03/yellowstone.shtml>

5. <http://www.atpm.com/5.05/drops/>

6. <http://www.atpm.com/5.07/toronto/>

7. <http://www.atpm.com/5.08/niagara/>

8. <http://www.atpm.com/5.09/monaco/>

9. <http://www.atpm.com/5.10/montreal/>

10. <http://www.atpm.com/5.11/bahamas/>

11. <http://www.atpm.com/5.12/clouds/>

12. <http://www.atpm.com/6.01/aerial/>

13. <http://www.atpm.com/6.02/madewithmacs/>

14. <http://www.atpm.com/6.03/landscapes/>

15. <http://www.atpm.com/6.04/northwest/>

**DeskPicture** An alternative to Mac OS's Appearance control panel is Pierce Software's DeskPicture, [reviewed](#)<sup>16</sup> in issue 5.10 and available for [download](#)<sup>17</sup>.



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16. <http://www.atpm.com/5.10/roundup.shtml>

17. <http://www.peircesw.com/DeskPicture.html>

# The Power of the Control Strip

Control Strip Modules (CSMs) are tiny pieces of software that can be easily forgotten, yet they are some of the most powerful ways to do simple tasks on your Mac. The ones provided by Apple are relatively unremarkable, but as we'll see in this roundup there's more innovation out there just waiting to make your Mac activities easier than ever.

The following list of CSMs is a highly arbitrary collection of some of the best modules we could find. By no means is this list exhaustive; there are plenty more modules out there that can do great things. While there isn't enough room to review everything, we think these eight serve as a good introduction to how far the power of the Control Strip can be stretched. You might be surprised at just how much a tiny little CSM can do...

## Access Strip v1.1

**Author:** Siga Software

**Web:** <http://hp.vector.co.jp/authors/VA014067/accessstrip-e.html>

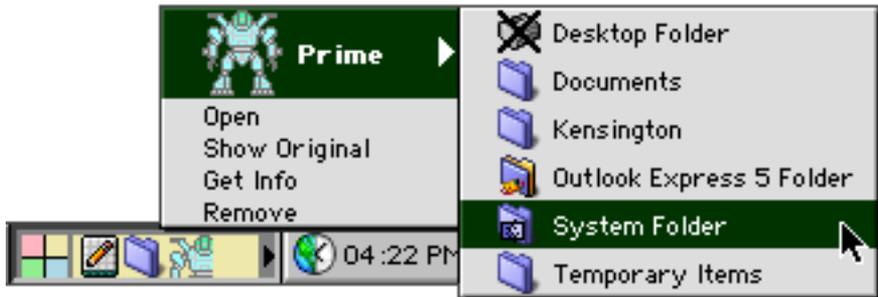
**Price:** \$10

**File Size:** 30K



There are many ways to keep frequently used files, folders, and applications within easy reach. You can line your desktop with aliases, for example, or you can stockpile them in your Apple menu. Then again, you might also rely on the Launcher control panel. These are all valid solutions, but none of

them is especially elegant; therefore, the best solution would be one that makes it easy to access your files but doesn't get in your way.



Access Strip fulfills both these requirements four times over. You start out with a small, four-colored square and a colored rectangle to its right. Click on one of the colors in the square, and the colored rectangle will change accordingly. Next, drag a few things onto the rectangle. Voila! Instant one-click access, or rather four layers of one-click access. Each color in the square is a separate layer, so you can group folders in one area, files in another, URLs in a third, or whatever organization scheme you require.

Access Strip can be configured to open an item when you click it, or pop up a window with options such as Get Info, Show Original, and Remove. You can also choose to create sub-menus off this popup, allowing you to access a folder or something specific inside it. This feature is limited to one level.

## Favor Strip v2.5.1

**Author:** Siga Software

**Web:** <http://hp.vector.co.jp/authors/VA014067/favorstrip-e.html>

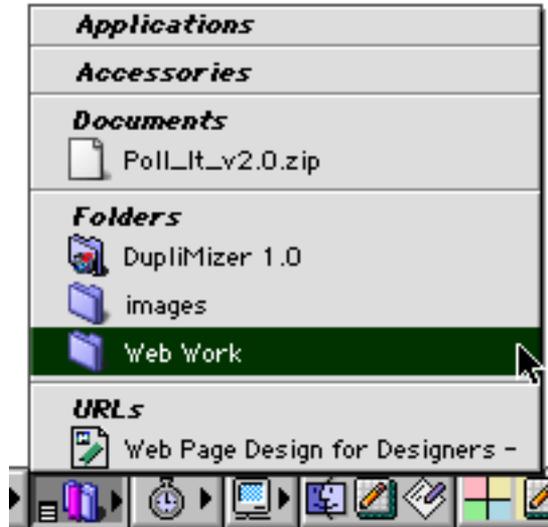
**Price:** \$10

**File Size:** 48K



Another way to get at your favorite files if you're using Mac OS 8.5 or later is to use the Favorites folder. The advantage of using Favorites is that

they're accessible from the new Open and Save As... dialogs. Normally the Favorites folder lives in the Apple menu, but Favor Strip brings it down to the control strip.



A nice feature offered by Favor Strip is the ability to easily delete things. Holding down the Control key after you click on the module changes the cursor to a trash can, allowing you to chop things away one item at a time. Favor Strip is also drag-and-drop aware. Drag a folder onto the module and it will be listed under the Folders section of the menu; other items receive similar treatment. Favor Strip can be configured to display either a text-only menu divided by category, or separate menus with icons.

# CalcStrip 1.4.2

**Author:** Siga Software

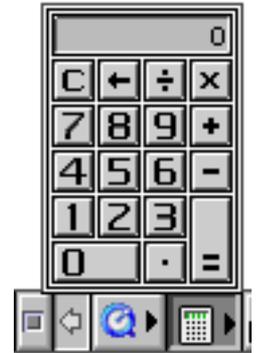
**Web:** <http://www.246.ne.jp/%7Ekykz/calcstrip-e.html>

**Price:** \$5

**File Size:** 92K



This idea is so simple that it's a wonder Apple didn't provide it when the Control Strip was first introduced. CalcStrip is a popup calculator disguised as a control strip module. If you don't mind its small size, you can send your current calculator application straight to the trash (unless of course it's a scientific calculator, or something fancy like that). CalcStrip accepts input from mouse clicks or the keyboard.



# Process Manager

**Author:** SkidPerfect Software

**Web:** <http://www.skidperfect.com/csm/>

**Price:** free

**File Size:** 42K



The Application menu is a far cry from the Windows Taskbar when it comes to functionality. Whereas Windows users can see at a glance which applications are active, Mac users have to pull down a menu at the edge of the screen or use the Application Switcher, which has problems of its own—configuring it to take up a minimal amount of space on your screen is more difficult than it could be.



Process Manager is a far easier way to see which applications are running, and in some respects even outshines the Windows Taskbar. As you launch and quit applications, Process Manager keeps track of what's available and shows the results as a list of icons that offer the same functionality as the Finder menu and then some. In addition to switching between applications with a click of the mouse, you can also hide them, quit them, get info, activate sharing, and more from a popup menu. Processes can be filtered from the list, a handy feature if your screen saver is an application (rather than a control panel or extension) that always needs to be active, but doesn't really need your attention.

## Trash It 3.6

**Author:** SkidPerfect Software

**Web:** <http://www.skidperfect.com/csm/>

**Price:** free

**File Size:** 10K



Emptying the trash is another task that's more difficult than it has to be. Normally, the Finder has certain rules for which files can be deleted and which ones can't. In the un-deletable category you'll find things like locked files, "busy" files (meaning that an application is currently using them, and wouldn't appreciate your deleting them), and active applications. If the Finder thinks a file is somehow in use, you won't be able to delete it until after you restart.

Trash It, on the other hand, is far less fussy. It will delete whatever you drag onto it with nary a peep or "Are you sure..." warning. This comes in handy when you know better than the Finder (or at least think you do) about which files can be safely deleted. Trash It gives you the power to override the Finder's usual rules, and for that reason can be very dangerous if you aren't careful. Entire volumes can be deleted, even the active System Folder.

## Jeremy's CSMs 2.1

**Author:** Jeremy Kezer

**Web:** <http://www.kezer.net/csm.html>

**Price:** \$15

**File Size:** 345K



If you really want to make the most of your Control Strip, Jeremy's CSMs are the place to go. This package of 16 modules both improves on some of Apple's offerings and offers unique additions to them. The following is a



# FM Egg Timer

**Author:** Dave Nault

**Web:** <http://www.bozos.com/lizardbreath/work.html>

**Price:** free

**File Size:** 85K



The best CSMs are the ones that do one thing and do it extremely well. Such is the case with FM Egg Timer, which will count down a time interval you specify and warn you when that time is up. Very useful when you're working at your computer and waiting for your laundry to dry, or when you need to limit how much time you spend on a project.

# World Clock

**Author:** MaBaSoft

**Web:** <http://www.k-inet.com/MaBaSoft/worldclock.html>

**Price:** \$5

**File Size:** 335K



If it's 4:00 PM in New York, what time is it in Melbourne, Australia? Or the Netherlands, for that matter? Or anywhere else on the planet? Timely questions like these are quickly answered by World Clock, a module that will display the local time in one or more cities around the globe. Simply pick the location, and World Clock takes care of the math. World Clock CSM 2.7.1 is available in English, Japanese, Korean, German, Dutch, French, and Italian.

|   |          |              |           |
|---|----------|--------------|-----------|
|  | 04:39 PM | London       | Melbourne |
|   |          | Sun 09:39 PM | 07:39 AM  |

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## A.I.D. 3.0.1



A.I.D., originally [reviewed](#)<sup>1</sup> not two months ago, matured to version 3.0. The auction tracker, now described as “auction information database™,” sports several new features since the review, including email directly from A.I.D., full support for Dutch Auctions, six more fully-customizable email templates, and the ability to “fetch” email addresses directly from eBay. [A.I.D.](#)<sup>2</sup> also went through several bug fixes since the review and it much more stable now.

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Since [ATPM reviewed](#)<sup>3</sup> GameRanger in issue 5.09, the gaming utility has come a long way. Firewall support was added along the route. Now, with version 2.0, the major new features are a powerful buddy list (for easier contact with your friends), extended information about servers (including ping), a message log, improved preferences handling, improved voice chat options and many other detailed refinements. GameRanger is a bit sluggish to quit, and direct support for private chatting would be nice, but overall it is a great improvement and a wonderful tool for serious Internet gamers and their friends.

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There are far too many Mac products these days for us to review each one, or even keep up with all the ones we have reviewed. Indeed, many shareware authors are revving their products more than once a month! The Update section is where we acknowledge significant new versions of products that we have previously reviewed. If new features, bug fixes, or other

1. <http://www.atpm.com/6.02/aid.shtml>
2. <http://www.epigroove.com/>
3. <http://www.atpm.com/5.09/gameranger.shtml>

revisions are substantial enough to change our assessment of a piece of software, we will generally publish a full review of the new version.

Send update information to [update@atpm.com](mailto:update@atpm.com). Reviewing in ATPM is open to anyone. If you're interested, write to us at [reviews@atpm.com](mailto:reviews@atpm.com)





BY ALAN TAYLOR, TAYLOR.ALAN@TESCO.NET

# Epson Perfection I200 Photo

**Company:** Epson, Inc.

**Web:** <http://www.epson.com>

**Price:** \$349.95

**Requirements:** Power Mac, Mac OS 8.5 or higher (7.5 for SCSI version)

The time had come to buy a new flatbed scanner. I have a beige G3, and felt that in order to future-proof my investment, I should get a USB scanner and a USB PCI card. Epson's Web site suggests that the USB scanner will only work with Macs **manufactured** with a USB port. Still, an email to their tech support people would surely sort that one out. Sadly not: the reply was as obscure as it was negative. They could not offer any worthwhile help or opinion on that matter.

I had already decided to buy a Keyspan USB card, so I thought I'd ask Keyspan. Their response could not have been more helpful. Within an hour of writing, I received an unequivocal confirmation that the Epson scanner would operate perfectly in my Mac with their card. So full marks to Keyspan, and their claims proved to be absolutely true.

Now on to the business of the scanner. It is quite a versatile unit, offering 1200 dpi true resolution. The version I chose also had the USB interface, and a transparency adaptor.

Many USB scanners look very cool and exciting. This one is strictly conventional. This is not an issue with me, as I want a tool, not a fashion statement, but some might be discouraged by its modest size, beige colour, and unremarkable styling.

There is little to report about the casing. At the rear, you will find the mains and USB connectors and a connector for the transparency adaptor (mini DIN—like an old Apple modem port connector). On one side is a neatly designed locking catch for use when transporting the unit. At the front is a conveniently placed on/off switch. Of course, being a USB device, this switch is actually useful. SCSI devices have to be switched on as the computer is started, but USB devices can be switched on and off as required.



In the front top corner is a small button that is potentially very useful, but which reveals the scanner's major weakness—its bundled software. The button is intended to be used like the 'copy' button on a photocopier. Put something into the scanner, press the button, and the software loads, enabling you to say what you want done. It offers all the obvious choices, such as print it on paper, OCR it to text, and load it into Photoshop.

What actually happens is that it loads an application called Presto! PageManager. Over the years, I have come across many poor quality ports of applications originally written for PCs. I can't recall ever having coming across a more irritating port than this one. Not only does it ignore most of the interface conventions developed by Apple, but it performs poorly and slowly.



Examine the screenshot; it looks quite ghastly. To say it is utilitarian would be to give false praise, as utilitarian implies usefulness. Note that there are two separate Help menus at the top of the screen. One offers access to the help system; the other turns balloon help on and

off. Pressing F1 for help is not implemented, nor is pressing the Help key on an extended keyboard. If you access help, you will discover references to features that are not available in the Mac implementation. It warns that rotating the scan is not available either, although in reality there is a button which does that! I don't want to dwell too much on these points and countless similar ones, as it distracts from my main criticism, which is that the software fails to do its real job adequately.

I tried it out with a full letter-sized scan at 300 dpi (you can also scan up to 1200 dpi, or beyond that for those who are impressed by interpolated resolution figures). The TWAIN driver is needed for all scans and is reasonably fast, but using PageManager to transfer the image to Photoshop took 91 seconds (25.6 MB file size). The same image acquired directly from Photoshop via the TWAIN driver took 49 seconds. These differences are even more striking at higher resolutions. PageManager seems to spend ages slowly loading and saving the image file. I started to repeat the test at 1200 dpi, but abandoned it as it was painfully slow.



With Photoshop already loaded, pressing the export to Photoshop button on PageManager caused it to attempt to load a second copy of Photoshop, apparently completely unaware that it was already running.

Normally I would take the view that with bundled software, it's a bonus if it's any good, and little is lost when it turns out to be mediocre. In this case, the green button on the scanner is a key operational feature, and as far as I am aware, it will only trigger the PageManager software. Therefore, this software is inextricably linked with the operation of the scanner, and forms a key part of the package.

In this case, Mac users are stuck with third-rate software. A company that makes as much money from the Mac community as Epson does should not treat us so shabbily. It might be that PC users get equally bad performance from their version, but Mac users are used to better things, and should not have to tolerate clumsy software. It reflects badly upon Epson as a company. If the hardware performed to the standards of the software, purchasers would demand refunds.

I had hoped to use the scanner to archive some paper documents electronically, and PageManager offers that facility, but in the real world, it is so slow and tedious that I decided that an alternative solution would have to be found.

However, once you find out how to use the hardware without PageManager, the story gets much more pleasant. Scanning directly into Photoshop (using the Import command) produces excellent quality scans quite rapidly. The detail captured was most impressive. Colours were accurately and consistently recorded, there was a wealth of information to be

found within the extremes of the whites and blacks, particularly with transparencies, and all of a sudden my anger about the software was subsiding.



**Note:** this image is reduced and JPEG-compressed and therefore may not accurately reflect the quality of the original scan.

As a photographer, I found that the photo option was irresistible. Nobody would try to claim that a scanner such as this could compete with a dedicated slide scanner, but for many purposes this scanner can do an excellent job. For scanning prints, it works admirably, and for slides and negatives, the 1200 dpi scanning permits very impressive 7x5 inch prints to be made. Unlike some dedicated slide scanners, it can also scan larger, and unusual sized, negatives.

I scanned some large B&W negatives that were anything up to 60 years old. They were optimized and cleaned up in Photoshop. These family photographs have never been seen so clearly, and are now archived on CDs for other family members to have and keep.

The transparency adaptor replaces the lid of the scanner, and has a short lead that plugs into the rear of the scanner. The scan area for transparencies is reduced in size, but still allows scanning of 4x5 inch originals, or up to four 35mm negatives in one pass. Film holders are

supplied for single and 4x 35mm, 6x9cm (120 size), and 4x5 inch. Mounted slides can be just laid on the glass.



The film holders are somewhat flimsy, and not too convenient to use, so you would certainly not want to use them intensively, but the results are easily worth the effort. You will also need to take care not to damage the negatives when feeding them into the holders. The clumsiness of the negative holder makes it quite impractical for anything other than occasional use.

It's hard to form an objective conclusion about this scanner. If you judge it solely on the hardware, then its performance is quite stunning, and it represents astonishing value for money. It would certainly warrant a rating of Excellent. However, the product is significantly diminished by its poor software and filmstrip holder. If you are not annoyed by the software, or you can avoid using it, then it would be hard to find a more versatile and useful scanner in this price range. If you only need to scan small numbers of negatives to modest magnifications, then the transparency adaptor is a good choice. If Epson were to rewrite the software properly, the Epson Perfection 1200 Photo scanner could be a top-notch product, but in its present form, I can only rate it Good.

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BY ERIC BLAIR, [EBLAIR@ATPM.COM](mailto:EBLAIR@ATPM.COM)

# iControl 1.0.1

**Company:** The Iconfactory

**Web:** <http://www.iconfactory.com>

**Price:** \$19.95

**Requirements:** Power Macintosh with OS 8.5 or greater

In my mind, one of the coolest things about the Mac OS is the ability to simply customize your icons. After finding the perfect icon, a [few clicks](#)<sup>1</sup> would have it pasted on to a folder. Of course, you would eventually want all of your folders to look this nice. But even if you changed every folder on your hard drive, any new one you created would have the default folder icon. If you really wanted to, you could play around with the System File in ResEdit, but that's not really for the faint of heart. Furthermore, with the advent of 32-bit icons, you'd also need to edit the System Resources File to change the default 32-bit icons. Throw in the fact that this is the only way to change certain icons, like the Trash, and you can see how things might get a bit messy.

In an effort to avoid the mess, The Iconfactory created iControl, which makes changing almost every icon in your system as simple as a few clicks. When you launch the application, you're presented with a window that contains three buttons and a list of 74 icons showing the original system icon and the current icon. The three buttons are: Restore Icon, which resets the selected icon to its default; Open Pack, which launches IconDragger (more on that later); and a button that links you to The Iconfactory's homepage. Normally, I'm not a huge fan of an application having a link to its homepage in the main portion of the interface, but in iControl's case it makes sense, because it gives you direct access to new iPacks that are available.

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1. <http://www.atpm.com/6.04/guijunkie.shtml>



There are five ways to change icons using iControl. At first glance, it may seem like this could get confusing for novice users, but it actually makes sense. The first way is to double click on an iPack. This will open iControl and change the system icons to the contents of that iPack. To get you started, iControl includes 14 iPacks—Photonica by Dave Brasgalla, Yosemite (in four colors) by Talos Tsui, ExtraVirgin by Albie Wong, and Perfect Yosemite (in eight colors) by John Marstall.

The second method is to select Open iPack... from the File menu. It's very similar to the double-click method, but it has a minor advantage—unlike all the other “total conversion” techniques, this doesn't give you a modalless dialog box asking if you're sure you want to change all the icons in the system. Yes, it's a minor thing, but I'd love a preference to turn the warning off.

The third method gives control over each individual icon. Just drag any icon from the Finder onto any icon in the iControl window to change the setting. Then after you customize to

your heart's content, choose Save iPack... from the File menu to preserve your creation and pass it along to others. One nice touch—when you go to save your iPack, iControl always brings up a Save dialog box asking for a file name. This way, if you start by modifying an existing set (for personal use only), you won't accidentally overwrite the original file when you go to save.

The last two methods involve both iControl and IconDragger (another product from The Iconfactory). Personally, I think the integration of the two products is both iControl's greatest feature and its biggest weakness. IconDragger provides the one thing iControl lacks—a viewer to see what different sets of icons contain. In iControl, you can only see a single iPack at a time, and that's only after you've applied it to your system. Using IconDragger, you can quickly flip between iPacks before choosing the one you want. This definitely beats applying an iPack, then applying another, and another...well, you get the point.



Okay, so I basically described the fourth way to pick an iPack—click the Open Packs button and choose your desired iPack from the Icon Dragger application. Similarly, the fifth way is to change individual icons. Just drag an icon from IconDragger to an icon in the iControl window and the change is made. The icon dragged from IconDragger can come from either an iPack or an IconDropper Pack.

I said that IconDropper integration was also iControl's greatest weakness. IconDragger is available for \$20 as part of the IconDropper package. Granted, the registration fee gets you five programs (IconDropper, IconDragger, IconLocker, Icon Expander, and IconPacker),

but if all you're interested in is a way to look through iPacks before applying them, then \$20 seems a bit steep. Personally, I'd love to see an iPack preview option that showed a few icons, such as a blank folder, a hard drive icon, or an Apple menu icon, just to get a feel for what the icons look like before applying them to my system.

If you like to customize the look of your computer, iControl would make a great addition to your collection. If time is money, the \$19 registration fee is well worth the time you'll save not hacking away with ResEdit (and that's assuming you don't edit the wrong resource). The lack of any type of preview option is a negative, but it shouldn't be enough to keep you away from this wonderful program. Moreover, if you already own the IconDropper package, iControl is the next natural addition to your collection.

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BY MICHAEL TSAI, [MTSAI@ATPM.COM](mailto:MTSAI@ATPM.COM)

# Internet Explorer 5.0

**Company:** Microsoft Corporation

**Web:** <http://www.microsoft.com/mac/ie/default.asp>

**Price:** free or \$10 on CD-ROM (including shipping)

**Requirements:** Power Macintosh with Mac OS 7.6.1 or later, 8 MB of available RAM, QuickTime 3.0 or later, MRJ 2.1 or later.

In the last week of March, with the Windows version already [more than a year old](#)<sup>1</sup>, Microsoft released Internet Explorer 5 Macintosh Edition. Judging by the response, IE 5 was the most hotly anticipated software product so far this year. After releasing IE 4.0 in January 1998 and IE 4.5 in January 1999, Microsoft was clearly targeting this year's San Francisco Macworld Expo for the unveiling of its latest browser. But as is often the case with software, development took longer than expected, and Microsoft wisely chose to delay the release until it was finished. Even so, IE 5 contains numerous bugs, and Microsoft apparently did not have time to finish work on the Media Toolbar that its own IE 5 pre-release site touted earlier this month. IE 5 boasts an all-new rendering engine, standard support for 128-bit encryption, a colorful new look, enhanced usability, and new features such as an auctions manager and a scrapbook. I'll examine each of these in turn, but let's start from the beginning.

## Installation

Installation of IE 5 is easy. You double-click the self-mounting disk image and drag the Microsoft Internet 5 folder to your hard drive. The first time you launch IE, it automatically copies some shared libraries and fonts to your System Folder. My machine contained some Microsoft Web fonts from an IE 4.5 installation, and while updating these the IE 5 installer did not ask me before it added additional fonts that I had specifically deleted from IE 4.5. On another machine with no previous IE installation, it was nice enough to ask whether I

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1. <http://www.zdnet.com/zdnn/stories/news/0,4586,2227998,00.html>

wanted Microsoft's Web fonts installed. Depending on your system configuration, installation may require a restart; but if it does, you are not warned ahead of time.

Although installing IE 5 is as easy as can be, there is neither an uninstaller nor a log of the installed files to aide you with a manual uninstall. However, IE 4.5 continues to work after you've installed version 5, so you can easily revert if you don't like the new version or if you want to check pages you're developing for backward compatibility. Unfortunately, you cannot run IE 4.5 and 5 simultaneously to compare the outputs of their different rendering engines.

## Standards

The biggest change in IE 5 is its new rendering engine, code-named Tasman. With the (honorable) goal of creating a browser that supports the [W3C's standards](#)<sup>2</sup>, Microsoft scrapped the IE 4 renderer and started from scratch. The result is that IE 5 is the [most standards-compliant browser on any platform](#)<sup>3</sup>. According to Microsoft, it contains full support for HTML 4.0, Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) 1.0, and Netscape's Document Object Model (DOM) 1.0, as well as the PNG image file format. Support for XML is present, [but limited, as with IE 5 for Windows](#)<sup>4</sup>. IE 5 displays raw XML documents in a collapsible outline view, but doesn't support using XSL to make them pretty.

How does output from Tasman compare? On pages written with correct HTML, the output is usually only slightly different from IE 4.5. IE 5 is less forgiving of poor HTML, so now is the time to make sure your pages [validate properly](#)<sup>5</sup>. I was pleased to learn that IE 5 honors DOCTYPEs, so it can actually tune the looks of Web pages based on the versions of HTML with which they claim to be written.

One of the coolest new features is Personal Style Sheets, a feature I've been waiting for since I first learned about CSS. With IE 4.x, you could decide whether to allow pages to override your default fonts and colors. In this way, you could prevent IE from displaying low-contrast color combinations and unreadable fonts. Personal Style Sheets take this a step further. By [writing your own style sheet](#)<sup>6</sup> you can tell IE exactly how you want each page element dis-

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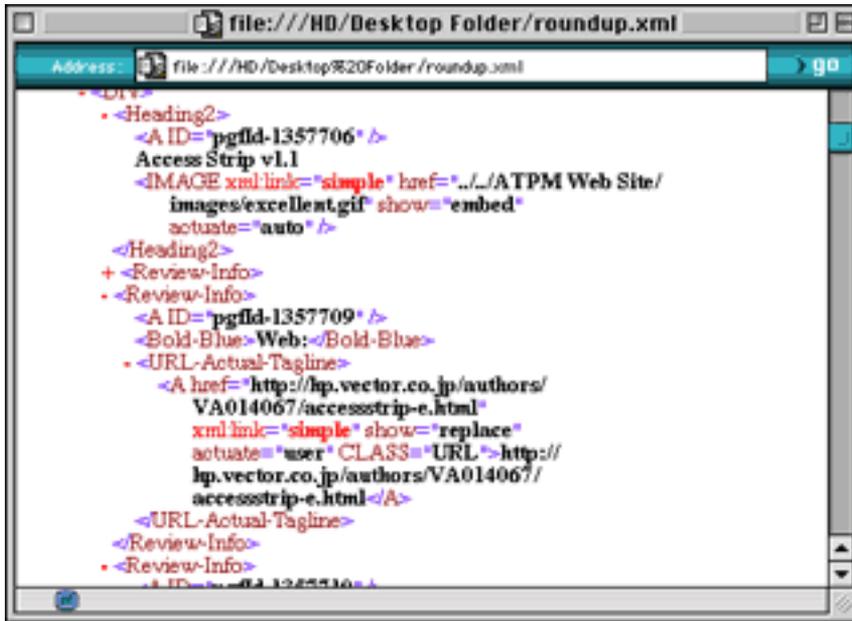
2. <http://www.w3c.org>

3. [http://biz.yahoo.com/bw/000329/Web\\_standards\\_1.html](http://biz.yahoo.com/bw/000329/Web_standards_1.html)

4. <http://www.xml.com/pub/1999/03/ie5/first-x.html>

5. <http://validator.w3.org/>

6. <http://www.atpm.com/5.10/paradigm.shtml>



played, and your personal style sheet can override the page's. This ensures that pages will be readable by those with color blindness or other visual deficiencies, and everyone can choose specific fonts and sizes that they like and apply them to all the pages they visit.

Tasman's renderer is generally quite accurate, and it passes Todd Fahrner's CSS test. However, there are a few glitches: Tasman sometimes interprets hard returns that it should ignore, it incorrectly draws underlines through the descenders of characters like 'y' and 'j,' and it does not always render tables correctly. See the [iCab test page](#)<sup>7</sup> for an example of this.

## Text and Resolution

The first thing you'll notice when you try IE 5 is that all the text looks huge. Tasman supports rendering at many different resolutions, but defaults to the Windows standard (and W3C recommendation) of 96 dpi. Mac OS uses 72 dots to the logical inch, and this combined with the default 16-point font (instead of 12-point) make text in IE 5 appear much larger than normal. As Microsoft [explains](#)<sup>8</sup>, the 96 dpi default resolution is aimed at improving the readability of Web sites. If a site that specifies exact font sizes is designed on a Windows machine, fonts often appear too small on the Mac, making the text difficult or impossible to read. By rendering at 96 dpi, IE 5 solves this problem but creates others.

7. <http://www.icab.de/test.html>

8. [http://www.microsoft.com/mac/IE/Support/article\\_pixels.asp](http://www.microsoft.com/mac/IE/Support/article_pixels.asp)

For instance, Macintosh sites that use CSS to specify font sizes in units of points will render with their text enlarged. This is arguably worse than small text because it disturbs the layout of various page elements. IE provides a command for zooming text in or out—and in version 5 it finally works with all text—but this does not completely solve the problem. Many Mac sites use CSS to specify 10-point Geneva as their body font. This is a popular choice because Apple hand-tuned the 10-point version to be easily readable on-screen. However, at 96 dpi, 10-point Geneva is ugly. You can zoom out one level, but that reduces its size to what 9-point Geneva looks like at 72 dpi. This is quite readable, but far too small for extended reading. In fact, IE's default resolution will foil nearly all attempts by Web developers to recommend screen font sizes that are known to look good.

The only way a site can recommend an exact font and size is by using CSS to specify it in pixels instead of in points. After I started using IE 5, I modified the AT<sup>PM</sup> Web site to specify 10-pixel Geneva as our base font. On Macs, this gives the desired results with IE 5 as well as IE 4. However, this makes the text unreadably small on Windows and Unix machines—the exact opposite problem. If anyone knows how to win on all platforms, I'd appreciate a [heads-up](#)<sup>9</sup>.

Overall, I think it's incredibly useful that Tasman can render at different resolutions, and I think that Microsoft's on-screen ruler for specifying the rendering resolution is nifty. But I question its choice of 96 dpi as the default resolution. Aside from the above issues, it encourages Web developers to think that the Web is a WYSIWYG medium. It's not. I fear that when Windows Web developers (in particular) learn that Mac IE 5 defaults to 96 dpi, they will be less likely to test their sites on both platforms. This can only be bad for Mac users, and it will be even worse for those who use palmtops and Internet appliances that have vastly different resolutions. Microsoft's decision—to make Mac IE render like their gold standard—works OK in practice, but doesn't feel like the right solution.

## Speed

Besides standards support and multiple resolutions, Tasman's main feature is speed. I'm happy to report that IE 5 is definitely faster than its predecessor. However, much of the speed improvement is perceived rather than actual: IE 5 waits longer after you click a link to begin displaying the next page, then does the actual drawing faster. If you switch between two pages with similar table layouts, IE reduces flicker by drawing the new page directly rather

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9. <mailto:mtsai@atpm.com>

than blanking out the first one with white first. IE 5 also feels more responsive: Dynamic scrolling is smoother, and the delay after you tell IE to close a window has been reduced.

IE 5 is definitely faster than Netscape. Depending on the page and connection speed, it's anywhere from noticeably faster than IE 4.5 to almost indistinguishably faster. Its speed is comparable to iCab's. For small and medium pages, IE 5 is perhaps a bit quicker to finish the rendering of the page, but iCab is the first to draw some text that you can read. For large files, especially ones stored locally, IE 5 is dramatically slower than iCab. In all cases, I found it much slower than IE 5 for Windows.

## Stability and Good System Citizenship

Web browsers are notoriously unstable, and people tend to have different experience with which browsers are stable and which aren't. In the past, IE has always been rock-solid for me, while Netscape was flaky. With IE 5, I'm sorry to say, that that tradition is over. In my first day of using it IE crashed numerous times, six of them requiring immediate restarts that caused me to lose unsaved changes in other applications. I have never experienced a Mac application that is so unstable. To be fair, I installed IE 5 on another machine that contained a clean installation of Mac OS 9. IE was more stable there, but still managed to crash seven times while I was writing this review. My experiences with IE's stability seem to be unusual but not unheard of. Many people find it quite solid, but enough are having instability problems that I think Microsoft needs to pay serious attention to its quality control. Certain pages such as [Outside Online](#)<sup>10</sup> cause immediate crashes for all IE 5 users, so there are definitely issues that need to be resolved.

As in IE 4.x, IE 5 uses a modest memory partition in its Get Info window and asks the system for additional temporary memory as needed. You can find out how much memory IE is using by choosing "About This Computer" from the Apple menu. IE 4 had serious memory leaks; if you visited enough pages, it would lose track of some of the memory it was using and keep asking the system for more, until there was none left. IE 5's memory usage still gradually increases as you use the program, but it doesn't leak fast enough to be a serious problem. Nevertheless, every once in a while it mysteriously causes my Finder to run out of memory even when there are 250 MB of unallocated RAM.

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10. <http://www.outsidemag.com>

The final citizenship problem I should point out is that IE still grabs a lot of background processing time. That is, even when it's idle in the background, it makes your other applications run more slowly. For this reason, I use iDo Script Scheduler to periodically run an AppleScript that quits IE if it has no open windows.

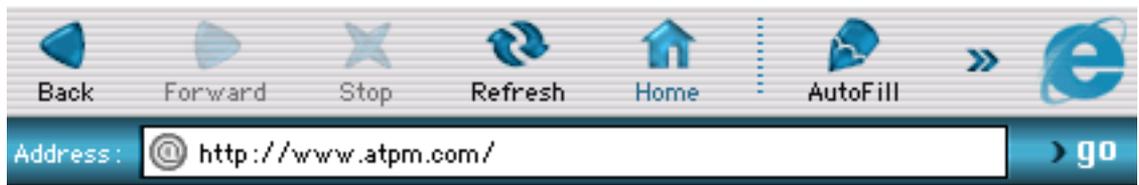
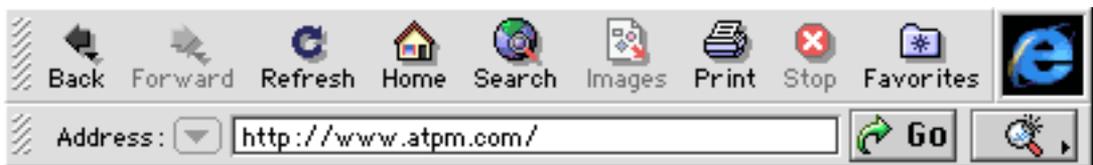
## Toolbars

So far I've been talking about what's underneath the hood of IE 5 because that's where the most radical changes are. But the first thing you'll notice about IE 5 is its new look.

[According to Microsoft Mac Business Unit Product Manager Irving Kwong](#)<sup>11</sup>:

One of the goals was to build a browser that was literally the best Mac browser out there. To do that, we had to make it more Mac-like. The Mac has a lot of style and we found in our research that the number three attribute of why new users purchased an iMac was because of style. So we said to ourselves, "The software has to have style. Why can't your browser have style?"...Now we've got this cool looking translucent chrome background on it (the browser window), brand new icons that have this really cool glow when you mouse over them and the ability to switch your color to match your iMac. This is the kind of stuff Mac users care about!

The problem with making an application stylish is that you're bound to polarize users into those that like the look and those that don't. I find IE 5's toolbar hideous and the new icons indistinct. Others think they're a nice prelude to Aqua. In my opinion, they don't look much like Aqua, and the ribbed background makes the button names difficult to read.



Aside from the styling, there are other important differences from the IE 4.5 toolbar. The buttons themselves are much larger now. They consume more precious vertical space, and fewer buttons can fit horizontally within the window width. As in Microsoft Windows, when

11. <http://www.macnn.com/features/ie5trans.shtml>

there are too many buttons to fit horizontally on a toolbar, IE replaces the rightmost ones with a popup menu disguised as a >>.

You can change the colors of the buttons to any of Apple's recent case colors—the iMac flavors, graphite, PowerBook black, and PowerBook bronze. However, you cannot pick your own custom color, and none of the ones Microsoft provides match any of Apple's Appearance accent colors. I'm not a fan of any of Microsoft's choices; the graphite and blueberry are probably the least distracting. You might think that the color of the toolbar buttons is a minor issue—after all, some people even hide the toolbar. However, Microsoft has ensured that everyone will care by changing the accent color within IE to match the chosen toolbar color. Focus rings in text boxes, scroll bar thumbs, the menu highlight color, and the names of form buttons all use the toolbar color in IE. Thus, even standard interface elements look different in IE than in any other Macintosh application. Consistency is perhaps the most important Macintosh interface ideal, and Microsoft has let its stylistic choices get in the way of it. Even worse, IE 5 has a bug where its toolbar color replaces the system accent color in all applications. This persists after you've quit IE, and the only solution is to restart your machine.



IE 5's toolbar is completely customizable. Select Customize Toolbars... from the View menu, and IE loads a special Web pages that shows the toolbar buttons that are available. You can drag them onto the toolbar, rearrange the toolbar, and drag buttons you don't want to

the trash. I have mixed feelings about the Customize Toolbars feature. It's nice to be able to select exactly the button functions I want; but, unlike iCab, IE doesn't let you use your own button graphics. Also, I question Microsoft's using the browser window to configure application-level preferences. This blurs the difference between the browser application and the page being browsed (much like the Windows 98/2000 file manager), and the functionality would be better off in the preferences. Not only does using the browser window cause IE to replace the page you're browsing with the customization page, but it also gives the impression that the customization affects only the current browser window—in fact, it affects them all.

In terms of toolbar usability, IE 5 takes one step forward and one step back. If you put folders in your Toolbar Favorites, they appear as popup menus in the toolbar (as in iCab). However, you can no longer customize the layout of the toolbars themselves. In IE 4.5 you could change the order of bars and place two toolbars side-by-side to save vertical space. In IE 5, this is no longer possible, apparently because it confused some people.

## Address AutoComplete

Address auto-completion was one of IE 4.5's strongest features, often saving you typing by guessing complete URLs from what you'd started entering. Though IE 4.5 supported key commands (using Control + arrow keys) to cycle through the auto-completion engine's guesses and decide how much of the URL you wanted to IE to guess for you, few people knew about them. Version 5 make this feature easier to use by showing a translucent drop-down list of possible completions that updates as you type. You can use the arrow keys to scroll down the list, and press Return to choose the completion that you want. Another improvement is that the list shows the titles of the pages as well as the URLs, which can help jog your memory.

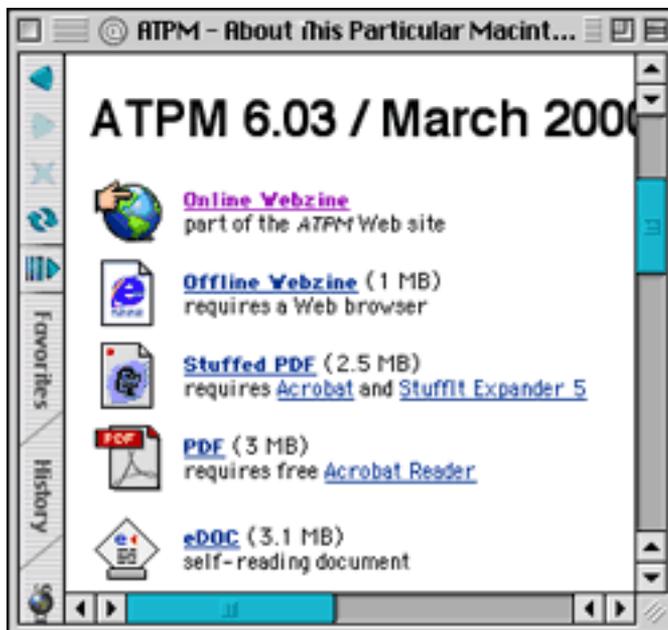
While an improvement, the new AutoComplete feature is far from perfect. The translucency of the list and the rapidity with which it updates are distracting. Microsoft seems to have changed the auto-completion algorithm from version 4.5; the new one generates more choices but seems to be less accurate. Since the up and down arrow keys are used to select items in the drop-down list, you can no longer use them to move the insertion point to the beginning or end of the text field. This is non-standard behavior, and I find it annoying.

The preferences contain an option to disable the AutoComplete feature. This removes the drop-down list but still lets you cycle through completions using Control-Up and Control-

Down (as with IE 4.5). However, with AutoComplete disabled, IE no longer generates completions as you type.

## Explorer Bar

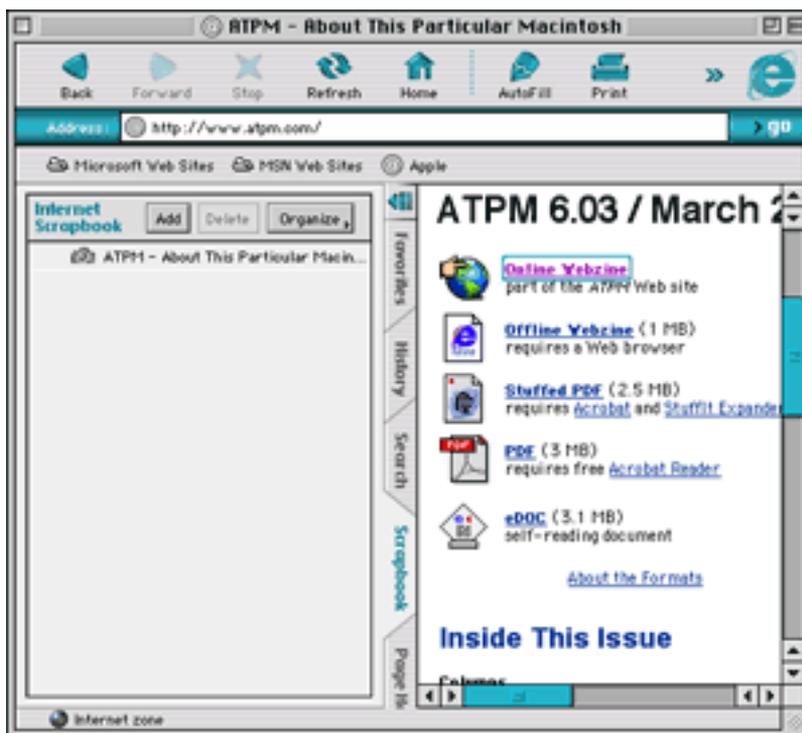
This is what Microsoft calls the rotated set of tabs along the left edge of the IE 4.5 browser window. In IE 5, the bar has a ribbed appearance and no longer appears to extend into the page content. It works much the same as before. Clicking a tab pops out the Favorites, History, Search, Scrapbook (more on that later), or Page Holder display. Clicking the tab again collapses the bar so that only the tabs are visible. Aside from the appearance, the main new feature is the button at the top, which looks like the eject button on a CD player. Clicking it collapses the bar and hides the button bar, location bar, and favorites bar, thus letting you see more of the page. You can still navigate, however, because the top of the Explorer bar now shows the essential buttons: Back, Forward, Stop, and Reload.



## Scrapbook

IE 4 introduced the Web Archive feature that saves all the text, images, and sounds from a page, or tree of pages, into a single file. With IE 5, the Web Archive feature is still present—and it still requires redownloading page elements even if the page is already being displayed—but there is a new feature called the Scrapbook. Accessed from a tab of the Explorer bar, the Scrapbook behaves like a list of Web Archives, except that Scrapbook entries are

limited to holding single pages. Pressing the Add button copies the current page into the Scrapbook, quickly and without requiring additional downloading. Viewing a Scrapbook entry is just like viewing the real page, except that IE shows a yellow strip at the top of the window that tells you when you added the page to the Scrapbook and provides a link to the original (online) copy. You can use IE's Find feature to search all the pages in the Scrapbook, providing another advantage over Web Archives. Scrapbook files are stored in the Explorer folder inside your Preferences folder, so you can easily back them up or exchange them with friends.



All in all, the Scrapbook is a very cool feature. I will probably use it often for archiving invoices from online orders. My only complaints are that IE still does not provide a way to archive pages as normal files, and that it takes a long time to close a browser window that's displaying the Scrapbook.

## Macintosh Look and Feel

Microsoft is fond of claiming that it writes “real” Macintosh applications. IE 5 is probably its most Mac-like application, but even it falls a bit short. Like Outlook Express 5, IE 5 uses [rollovers and cursor changes](#)<sup>12</sup> to indicate that the cursor has passed over a button. Some

buttons are actually popup menus, but (unlike IE 4.5) there's no indication of this until after you've moused over them.

Print Preview still draws a huge dialog box that fills the screen and cannot be resized, and since there is no standard close box you must dismiss it with a push button labelled "Close." Likewise, the information windows for favorites and auction items lack close boxes.

HTML form buttons, radios, and checkboxes still don't look like their standard Appearance Manager counterparts, nor do they properly disable themselves when IE is in the background. And as I mentioned before, the text on form buttons is colored with the toolbar color instead of black.

Microsoft has finally chosen function over form in its implementation of drag and drop. Dragging images still drags transparent "ghosts," but large images are now reduced to thumbnails and dragging them is therefore much smoother.

IE 5 is the first browser that lets you select words and paragraphs by double- and triple-clicking on them (as is standard on the Macintosh). And it finally lets you drag text selections from the browser window to other applications or the desktop. Unfortunately, Microsoft decided that when you drag text to the desktop it should create a SimpleText document instead of a text clipping. [According to the Mac IE product manager](#)<sup>13</sup>:

Text clippings are cool, but they are not incredibly useful in the real world. They are not cross platform compatible, you can't open them in most Mac applications, and they don't do a good job of handling large text selections. A lot of novice users use File->Open to try to get text clippings into their word processing or email applications and that doesn't work. We are very comfortable with this decision.

To me, it seems that Microsoft does not understand how people use clippings files. There is no excuse for their implementing this non-standard behavior without providing an option to support clippings files as other Mac applications do. Furthermore, if you drag a lot of text to the desktop—more than 32K—SimpleText will be unable to open the resulting text file, while most applications support dragging in similarly large clippings with ease.

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12. <http://www.atpm.com/5.12/paradigm.shtml>

13. <http://db.tidbits.com/tbtalk/tlkmsg.lasso?MsgID=6458>

Finally, although IE 5 now supports proxy icons in its title bar, dragging one to the desktop produces an IE .url file instead of a URL clipping.

## Macintosh Technology Adoption

Microsoft supports Apple technologies in much the same way that it supports the Macintosh interface: it usually tries to do the right thing, and does much better than Netscape, but falls short. IE 5 is the first major browser to support Navigation Services, and it even lets you open more than one file at a time. It has rudimentary support for AppleScript, but it uses monolithic command names like “PrintBrowserWindow” instead of the more AppleScript-like “print the frontmost window.”

The First Run installer simplifies the installation process, but IE 5 still fills your Extensions folder with shared libraries. These libraries are neither grouped into a single Microsoft folder (to help reduce clutter), nor are they installed in the Application Support folder where they belong.

The Mac OS 9 Keychain was first released nearly ten years ago with System 7 Pro, and plenty of applications from Anarchie to iCab to WebConfidential support it. However, IE 5 does not support this wonderful feature, instead maintaining its own list of your Web site passwords, which is less convenient and probably less secure.

## Tools Menu

The new Tools menu lets you access the new Auction Manager (discussed below), as well as the Download Manager and the forms Auto-Fill feature, which do not seem to have changed since IE 4.5. It also contains a new What’s Related feature, which uses the Alexa service to find pages similar to the one that’s being displayed—just like in Netscape. At the bottom of the Tools menu are three other new “features”: permanent bookmarks to the Microsoft Network, Hotmail, and Encarta. I wonder whether these would be present if Microsoft sold IE like a normal product.

## Auction Manager

One of the highly touted features of IE 5 is its Auction Manager, which at first looks useful and convenient but ends up being a disappointment. The idea is that you can go to an item

page at eBay, Amazon, or Yahoo and tell IE to track the auction. Doing so adds the auction to the Auction Manager window, which is modeled after IE's innovative download manager.



In theory, IE can keep you up-to-date by telling you the high bidder and the time remaining for each auction. But the Auction Manager turns out to be limited. It only shows the high-bidder if it's you, it doesn't show the actual bid amount, and it doesn't let you place bids. It's also clumsy. You must re-enter your bidding ID and tracking options for each auction that you track, and you'll often want to rename auctions in the Auction Manager because IE names them with the title of the bidding page instead of the name of the item. IE's Auction Manager is convenient because it's built right into the browser, but at present it's only a slight extension of the IE 4.5 Subscriptions feature, which few people found useful. If you're serious about online auctions, you should instead check out a stand-alone utility such as [A.I.D.](http://www.atpm.com/6.02/aid.shtml)<sup>14</sup> or [Auction Action Tracker](http://www.atpm.com/5.11/aat.shtml)<sup>15</sup>.

## Usability

Just as important as all the new features, Microsoft has improved the usability of IE. Version 5 adds keyboard shortcuts for common actions, including enlarging and reducing text. (Although it unfortunately provides neither a button nor a shortcut for toggling the rendering resolution between 72 and 96 dpi.) My favorite keyboard shortcut is Command-~ which cycles windows, just like in iCab. Other commands are easily accessible in contextual menus, which now contain only the essentials.

You can Command-click title bars to tunnel up the hierarchy of a Web page, just like in the Finder. And, like the Finder, you can hold down the Command key to drag-scroll using the

14. <http://www.atpm.com/6.02/aid.shtml>

15. <http://www.atpm.com/5.11/aat.shtml>

hand cursor. This is the kind of feature that makes you wonder why no one thought of it before.

The Open Location command now gives the location bar keyboard focus instead of popping up the open location window. Even cooler, if the location bar is hidden, Open Location will reveal it and hide it again after you've entered the URL. Also, IE 5 fixes one of my long-standing complaints: a page in the process of loading no longer overwrites a URL that you're entering with its own.

Finally, you can now (optionally) use Tab to select links and form items in Web pages. IE uses a colored focus box to show which item will be selected when you press return, and links that you follow retain the focus ring until the new page has loaded, making it clear which link you clicked on.

## Help and Support

IE still does not have extensive balloon help, and it still uses online HTML help. Although the help works, I find it more clumsy to use than PDF, QuickHelp, or Apple Help. It is not easily searchable, and if you've disabled JavaScript most of the online help is inexplicably inaccessible. Besides this, the online help is generally not very helpful. It has a tendency to describe what you see on the screen without explaining how to use the various functions.

Getting support from Microsoft is not easy. There is no address you can email to get technical support. Instead, you must obtain a Passport and wade through Microsoft's online support site to ask your question using an HTML form. Since IE 5 was crashing so much, I decided to do this with iCab, only to find that Microsoft's support site doesn't work with it. (In addition, the support site makes no mention of IE 5 for the Mac, and the section that asks you to describe your machine configuration does not include an option for the G4 processor.) After about fifteen minutes of jumping through hoops, I finally got my question (about IE 5's stability) sent off. Later that evening I received an email response asking me to specify whether I obtained IE 5 with a new computer or on CD. Not only was this response unhelpful, but it was also a stupid question: since IE 5 had only been released the day before, how could it have been bundled with a new Mac?

I answered the question anyway, then heard nothing for two days (despite the fact that Microsoft promises a 24-hour response time). On the third day, I received a helpful reply from a Macintosh support person. It suggested trashing the IE preferences, the Internet

Config preferences, and several of IE 5's shared libraries. I followed the advice, and IE is now more stable on my main machine. However, it still crashes from time to time, and of course this procedure brought no improvement to my second machine that contained the clean install.

## IE 5 vs. IE 4 vs. Netscape vs. iCab

Most users will prefer IE 5 to its predecessor, and in my opinion it's several steps ahead of the latest offering from Netscape. IE has a better interface than Netscape, it's faster, it renders better, and it has features like the history and download manager that I find essential. About the only reason to use Netscape is if you prefer the integrated approach of Communicator or frequent Web sites that only work in Netscape. (These are few and far between, but I keep a copy of Netscape around and use it from time to time.)

Surprisingly, perhaps, IE 5's main competition comes from iCab. iCab is in many cases faster than IE 5, and it uses substantially less memory and disk space. It doesn't put anything in your System Folder, and it works on 68K Macs. Although IE has improved its usability since version 4.5, it still lags behind iCab in that area. It cannot stop animated GIFs, open new windows when you Command-click URLs in other applications, or open new windows in the background. Although IE has flashy rollovers and transparency, iCab has superior cursor hinting; it subtly changes the arrow cursor to indicate whether clicking will open a new window or download a link to disk. Unlike iCab, IE won't let you view source in BBEdit or automatically reload a page when you save it in BBEdit. Finally, it lacks iCab features such as image filtering, kiosk mode, local search paths, and the standard links toolbar.

## Conclusion

IE 5 has many improvements over the previous version, most notably the Tasman rendering engine, with its increased speed and support for Internet standards. I commend Microsoft for doing the right thing with regard to supporting HTML, CSS, and the DOM. It's the most compatible browser out there, and for this reason I think even Netscape and iCab users will find it useful now and then.

IE's default resolution and font size are bound to cause problems for users and Web developers, and I hope Microsoft will fix them with a maintenance update. Although the new interface contains some nice usability enhancements, plenty more need to be added, and some key bugs must be fixed before I can recommend IE 5 to everyone. For now, I believe iCab is

the better browser for people who do not require JavaScript or CSS support; but if you require one or both of these, IE 5 is the clear winner.

Microsoft has raised the bars for standards compliance, speed, and browser features. Hopefully, Netscape and iCab will rise to the challenges IE 5 presents, for competition leads to better software and happier users.

*Copyright ©2000 Michael Tsai, [mtsai@atpm.com](mailto:mtsai@atpm.com). Michael's first article for ATPM (issue 2.04) was a comparison of IE 2.0 and Netscape 2.0.1. Reviewing in ATPM is open to anyone. If you're interested, write to us at [reviews@atpm.com](mailto:reviews@atpm.com).*





BY DAVID OZAB, DOZAB@ATPM.COM

# Melody Assistant 5.0

**Company:** Myriad Software

**Web:** <http://www.myriad-online.com>

**Price:** \$15 (shareware)

**Requirements:** Mac OS 7.5 or greater, with at least 8 MB of RAM



For a professional musician with a computer, three software applications are considered vital: a sequencer, a digital hard disk recorder and a notation program. Such applications are expensive, perhaps too much so for the hobbyist who only wants to make music for fun. Myriad software had this user in mind when they released Melody Assistant, a \$15 shareware program that combines basic aspects of all three.



# Starting With the Notes on the Page

Melody Assistant is a score-based music editor with MIDI playback. The on-screen note entry method is very similar to [Finale's Simple Note Entry function](#)<sup>1</sup>. Note values (or their equivalent rests) are selected from tool palettes and placed on a staff; key and time signatures, dynamics, and expression markings are added in the same way. The interface is straightforward, and the only drawback is the sheer number of toolbars needed to accommodate the wide variety of markings. Those shown on the screen above are only about half the total number available; the complete list can be found under the Windows menu.

To set up a new piece, choose either a default document (a basic pop chart of piano, bass, guitar, strings and drums), a single staff labeled “melody”, or one of the preset templates (called “models”). Basic templates, such as solo instruments, orchestra, choir, string quartet etc., are provided along with some synth combos that look rather strange on paper—Space Model, for example, consists of Fantasia, Goblin, and Strange Voice. Next, select notes, rests, and other markings from the tool palettes and place them on the piece by clicking where needed. If you intend to work with a particular combination that’s not provided, such as a mixed chamber group, or an otherwise unusual combination, you can create and save your own models.



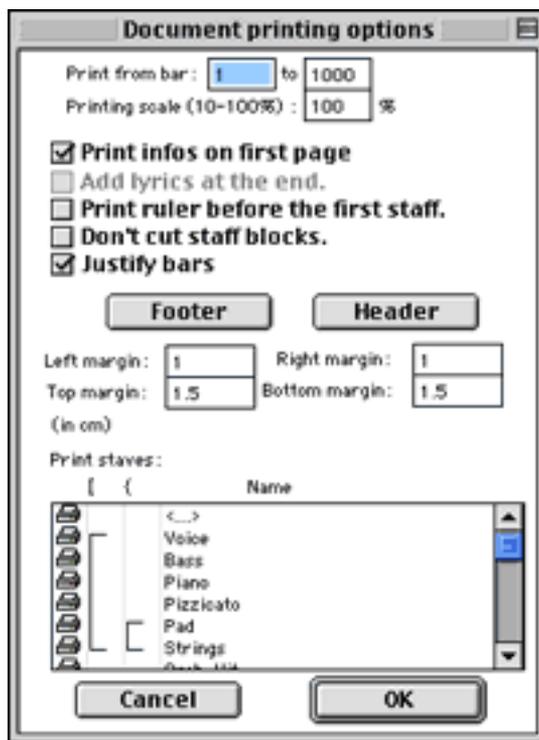
1. <http://www.atpm.com/6.01/finale.shtml>

## Followed by the Music That You Hear

Basic playback functions are provided on a toolbar. To specify scrolling playback, go under the Score menu. This option is preferable as only a few measures are visible on screen, and I would prefer it to be a default in Melody Assistant, as it's common to most sequencers. Melody Assistant comes with its own set of patches, which the program compiles in real time. The basic sound database provided can be upgraded to the “extended” version over the Internet; the sounds themselves are nothing spectacular, but the free extended sound database is a slight improvement over the basic set.

## And Then What Appears on the Page

Ultimately, a score editor is only as good as its printed output, and Melody Assistant needs a little work in this area. Partly, it's just a matter of a poor choice of defaults. In the print options dialog box, for example, the option marked “Don't cut staff blocks” is not selected, resulting in staff systems splitting in the middle across pages. The program also defaults with measure numbers off, and finding the place to activate them isn't easy either. (It's under the Staff Menu, by the way.) With the right settings and the right reduction, the output is legible, although I'd like the ability to adjust spacing on the page in order to avoid collisions between notes and accidentals.

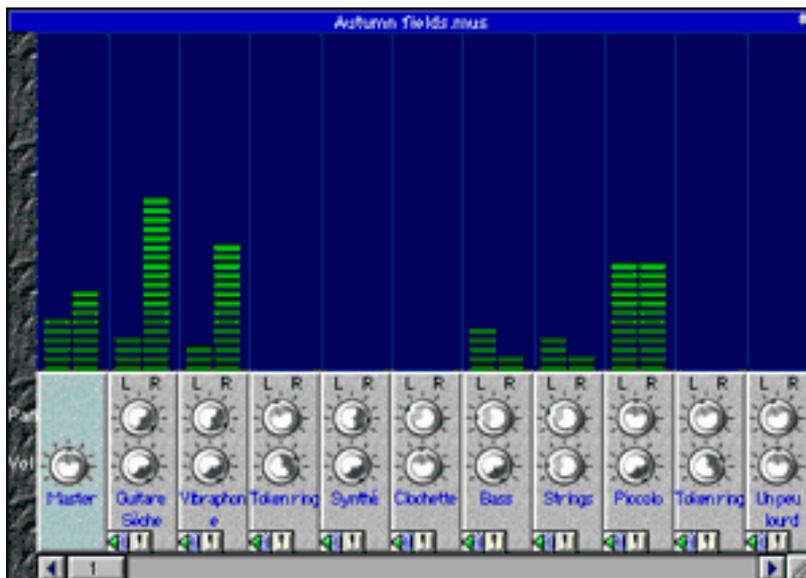


## But What About My Keyboard?

Melody Assistant also accepts MIDI input from a keyboard or other controller. Input quantizing is set by default, which is critical for recording legible notation. Be careful to set the quantize settings correctly based on the music you're recording; otherwise the result will be surprisingly different.

## Or My Microphone?

Melody Assistant doubles as a simple digital hard disk recorder. Audio can either be recorded live, or imported from several common formats, including AIFF, WAVE, and MP3. When using the digital outputs, the patches from the sound database and the digital audio tracks appear together in a central mixing console. The result is a nicely packaged software-based digital studio that takes up little RAM, compared to higher-end packages.



## Quirks and Qualms

Melody Assistant includes a mixed bag of additional features. Some are nice, like the extensive support for tablature. Others are unnecessary, such as including graphic files and colored staves and notes. Finally, a few are quite esoteric. I honestly can't think of another application that includes both drum machine grids and extensive support for Gregorian chant. Perhaps this is the strange beauty of shareware, written by programmers for their own needs then sold for a little extra pocket money.

That said, I have some reservations about the interface. Though the tools themselves are easy to understand, the sheer number of palettes contributes to an overall clutter. The help window is nice, but it is always in the foreground, and can only be resized. The preponderance of blue bars reminds me a little too much of Windows—I like my Mac software to look like Mac software—and the decision to place the close box on the right side of the window (example above) bewilders me. For the price, though, it's a very good package, and I'd rec-

commend it (with the above reservations) for someone looking to try a little composing and sequencing for fun. Serious musicians, however, should purchase more serious software packages.

## From the Same Manufacturer

Harmony Assistant is described as Melody Assistant's "big brother." For \$65 you get all the features of Melody Assistant, plus harmonizing, drum sequences, and expanded MIDI input capabilities. The CD also includes an extended sound database even larger than the one provided online. The interface is identical, with the same qualities and drawbacks I described above. A demo of Harmony Assistant is available for download from Myriad's Web site.

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BY DANIEL CHVATIK, [DCHVATIK@ATPM.COM](mailto:DCHVATIK@ATPM.COM)

## MP3 Player Roundup—Part II

I hope you found the [first part](#)<sup>1</sup> of this series helpful. Although there is an unbelievable number of programs on the Mac that play back MP3s in some way, I tried to concentrate on some of the major representatives from each category in the first part. This time, I'll introduce you to some of the more exotic MP3 programs. Of course, I have to draw a line somewhere. I will skip programs like the new FTP client [Hefty FTP](#)<sup>2</sup>, whose 'Bored?' menu lets you play MP3s while downloading. In the last part of this series, next month, I'll wrap up the odds and ends, review the last bunch of major players, and list all the programs that I did not review but that are nevertheless around.

### BayTex Party! PRO 2.0.2

**Company:** BayTex Producciones, Chile

**Web:** <http://www.baytex.net/>

**Price:** \$60 shareware

**Requirements:** 132 MHz PowerPC 604 or faster, QuickTime 4.0 (for MP3s).



Ever wanted to hear how [N'Sync](#)<sup>3</sup> sounds a few octaves higher? Then BayTex Party! is for you. It's a DJ tool that lets you mix songs together, change their pitches, add jingles, and much more. Compared to some of the other programs out there, it actually has a somewhat tolerable user interface.

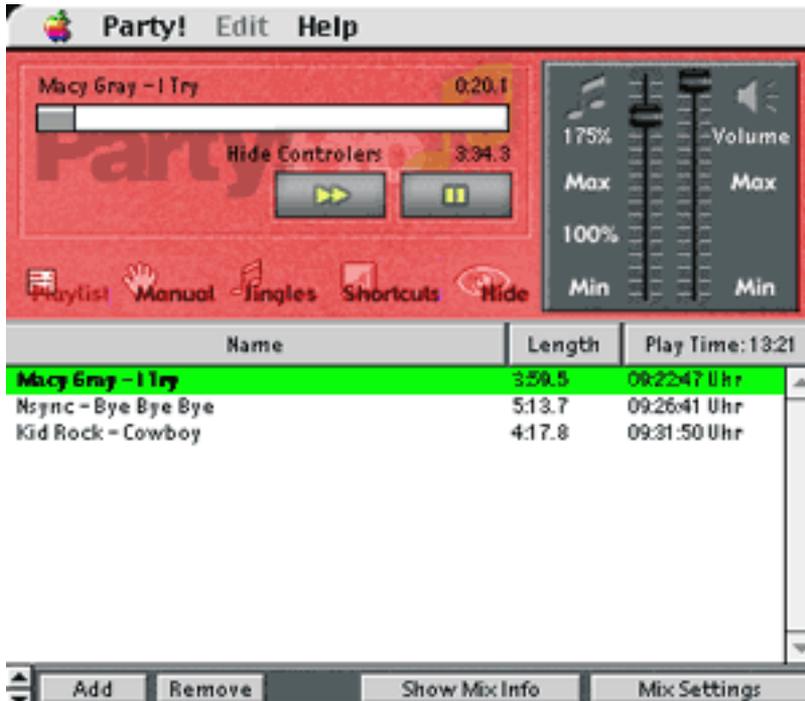
As you can see from its name, it is mostly geared at DJs and party crowds. I have to admit that I got a kick out of hearing N'Sync at 175% pitch, which makes them sound like a bunch of little smurfs. If you prefer, you can listen to them at 65% pitch, which makes them sound like they're in their mid-40s. The program is well designed, with keyboard shortcuts for most important commands so that DJs don't have to struggle with mouse, menus and icons,

1. <http://www.atpm.com/6.03/mp3players.shtml>

2. <http://www.ziggy.speedhost.com/#Hefty>

3. <http://www.nsync.com/>

but can simply hit a key in the dark of the club. Or you can prepare your mix beforehand and enjoy the party. Besides MP3s, it also plays WAV and MIDI files. It is somewhat pricey at \$60, though.



There is also a Lite version (currently in beta) for \$15, which lacks some features but might be more appropriate for casual users. The Lite version also supports CD playback and collapses to a small floating window if you want. Demos are available and are limited to 10 minutes until you register.



# Tactile 2000 2.0

**Company:** Tactile Pictures

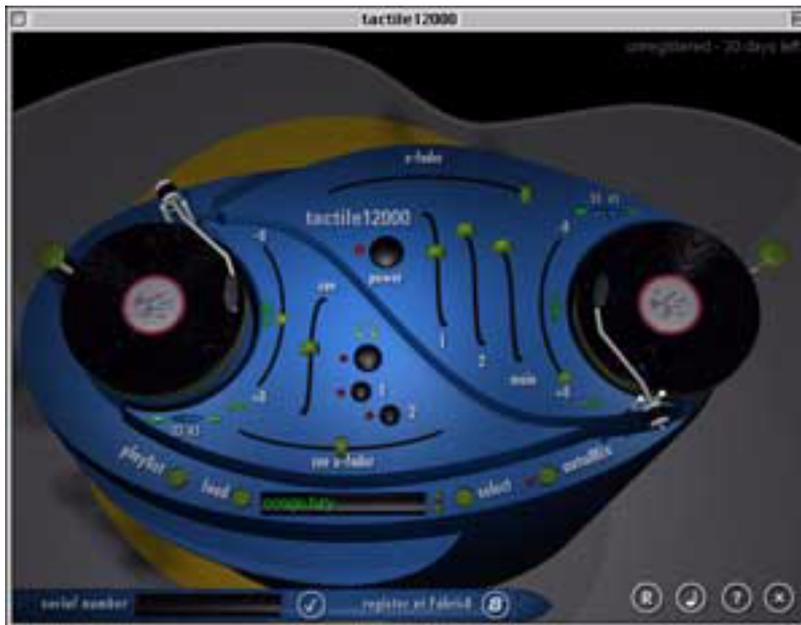
**Web:** <http://www.tactile12000.com/>

**Price:** \$29.95 shareware

**Requirements:** Power Macintosh with Mac OS 7.5.3 or later, QuickTime, Sound Manager. QuickTime 4.0 required for MP3 playback.



Okay, I promised myself to stop reviewing DJ software, but I'll make one more exception. Tactile12000 just caught my eye. At first, it seems rather unusual. The main part of its interface is quite unlike most Mac applications. Instead, it simulates a virtual turntable and mixer right on your desktop.



That confused me immensely in the beginning. However, once you shed your Macintosh interface prejudices and imagine sitting in front of a 'real' turntable, it actually becomes quite simple and powerful to use. Still, you'd better read the manual to learn about the large number of powerful features such as cueing with headphones, keyboard controls for most functions, precise control of the mixer and records, pitch bending and cue points, cross fading, and backspinning, to name just a few. The autoMix feature can do most of the work for you and mix your playlist together automatically, if you desire. The sound formats supported are: MP3, AIF, WAV, and other sound formats supported through QuickTime.

Besides its interesting approach to the 3D user interface, what I like about Tactile is the price. It is actually reasonable for what the program offers. A 30-day, unlimited demo is available for those interested. After that, the program's functions become limited until you register.

Future plans for the product include: support for 4-channel sound cards (to use the rear channels for cue), support for streaming audio (both downloading and broadcasting), enhanced playlist support, playback of CDs, level meters, and the ability to save mixing information.

## AMP Radio 1.5

**Company:** Subband Software, Inc.

**Web:** <http://www.subband.com/ampr/>

**Price:** \$10

**Requirements:** Power Macintosh with Mac OS 7.5 and 3500K devoted to AMP Radio, Internet connection to listen to Internet streams.



Why would you want to listen to a regular radio station when you could listen to the 'radio' on your computer over the Internet? Well, ok, maybe there are some very good reasons for listening to a regular radio station, but Internet radio stations are nevertheless pretty interesting. Most don't have annoying advertisements, for example.

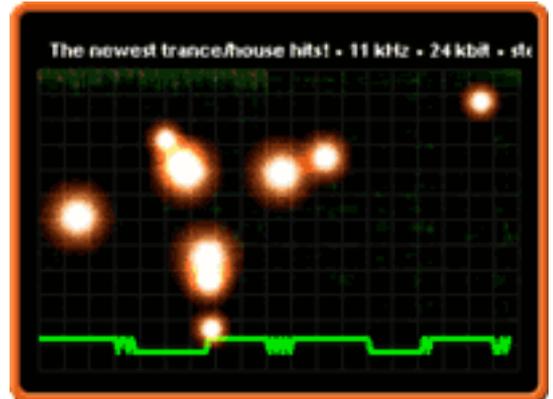
AMP Radio is your 'virtual' radio in this world of virtual music. Through support for Internet Streaming Audio, you can connect to a multi-



tude of different streaming servers, each catering to a different musical taste. The programs interface is—as with most of the players—mimicked after the original, in this case a radio. And obligatorily, you can change the colors of the radio front. AMP Radio itself has quite a number of features, including the ability to record from a server and advanced playlists. Unfortunately, it does not display the name of the currently playing song, but that is most likely a limitation of the servers, not the radio software. While [Audion](#)<sup>4</sup> and other MP3 players feature steaming server support as well, only AMP Radio classifies them nicely by category and allows recording of the songs.

For the fans of graphical effects, Subband has included a copy of their other software, Entheogen 1.0.1, which creates graphical effects to match the music. Currently, Entheogen seems to work just with AMP Radio, but it will probably support other players in the future.

AMP Radio is a solid application with a good interface, and its functions are well explained in the manual. As usual, a demo is available. I have tried several ‘stations’ on my DSL connection, and most servers worked flawlessly. Your mileage may vary with slower connections, or from overseas. However, the money is probably better spent on a ‘real’ MP3 player like [Audion or SoundJam](#)<sup>5</sup> first. Then, if you still have some left, get AMP Radio.



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4. <http://www.atpm.com/6.03/mp3players.shtml>

5. <http://www.atpm.com/6.03/mp3players.shtml>

# Macster PR 3.5

**Company:** Blackhole Media

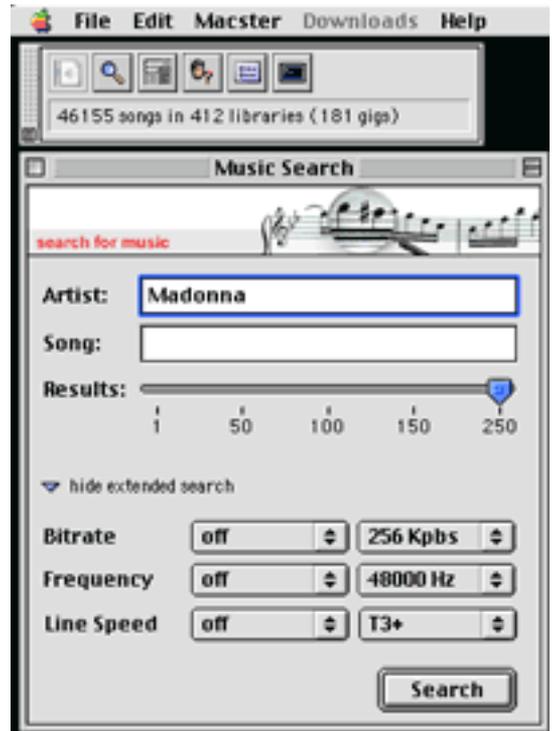
**Web:** <http://www.macster.com>

**Price:** Free (preview version)

**Requirements:** Power Macintosh running Mac OS 8.1 or later with Navigation Services.



I have been struggling with myself for a while whether or not I should review Macster. Macster is the Mac client for Napster, a PC program that allows users to share MP3s over the Internet and that is very popular with college students. Such sharing is often illegal, and ATPM does not in any way support or tolerate such copyright violations. However, there are legitimate uses for Macster, such as downloading songs that are legally freely available. The most legitimate use that I could think of would be downloading a song that you already own onto your PowerBook while you are travelling. That would be pretty much the same as creating MP3s off a CD you bought and taking those with you. Please try to respect copyright laws.



Macster Preview 3.5 is not a final product—which is supposed to be released in a few months—but it is relatively stable and most basic functions (most importantly downloading and searching for songs) are already implemented.

Macster's functions are simple. After creating an account with a Napster server, you log into a server and can search for any song by artist name or song name, and even filter by bit rate, recording quality, and line speed of the file server. The line speed is important if you want to download a file quickly. If you are in a rush, avoid 56K hosts and go straight for T3+, T1, DSL, or Cable hosts.

The result of the search is shown in a result window that displays the name of the song, file size in MB, bit rate, length of the song, the user who originated the file, the line speed of the

| Search Results                    |        |          |        |             |            |         |
|-----------------------------------|--------|----------|--------|-------------|------------|---------|
| 90 items                          |        |          |        |             |            |         |
| Name                              | Size   | Bit Rate | Length | User        | Line Speed | Ping    |
| madonna-crazy for you.mp3         | 3.4 MB | 128 Kbps | 3:39   | Telly756    | 56k        | timeout |
| (Madonna) - Rain.mp3              | 2.7 MB | 112 Kbps | 3:24   | Bloominista | Unknown    | timeout |
| Madonna - American Pie.mp3        | 4.1 MB | 128 Kbps | 4:26   | Bloominista | Unknown    | timeout |
| madonna...like_a_virgin.mp3       | 2.2 MB | 128 Kbps | 2:26   | (YseuLt)    | 56k        | timeout |
| Madonna - Beautiful Stranger.mp3  | 4 MB   | 128 Kbps | 4:16   | PabloTolete | 56k        | timeout |
| Madonna - Material Girl.mp3       | 3.1 MB | 112 Kbps | 3:48   | umskeetsh   | 14.4       | 29 ms   |
| Madonna - Beautiful Stranger.mp3  | 5.9 MB | 192 Kbps | 4:15   | umskeetsh   | 14.4       | 29 ms   |
| Madonna - Rain.mp3                | 1.8 MB | 128 Kbps | 1:55   | Cmg1607     | 56k        | timeout |
| Madonna - Whos That Girl.mp3      | 3.4 MB | 144 Kbps | 3:15   | Cmg1607     | 56k        | timeout |
| Madonna - Beautiful Stranger.m... | 3.9 MB | 128 Kbps | 4:15   | Cmg1607     | 56k        | timeout |
| (Madonna)-Holiday.mp3             | 3.5 MB | 128 Kbps | 3:48   | TvM         | 28.8       | 27 ms   |

host, and its ping time (how quickly the server responds). Pings that are ‘timed out’ mean that the host (and the song) is currently unavailable. You can freely sort by any column in the result window by simply clicking its heading. When you find the song you want, just double-click it to initiate the download process. A window similar to the Finder’s copy window will pop up and inform you about speed, time remaining, and download status.

Later versions will also support chat and many refinements on the download theme. I already mentioned that the program is quite stable, but remember that it’s just a preview version and it has shown some problems from time to time. It is noteworthy that there are two other Napster clients for the Mac: Rapster (currently in beta 4) and MacStar (in developer release 12). However neither of the two is nearly as stable and nice to use as Macster.

# SoundApp 2.6.1

**Company:** Norman Franke

**Web:** <http://www-cs-students.stanford.edu/%7Efranke/SoundApp/>

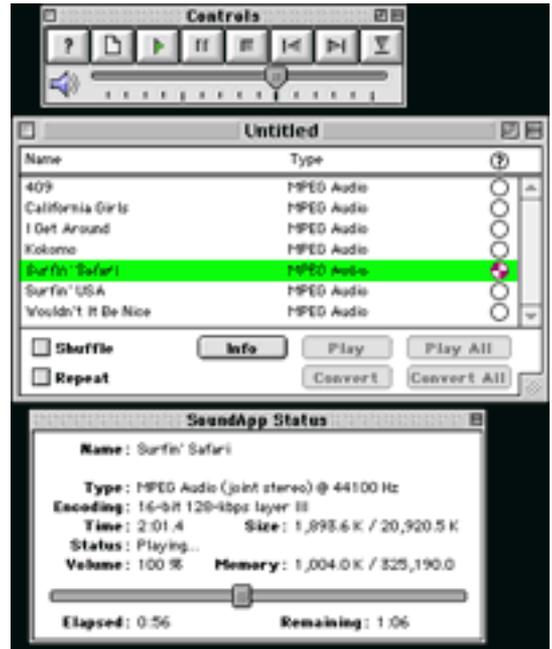
**Price:** free

**Requirements:** SoundApp requires at least System 7.0 and Sound Manager 3.1 or greater (part of System 7.5.3).



SoundApp has been around since 1993. It did not start out as an MP3 player, but instead as a general sound playback and conversion utility, in a time when no one even knew what MP3 meant. It currently supports 28 sound formats, some of them rather obscure. A quite complete description of the formats can be found [here](#)<sup>6</sup>.

Like most decent MP3 players, SoundApp features a simple play list (which can harbor different file formats at once transparently). Absent are any fancy features, but the conversion option can be quite useful to some users. Nice is the Get Info feature which has a Show Original button that takes you to the file in the Finder. It also shows complete file tag information about the selected song. At least the play list supports random play, or 'shuffle.'



SoundApp is glamorless, but it does what it is supposed to do cheaply, efficiently, and with a good, consistent interface.

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6. <http://www-cs-students.stanford.edu/%7Efranke/SoundApp/formats.html>

BY JAMIE MCCORNACK, JMCCORNACK@ATPM.COM

# ViaVoice Millennium Edition

**Company:** IBM Corporation

**Web:** <http://www-4.ibm.com/software/speech/mac/>

**Street Price:** \$79.95

**Requirements:** G3- or G4-based Mac, 48 MB of RAM, 200 MB available disk space, audio input jack compatible with Andrea NC-71 microphone.

I'll be darned it works. Paragraph. I mean

Let's try again. I'll be darned, it works.

See, I messed up before when I said and, "Paragraph," because the proper command for a new paragraph is "New paragraph," and to speak that phrase into text you have to say "New" and then pause and say, "Paragraph." " this is going to take some getting used to do This is going to take some getting used to.

I'm letting ViaVoice write its own review. Here I sit, with my little plastic headset on my head and my fingers least behind my back. I'm talking, and my words appear—proof—right there on my monitor. I've had this dream since March 2nd, 1984, and though this stream has taken much longer than I expected to come true, here it is at last, of voice recognition program worth using.

**Note:** The text above is the raw and uncorrected transcript of my first ViaVoice session. From here on out, I'll correct my mistakes.

OK, I'll admit it, my typing is faster and more accurate than my ViaVoice dictation. It ought to be, since I've been stroking keyboards for a living for 15 years and talking to ViaVoice for an hour. To be fair, we should compare this session with my first day as a typist, and by that standard I am smoking!

And in this hour, I've seen enough to believe this is more than a technical oddity, more than a gee-whiz-what'll-they-think-of-next. My first impression is that this is going to be a workable system once I get up to speed with it.

So I'm going to do some Reviewing Beyond the Call of Duty. I'm going to spend a month with ViaVoice. As a novice touch-typist, it took me a month before I could find the 'B' key with any consistency, but I eventually got with the program, and I'm going to give ViaVoice an equally fair trial.

Voice recognition is an interesting challenge. Voices are different, accents are different, and it's not likely that a system customised for me will work for you. ViaVoice has a clever initial training routine, where you read a story to your Mac. ViaVoice knows the text, and it matches your voice with the words it expects to hear. After I read it a short story, I opened IBM SpeakPad (the text-recognizing mode of this program) and said, "I'll be darned, it works," and the rest is history.

The voice recognizer will mis-recognize a word or two at first, and it's worth the trouble to correct it so it can get it right next time. If you correct by selecting wrong words and spelling them right, ViaVoice will add them to its vocabulary (for example, earlier this evening it didn't know "poof" was a word, but it does now). Still—utter non sorghum stench—never send out a ViaVoice document without looking it over closely for words that sound pretty close but aren't quite right.

Even more important than training ViaVoice is letting ViaVoice train you. It has some special commands for punctuation, cursor movement, and the like; and you have to memorize these commands or you're wasting your time. I can press the return key much faster than I can look up the New Paragraph command, but now that I have it memorized, it takes no time at all.

How do I rate ViaVoice? To quote the 8-balls of my youth, "Reply hazy, ask again later." It looks promising, but let's find out if it can keep its promise. I'll see you back here in May.

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## What Is ATPM?

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

## Are You Looking for New Staff Members?

We currently need several **Contributing Editors**, a **Publicity Manager**, and a **Cartoonist**. Please contact us at [editor@atpm.com](mailto:editor@atpm.com) if you’re interested.

## How Can I Subscribe to ATPM?

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## Which Format Is Best for Me?



The Online Webzine edition is for people who want to view AT<sup>PM</sup> in their Web browser, while connected to the Internet. It provides sharp text, lots of navigation options, and live links to AT<sup>PM</sup> back issues and other Web pages. You can use Sherlock to [search](http://www.atpm.com/search)<sup>1</sup> all of the online issues at once.



The Acrobat PDF edition is optimized for printing, but it can also be viewed on-screen, and we've increased the font sizes to make this easier. It may be viewed online in a browser, or downloaded and viewed in Adobe's free [Acrobat Reader](http://www.adobe.com/prodindex/acrobat/readstep.html)<sup>2</sup> on Macintosh or Windows. PDFs may be magnified to any size and searched with ease.



The Offline Webzine is a HTML version of AT<sup>PM</sup> that is formatted for viewing offline and made available in a StuffIt archive to reduce file size. The graphics, content, and navigation elements are the same as with the Online Webzine, but you can view it without being connected to the Internet. It requires a Web browser.



The eDOC edition of AT<sup>PM</sup> is a self-reading document that, like our old DOCMaker format, may be read on just about every Mac ever made, without any additional software. It features a table of contents, clickable URLs, high-quality printing, and easy magnification and searching. Oh, and it's **very** fast.

## What Are Some Tips for Viewing PDFs?

- You can [download Adobe Acrobat Reader](http://www.adobe.com/prodindex/acrobat/readstep.html)<sup>3</sup> for free. If you have a Power Macintosh, Acrobat Reader 4 has better quality and performance. AT<sup>PM</sup> is also compatible with Acrobat Reader 3, for those with 680x0 Macs.
- You can zoom the PDF to full window width and scroll through articles simply by single-clicking anywhere in the article text (except underlined links).
- You can quickly navigate between articles using the bookmarks pane at the left of the main viewing window.
- For best results on small screens, be sure to hide the bookmarks pane; that way you'll be able to see the entire page width at 100%.

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1. <http://www.atpm.com/search>

2. <http://www.adobe.com/prodindex/acrobat/readstep.html>

3. <http://www.adobe.com/prodindex/acrobat/readstep.html>

- Try turning Font Smoothing on and off in Acrobat Reader's preferences to see which setting you prefer.
- All blue-underlined links are clickable. Links to external Websites are reproduced in footnotes at the bottoms of pages, in case you are reading from a printed copy.
- You can hold down option while hovering over a link to see where it will lead.

## What Are Some Tips for Printing the PDF?

The PDF edition uses large fonts for on-screen readability. The side effect is that they then print larger than desired. We think that if you print AT<sup>PM</sup> at two pages per sheet, the fonts will come out perfectly sized for reading from paper. Go to the Layout page of the Acrobat's Print... dialog box and choose "2" from the popup menu.

## Why Are Some Links Double-Underlined?

In the PDF edition of AT<sup>PM</sup>, links that are double-underlined lead to other pages in the same PDF. Links that are single-underlined will open in your Web browser.

## What If I Get Errors Decoding ATPM?

AT<sup>PM</sup> and MacFixIt readers have reported problems decoding MacBinary files using early versions of StuffIt Expander 5.x. If you encounter problems decoding AT<sup>PM</sup>, we recommend upgrading to StuffIt Expander 5.1.4 or later<sup>4</sup>.

## How Can I Submit 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 AT<sup>PM</sup>, 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.

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4. <http://www.aladdinsys.com/expander/index.html>

## How Can I Send a Letter to the Editor?

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.

## Do You Answer Technical Support Questions?

Of course. E-mail our Help Department at [help@atpm.com](mailto:help@atpm.com).

## How Can I Contribute to ATPM?

There are several sections of ATPM to which readers frequently contribute:

**Segments—Slices from the Macintosh Life:** This is one of our most successful spaces and one of our favorite places. We think of it as kind of the ATPM “guest room.” This is where we will publish that sentimental Macintosh story that you promised yourself you would one day write. It's that special place in ATPM that's specifically designated for your stories. We'd really like to hear from you. Several Segments contributors have gone on to become ATPM **columnists**. Send your stuff to [editor@atpm.com](mailto:editor@atpm.com).

**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](mailto: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 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](mailto:reviews@atpm.com).

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

## Which Products Have You Reviewed?

Check our reviews index at <http://www.atpm.com/reviews> for the complete list.

## Will You Review My Product?

If you or your company has a product that you'd like to see reviewed, send a copy our way. We're always looking for interesting pieces of software to try out. Contact [reviews@atpm.com](mailto:reviews@atpm.com) for shipping information.

## Can I Sponsor ATPM?

*About This Particular Macintosh* is free, and we intend to keep it this way. Our editors and staff are volunteers with "real" jobs who believe in the Macintosh way of computing. We don't make a profit, nor do we plan to. As such, we rely on advertisers to help us pay for our Web site and other expenses. Please consider supporting ATPM by advertising in our issues and on our web site. Contact [advertise@atpm.com](mailto:advertise@atpm.com) for more information.

## Where Can I Find Back Issues of ATPM?

Back issues of ATPM, dating since April 1995, are available in DOCMaker stand-alone format from <ftp://ftp.atpm.com> and <http://www.atpm.com/Back>. In addition, all issues since ATPM 2.05 (May 1996) are available in HTML form at <http://www.atpm.com/Back>. You can search all of our back issues from <http://www.atpm.com/search>.

## What If My Question Isn't Answered Above?

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

[editor@atpm.com](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 would like to contribute a Trivia Challenge, please email me at [egoss@atpm.com](mailto:egoss@atpm.com).

This month's Trivia Challenge is a grab-bag of questions from various subjects. So put on a large pot of coffee, fire up the search engine, and test your wits with:

## Trivia Challenge 6.04—Potpourri Puzzler

- Which country was the only one to repay its War Reparations Debt after WWI?  
A. Norway                      B. Finland                      C. Switzerland
- Who provided the voice for ET, the extraterrestrial?  
A. Jeff Goldblum              B. Richard Dreyfuss              C. Debra Winger
- Where would you find the Tennis Hall of Fame?  
A. Rhode Island              B. Paris                      C. Wimbledon
- Which is the most densely populated country in the world?  
A. Hong Kong              B. India                      C. Monaco
- Which country issued the first postage stamps?  
A. Great Britain              B. France                      C. The United States
- What are the French-speaking residents of Belgium called?  
A. Walloons                      B. Belguise                      C. Franc-Bels
- What country was previously called Bechuanaland?  
A. Burundi                      B. Kenya                      C. Botswana



## Last Month's Answers—6.03—Confused Capitals

- |                                   |                              |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 12. The Keystone State            | D. Harrisburg (Pennsylvania) |
| 13. The Home of The America's Cup | N. Wellington (New Zealand)  |
| 14. The Home of The Kangaroo      | J. Canberra (Australia)      |
| 15. The Diamond State             | C. Dover (Delaware)          |

## The Rules

Each question has only **one** correct answer. The answers are stored in a hermetically sealed envelope guarded by a young Siamese cat named “Daniel Jackson” who lives in our house.

## This Month's CD Recommendation

“[The Unplugged Collection](#)<sup>1</sup>” by John Denver. Containing acoustic re-recordings of his most popular songs, this carefully recorded 1996 Nashville session is the ultimate John Denver album. His voice mellowing with maturity, each song takes on a new personality compared to the horribly-recorded versions of his “hits.” If you've ever belted out “Rocky Mountain High” while alone in your car, or if you ever took a liking to any of John Denver's songs, you should own a copy of this album.

## Parting Pointer

The “Parting Pointer” is ATPM's “Tips and Tricks” section. If you have a pointer that you would like to share with other readers to make their Mac experience easier or more enjoyable, please send it to me at [egoss@atpm.com](mailto:egoss@atpm.com). Here's this month's “Parting Pointer”:

### How To Keep Your Desktop Clean

It's very easy to end up with an overly cluttered desktop. Files, folders, copies, downloads, and aliases float around, get hidden behind open windows, and become harder and harder to find. Here's an easy way to keep your desktop organized. First, click on the Desktop background, then go to the View menu, choose View Options, and set the Icon View to “Keep Arranged by Kind.” This will keep your trash can in the right place, and arrange other files logically even as you add and remove them.

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1. <http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/B00000I2GJ/aboutthisparticu>

## Apple Cores

Can you guess why there are blue apple cores at the ends of some of the articles in this issue?

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