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*About This Particular Macintosh™ 2.07: About the **personal** computing experience™*

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Cover Art

“Independence Day”

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

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Illustrator 6
Photoshop 3.0.5
Snapz
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we don't have anything to give you. June's keen eye belonged to Leonard Auslender. Congratulations Leonard! The opinions expressed in *ATPM* are not necessarily those of this particular Macintosh. ATPM, Only Boy, and the Only Boy logo are the property of Only Boy Productions. Publication, product and company names and logos may be registered trademarks of their respective companies. *About This Particular Macintosh* is published with DOCMaker 4.6.1, and owes its existence to the program's author, Mark Wall. May his camels never have fleas. Thank you for reading this far, and we hope that the rest of the magazine is more interesting than this.

Thanks for reading *ATPM*.

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Welcome

ATPM Independence Month Celebration!

Yippee!!! It's summer and in July we celebrate Independence Day. In keeping with our cool American tradition, we have declared the July issue of ATPM to be our commemorative "Independence From Themes" issue.

We know what a lot of you must be thinking: that we simply ran out of ideas, or that we are drunk with the success of ATPM and have been too busy opening the many gifts from our devoted readers to care about a theme for our new issue. That's not true. We care at least as much about the quality of our publication as we do about the many fine tokens of appreciation sent our way.

While we're on the subject — Michael, where did you put that latex replica of the Opossum head sent in by one of our loyal subscribers?

Well, it's now official. Our subscriber base and readership census indicates that our overall reach is precisely somewhere between the number of people speculated to have been on earth during the early Jurassic Period (we're not talking the era the film was in first-run release) and the current population of Mainland China. You can quote us on this.

Speaking of movies, have many of you have seen "Independence Day"? How do you like Apple's marketing tie-ins with big budget motion pictures? Do you now believe the PowerBook has the "Power to Save the World"? We found this really great word spelt H-Y-P-E-R-B-O-L-E .

How about "Mission Impossible"? How many of you have read the really poor analogies in the press comparing the title to the prospects of Apple's future success? In our view, the real mission impossible is the latest Pentium box trying to stand straight in the gale-force breeze of those new Power Computing machines as their processors whiz by — Woooooosh!

Now, before you whiz by, please read our sensational July issue. Plenty of hot opinions, informative reviews and heart-moving articles about the personal computer experience.

Your continued support is always appreciated.

One final note: As we reflect this month on the experiment called “Democracy” that was started 220 years ago in Philadelphia, ATPM will be ending an experiment of our own. With this issue we are ending our experiment of claiming to successfully punctuate our collective thoughts with the proper and appropriate guidelines for the written language called English. We are, however, looking for a volunteer English Language Translator for our editorial staff.

In that other grand tradition of American personal improvement we have now stated the problem, admitted we’re helpless to solve it on our own, and we’ve reached out for help. (We ran out of free stuff, too.) So, we will no longer be held responsible. We could, of course, try an issue in pig latin — we ope-hay ery-evay ay-day is-ay appy-hay ac-May ay-day. Now that would be a cool custom dictionary! appy-hay ummer-say from ATPM-ay? Enjoy!





eMail

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Printing Troubles

I have a problem with ATPM. I like it a lot but I can't get it to print right. I don't know what application you are using to compose your great mag but it doesn't work to well on the printing end on my Performa 631CD (which Tech Tool sees as a Quadra 630) and Color StyleWriter 2400.

Since February I have read the zine on screen. Today I had a doctor's appointment and anticipating a long wait thought I'd print out the June issue and read it while waiting.

Tried the print command with all pages selected and froze up. Tried again after force quitting and restarting ATPM, this time using the select all command in the dialog box. Pages started coming out but only with the color graphics, no text. The graphics didn't look good at all so I aborted the printing.

Then I tried the "Output Text" command. Got a generic text file which I could open with ClarisWorks and told it to print without looking since I was running late. It printed three blank pages, left spaces for all the graphics, and some of the text (which I guess was wrapped around graphics) gave me three or four words per double spaced line or about 17 lines per page. Lots of wasted paper but I could read all the articles I think. Noticed all staff member names were not there so I don't know for sure until I look on screen if there was anything else missed.

Hasn't anyone else complained about this or am I unique?

I would strongly suggest you go to Adobe Acrobat Reader as some other online pubs have done, it works great with great graphics, good photographs, and nicely formatted text. It has features which allow you to follow a story through columns and/or pages even in a magnified mode and then return to the start to get another story on the same page. Also has the "Go to Page X" feature. Besides, it will print the pages with no difficulty just as you

see them on the screen.

Think about it, it would make a great publication even greater.

Carl Stemler

CPSMAGIC@aol.com

ATPM is published with DOCMaker 4.6.1, a shareware stand-alone document creator. While it is not perfect, it is the best solution we have found so far. The printing problems you describe are unusual. DOCMaker does seem to have trouble spacing graphics when they are printed, but we haven't had the problems you're describing. There is no way to remove the extra spaces for the graphics when outputting text (other than by hand). Because of the way DOCMaker handles images, we have to add the blank spaces to make room for the graphics.

One of the reasons that we don't use Acrobat now is that the files it generates are large, and it is necessary to download and install the Acrobat Reader, which includes the ATM control panel, several fonts, and uses quite a bit of memory.

However, we are always open to suggestions. We are currently examining other possible formats. If any of you readers have ideas or opinions on this issue, we welcome them at ATPMEditor@aol.com. In the mean time, if you can't get the DOCMaker version to print, you can try printing our web page. The URL is <http://www.AmbrosiaSW.com/ATPM>.

A DiskDoubler Omission

Terrific review of DDPro, Michael!

This is a superior package (especially CopyDoubler) that few people know about. I've been using it since DiskDoubler 1.0 and many of it's features are second nature to me. I'm glad to see a positive review of it.

However, I noticed one omission from CopyDoubler that is a vital feature for me — CD's "Fast Replace" option. When you copy one folder over another of the same name, CD offers you to chance to use "Fast Replace" which replaces only the changed items. I use this feature all the time to back up entire projects (which often contain hundreds of files) to Zip or Syquest disks. The time to copy is reduced to seconds because usually only a few key files have changed since the last backup. This is a Godsend and I refuse to live without CD because of this single feature.

Marc Zeedar

sales@svprint.com

Thank you for keeping me on my toes! The Fast Replace feature is indeed one of the best parts of CopyDoubler. It's a shame though, that it wasn't the default choice in early versions of CopyDoubler, and still isn't in Connectix's SpeedCopy. —MT

Thank you!

I was one of the lucky few which Danny wrote a letter to explaining his decision to discontinue publishing ATPM, and I feared that ATPM would die an undeserving death. Thank you and Mr. Leitao for picking up the publication duties. You did an excellent job with ATPM 2.06, such a good one that had one not been aware of the changes in the "top brass," one would probably not have even given it any notice at all.

Besides that, I'd like to say that I heartily enjoyed your column about the IIGS. It was very, very good. I grew up in elementary and junior high school with nothing but bare-bones IIGS's (extra memory? A 40 Meg hard disk? Unheard of!), and spent 90% of the time in the ProDOS environment. I had never even realized such things as a IIGS Finder! I wish I would've been able to use the multiple operating systems and the unique enhancements that you talked about. Even without the frills, though, I could agree with you that the IIGS was indeed a cool computer and a remarkable machine for its time. I remember many of the things you talked about, such as Bank Street Writer, AppleWorks GS, the speediness, the keyboard-combo control panel, etc.

Mike Wallinga
MWallinga@aol.com

IIGS Users Alive & Kicking

I read your recent column about your Apple II GS computer. I don't know if you are aware of it, but there is a users group based in Petaluma, CA (Sonoma County) named GravenStein Users Group. It is roughly half GS users, and their monthly newsletter is split between the GS group and the Mac section. If you are interested, there is a link to their page at:

<http://www.iscweb.com>

Paul North
paulnorth@iscweb.com

It's good to hear that the IIGS is not forgotten. At the moment, several different groups are working to develop an Apple IIGS emulator for the Macintosh. One of the emulators, named Gus, has a programming team including Apple's lead engineers for Copland and Harmony. This promises to be interesting.

Anyone else have stories about their old Apple II's or Macs? We'd love to hear from you.

Praise

I got a copy of ATPM and finally had a chance to check it out, and you were right, it's a gem! Keep up the good work and soon the Mac will break some Windoze!!

Taryn
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We'd love to hear your thoughts about our publication. We always welcome your comments, criticisms, suggestions, and praise at ATPMEditor@aol.com.



ABOUT THIS PARTICULAR
OPINION



ABOUT THIS PARTICULAR MACINTOSH, BY RD NOVO

All Wonky

I have been busying myself this past month, rediscovering the simple pleasures of a life without deadlines hanging like a suspended piano over my head. I mean, I have some small deadlines (like the one for this column), but I find myself with a relatively large amount of “free” time.

As you may have surmised from last month’s column, I have been filling that newfound leisure time playing a game called Escape Velocity, from Ambrosia Software. They’ve just recently updated it to version 1.0.2, fixing a few inconsistencies and a few bugs. The game runs better than ever now, and I still enjoy the time I spend playing it.

If you have no loved ones, I recommend getting it. If you have loved ones, you may want to buy them something nice and big (after all, Escape Velocity is only \$20) so they don’t miss you while you’re gone.

In retrieving the update from Ambrosia’s web page, I also took the opportunity to update my System software, I installed a new copy of Navigator, I updated my copy of Emailer, and just generally made things work better.

But getting there involved a few headaches.

My Internet service provider, Nfinity, has been having some problems with their phone lines. They claim, in several e-mail messages to subscribers, that the problem belongs to US West, the regional Baby Bell telephone company. The problems seem a little more widespread than that, and yet I have no choice but to trust their account of things. In any case, my dial-up connection to their system has been having problems. Most often when I called, their lines either never picked up, or the familiar hiss and beep of their modem came out all wonky (yes, that’s the technical term, wonky), my system seemed unable to handle it, and crashed.

By about the sixth or seventh restart (yes, I had to restart the computer), I usually got connected. By then I was so frustrated that I didn’t want to surf, or read news, or have fun, so I’d just sit there, unable to disconnect after so much hardship, but unwilling to go on. I’d been using the latest release of FreePPP with my System 7.5.1 installation.

Finally, I remembered Cecilia, my 100 MB Zip disk with System 7.5.3 installed. Maybe, I thought with a glimmer of hope, maybe Open Transport 1.1 will solve my problems. Open Transport is Apple’s new system-level software in charge of making network connections, including dial-up phone connections. It’s supposed to be wonderful, and I thought that just

might be my only problem.

So I booted up with Cecilia, installed FreePPP in her System folder, and tried to connect. Nothing like that ever works the first time, and don't let anyone tell you it does. She wouldn't connect. I fiddled with some numbers, I booted up from my hard disk to look at the FreePPP preferences on that machine, copied some stuff down, rebooted with Cecilia, filled in the blanks, and tried again.

The modem hummed, Nfinity picked up on the other end, and wonkiness ensued. Braced for an all out crash, I was pleasantly surprised when a dialog box came up that said, "A connection was made, but the lines are all wonky, so it was terminated." At least that was the gist of what it said.

But it didn't crash.

I tried again (remember rule #1 for working with computers: if it crashes and you don't know why, try it again) and this time it connected, negotiated a deal, and stayed connected.

Heartened, I decided to go all out on this upgrading thing. I went to Apple's home page and downloaded the *latest* System update, labelled System 7.5.3 Revision 2. An hour later, with the revision installed, I read the new Read Me file which told me not to bother if I didn't own certain machines. It's only for machines built within the last year. Still, even if my trusty Ilci doesn't need the newest System software bug fixes, it's nice to have the latest.

(That's what sets computer fanatics aside from people who just want toasters.)

With the latest system software installed, I decided to upgrade some other stuff. So I downloaded the latest beta copy of Netscape's web browsing application, Navigator 3.0b4. I must say this version looks a lot like its Windows counterpart, which I have been using at work for about a month now. Well, except the buttons look cooler. Replacing Navigator 2.0 with this version also took care of the last crashes plaguing my system. I am happy to report that, using Cecilia, I am now 100% crash free in my Internet cruising.

...

Having licked that particular problem, I decided to work on increasing my efficiency. First, I began Spring Cleaning my hard drive. Essentially, this involves taking all the files that are cluttering up my drive, and using them to clutter up a Zip disk or two. Then, I downloaded the latest version of Claris EMailer, version 1.1v2. The update fixes a few bugs, eliminates eWorld from the options for connection (a moment of silence, please), and adds AppleLink, for those who care.

Emailer 1.1v2 also allows you to have multiple installations. Now don't get all excited. When I read that this had been added, I got all excited, and it turned out I should have contained my euphoria. You see, I thought it meant that we could have one installation of EMailer (i.e. one copy on the hard drive) and several preference files. Thus, I thought, we could have one set of preferences for personal accounts, and another for business accounts, without having to have two copies of EMailer on the drive.

Not so. What it means is this: you can have separate preference files for each copy of

Emailer you have on your hard drive, but you still need multiple copies of Emailer. What kind of information is kept in the Preference files that would make this useful? So far all I've found is that the signature files is kept there. So now my two installations of Emailer (Personal and for AppleSauce) have separate and distinct signature files.

Yippee.

I still want Emailer to allow for more than five AOL accounts. And I really want them to add some functionality to the address book. People managing large mailing lists have a very tough time right now. (Sorry, Rob.) But since they just released version 1.1v2, it may be a long time before we see version 2.0.

Ah well.

...

In the meantime, I'll just keep on enjoying my Mac. The other day I listened to a music CD on my computer for the first time in almost a year. I'd forgotten I could do that. In fact, I popped the Star Wars soundtrack into the machine while playing Escape Velocity. It was a lot of fun, reminded me (again) of playing AutoDuel on my Apple IIe, only the music was Mr. Mister and A-Ha.

(Ooo. That might have been more than you needed to know about me.)

What else happened this month? Oh, right. Some readers will remember my cuddly appraisal of Dogz, the computer pets that hang out on your screen. Well, the company that publishes Dogz has just started selling Catz. Yes, that's right, now you can have a stand-offish, haughty, sulky cat right on your desktop. What's it do, sharpen its claws on your desktop? Sit on the Trashcan and yowl?

(Ahem. You might surmise that I'm allergic to cats. This is true. I'm a dog person, and have just never connected with cats. Which is better than a friend of mine, who has repeatedly been chased down the block by mean neighborhood cats.)

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Lastly, Matt Sanders, one of ATPM's readers, delivered to me a wonderful little program called Readtime. All it does is tell you how long your Macintosh has been turned on. Useless, but tiny. Pokegenia, in her various incarnations, has been on for 2,666 hours and 15 minutes. I am unfortunately not sure where you can find this little gem, but look around, it shouldn't be hard to spot.

Apple stock is at a record low today, \$19 and change per share. Now would be a good time for all good Apple loyalists to put their money where their hearts are, as one reader put it. Should you want to know beforehand what you're getting into, try the following web site, and order Apple's Annual Report.

<http://www.irin.com>

Until next month, keep enjoying the *personal* computing experience.

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The Software Reformation

“But Daddy,” Jessica protested, “I don’t have her in my room and Matthew has her in his.” “I know that, Jessica,” I responded, “but this one’s for Daddy’s room. Don’t worry, I have something else in mind for you.”

This was one of the last conversations we had before the younger two-some of the Apples, Kids & Attitude household left for their nine-day vacation to visit with family. We were on our way to the art store to have a Ukrainian portrait of St. Philomena properly framed. Jessica was correct, there is a different portrait of St. Philomena hanging just above a statuette of the “dear little saint” in Matthew’s room. In the great quid-pro-quo of sibling rivalry this meant, according to Jessica’s OSPAP (Older Sister Preference Accounting Principles), that the next new item relevant to matters of faith that entered the house was to be given to her. Outside of measuring attention time, Dads don’t usually factor into sibling accounting systems. I did have something else in mind for Jessica, but more on that a little later.

Their nine-day vacation was to be the longest period of time I have been separated from either Matthew or Jessica since they arrived in this world, so I planned to take this time to do some things that I had been postponing for awhile — have the house cleaned, schedule some elective surgery and do what seemed like a dozen full loads of laundry.

All this of course, with the exception of the surgery, could wait until after I unwrapped my new copy of Adobe PageMaker 6.0, downloaded the GIF89 plug-ins for Photoshop and Illustrator from the Adobe home page, and set to work updating my various web pages.

After several months of being enamored with the World Wide Web it was comforting to be reacquainted with my senses. Prior to my “great web exploration” I operated under one basic software rule: If it doesn’t work right, I don’t want it. I finally took time to remove the various web-related beta copies of applications, plug-ins and browsers from my hard drives and went about putting some long lost normalcy back into my computing life.

Over the years I have come to rely on Adobe Systems for quality products that help me to do quality work. I had waited for this version of PageMaker to allow time for the company to fully “digest” the Aldus merger and more fully integrate the application into the Adobe product line.

As a Mac enthusiast who has spent a lot of time working with graphics-related software, my instincts told me it was just a matter of time before web publishing became simply another form of output with unique attributes for people wishing to express an idea, make

a point, or simply communicate in a more interactive, graphic intensive environment. Adobe products are moving us quite quickly toward that reality.

Very soon there will be no more of a need to know HTML, Java or their successors than there is for us to know programming languages in order to use a Mac. This makes me happy. Each of us have different talents and skills and while we can always learn something new, I think it's better that people who have the talent to communicate an idea effectively through creative design should be able to do so without having to learn code. Conversely, people who have a skill with computer programming, efficient code compiling and authoring useful applications shouldn't have the added burden of needing to be mass media graphic designers, other than the important design skills needed to create a comfortable user interface.

The software user and software writer should simply need to communicate with one another. I'm not promoting ignorance. Applications need to be written with an understanding of the needs of the user and the user needs to appreciate the challenge involved in maintaining a balance between efficiency and features in the writing of applications.

The World Wide Web and other forms of interactive electronic communication will ultimately replace most paper print. For this reason, electronic interactive communication will adopt many of the valuable lessons learned from print since the invention of the press. Over the past year I have seen very few web sites that actually convey their intended message in an efficient, well organized way.

As a heavy web surfer I think graphic "bells and whistles" are nice but if it takes me more than a couple of minutes to find what I want or if it takes too long for pages to load I'd rather go elsewhere. As of this writing the vast majority of homes and small businesses access the internet from 14.4 and 28.8 modems. This may well change and change quickly. Until then, web pages need to accommodate the limits of current transmission speeds and relay the intended message much more efficiently.

For me, software is an equity investment. If I wish to communicate in word, sight or sound, I need the appropriate software tools. It's also something I save money to buy. This is another reason I like the Adobe product line. Each application offered by this company satisfies a specific need. Each product works well on its own and allows me to work with a document between their various applications as my budget and skills allow. I acquired a copy of Photoshop when I began to work with photos, then a copy of Illustrator to create non-photo images. I purchased PageMill to create pages for the web and now a copy of PageMaker to help me bring the various elements of my web projects into an easy-to-read and use graphic layout.

We are at the dawning of a new software reformation. Java Applets, OpenDoc "parts," and more open standards are just the beginning. This will hopefully bring an end to unnecessary "bloatware." I very much miss my copy of Microsoft Word 5.1a and I prefer it to that application's most recent upgrade. I very much like ClarisWorks 4.0 and I'm very much looking forward to the 5.0 upgrade which will make it an OpenDoc container application. Applications such as Photoshop, which have allowed for third-party plug-ins, have been a forerunner of changes to come. Also, more derivatives of existing high-end software (packaged for home users, reduced in complexity, memory requirements and retail price) will also be coming to market. This will allow home users and home budgets

less limited access to some of the creativity tools formerly reserved for high-end, professional applications. Specular's 3D Web Workshop is an example of this trend.

I like what I see. More of what I want, less of what someone, somewhere simply wanted to give me. And, the opportunity for my software tools and resources to grow as my skills and budget allow.

Well, the nine days are almost over. I didn't get to much house cleaning, the laundry is at least half-way done (washed, dried, but sitting in mountainous piles on my oversized kitchen table). Thankfully, the surgery went well. As I'm writing this, I recall that prior to surgery I had a very simple prayer. All I asked is that the surgery go well, with as little discomfort and pain as possible. I'm grateful that I was heard.

As for Jessica, as I mentioned, I had some things in mind for her, and for Matthew, too. While they were on vacation though, I thought about ways I could be a better parent, more responsive to their requests, more receptive of their ideas, and less apt to try and decide everything for them. Perhaps it's a little bit of a reformation for me, too. Just a little while ago I got out a hammer, a nail, and the new portrait of St. Philomena. It looks good in Jessica's room, just above the night stand next to her bed.

Maybe, without saying a word, I was heard then, too.

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ABOUT THIS PARTICULAR
OPINION

THE PERSONAL COMPUTING PARADIGM, BY MICHAEL TSAI

Chicago? I Don't Want To Go *There* Today!

I now use Microsoft Windows 95 five days a week, and I've noticed that it's not as bad as Mac users would have you think it is. You see, the best part about Windows 95, is the excitement that results after a day of using it when I arrive home in the evening and fire up my Mac. After turning everything on from the keyboard, I am greeted by a lively guitar chord, followed by the sight of that timeless face smiling back at me. Instead of seeing a startup screen that says Microsoft not once, but twice and contains a hypnotizing blue bar across the bottom, I'm soon greeted by the colorful Mac OS logo, a progress bar, and several rows of icons. The PC at work loves to bring up messages at startup about a network card that still doesn't agree with its system. It kindly offers a button to enter DOS so that I can locate the problem, or at least attempt to. Even after four major versions of Windows, Microsoft has not been able to rid people of DOS. Actually, I kind of like DOS. It reminds me of my IIGS, and despite its limitations, can sometimes be more intuitive than Windows 95. It is certainly more predictable.

I go to the kitchen to get a quick drink of water, and by the time I'm back, EMailer has downloaded and filed my email, Netscape has presented a list of recent info-mac uploads, MacTools AutoCheck has brought up a dialog box telling me that it fixed a problem in the desktop database, and NewsHopper has started downloading new postings to Usenet. You see, the best part about the Macintosh is that it blends into your working (or playing) style. Using a Mac is more like having an assistant you can trust, than like having a machine that's in constant need of repair. I can organize folders and partitions on my hard disk into groupings that are logical to me, and the Mac OS will oblige. I tried this with Windows. Documents lost links to their creators, and applications lost access to their data files,

prompting me to remove, and then reinstall applications. The same thing happened when I tried moving an application to a Bernoulli cartridge. I now have a inkling of why Uninstaller has sold more copies on the PC than RAM Doubler has.

I understand now why so many people are afraid of computers. It's because with operating systems such as Windows, they're forced to change the way their mind works to agree with the operating system, not the other way around. If I double-click a text document on the Mac, it will open the application that created it, not just *any* application that can read it. Furthermore, double-clicking another document of the same type and creator opens that document in the same application. Under Windows, the application that is mapped to the document's file type is opened, even if the original creator is present. All text documents like to open themselves with NotePad, even if they are too large for it to read. Opening the second document opens a second copy of the application, even if the document is dragged onto the icon of the already open application. This is a 90s operating system? The IIGS was smart enough to handle types and creators.

The operating system that was supposed to leap ahead of the Macintosh with preemptive multitasking still does not even match it in this area, or in most others. File copies and Recycle Bin empties have a progress bar for each file or folder, rather than one for the entire copy. There's no way to tell how far a task has until completion. These are accompanied by corny animations that frequently skip frames. Of course, since Windows supports advanced multitasking, these operations can be placed in the background. In addition, the number of things that you can do during a copy are limited. For instance, it is not possible to modify, or even view files or folders that are being copied. You cannot copy a file while it is open in an application either. Furthermore, double-clicking a folder while it is being copied results in zero feedback. There is no dialog to notify the user of *why* they can't look at it.

While the multitasking is barely on par with the Mac OS, Windows does best it in one area: memory protection. I don't know the details of the Windows memory architecture, but it certainly seems more advanced than on the Macintosh. When one application crashes the machine, you can (usually) force-quit it, leaving the rest of the system intact.

I thought it was pretty cool to see that Microsoft had emulated CopyDoubler by allowing copies to background, until I noticed that the pointer had stopped moving. In a few seconds, it jumped to the other edge of the screen, and then froze again. The mouse must be near the end of the line for processor time. In fact, even under normal circumstances, when there are no processor tasks, the mouse doesn't move as smoothly as on the Mac. And the (white) pointer likes to hide itself. I suppose that's why Microsoft included a cursor locator in the mouse control panel.

Speaking of mice, it was necessary to install a new mouse driver in order to upgrade my machine to Windows 95. Unfortunately, it no longer works in DOS. It doesn't really matter though, because I never used it much for typing in pathnames anyway.

Dialogs that look modal, aren't. Sometimes there is both a cancel button and a 'close x', with no indication as to how their functions differ. Other times, there are yes, no, cancel, and close buttons. The latter three all serve the same function: dismissing the window, and confusing the user.

Most control panels and preferences dialogs abound with tabs. These can work in relatively

simple programs such as Claris Emailer, but imagine an interface that's an extension of Word 6's preferences dialog box, complete with several rows of tabs. It seems that almost all Windows 95 programs do this. Some even feature tabs that scroll from right to left in one long row with arrows at the ends. I'm sure that this idea never would have passed an Apple Human Interface standards.

Clearly, clumsy interfacing and most of the other oddities that I've discussed are in of themselves not earth-shattering reasons to switch from Windows to the Mac, or to remain on the Macintosh platform. However, they can be a great nuisance. What is more significant, is that there are many more where they came from.

The fact is, Windows 95 is a great step forward from Windows 3.1. It's easier to use, and much more Mac-like. It is not however anywhere near the Macintosh in terms of ease of use, intuitiveness, or elegance. I hope it never is. The interface is still in need of a major overhaul, and all in all, it is worse than the sum of its flaws.

The Mac is still a more productive, more consistent, and perhaps most importantly, more loved platform. Its interface is intuitive, elegant, functional, and fun. Beyond that, it offers an unbeatable integration of hardware and software. This complete user experience is why Mac users are so devoted to their computers, why they think of their computers as more than silicon tools, and why **they** will not be fooled by imitations — even though they are a form of flattery.

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ABOUT THIS PARTICULAR
OPINION

MACMAN TO THE RESCUE! BY MIKE SHIELDS



What Does A Mac Tech Do, When All The Macs At Huge Work???

Lately, it seems like no one needs a Mac Tech, at least here at Huge. I mean, we're done with the 7.5.3 upgrade, although we still can't install it site-wide yet. Possibly because they (meaning CSC), can't decide when to do it. After all, there is Update 2, and Revision 2 to deal with. So, in reality we have 3, count them, 3 different versions of 7.5.3 here at Huge. As well as you, the home user. Now Update 2.0 is supposedly a more recent version than 7.5.3, so actually, there are only 2 versions. Now didn't we read somewhere that 7.5.3 was supposed to work platform-wide? I believe it was in MacWeek.

Everyone should believe in something. I believe I'll have another drink. Because, as you may or may not know, they (meaning Apple) decided that we needed Revision 2, for the PCI PowerMacs. "Excuse me Mike, under redundant it says, 'see redundant.'" Yes, I know, all the PCI Macs are PowerMacs. So, now that I've thoroughly confused you, let's review. Economy, bad. Recovery, good. Sorry, I just had a George Bush flashback. Getting back to what I was talking about, there are two different versions of 7.5.3, one for PCI Macs, and one for non-PCI Macs. How does this affect you, the home-user you may ask? Well, by now, if you have a PCI Mac, you should've gone to your friendly neighborhood Apple Web-Site, not to be confused with your friendly neighborhood Spider-Man, and downloaded a copy of Revision 2. Of course, to load Revision 2, you must be running 7.5.3, which is actually 7.5, Update 2.0. And they wonder why I spend my free time reading newsgroups. Some of them are even work related.

Alt.Showbiz.Gossip

There is a minor hole in the security at Huge. It allows me to get to approximately 3800 newsgroups, give or take, with my software o' choice: NewsWatcher. Now I could use Netscape Gold 3.0 Beta, but I don't like how it reads the list of available newsgroups. I much prefer the Netscape 1.1 version, but that's another column, which I'll turn in late next month. Maybe. If you write to request it. But I digress. The newsgroup I 'hang out' at is, (insert appropriate fanfare here), Alt.Showbiz.Gossip, or a.s.g. for those that know. This newsgroup alone rates an entire column, but it's not really Mac related, so I'll simply state the following. If you have even the remotest interest in what's happening in the Industry, and of course when I speak of the Industry, I'm talking about, The Business, you could do worse than to spend your time browsing this fascinating group. Read the FAQ before you try to post. Or should I say, the anti-FAQ. For those of you from Little Rock, Arkansas, FAQ stands for frequently asked questions. If you don't read it, when you get

After diligently posting for almost 3 months, I received my first flame. The guy didn't even have enough guts to use his real name, as he did it anonymously. You see, there's this server in Finland...sounds like the setup of a joke. When I write the punchline, I'll let you know. Or, we could start a contest. (Spoiler warning: I have no prizes, other than the fame and fortune you can acquire by having your name published in the next ATPM) having said that, if you'd like to finish the joke, submit your best punchlines to me, MShields@ccgate.hac.com, and the best one gets 'printed' next month. So, have I confused you enough? Good!!! On to your questions...

MacMan to the Rescue!!!

I only got a couple of questions this month, I guess all your Macs are working. Try to have more breakdowns this month, so I can do an all user question column, like I did last month. Unless of course, you enjoy my ramblings, in which case, write anyway. I get lonely.

...

All right tough guy, let's see if you can solve this one. First, the setup: Powermac 7200/75; 24 megs of RAM; 500 meg hard drive; EZ135 external SyQuest drive; dozens of extensions and control panels, mostly Apple-related with a few third party; running system 7.5.3r2. Now the problem: Every once in a while, and for no discernable reason, the Finder will refuse to load. The startup process proceeds as normal, but once the menu bar appears, everything just stops. Usually this happens after a crash, but occasionally it occurs when I start up for the first time. When the problem is preceded by a crash, the freeze-up is usually related to something I was doing that involved the SyQuest drive. (I'm running Silverlining 1.1, which came with the drive.) To date, the only solution I have been able to discover solves the problem, but reveals little about its cause. Here it is: all I have to do is remove one control panel or extension (It doesn't matter which one, as long as there is one less CDEV or INIT loading at startup!) and then restart. All is well, and I can replace the extension or control panel, and restart without any problems.

Ben Levin
Nemesis@cris.com

I've been in contact with Ben on this since his initial inquiry. Part of his problem is that he's actually running Silverlining Lite. The latest and greatest version out there is actually 5.6.4, (coming soon to an online service near you), which will do all sorts of wonderful things with all sorts of drives from every company except Micronet. Their hard disk driver is proprietary. Go figure. Additionally, we came to the conclusion that he simply needed to zap his PRAM. For those that don't know, that's Parameter RAM. [and stores such things as the current time, and the number of hours your Mac has been used. -Ed.] Zapping it resets your Mac to the factory settings. So, the first control panels you should go to after doing this are the Memory, Network, and Monitor panels, not necessarily in that order. To zap your PRAM, hold down the option, command, P, and R keys on startup. Or, you can run the latest version of Tech Tool from Micro Mat Computer systems, which will let you zap your PRAM or rebuild your desktop at anytime. (end of shameless plug.)

...

I have Norton 3.1 on my machine and ran into a situation yesterday that cost me about 5 hours of work and a lot of adrenaline. I had been informed off and on over the past few weeks that the volume bitmap was incorrect, and after a few fits and starts got around to fixing it with Norton. Thing was, it showed up again a day or so later, only this time Norton told me it couldn't fix it. Not only that, it eventually (I.E. within a few minutes) made it so that I couldn't even get the HD to show up on my screen. I *was* able to get the disk back using Volume Recover and managed to take a quick backup before following Norton's advice and re-formatting. Needless to say, I then spent several hours re-formatting, re-installing, recovering and resetting my Mac up to do its job. Is there some kind of progressive error introduced by Norton or it's Volume Recovery functions that will eventually destroy your directories? I have checked for viruses and found none (Disinfectant 3.6), but now I'm seeing the same ominous message at home! Thanks!

Bev D. Blackwood II
blackwod@rice.edu

The quick answer to your question is a qualified yes. You didn't say how old your Mac was, however, at a previous worksite, I had almost the identical problem. It got to the point where I left my Mac on, because if I turned it off, on power up it wouldn't find the Hard Drive. What you have, is a Hard Drive crash waiting to happen. I can only recommend doing what you did for your Mac at home, however, you'll wanna use the latest Norton (3.2.3 as of this writing) and pray your disk doesn't crash before you can get a new hard drive, and complete a data transfer.

...

We bought our Performa 578 (8/320) for Christmas 1994 (year & a half ago).

I ran Disk FirstAid periodically, and occasionally it had to make repairs, but I don't remember if it mentioned what was wrong. Then a couple months ago, we got the System 7.5 update 2.0 CD-ROM, and upgraded to 7.5.3!

After this, it seemed that almost every time I checked (every few days) Disk FirstAid had to repair a bunch of (once over 50) problems such as:

"Problem: Missing file record for file thread, 3243, 1024"

Apple SOS said to do a clean reinstall of the system.

But, before I was able to do that, Disk FirstAid found a problem it could NOT fix:

"invalid index key, 4, 14"

So, I backed up (via appleTalk to our Classic), and re-initialized the Hard Drive as "maximum Macintosh" (like original).

Then I re-installed all software from the Performa CD, and straight-way ran the 7.5 update 2.0 from its CD (easy install), followed by both English & Spanish text-to-Speech. Then I ran Disk FirstAid, just to be sure, before I ran a bunch of installations of my other software, updates, etc. It found another:

Problem: Missing file record for file thread, ##, ##

I went ahead & reinstalled my software & data, and have been using the it. I just repair the problems with Disk FirstAid each time I empty the trash, which is the only time the problem seems to manifest itself. The problems seem to be related, but not equal, to how many files I delete by emptying the trash. I suspect it has to do with the files that were fragmented, or some such thing.

This time when I consulted Appl-SOS, the kind gal went out of her way to do some checking & came back with the recommendation I get a dealer to do a "low level format," which couldn't be done from the PerformaCD, and she wasn't equipped to explain how to do it. (but apparently can be done in some way with the update CD).

I am not at all close to a dealer, and would rather do it myself.

Will continually fixing, eventually cause me trouble? Do I need a de-fragmenter? Do you think the low level format is the proper fix?

If so, can I do it with the latest HD Setup? (ie. copy the newer HD Setup from the update CD to RAM Disk or Floppy, and then start up from the original PerformaCD to use it). Will it also allow me to partition my hard disk with separate *Macintosh* volumes?

By the way, what is System 7.5 update 2 revision 2? Is this the one that is only meant for certain models (which I don't have), or is it something I should be looking into?

Ben Andrus

AndrusBC@3rivers.net

Ben, you sure do ask alotta questions for someone from Glendale...seriously, It sounds like your problem lies in the fact that Disk First Aid is unable to fix the error it is finding. You have a similar problem to Beverly above. So, I recommend a similar solution, Norton Disk Doctor 3.2.3. This MIGHT fix your problem. I believe you can do a low level format with Apple HD SC Setup 7.3.5, which is the latest and greatest version that you can use for non-PowerMacs, but don't quote me. Yes, it will allow you to partition your drive. And in this case, there is such a thing as a free lunch, 'cause if your machine is under warranty, the dealer will fix for free. You MIGHT need to replace a faulty hard drive.

As for your second question, Revision 2 is only for PCI Macs, and the PowerBook 5300's, that have been listed elsewhere.

...

Okay, so there were 3 questions. Being under the deadline crunch, I momentarily forgot. So, again, for next month, try to have more breakdowns. And then immediately eMail me at: Mshields@ccgate.hac.com, and I'll get back to you quickly, hopefully with the right answer. The best questions will be published next month. Also, remember the contest, or, The Alamo if you prefer.

Mike Shields is still looking to review things, so contact him about sending him free stuff at Mshields@ccgate.hac.com. He needs a 28.8 modem, and the recent 225mhz PowerMac from Power Computing would be nice. Ok, he'll settle for a book...





Freedom from PageMill

There was, by most accounts, a “momentous event” in the Macintosh firmament not seven months ago. The stars shook, the world held its breath, and everyone turned to watch. In late 1995, Adobe released PageMill 1.0. This was the application that would make creating web pages as easy as... well, as easy as desktop publishing. The World Wide Web was running down the rest of the bandwagons, and Adobe promised that everyone would be able to grab hold, with PageMill.

I received one of the first copies of PageMill. I was eager, I was a believer, and I booted it up with glee, which some persistent readers will recall, was the last bit of glee PageMill afforded me.

This article isn't about PageMill, so let me keep this short. In the end, the world's collective breath was let out with a sigh and a shrug. PageMill, by all professional estimations, makes a good web page starter. It's easy to get a look at what your page will look like, and that mock-up process is fast with built in image tools, and a built in previewer.

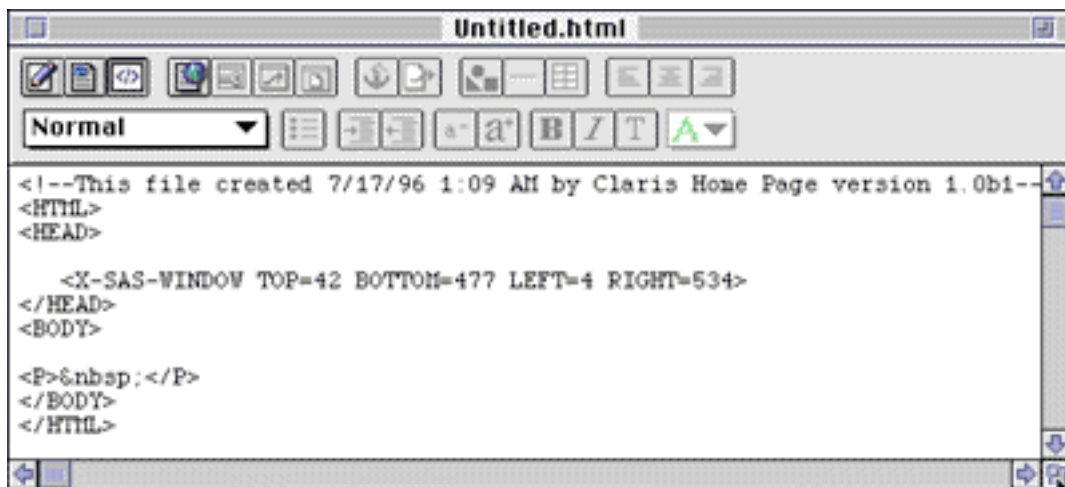
Since PageMill's much heralded start out of the gates, several other contenders have leant

to the challenge of providing the world with an easy-to-use web page designer, and one that is powerful, too.

The most recent candidate to the throne PageMill never filled is Claris Corporation's Claris Home Page. Based on the well-remembered Loma Prieta page designer, Claris Home Page looks like a winner. More importantly, it looks to be able to free us, permanently, from the chains of Adobe's PageMill.

Here's why.

I create most of my web pages in a text editor. I have learned enough of HTML, the language in which web pages are written, that I rarely need more than that. Because frankly, most web programming is very simple. You bold something by enclosing it with the `` and `` tags. The same is true of italics and underlines, and when you want to center something it's `<CENTER>` and `</CENTER>`. Most HTML commands are like that. Turn it on with one tag, and turn it off with another.



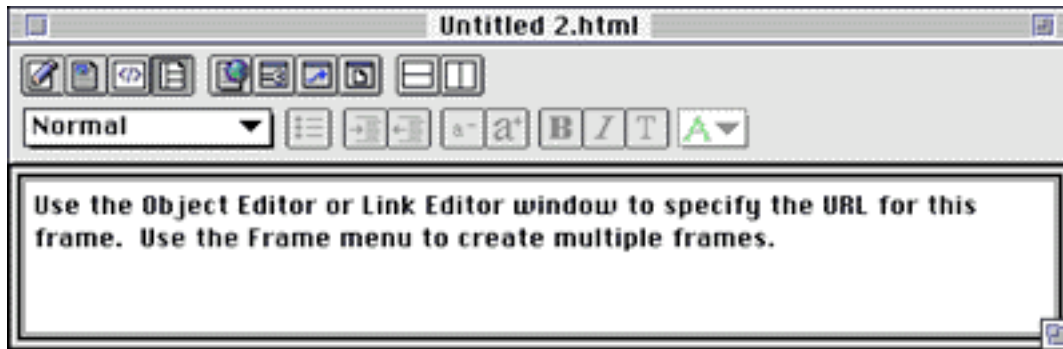
Inserting graphics is a little more complicated, but once you know the tags involved, it is very straightforward. One tag to tell the browser that an Image is coming, another to tell it where to find the picture.

While having Web page design programs automate or simplify these tags is nice, it is hardly necessary.

No, where HTML editors need to shine is in what they do to simplify the complex capabilities of HTML. Working with tables and/or with frames is difficult for experienced HTML coders, and impossible for most of us. I have only just managed to get a grip on how to code tables, and frames are still way beyond me.

But not with Claris' Home Page.

With a click or two of the mouse, I can now make web pages with frames. Just like that. It took me less than thirty seconds to create the frames in a Home Page document. It would have taken me over two days to learn how to do it with my text processor. And I can't do it with PageMill. At all.



That's the difference between being easy-to-use, and being easy-to-use and powerful. That's what the Macintosh is all about, and what Macintosh applications are all about. They need to be intuitive and yet have depth. They need to be flexible enough to provide users with room to grow. PageMill doesn't do that. Home Page, at least in this incarnation, does.

Another thing Home Page does is let you work with unadulterated HTML code, if you like. PageMill, while it claims to let you work with raw HTML, as they call it, subtly changes HTML code in its documents. Even if all you do is open a document to see what it looks like in PageMill, you'll find tags changed when you open it in another editor. Home Page doesn't do that (at least as far as I can tell).

And there's one other cool thing Home Page does. You can call up a Document Statistics window that will tell you how big your document is, and about how much time it will take to display with 14.4 modems and 28.8 modems. It is often said that web surfers won't wait much longer than thirty seconds to view a page. With Home Page, you can see about how long they'll have to wait.

A final note in this brief overview. Home Page is still in testing, and has not been released yet. This can't be a full-fledged review of Home Page until that point. Other programs, like the wonderful PageSpinner, are charging over the horizon, ready to bust our chains if Claris falls on its face. PageMill, on the other hand, has been on the market for the better part of a year, and PageMill 2.0 is in the works. Reportedly it will address some of the faults in the first edition. I reviewed PageMill 1.0 in an earlier issue, and don't care to work with it enough to do another review. PageMill 2.0 can't help but be better.

In the end it seems to me that Home Page, even in this modest first beta, beats PageMill 1.0 in ease-of-use (or at least in lack-of-confusion) and in power. That's what counts when you're trying to get your coolest efforts online.

PageMill is no longer the only way. Live free.

RD Novo is the creator of ATPM. His monthly column appears at the beginning of each issue.



ABOUT THIS STUFF



REVIEWED BY CHRIS DeANGELUS, macoy@AmbrosiaSW.com



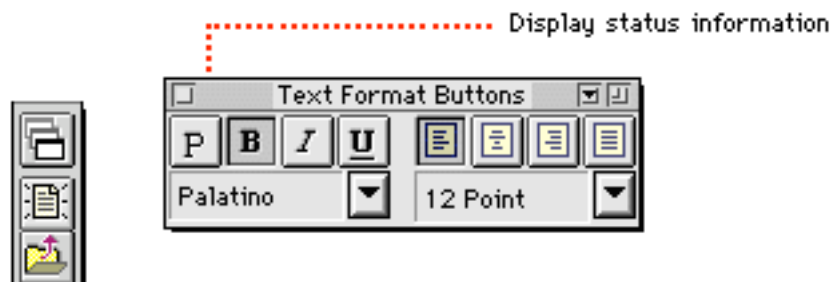
OneClick

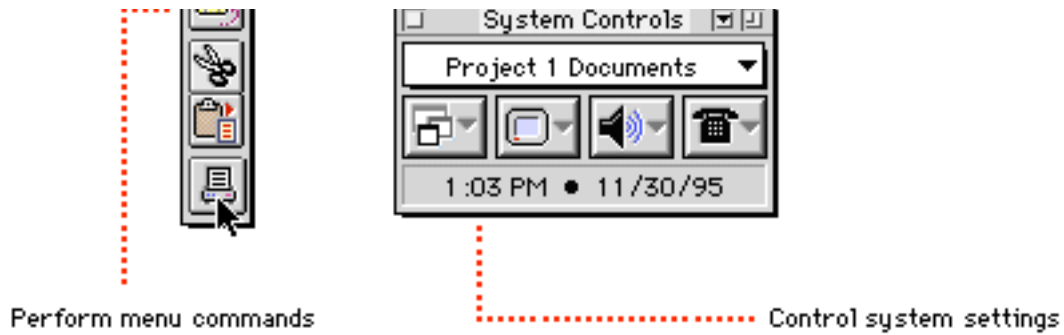
I will say it right off the bat that OneClick is cool. It is a powerful, intelligent, easy-to-use piece of software, that does what it is supposed to do beautifully. What is it you ask? It is a macro editor with a graphical interface.

OneClick does what it says, it makes everyday tasks simpler, quicker, and more painless. Via floating palettes, buttons are displayed for you, with each one executing some task. OneClick allows you to make custom palettes, custom buttons, and custom libraries of buttons. It is quite a smart setup.

It's Got Moxie!

It is the buttons that have the power in this software. One button may empty the trash for you, another may select all the text in the window. It is these kind of tasks that OneClick makes as simple as clicking the mouse. But don't think that is the limit of OneClick, it's not. It has its own scripting language (that I have yet to learn) that allows for some very powerful creations.



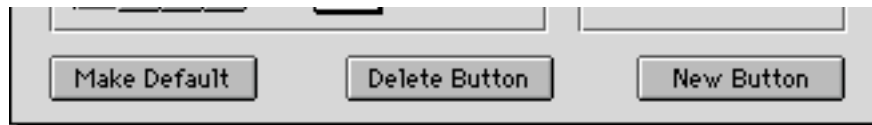


For instance, I have a palette specifically for Netscape that displays the amount of free RAM Netscape has. When that number goes below 1000, a message box pops up telling me that memory is getting dangerously low. Impressive, no? I have many simpler tasks performed by OneClick. For instance, in Claris Emailer, I have a button that creates a pop-up menu with a list of different signatures to use in a letter. I have my TRM (The Real MacOy) sigs, my personal sigs, and my professional sigs. Each is stored in a text file in the prefs folder, and OneClick opens, copies, and pastes the text into the letter instantly, invisibly, all by pressing one button. I must confess, I did not make either of these buttons, but am grateful for those who did. How about giving SimpleText a 'save every 15 minutes' function? That is definitely cool. (It even saved this article!) This is just a glimpse at what OneClick can do.

Yet, due to my inexperience with the scripting language (and all in general) I cannot make an educated report on its power. All I can say, is that from the looks of some of the buttons out there, it is very powerful indeed. This goes way beyond assigning keyboard shortcuts to menu items. This is total customization.

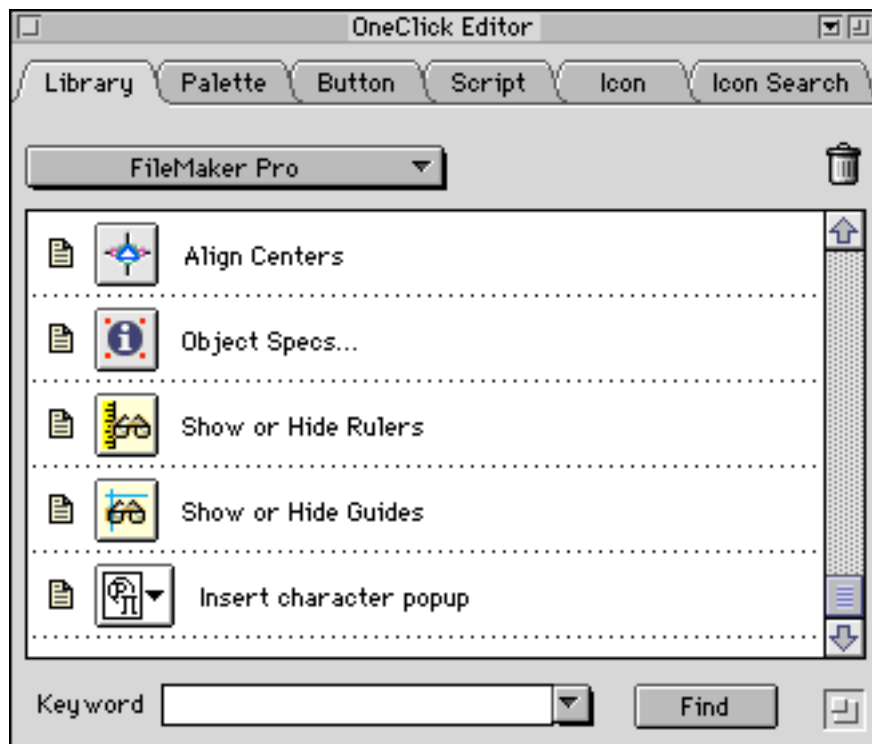
As you may have realized, OneClick allows for total customization. From the color of the button, to the size of the palette, everything is customizable. You can edit already-existent scripts, and replace certain criteria with some that matches your needs. You can create your own buttons from scratch, and implement them anywhere.





Puttin' It All Together

The main tool of OneClick is the OneClick editor, accessible through a newly-added menu. This editor allows for complete control over your palettes. Within it, you edit everything, the button size, color, style and function. You edit the palette size, shape and what-not. You even write and edit the scripts from within here. It is your main tool in creating palettes.



The palettes themselves are customizable. You can make a palette either a global palette or an application palette. This means that if you were to make a palette global, it would remain open and accessible in all apps. If you make it an application palette, it would only be open for certain applications, and close when you quit or moved out of that program. There are also sets of buttons designed specifically for an application. Take the Claris Emailer library. Some of the buttons are Connect Now... and Connect Again.... Well, these wouldn't work in the finder, or SimpleText, so they aren't part of that library. That doesn't mean they can't be used at all in those programs, it is just that the organization of OneClick makes the possibility of creating unusable palettes unlikely.

Yet, one of the greatest things of this software, is something that does not come in the packaging. That is the following this software has developed. The OneClick ButtonCircle is a group of people who share their buttons with the world, for free, in an effort to get the most out of this software.

You can find a button for quite a few things if you look for it. Sometimes you may have to do

a little tweaking to get just what you want, but it's not that hard to figure out. Usually it is just a noun or two. WestCodeSoft, the creators of OneClick, offer an assortment of libraries, buttons, palettes and more at their web page. You can also find other web pages devoted to this.

The Bad Points?

Now for the kicker. I could not find anything seriously wrong with this software. There were a few things, like not being able to copy out a script, or for that matter, paste one in, but these are not really problems. I guess my only gripe was with the first version, this problem has since been fixed. If you crash, your palettes may be damaged permanently, and require a clean reinstall. But this is not a problem anymore. And then, other than the fact that it does take up about 300k memory, it's perfectly fine. I haven't crashed due to this software (at least knowingly), and it always functions like it is supposed to. My final gripe is the fact that the palettes can get in the way at times, obscuring your view. But you can choose to add a title bar, which supports window shading. So that is not a big problem either.

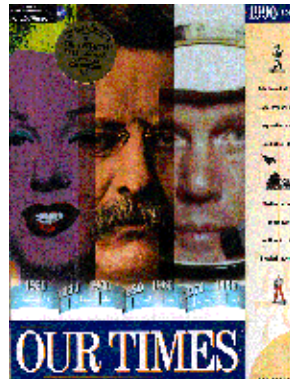
All in all, this is a superb piece of software. It is a little pricey at \$100, but that does not mean it is not worth it. If it is something besides the price that is holding you back, buy it. You will thank yourself. It's powerful, smart, easy-to-use, and it does what it says. What else can you ask for?

Chris DeAngelus is the Editor-In-Chief for The Real MacOy, where this review was originally published.



ABOUT THIS
STUFF

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



Our Times Multimedia Encyclopaedia of the 20th Century

Requirements: 68030 processor or better
4 MB RAM available for application.
System 7.1 or higher
3 MB on hard disk
CD-ROM Drive & 13" or larger colour monitor.

Available on CD-ROM for Macintosh (or Windows)

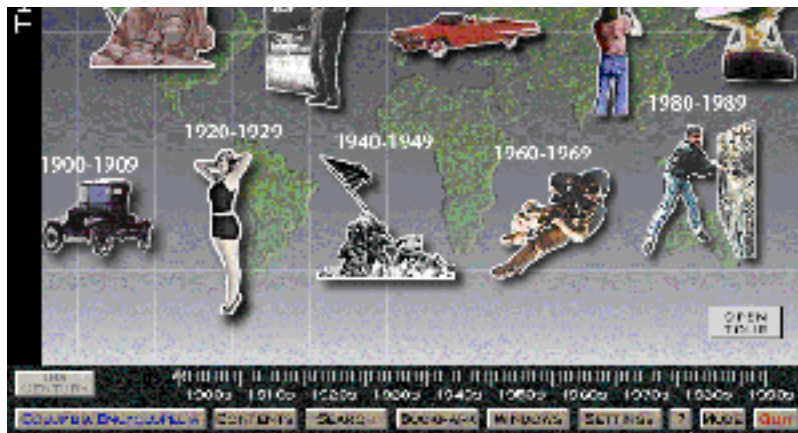
Distributed by ViCARIOUS™ (800) 465-6543

\$69.95/\$55 estimated street price

(The book \$89.99 Can/\$65.00 US, probably lower cost at, e.g. Barnes & Nobles)

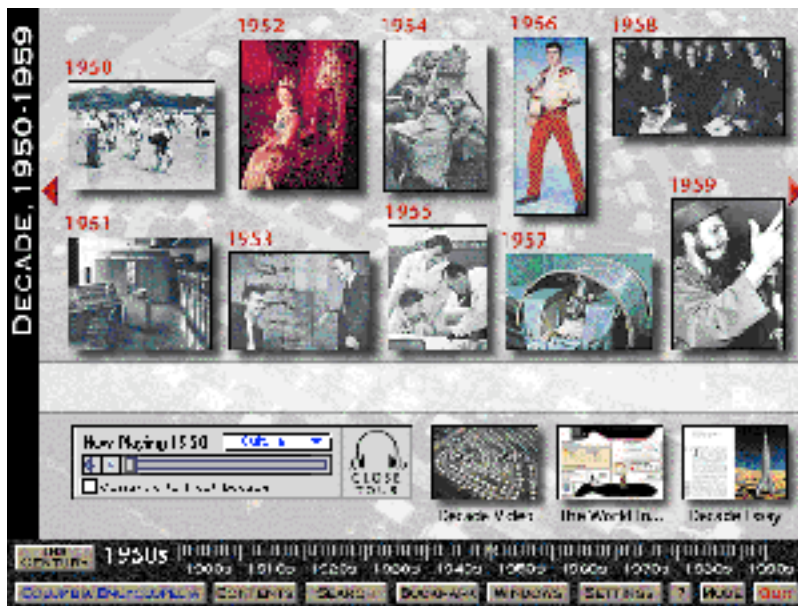
In this corner, weighing in at 720 pages, we have — OUR TIMES, The Illustrated History of the 20TH CENTURY — the book. In the other corner, weighing in at 637 MB, we have — OUR TIMES, Multimedia Encyclopaedia of the 20th Century — the CD-ROM. I must admit that I first approached the review of the CD from the point of view of a person interested in the results of a media battle — the book versus the computer. The scenario was possible because the two products offered the same material in alternate packages. The educator's soul in me was pulling for the book while my Mac user spirit was secretly anticipating a potential end run digital victory. Leaving the start and outcome of the competition until last, I took a close look at the CD.





From the initial splash screen, music and the narration by James Earl Jones you are made aware of the fact that you will be viewing quite the multimedia production on this CD. The product does acknowledge that it is based on the book (mentioned above) released by Turner Publishing Inc. with the support of Turner Broadcast Systems. With the resources of such media giants, VICARIOUS™, producers of the CD, should be expected to deliver on their promise to present a rich resource encyclopaedia of visuals and text entries documenting the “defining moments” of the 20th Century.


The GUI (Graphic User Interface) is smoother than any I have seen to date on similar products. “The Century” screen offers ten visual “decade” images which, when individually activated, take you to the second major area — “The Decade” screen of course!



“The Decade” arena presents you with ten visual “year” images, which when individually activated, lead to two “Year Screens.” All of these screens have a “Time Line” bar at the base. At each “Decade Screen,” you have the opportunity to view a “Decade Video” synopsis of that timeframe, call up “The World in... Screen” for informational graphs, facts, figures and trivia associated with those years, and/or read a “Decade Essay” written by a well known and popular people such as Arthur C. Clarke or Witold Rybczynski. I mention Witold because: his 1910-19 “Decade Essay” on the advent and effects of mass production on society is fascinating. He is Canadian, I use his architecture books in my

university classes, his name is a delight to pronounce and, finally, because Arthur C. Clarke (who writes the “Decade Essay” [Destination Moon](#), for the 1950’s) has already had more than his “Andy Warhol 15 minutes of Fame!”

DECADE ESSAY



This painting by Chesley Bonestell—one of many that illustrated an influential series of

Decade Essay

Destination Moon

Arthur C. Clarke


The Dawn of the First Space Age

The opening date of what i have come to think of as the First Space Age was October 4, 1957, when the [Soviet Union](#) launched the first artificial Earth satellite, [Sputnik 1](#). It was humankind’s inaugural leap toward the stars, and it would forever change the way our species saw its place in the universe. And so the world could not help but be startled and amazed—despite the fact that astronautics, far from being a new field, had been a subject of serious scientific study for more than half a century, and a favorite theme of fantasy writers for much longer.

Finally, the generalist overview can be completed by listening to three narrated “Tours” of the decade in the area of “Culture,” “Science,” or “World Affairs.” The audio by James Earl Jones is nicely complimented by the appearance and highlighting of photographic images appropriate to that event, personality, or phenomena identified with each year within that decade. The moment arrives to choose a year from the decade. Activating the ‘thumbnail’ photographic image for that year generates two “Year Screens,” each of full monitor size. You switch back and forth between the two screens with an ‘illuminating linkage bar.’ Each year offers the “Story of the Year,” and a series of categories including among others: ‘Popular Culture,’ ‘Science & Technology,’ ‘Philosophy & Religion,’ ‘International Affairs,’ ‘Economics & Business,’ ‘Politics & Society,’ ‘Space & Aviation,’ ‘War,’ ‘Crime & Disasters,’ ‘Arts & Literature,’ and (last but not least!) ‘Sports.’ The information within these categories is accessed through the now familiar photographic icon which leads to a new screen called the “Story” window.


YEAR, 1952

Arts & Literature




Masterpiece of Invisibility

Popular Culture




Cage's Sound of Silence

A MOMENT FROM 1952




Betsy McCall Gets a Doll


Popular Culture




Science & Technology

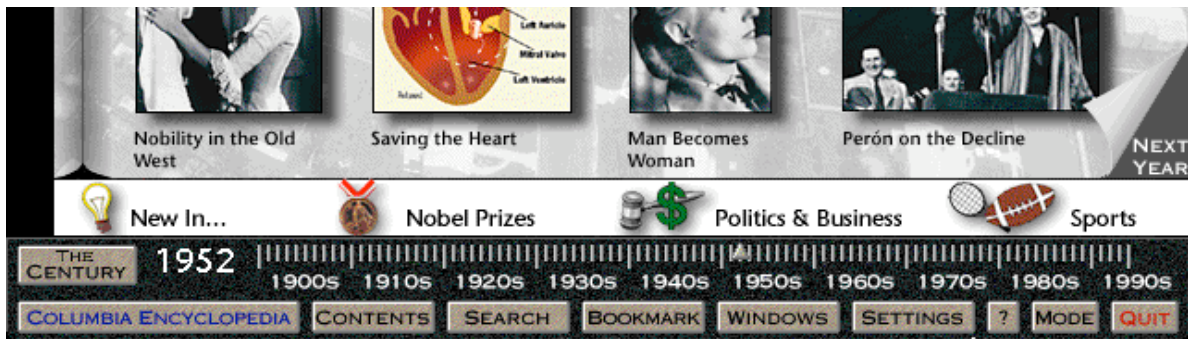


Science & Technology



International





You are now presented with a concise and informative article concerning the topic associated with the photographic image you activated. Additionally, from that same article page you may activate a full screen image of the thumbnail photograph under consideration, view related articles in the Columbia Encyclopaedia by activating blue colored text, and follow on to related articles by activating the green colored text at the 'conclusion' of the article. I use the term 'conclusion' lightly because the entire production encourages you to follow various streams of information and thought to other years and categories on the CD. One of the excellent aspects of this production is the manner with which it validates contextualism and differing perspectives on the way we have traditionally viewed history and current events. Life is not a sequence of linear experiences and separate streams of events. This CD reflects the reality of life and history being a rich mosaic of interrelated phenomena and personalities operating in all dimensions and directions. Not so strange that the physical architecture of the user interface relies so strongly on "web-like" hypertext links and other derivative connectors!

The experience of the information on the CD need not necessarily take a luxurious, wandering route. The "Time Line" bar at the base of the "Century..." and "Decade" screens allows instant access to any year from a calibrated ruler-like interface. Beneath that bar are series of buttons, labelled 'Columbia Encyclopaedia,' 'Contents,' and 'Search.' As advertised, [Our Times](#) (the CD) includes the complete fifth edition of the [Columbia Encyclopaedia](#) which is used as backup material for the various "Story" screens and which may also be independently searched by word inputs. The 'Contents' selection generates a less useful complete listing of all the items in [Our Times](#) under the categories 'Title', 'Category', and 'Year'. (This was the only stage in which I began to experience "information overload" and began to relive the angst of having to cram the night before for a test with too much material to study!) The 'Search' button brings up a simple or complex method of researching topics which might be covered in this selective multimedia experience. Remember, the operative word is 'selective' — the CD does not pretend to be an extensive scholars tool.

From my experience, the search engine is as good that used in other informational CDs such as [Microsoft® Encarta™](#). Two other buttons at the lower bar allow you to place a 'Bookmark' on an item and the 'Windows' selections allows you to trace your passage through each of the experiences you initiate. These can be saved to disk to allow you to return to a research project at a later date. I suppose it is merely being spoiled by other CDs which include a 'Note Pad' option that had me wishing one had been included. I know it is not necessary because as I write this review on my Mac, I also have the [Our Times](#) CD running, [Star Trek Voyager](#) running in the lower right hand corner of the computer monitor (TV card - decadent!), and I have the Apple Note Pad (with my outline) buried somewhere under this entire production! The complement of lower bar buttons is complete with the '?' leading to a complete on-line manual, the 'Mode' — allowing for full monitor viewing or use of the CD with other applications and the full menu bar available, finally

there is 'Quit!' But don't yet! There are a series of additional links which call up the brief lists of books, music, films, deaths, births, Nobel prizes, sports events and so forth associated with each year. In this area was a link entitled 'In the U.S.!' Well, here was my call to order!

Was [Our Times](#) actually to be more appropriately entitled [Our AMERICAN Times](#)? After all, there was no link entitled 'In Canada' or 'In Australia'.....? I did not want to believe that the CD might have a selective U.S. bias (although it does, with some justification!). I therefore performed a partisan Canadian search and did discover that we were represented by, for example, Pierre Elliott Trudeau, Quebec Separatism and the Meech Lake Accord! Congratulations to the publishers for recording the political situation that still dogs Canada to this moment! While playing the devil's advocate I also decided to do a search for 'Macintosh Computers' and our corporate friends at I.B.M. Lots of material on I.B.M., but the closest I got to information on our 'friend' is the occasional mention of Apple Computers and Steve Jobs! For some of us, the Macintosh computer should have been included as one of the "defining moments" selected by the producers of the book and CD!

Back to the book versus CD competition. I chose to closely examine all of the contents of 1952 in both media. With few exceptions, the book and CD contain the same material. The occasional picture may vary between the media, and I was jealous that the book contained the 1952 picture of people at the theater watching a movie with their 3-D glasses. The CD did not have that 'famous' photo! The book does attempt to emulate a cross referencing of material in a manner which ends up looking as though the book was the story board for the CD production. For example, the story of the year involves Great Britain's Queen Elizabeth. The "Story" in the book ends with the notation —">1981.4" — a cryptic way of telling the book reader to turn to the pages on 1981 and look at article number "4." The "Story" on the CD ends with the more straightforward and descriptive notation: "(See "A Fairy Tale Wedding" from 1981)" as an active green hypertext link. It doesn't take much to figure out that it is quicker to activate the CD link than it is to find the appropriate passage in the book. Another advantage to the CD is the fact that the photographic images can be enlarged to full screen size as opposed to the smaller book format images. Additionally, the computer user, with a printer, can print the images at their desktop.

I would be hard pressed to find critical flaws in the CD. There will always be the — "They really should have included 'this'...or... Why did they include 'that'?" Such comments become immaterial when you accept the original premise of the project. The contents end at 1994, so I presume Turner Publishing Inc. and [ViCARIOUS™](#) will offer an upgrade at some time in the future and an appropriate rebate for those who have purchased the 1996 edition. It may be a good idea for the company to consider offering the option that the 1996 edition of [Microsoft® Encarta™](#) offers — a Web page update and download section for their encyclopaedia. When push comes to shove, I have to admit that, for me, the media contest falls only slightly on the side of the CD. As an avid book reader, I have the greatest appreciation for these "objects" we commonly associate with traditional education, literacy and communication. As a computer user, I can appreciate the greater flexibility and scale of the CD. You can't deny that the computer technology allows for a quicker access to cross references than does the human hand flipping through pages in a book while the eye and brain try to locate the reference point. Granted this is the major plus for the CD, but such processes do discourage mental exercise and the advantage of flipping through the pages and discovering additional information by "accident," something the computer doesn't allow, because the computer doesn't make mistakes! Right? A final note of caution about leaping on the multimedia bandwagon too soon: the CD assumes that the user is

literate to begin with. If you can not spell correctly, you will be frustrated by searches for information. I admit the same is true, to a lesser extent, of a book search, yet I am convinced that a lot more book reading would not hurt any one of us.

A few parting remarks: you will notice that I did not make any cheap humorous remarks concerning James Earl Jones (the narrator of [Our Times](#) CD) and his connection to Star Wars in the role of Darth Vader! Actually Jones does a great job...much better than listening to Bob Saget reciting Shakespeare. Yes this is true! Saget ruins the work of the British sage on the multimedia production of [Great Libraries](#) CD-ROM (Bureau Development, Inc., 1992). I must admit that viewing the "Decade Videos" on [Our Times](#) continually left me with the urge to play the excellent military simulation and strategy game [Allied General](#) by Strategic Simulations, Inc. Darned if that game doesn't start with a "Decade Video" of its own!

Making a long story short, [OUR TIMES, The Illustrated History of the 20TH CENTURY](#), the book, is most worthy of a place on your bookshelf, and [OUR TIMES, Multimedia Encyclopaedia of the 20th Century](#) the CD-ROM, is a 'must have' for your educational CD computer library.

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ABOUT THIS STUFF

SHAREWARE REVIEW

BY MICHAEL TSAI, mjt@sover.net



Smooth Move

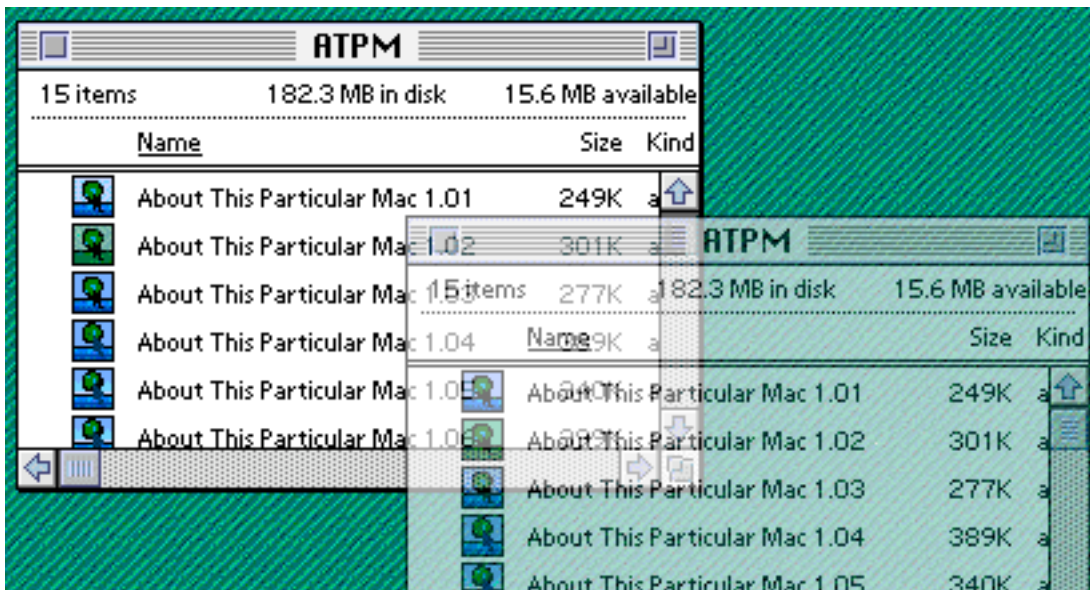
Author: Jonas Walldén, jonasw@kagi.com

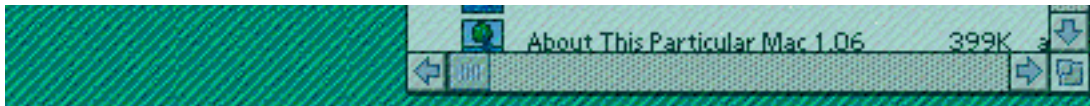
Requirements: SmoothMove-PowerMac (the faster the better)

Price: \$10 Shareware

Have you ever used Greg Landweber's excellent Aaron extension? If so, SmoothMove is an excellent complement to it. In fact, even if you don't use Aaron, SmoothMove can give your Mac a new feel, and make it cooler. It doesn't seem to conflict with any extensions, so there are no real drawbacks to using it, especially if you disable it with a modifier key when you move around large windows.

When you look at a Mac that has SmoothMove installed, you will not notice anything different at first. Its presence is only apparent when you drag a window. If you are using System 7.5.3 or later on a PowerMac, you are no doubt aware that whenever you drag an icon in the finder, a transparent rendition of the icon follows the pointer around the screen. SmoothMove takes this one step further. It extends this capability to windows. Whenever you drag a window, a translucent copy of it follows the pointer around the screen.





There are numerous options that can be set in the SmoothMove control panel. For instance, you can set the level of transparency. If you like, you can make dragged windows look as if they almost aren't there, or you can make them appear almost opaque with a slight trace of other windows showing through. Anything in between is also possible. In fact, by pressing keys that you set in the control panel, you can adjust the transparency level of the window as you drag it. This feature reminds me of some of the cool preview effects in Kai's PowerTools. Best of all, SmoothMove works with almost all windows, regardless of the application that they belong to.

Stiff Requirements

Unfortunately, SmoothMove requires a tremendous amount of processing power. Making a transparent copy of a window, and moving it in sync with the cursor is more complicated than it sounds, especially because the processor has to handle the drawing of other windows whose contents show through the transparent window.

There are several steps you can take to speed up the dragging of transparent windows. Using a simple desktop pattern helps, as does reducing the color depth. SmoothMove is also much faster without Aaron installed. However, it's not much fun to practice these techniques. Fortunately, there are better options.

SmoothMove includes a number of features to make it much more usable despite the processing power required. You can set conditions under which windows will not become transparent when dragged. For instance, you may want large windows to behave normally, or you may want to disable transparency altogether when in 24-bit color mode because it is more processor intensive. SmoothMove lets you do this.

You can also hold down modifier keys when dragging windows. One key will disable SmoothMove altogether, resulting in a normal window outline following the pointer. Or, you can disable transparency with a modifier key, resulting in a fully opaque window following the arrow, which speeds things up a bit. Finally, SmoothMove gives you modifier keys for precision window dragging. Holding down one of them forces the window to move on a straight line either horizontally or vertically. This is analogous to holding down shift in a drawing program. Another modifier slows down the responsiveness of window dragging so that you can finely position it on your desktop.

All in all, SmoothMove is a great program. It invigorates the user experience much as Aaron and System 7.5.3 did. Despite the fact that moving large windows around can be slow, the fact that it is even possible is astounding. Several years ago, no one would have even thought that interface enhancements such as this were possible. They are yet another result of Apple's switch to the PowerPC chip.

Mac OS 8 will also take advantage of this processing power. At least one 'theme' will feature animated menu items. Apple has not said that they will include transparent window dragging, but I wouldn't be surprised if they did. Personally, I'm hoping that they will implement slide-down menus, menus that open as if they are being slid down from

underneath the menu bar, rather than the current menus which are merely drawn from the top down. Even if Apple doesn't implement sliding menus, you can count on seeing more shareware interface modifiers before next summer. In the mean time, I recommend that anyone who has a PowerMac try SmoothMove, it's shareware, so you have nothing to lose if for some reason you don't like it.

This review is ©1996 Michael Tsai. Note: Just as this issue went to press, SmoothMove's name was changed to Smooth Windows to avoid conflict with another piece of software. The current version, 1.1, adds support for 68K Macs.



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

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

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Wishful Thinking: This section appeared in one issue this year, and has been silent since then. In Wishful Thinking we have a space for Mac enthusiasts who know exactly what Apple's advertising *should* be. Did you come up with a great advertising tag line? Have you had a Mac campaign stewing in the back of your mind for a year now? Send your ideas, or your art, to ATPMEditor@aol.com



Next Time

Next month, we'll bring you the next installments of About *This* Particular Macintosh, Apples, Kids & Attitude, The Personal Computing Paradigm, and Macman to the Rescue. You'll also find more commercial and shareware reviews, a new segments piece, and news of PowerComputing's new speed demons.

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