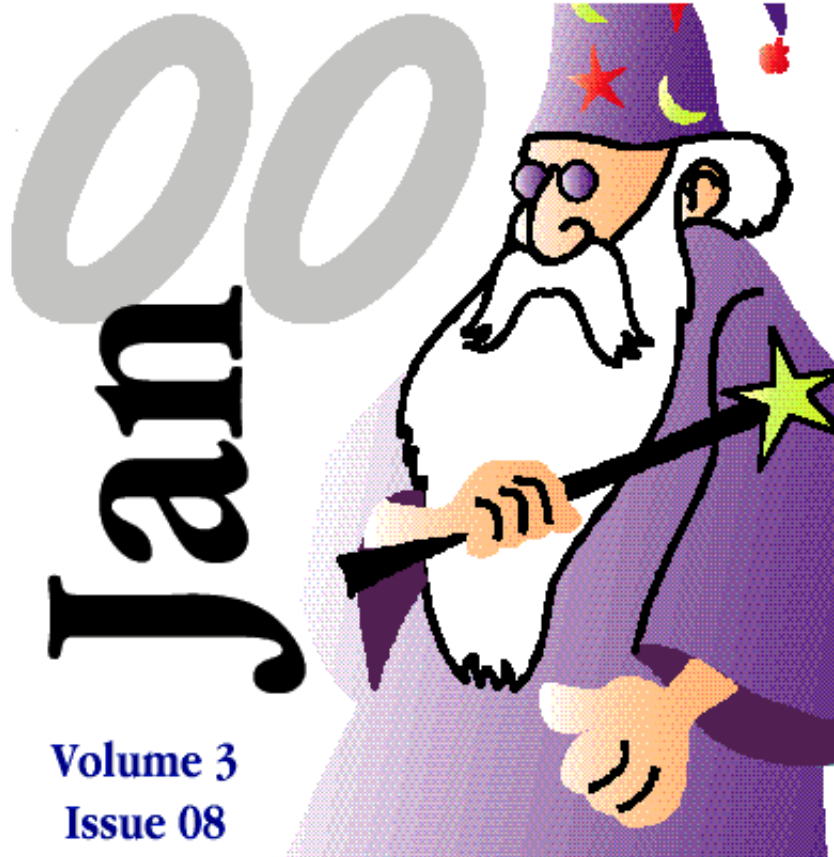


APPLE WIZARDS



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This month's note: Wow! Mac OS X, the Expo, who knows where to start? Well here at Apple Wizards, refreshed from our holiday break, we're excited to bring out this month's issue, with some exciting articles. Look forward also to next month's planned feature article on the latest developments with Mac OS X, and make sure you download the PDF in the Previous Issues.



Feature Article



Macworld SF 2000 Report

What's this hacker's take on the latest Expo? Read on...

Michael Coyle



Monthly Columns



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The Happy Mac

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Connecting...

Welcome to Connect, our column for reader email! We want to hear your thoughts and opinions about things you've read in Apple Wizards about Apple, your computer, Mac OS X, and so on. So let us have it people! Send email to connect@applewizards.net.

 If your letter is published in Connect, you'll win a prize. This month, everyone listed below wins a free copy of Setting Sun, a screen saver application which uses plug-ins to draw interesting things when your computer is idle. If you're jealous of your Wintel friends' screensavers, here's what you need to turn the tables - Setting Sun has bells and whistles never even conceived of by those sniveling Wintel critters. And now we have the Flower Box too!

Check out [Setting Sun](#) today. It's worth a download even if you didn't win - but if you like it, don't forget to pay!

Next month we'll have another prize. Write in quickly! Deadlines for the next issue are sooner than you may think!



Mac vs Wintel. And the Winner is ... (1)



OK, I confess, I use both. A Mac at home and a PC at work. What are the differences? Well, let's see - the PC crashes, oops, so does the Mac. Sorry, Apple, you don't have your act together in regards to the OS. But, hey, neither does Microsoft.

Other differences: Installing software - on a Mac it's put-in-the-disk click-click-done. On a PC, it's put-in-the-disk, click-click, answer-75-questions, answer-25-more, reboot, find the icon, copy it to the desktop, done. Ok, give the Mac a slight edge there (yeah, right).

The Mac can also recognize what a file is by the content of the file rather than just by the extension that it has been given. You're gonna wait forever for a PC to ever do this. It's a DOS thing. Yes, Windows 9x does a pretty thorough job of disguising it, but it's all just a huge top-heavy overlay of DOS.

Want to change a program's configuration? On a Mac, it's all accessible from the menu. On a PC, it's problematic. Maybe it's on the menu, maybe it's in WIN.INI, maybe it has it's own INI file. Maybe it can't even be done. Good luck finding out in the manual.

Memory protection? OK, I have to be honest, they both suck rocks. Apple and Microsoft have both left the users in the lurch on this one. This should have been done 10 years ago and we're still waiting. Mainframes can do it, micros should too.

User interface: Apple wins, hands down. The stuff on a Mac just works, no surprises. The stuff on the PC needs the enormous help files that come with them.

Both systems suffer from the lack of an operating system with preemptive multitasking and memory protection. I will slap the next PC user that tells me that Windows has this, it doesn't. Do your homework.

To sum it up. I am impressed with my PC and Windows. It takes brilliant engineering to come up with an OS that can run on that many different manufacturer's machines and still work at all. But, sorry, I love my Mac. The damn thing just works. There are things that I can do with my Mac that I can't even attempt on my PC.

Mark Ross

Thank you Mark. I won't comment on what you say because I don't feel like being slapped. But what d'ya think about Mac OS X and the recent Macworld Expo? Bye bye (big) crashes! Given peoples' experience with Mac OS 9, will any of our present much-loved programs run without expensive upgrades? All readers - write in on this hot topic, and if your letter is published, you can win prizes. What do you think? Write to connect@applewizards.net.

- Dennis Field



Mac vs Wintel. And the Winner is ... (2)



I'm a pretty old guy and started using PCs when I found I had to become computer literate or be embarrassed by my fellow employees. But, the PC made too many demands on me, especially since all that was available was DOS. I found the commands required interfered with the work at hand, limiting my throughput. How difficult it was to copy things - and other commands were worse.

Nearby was a Mac SE so I decided to try it out. I was immediately greeted by a very simple and enjoyable interface. The commands were straightforward and logical. I could move from one software program to another and be able to understand how to run the new software quickly. I never returned to the PC.

Now I volunteer one day each week, and at work I only have access to a PC. It's a very frustrating interface. The commands are not as logical as the Mac commands. The Windows OS is unstable and crashes are frequent - I guess because of Windows being a shell around DOS.

There is more than enough software available for the Mac. I've never experienced a need for software that was not available to me. MacLink can be used to translate PC files to the Mac, and if the need should arise for particular PC-only software, I have Virtual PC installed on my Mac.

The best reason I can think of for the Mac are my wife's comments every time she sits down in front of it. She says, "It's too easy - it's only for babies." She's even threatening to buy an iMac for herself, which no one else can touch.

Take the advice of an old man and put your money down for a Mac. You will never be sorry.

Sincerely,

Irv Skorka

Thanks Irv. It all seems pretty clear to me, which is why I printed your letter. I hope Mrs. Skorka enjoys "Setting Sun" on the new iMac you bought her for Christmas.

- Dennis Field



What Can I Tell My Friends?



I love my Mac. But my PC "friends" are always razzing me about the stuff they know I can't get at the Office Depots and Maxes that seem to be around all their corners. Usually I can find an adequate response to their jibes, even though for me it's half an hour to CompUSA - not always a pleasant experience - or mail order - nearly always pretty good. But here's what I can't answer: Streets and Trips 2000 or National Geographic Trip Planner Deluxe - what can we get for the Mac that compares? And is there a Mac-compatible version of the Rio or the new RCA player that will let us take our MP3 tunes jogging with us?

Sometimes you're better off without all that choice of software that mostly all does the same thing. Mapping apps are a good example. Delorme does have Street Atlas USA 6.0 for the Mac. There's a new version (December 1999) that has all the latest bells and whistles and connects to GPS units, including Delorme's own.

Find all the details at <http://www.delorme.com/StreetAtlasUSA/mac/>.

But you can also save your money and get your maps from the Internet. You get the most up-to-date maps and the best routing algorithms. Compared with CD-ROM based software, the downside is that it takes the maps a bit longer to get drawn unless you have a high speed connection, and the map windows themselves are rather small.

Delorme itself has excellent U.S. maps and routing software.

<http://www.delorme.com/cybermaps/>.

Maps On Us is well worth a try as well. <http://www.mapsonus.com/>.

For street-level maps of locations all over the world, I always use Mapquest.

<http://www.mapquest.com/>.

It draws impressive maps of the places I know well: obscure little towns in Wales, Netherlands, New Zealand, as well as North America. And for trip planning, it knows where the major construction sites are - everywhere I go, it seems.

Don't take my word for it. Look for a place you know well - maybe a place where there are some new roads. Compare the results. Unlike your OfficeMax visiting, CD-ROM buying buddies, you won't spend a penny. Just reassure them afterwards that they could have used the Internet too.

Now MP3 to go: your "friends" did have a point until now. Everything you found at CompUSA was parallel port only, which Macs have never had. Mac versions are coming though... and the new models are a lot better even for PC users. The deluge has begun, so watching the ads and keeping up with the mail-order websites will keep you in touch. For manufacturers' sites, check:

<http://www.rioport.com/> - the pioneer. Available now, the new model 500 looks good, with 64 MB memory built-in and removable flashcard support as well. It supports up to 32 hours of spoken audio, or two hours of near-CD quality music. You can get it in translucent teal and purple, too.

<http://www.ijamworld.com/> - The cool-looking I-JAM has bass and treble controls and a built-in FM tuner. According to their website, they have a Mac compatible model.

<http://www.ita.sel.sony.com/jump/musicclip/> - Sony's Musicclip is an extremely cool player the shape of a big magic marker. No Mac software yet, but the player will plug right into a Mac, so it won't be long before someone writes software for it even if Sony doesn't.

<http://www.nomadworld.com/products/nomad-2/> -The Nomad II is another player that promises to plug right into the Mac, but there's no word on Mac software from Nomad either. It promises upgrade flexibility to new formats when they appear.

The compatible players use USB of course, and that's why the current apparent dearth of players on the market won't last. USB makes Mac-PC hardware sharing easy. It just needs the appropriate software driver. USB is about five times as fast, pouring a 64MB chunk of music into the player in three minutes. It has nice compact cables and plugs - no small consideration for these pint-sized devices. That's a big difference from the clunky prehistoric PC parallel giants. I'd predict that your first generation parallel friends will go USB when they see how much faster the transfer is and will junk the parallel version.

Parenthetically, I have to say that I've been listening to classical music and going to concerts since just after the 78 rpm days and I can't tell the difference between MP3 and CD played

over the same set of speakers or the same pair of headphones. Senile hearing atrophy, you say? Well, I've no way to disprove that.

Finally, the big guns at Polygram and Warner have discovered MP3 too, and they're mightily concerned about it. MP3 has an annoying habit of coming directly from the source to the consumer without requiring the intervention of your friendly multinational. Kinda like sunlight and oxygen, y'know. And if the Business School Guys hate one thing, it's losing control of the market. Hence SDMI -- the Secure Digital Music Initiative. Will current players play SDMI-coded tunes? Doubtful except for the Sony Musicclip and the upgrade-ready Nomad II. But meantime most of what you could possibly want (and even more of what you couldn't) is out there. Lots of it is even legal. And of course, it's quite legal for you to load up your player with your favorite cuts from your own CDs before you go out on that early-morning run. Now get on out there real soon now, when the USB players arrive.

- Dennis Field



More About Poor Gerry



Hi .

Is Gerry Darlington for real? Some of my IRC buddies and I have been arguing about it, and we can't agree. There's virtual money riding on it, so give us the authoritative scoop.

Benny Francis

Well, is Benny Francis for real? If Bill Gates on his own in the forest says Win98 has preemptive multitasking, and Mark Ross isn't there to **slap** him, is Bill Gates for real? Golly Gosh, is Steve Jobs for real? Have you ever actually seen anything but virtual images of him? Gerry Darlington, Mark Ross, Bill Gates, even your IRC buddies: maybe they're all a humungous virtual conspiracy.

- Dennis Field



A Real Nice Message From Texas



Dear Sir or Madam,

Real Soon Sleuthing Wizard has determined that the hard drive on your computer contains one or more of our Trademarks used without our permission and in a frivolous context. Please be aware that we prosecute offenders to the full extent allowed by Texas law, where there are already hundreds of Persons lined up to get electrocuted or poisoned or beheaded or such other penalty as we may decide upon in our capricious way in the future.

Cornelius ("Con") Spyer, Chief Counsel
Real Soon Corp, Waco TX

Thank you for your interest in Apple Wizards. Your form letter is important to us. Notice that we're careful not to use CAPS to begin the words you refer to except at the beginnings of sentences. Even under Texas law, writing that way is an idea, not a product. Furthermore, not even in Texas would you be able to prove in court that it's new. So get **slapped**, and go find some more paranoids to go after.

- Non-Paranoid Dennis Field



Send your rants and raves, questions and comments, compliments and criticisms to connect@applewizards.net.



Dennis Field

connect@applewizards.net



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Michael Coyle, webmaster of "Hacker's Heaven" [ResExcellence](http://ResExcellence.com) and the man behind the voice behind Tony the Tiger, went to Macworld Expo 2000 - San Francisco. We gave him some left-over candy canes and a blank piece of paper and said "write something, good man," and this is what he came up with! Visit [ResExcellence](http://ResExcellence.com) today.

If you have an idea for a future feature article, or would like to write a feature article, email us. We're currently seeking someone to serve as our Features Coordinator. Send important information to apply@applewizards.net.



Let's Get It On

Having just returned from my third Macworld Expo, I'm happy to report that the show was appropriately boring.

That's correct. Appropriately boring.



I attended my first Macworld, also in San Francisco, at the height of Power Computing and cloning. Apple was cranking out boring beige computers in a

complicated product line. Power Computing made faster, cheaper boxes, and in front of the press at the Expo, they previewed a portable Mac clone and demanded that Apple let them produce it. The employees of Power Computing were dressed in army fatigues, and Hum-Vee's patrolled the streets. There was so much tension in the air that you were expecting them to stage a literal corporate coup. I skipped the next several shows until this last summer's New York Macworld, which of course featured the surprising, exciting iBook/AirPort release.

All of the recent Macworld Expos have had a high degree of drama. In 1998, the fear was that the next Expo may be the last. MacUser had effectively closed shop. Macworld wrote articles on migrating to Microsoft's Windows NT, and I learned to use LinuxPPC, just in case.

After the second coming of the Messiah, every show with Steve Jobs became an event of epic proportions - a turn-around from red ink to black, the launch of the iMac, a solid OS strategy, and last summer the release of the iBook.

These recent Macworld Expos, with their grand announcements and dramatic product launches, always implied a certain level of volatility for me. A company whose fortunes could rise so quickly could just as easily crash and burn.



MWY2K

Then, the first Expo of 2000 was upon us.

2000

Even if Apple had announced the new "Pismo" PowerBooks as was rumored, we all know the basics of the machine, if not the exact color and port layout. No one was expecting any amazing new technology such as a Microwave AirPort that could also cook your pizza (now that would be cool). We expected favorable news on Mac OS X, even though most attendees were pleasantly surprised at its beauty.

So you see, that is why I found the show appropriately boring. No longer does Apple's future hinge on the "Next Big Announcement." As Steve Jobs stated, the company is firing on absolutely every one of its cylinders, and the biggest one now has an "X" on it.



As Apple's stock price hovers around one hundred dollars, and the company continues to add to its market share, it was pleasing to go to a Macworld with the warm, comfortable feeling that the thousands of dollars I spend each year on Apple hardware and software will be money well spent.



Spending Money

Where to spend a little money?



Leading the list would be Mac OS X. Having viewed thousands of schemes and themes on a half dozen operating systems, I can sincerely say I have never seen anything as beautiful as Aqua in Mac OS X. Static screen shots will not do it justice. It is no exaggeration when Apple refers to Aqua as being fluid. I imagine soon we will have a Kaleidoscope scheme or Appearance theme that attempts to imitate the look of Aqua, but the mere widgets and buttons on Mac OS 9 won't suffice. The behavior of the Aqua Finder windows, dock, and quartz display will be dreamed of by Mac users until this summer. Combine that with the true memory protection and multitasking, and I will finally have the OS that has been promised to me since Copland.



In hardware, the buzz words were large and small. Manufacturers were displaying consumer drive arrays of over 220 gigabytes in preparation for the new crop of iMac video editors. Unfortunately, none of them had clear strategies for backing up and archiving this much data. The response from one vendor to simply buy two of his drives was rather ridiculous.

How small can you make a USB hub? How tiny can a six gig Firewire drive be? Many companies were displaying devices smaller than a deck of playing cards. Memory sticks and chips were so tiny and held such huge amounts of data, they would have felt right at home on the deck of the Starship Enterprise.



Come on Macworld New York!

Macworld Expo 2000 gave us new software and hardware options from vendors that previously ignored the Macintosh platform. Combine Apple's steady course for their Mac OS strategy and lots of good news announcements and you have the ingredients for any successful trade show built around a thriving, stable company. All future Macworld Expos should be this appropriately boring.



Michael Coyle
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January 2000 | | Volume 03, Issue 08

Daria Sells Out, Buys Herself Back

Please bear with me as my column takes a darker form this month and breaks from my usual format. I have something very personal to tell.



I have a very dark secret to confess. So dark that I fear my Outlook Express inbox will be filled with all sorts of "hate" and "disbelief" mail very soon. You see, my beloved readers, I sold myself out to a sect of the "Evil Windoze Empire." Until yesterday (as of press time of course!), I was a [Circuit City](#) (henceforth referred to as Sellout City) PC saleswoman, and this is my story.

Let me start by giving you a little background about how I came to put eMachines systems into the homes of **uniformed American sheep**. In October, I moved to a new town along with my boyfriend Gabe, cats, and [web design business](#). Up until a day before signing the lease on our townhouse, our friend Dave had been planning to move in with us and we expected to be splitting the bills three ways. Suddenly it occurred to him that Northeastern Pennsylvania gets cold in the winter time, so he packed his car and ran back to sunny Florida. So here Gabe and I were, with a new apartment and 1/3 more expenses. Our design business was still in its early stages and we could barely depend on income from that endeavor to cover the cost of living and paying off the credit "**slave**" cards. I was trapped. I needed to get a part time job.

Survival

So I pulled out my resume and went to seek out tech jobs in the area. Silly me! Northeast PA has cows, rock quarries, and coal mines. It may as well be the polar opposite of San Jose, CA. I passed out a few resumes to the ISPs that I could find and prepared to go to Wal-Mart (probably the biggest employer in the region) and stock up on Ramen noodles. And then, I saw it - a Sellout City perched in a shiny new strip mall. I pulled into the parking lot with only the intention of seeing what Mac-compatible toys they had in stock. What happened next, I'm not really sure, but an hour later I walked out of Sellout City as a new employee. I'd never worked in retail before, but the manager promised me great wages and the joy I'd feel after fully qualifying customers and assisting them in their new computing purchases. I ignored the feeling of dread in my gut and told myself that a relatively responsibility-free job in retail would enable me to put my full efforts into developing my own business.

I should have taken it as a sign from God when I was forced to go take a drug test on my first day of work. As a Libertarian, I have to say that this was the most humiliating experience of my life up to this point. I don't understand how my urine composition has anything to do with selling computers, especially since monkeys on crack could perform acceptably at this job. The point here is that **I sold out my beliefs** and took their stupid test, feeling incredibly raped in the process. I hereby swear that I will never again submit to this invasive procedure. Not even for Steve Jobs. People like me, who sell out their beliefs in this fashion are the reason that the world is turning to the **nightmare** George Orwell described in 1984.



The Two Minutes Hate

After I got training out of the way, which included countless instructional videos on how to sell expensive service contracts to sheep, I stepped out onto the sales floor with all of the enthusiasm of the Apple Demo Days Representative I once was. At first it was tons of fun. Talking all day long about the Internet and computers. Not talking about these topics with customers, mind you, but with fellow employees. What you may not realize is the average PC customer has **no knowledge of computers whatsoever**, and is only reluctantly entering the Internet Age. Most have had horrid experiences with computers in the workplace, which is why those expensive extended service contracts are so easy to sell. Customers almost expect to buy a piece of crap.



For two months, I explained the differences between the AMD-K6 and Intel Pentium processors to people who trusted my knowledge and literally bought whatever I told them to. They thanked me wholeheartedly when I demonstrated the **ease of use that Windows98 offered to new computer users**. I introduced the AMD Athlon 700 as "the fastest chip available for a PC," all the while dreaming of my copy of MacAddict that

I hadn't had time to tear from its plastic packaging. I sold \$40 printer cables that were selling for only \$10 at the Sam's Club down the road. I even told customers that the machines on the floor were more powerful than the machines I had at home. What's frightening is that I was good at it. **I lied - I sold out - I can hardly stand to write this.**

Suffering

There was a price to pay for these lies. Customers would come in to the store, frustrated that they couldn't figure out how to make peripherals work properly after I promised that they would. Top of the line Hewlett Packard systems would "blue screen" in front of customers as I tried to change screen resolutions. DVDs would perform like Ford Festivas at a Grand Prix after I finished bragging about how great the technology was. Imagine me trying to make sense out of how a \$1300 Compaq didn't have any dedicated video RAM, but instead shared the system's main memory.

In defense of my position as a Sellout City computer saleswoman, I must declare that I sent at least 5 customers a week over to Sears ordering them to purchase iBooks and iMacs. **Sales goals be damned!** Despite my employment, I still had my **dignity** though it was fading daily. I held the last shreds of it together by encouraging any and all Mac use that I could. After all, Mac customers were the only people who came in the store with any idea about what they wanted and any real enthusiasm for computing.

Eventually, I started to lose my mind. My business was growing and Sellout City's extended holiday hours were cutting into the time I had to devote to my design projects. I swear to you that I would cry before going in to work. All I wanted was to share my enthusiasm and love of computing with the world around me, and here I was encouraging people to waste their money on products that could only bring them grief. The PC buyers weren't happy consumers. **They were suckered.** And right down the street at the local Sears sat the answers to their problems and the gateway to Internet happiness.

Salvation

Luckily, like a divine answer to my prayers, I received a phone call from one of the ISPs that I'd given my resume to back in October. They wanted me. It seems that a woman I spoke to at

Sellout City worked for this ISP and could sense my unhappiness with my position there. She went to her boss and asked him to dig out my resume. I was offered an amazing position doing web development, programming, and presentations. Better yet, I could work normal part time hours that would allow me to further develop my own web business and **keep up with Apple Wizards responsibilities**. Better yet, they gave me two computers on my first day of work - a PC and a PowerMac 6500/225 with 128MB of RAM! I gave Sellout City my two weeks notice that night and decided to buy my soul back. If I hadn't gotten that phone call I don't know how I would have made it through the holidays.

I feel as though I've just purged my soul to you. I have. Let this column be a lesson in following your heart and your beliefs. It's never worth it to sell out, no matter how much commission you earn on Extended Warranty Plans. As the most idealistic person I know, its hard to believe that I came to this, but I did. It is appropriate then, that my "(Fake) New Millennium's" resolution is to live true and re-earn my title as "Mac Goddess". Nonetheless, I'm back and re-devoted to the platform that has brought me happiness and a decent living. Thank you for listening.

Editor's Note: I once worked at a Sun retail store for one month. I sold computers. Luckily we had a few Macs to sell... I sold more Macs in one month than the entire store had sold in the previous year. Why? The salesmen didn't know how to sell them, and Apple didn't have contests or offer prizes to high sellers. I too felt like I had sold out and soon quit. Oh, and we called our extended warranties "cheese" amongst employees and "POM" to customers ("Protection Or Maintenance," I believe). Now Sun is out of business. Why? Circuit City.



Daria Aikens

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Welcome to Macintalk, my series of monthly interviews with people who make a difference in the Mac world and beyond.

This month I sat down with Tuncer Deniz, Editor-in-Chief of Inside Mac Games. Tuncer gives a little insight into Mac games, so read on. Then, visit the IMG website at <http://www.insidemacgames.com/>.

Please email me your ideas, comments, critiques, and suggestions for future interviews. I can always be reached at robert@applewizards.net.

Interview conducted: November 15, 1999



Robert Zimmermann: What can you tell us about your work at Inside Mac Games? What is it and how does its distribution work?

Tuncer Deniz: Inside Mac Games was started back in 1993. It actually started out as a floppy disk magazine. At the time no one was covering games for the Mac. This was back in the days when Apple didn't care much for games and magazines like MacUser and Macworld barely mentioned the topic.

Anyway, we started selling the monthly floppy disk subscription on AOL and soon subscriptions started to pour in. We used the money we got from subscriptions to advertise the magazine in game boxes and magazines.

But by 1995 we realized that floppies were on there way out (even before Steve Jobs pronounced them a dead medium) so we switched to a CD-ROM format. Well, after that the magazine really took off. We were getting hundreds of subscriptions every week.

IMG is now published on CD-ROM and the Web and continues to grow to this day.

RZ: You have a strong gaming background. Can you tell us about it?

TD: Gaming to me was just a hobby. My first Mac was a MacPlus and I remember playing games like Dark Castle, Airborne, and The Ancient Art of War back in college until the wee hours of the morning.

When I graduated from college I took a job at an advertising agency but I was soon laid off due to cut backs. It's a good thing I got laid off, because within a month I started IMG.

To be honest, when I first started IMG I didn't know much about gaming. But I quickly learned about the industry. I began to make contacts, do research, and started to meet with developers and publishers. And yes, I played a lot of games. I played every game I could get my hands on and studied all of them from top to bottom. My curiosity was so great that I even bought...a....oh God, please forgive me...a 386!

But by having both machines (Mac and PC) I could keep on top of things, on both platforms.

After a successful run with IMG from 1993 to 1996, I did the unthinkable; I left IMG, the magazine I started, and joined Bungie Software as their Production Manager. Why did I do this? Well, I felt I had more to learn. I wanted to see what it was like to work at a software company. I wanted to experience what it was like to create games. You could say my thirst for games lead to the job.

**I left IMG,
the magazine I started,
and joined Bungie Software.**

In any case, I worked on quite a few projects while at Bungie. I was Product Manager on Marathon Infinity, Weekend Warrior, Abuse, Marathon II for Windows, and Myth. I finished my tenure at Bungie by being the Project Lead on Myth II: Soulblighter. In early 1999, I came back to IMG.

Having been on both sides of the fence, I have a deep appreciation for what goes into making a game. It's a lot of hard work, lots of long hours, but lots of reward in the end.

It was fun while it lasted, but I'm glad to be back on the press side of things.

RZ: The sales of Macs are on a rise, but still companies are complaining about the market share and their lows. What do you think are the reasons for this?

TD: It's a simple matter of economics. Most game companies have limited resources and they tend to concentrate on markets that are most profitable (i.e. Windows and consoles). An "A" title will sell anywhere from 300,000 to a million copies on the PC.

Now, if you're lucky, you'll sell 50,000 or 75,000 copies of the same "A" title on the Mac. So, naturally, PC companies see this and complain that sales are too low.

Apple in recent years has done a pretty good job of promoting the Mac as a gaming platform. It has invested in bringing OpenGL to the Mac and does a decent job providing developer support to gaming companies.

So where does the problem lie? I've thought long and hard about this one and came up with some conclusions.

Take the iMac. It has been a phenomenal success, yet game companies I've talked to haven't seen an increase in their sales. The bottom line is that the original iMac was not a very good gaming machine. It was hampered thanks to its slow video and very little RAM. But it goes deeper than that. The iMac was marketed as an Internet machine, not a gaming machine.

While Apple did a good job of marketing the iMac, it didn't do anything to promote it as a machine you can play games on. The notion that "if you build it, games will come" just didn't work.

Apple needs to really push gaming. The new iMacs are great gaming machines. Let's see some ads with games in them! Let's see more games on Apple's web site! Let's see Apple woo more game developers! Let's see some action and less talk!

RZ: Some games hit the Mac market years after they were released for the PC, but the companies still expect them to be as popular as when they first came out. Do you think this will change and if so, what will the future probably look like for Mac gamers?

TD: A lot of game companies wait and see how their games do on the PC before committing to make a Mac version. But you're right, if a game comes out on the Mac a year or two after the PC version ships, it not only loses its cool factor, the game will not sell well (who wants to buy a year-old game with year-old technology?).

Shipping a game simultaneously on PC and Mac is not that difficult. For example, Myth I was built from the ground up to be cross platform. And look at Halo, Bungie's upcoming action game. Although it is being built entirely on PCs, they have one programmer doing the Mac version. And my guess is it'll ship simultaneously on both platforms.

**Shipping a game
simultaneous on PC and Mac
is not that difficult.**

Doing simultaneous releases is really a no-brainer. I mean, look at it from a cost perspective. By releasing the game on both PC and Mac, you save on box production, advertising, marketing, sales, everything.

More and more game companies are realizing this and overall the Mac gaming market looks relatively healthy, especially when you consider that two years ago there were barely any games for the Mac.

But there's still a long way to go. Like I said before, Apple needs to actively push games. And companies need to realize that they can't simply port games to the Mac and expect them to sell.

RZ: As far as I knew Halo and Oni are being developed using both Macs and PCs, something

really unimportant, but after Bungie showed the game the first time, some PC magazines tried to point out that the Mac is an "unimportant" platform. Do you think that people could dislike a game just because of the platform it was built on?

TD: I don't think so. If a game comes out for the Mac and it looks, feels, and runs well, then I don't think people have a lot of complaints about. If more games come out for the Mac, whether they were built on a PC or Mac, the better it'll be for the Mac platform.

RZ: But do you think games on a Mac are more consistent, because their programmers inherit the consistency from the Mac OS, thus they are better? (At least from their interface.)

TD: That's a tough one, but here's my take on it. Right now gaming is in a state of flux. Mac developers are slowly moving to OpenGL, now that RAVE is dead. There's also a lot of new hardware (new iMacs, G4's) and new OSes (MacOS 9) that developers have to deal with. The result: lots of buggy software.

It's great that Apple is introducing new Macs and OSes every few months, but it's certainly not helping as far as platform stability goes.

Another factor contributing to the virtual chaos is that PC developers are constantly updating their games. And if their game is on the Mac, then the Mac version has to be updated. For example, Descent 3 for the Mac just shipped, and just a few days ago the original PC developer updated Descent 3. Now they have to release a patch and will probably have to release a new demo, etc.

RZ: Why do people say that the Mac is not an adequate gaming platform and what in your opinion needs to be done to change this?

TD: Well, for a long time the Mac was not an adequate gaming platform. With the G3 and the G4, this began to change. In the past game publishers complained that the Mac was just too slow. But Macs are very speedy these days.

The inclusion of USB into Macs has also been a boon for game controllers like joysticks and game pads. There are dozens and dozens of these now available for the Mac, all thanks to USB.

The new G4's and new iMacs are terrific gaming machines. The G4 finally has AGP and the new iMacs have a decent video in the Rage 128.

**The new G4's and new iMacs
are terrific gaming machines.**

What does Apple need to do to make it an even better gaming machine? In addition to making their machines faster, Apple needs to woo hardware developers like nVidia and 3dfx into bringing their 3D cards to the Mac. Although ATI's cards are decent, nVidia's GeForce 256 and 3dfx's upcoming Napalm are the king of 3D cards. These cards need to come to the Mac.

Ed Note: 3dfx recently released news that their upcoming Voodoo4 and Voodoo5 technologies will have direct Mac support.

The Mac's biggest problem, or threat right now is DirectX, Microsoft's gaming APIs. Almost all new games on the PC are developed to use DirectX and porting games to the Mac that use DirectX are often difficult.

RZ: What in your opinion can be done to ease cross platform development of games?

TD: Technologies such as OpenGL are making cross platform development a lot easier. In the past developers had to write to Apple/ATI's 3D API RAVE and it wasn't very popular with companies porting games to the Mac. With OpenGL becoming a standard on both platforms, game companies can migrate their software to other platforms without too much trouble.

Apple has also revived GameSprockets, a set of API's developers can use to enable

controllers, sound, and networking.

As new technologies become available, Apple needs to adopt them as fast as possible. Gone are the days of proprietary software and hardware.

Apple also needs to encourage developers to develop cross platform games. That requires developer support and marketing. Apple, in my opinion, needs to invest in this area just as it does when it invests in companies such as Akamai, Samsung, etc...

RZ: As a gamer what project do you most eagerly await to become reality for the Mac?

TD: There are really a lot of outstanding games coming out for the Mac right now. Apsyr Media just shipped Madden NFL 2000 for the Mac and it looks fantastic. Other titles in the pipeline also look awesome. MacSoft has Unreal Tournament and Rainbow Six. Quake III should also be a big hit and Oni looks like it'll be a kick ass game when it comes out.

There are a ton of other games coming out soon. It should be a fantastic Christmas.

RZ: On the IMG site you tried to create a gMac, so what are the key features necessary to create a "gamer's machine"?

TD: We wanted to have a little fun so we came up with this idea for a gamer's iMac. We call it the gMac. It comes with a 17 inch monitor, a ZIF-socketed 450 MHz G4 processor, AGP, Voodoo 5, and a few bundled items like the Microsoft IntelliMouse Explorer (Because trying to play games with the hockey puck mouse is a joke), and a Gravis Joystick.

RZ: In the past months Apple has introduced the iBook, new iMacs, G4s and the MacOS 9. Which of these products do you consider the most innovative and why?

TD: From a gamer's perspective, the G4. In gaming almost nothing is more important than speed and the G4 is super fast. The G4 also features AGP which has been standard on PCs for almost two years.

I also like the new iMacs. They're wickedly fast, feature a Rage 128 card, USB and AGP. It's a perfect gaming machine.

RZ: I read Bungie Software might not attend the next Macworld Expo, because of this expo being overcharged. Do you know if this is true and how important do you think it is for a major game company to be present at an expo?

TD: I think Bungie (and other gaming companies) have caved in to IDG's demands. From what I've, IDG in the past gave gaming companies a bit of a price break on booth space. But I guess IDG now wants them to pay the full price. So, although Bungie is going to go to Macworld, it might cut other smaller game companies out.

Is it important for gaming companies to go to Macworld? Well, from a public relations perspective, yes. At Macworld companies get to meet press people, dealers, as well as customers. But most game companies end up losing money when they go to Macworld. So it's a toss up. Most of the bigger game companies can afford to go, but it's quite risky for smaller developers and companies.

RZ: What are your future plans, if you have any?

TD: Right now we're working on two Web-related projects. Unfortunately, I can't talk about them (the Mac community is very competitive).

IMG continues to grow at a phenomenal rate. This month we expect to go over one million page hits for November. And our subscriber base continues to grow.

All of us at IMG really love Mac gaming and we make it our mission to provide Mac gamers with the best in Mac gaming. And yes, there's definitely more to come!



I would like to thank Tuncer Deniz for the time he spent answering my questions, instead of playing the Unreal Tournament demo.

If there is someone in the Mac community that you are dying to learn more about, please let me know. I would love to hear your suggestions and your comments about my column.



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January 2000 | | Volume 03, Issue 08

Welcome to **A Spider Speaks**! Every month I try to pack this column full of useful tips, tricks, and tidbits. I'm done with my mini-AppleScript series, so this month I move on to new territory: the Internet. Specifically, we'll learn just what the Internet control panel's "File Map" does, and how you can use it to your benefit.

I'm always looking for some good ideas and constructive criticism, so send your comments my way at erik@applewizards.net. Operators are standing by.

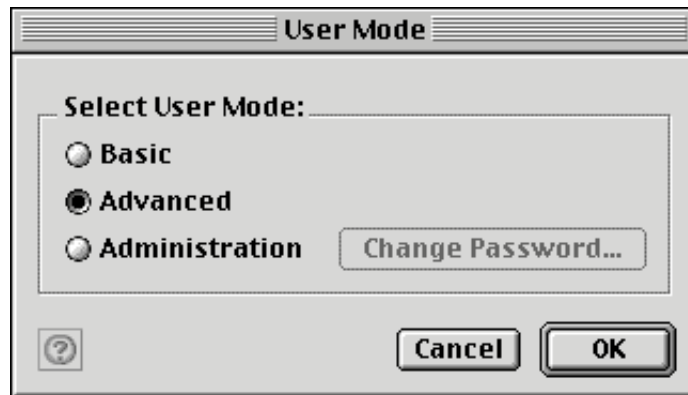


The Internet Is Your Friend



The Mac's Internet control panel, first seen in Mac OS 8, offers Mac users one-stop shopping for Internet preferences. With a few clicks you can change your default email address and your startup page, adjust the name of your POP or SMTP server, and specify a new default news client.

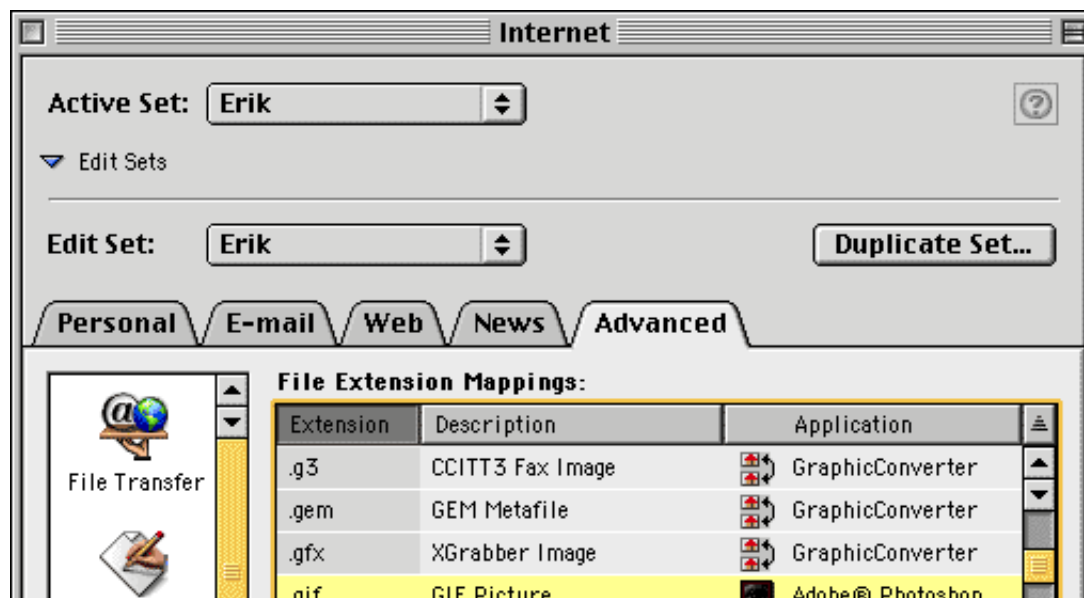
Though most users are only aware of four tabs: Personal, E-mail, Web, and News, a quasi-hidden fifth tab - named "Advanced" - is available. To make "Advanced" available to you, press command-U or choose "User Mode..." from the Internet control panel's Edit menu. Change the user mode to Advanced as seen below. Administration mode, which is also available, allows you to lock certain preferences and protects those settings with a password. Unless you are maintaining a computer for multiple users, "Advanced" mode will suffice.



The settings held within the Advanced section of the control panel are on a lower-level than those in the other four tabs. The Advanced section has many sub-sections, but this month we're going to only look at the "File Mapping" portion of the Advanced tab. Why? Well, quite simply, almost every file you download, be it via email, from your browser, with an FTP application, or otherwise, follows rules set forth in the Internet control panel's file map.

Because files downloaded via the Internet often don't have resource forks, the Mac OS doesn't necessarily know what to make of "blah.jpg" or "hmmm.txt" or "somewebpage.html." The Internet control panel's file map can help: blah.jpg is a JPEG file, hmmm.txt is a text file, and somewebpage.html is a text file containing HTML.

File maps are important - if you don't have a file type associated with the ".gif" extension and you download a GIF file, your Mac will likely leave the icon generic. It won't know what to do with the file until you open it with a graphics application. If ".gif" is in your file map, however, the Internet control panel can tell your Mac to open the file with Adobe Photoshop, as seen below.





Let's Muck with the Map

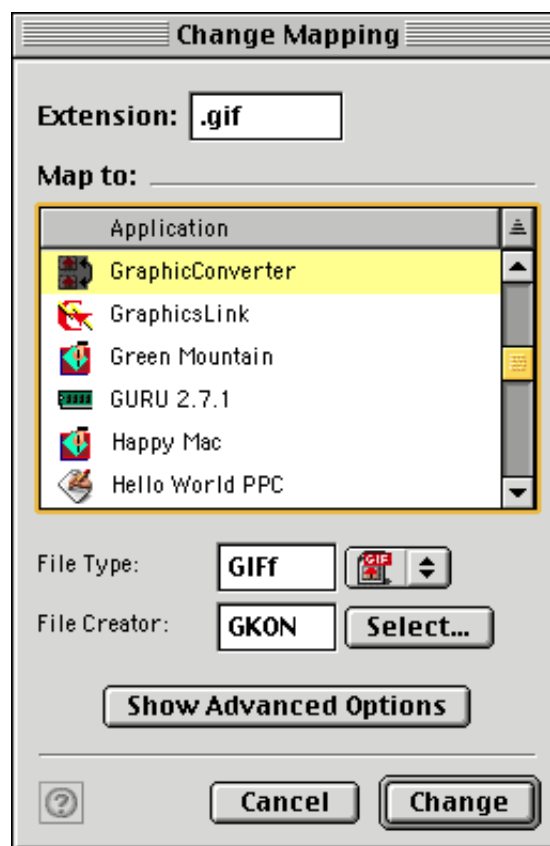
This is all well and good... if I want to open GIFs in Photoshop. But I don't... I would rather they open in [GraphicConverter](#), a \$35, multi-file-format graphics app that I recommend to almost everyone.

It turns out that I'm in luck - I can simply change the file map! Upon double-clicking the "GIF" line seen in the screenshot above (or pressing the "Change..." button), a window similar to the one at right appears.

The file map can be changed by simply selecting GraphicConverter from the list of applications and pressing the "Change" button. Piece of cake!

Of course, you could still run into problems. Make sure the "File Type:" contains the correct type. If it doesn't, choose what you believe is the correct type from the pop-up menu on the right. The "File Creator:" will automatically be filled in for you and usually need not be changed - it is just the application's creator code - GKON is for GraphicConverter.

The astute readers will of course wonder just what the "Show Advanced Options" button does. Well let's take a look, shall we?



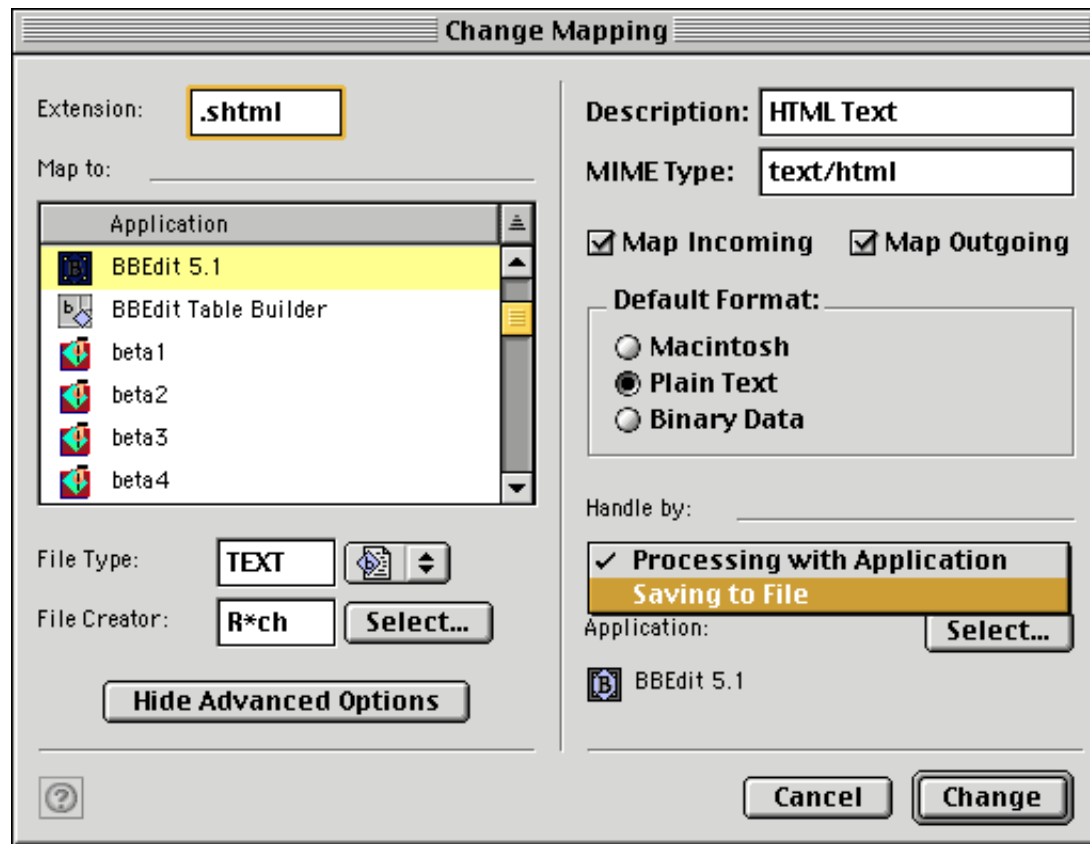
Map This!

The Apple Wizards website, uses a variety of files: JPEGs (.jpg), GIFs (.gif), Lasso files (.lasso - used by our database-driven [Mini-Reviews](#) website), and HTML files. However, our HTML files are not appended with the typical ".html" extension. Instead, we use ".shtml" files (for various reasons).

The Internet control panel, by default, does not have a listing for ".shtml." To add .shtml to your Internet control panel, click the "Add..." button in the main File Mapping window.

Type ".shtml" into the "Extension:" text box and choose BBEdit (or your HTML editor of choice). The File Type should be "TEXT" and the File Creator should be that of your chosen application.

Because we're adding a new file to the database, it's a good idea to specify a complete set of information. Click the "Show Advanced Options" button. Fill out the information as seen in the image below. Read on to find out what each of these options represent.



The "Description" area appears in the main File Mapping window. Describe the file you're adding here. In this case, ".shtml" is a file containing HTML, so I say just that. The MIME Type is a bit trickier. When in doubt, leave this blank. In this case, I was able to get the MIME type by looking at the MIME type for ".html" files - ".shtml" and ".html" files are both HTML text files, so the MIME types are the same. The MIME type for a GIF file is "image/gif" - they're typically fairly straightforward.

To select the proper radio button in the "Default Format:" section, use a little common sense. A text file - .shtml in this case - should be "Plain Text." Mac-only files are typically "Macintosh" and executable files - programs, extensions, and so on, are "Binary." Odds are you won't have to muck around with the Default Format too much, but if a file type is giving you trouble, look to solve the problem here before going anywhere else.

The last step presents you with a choice: do you save the file or "post-process" it? If you choose the "Processing with Application" option, the chosen application will launch and open the file after it's downloaded. This can be useful in certain circumstances, but I typically choose the second option: "Saving to File." This will result in no action being taken upon downloading a file - it will just sit there with the correct icon and file type, patiently waiting for you to use it whenever you'd like.



I'm a picky guy. My JPEG and GIF files **must** belong to GraphicConverter (creator code: GKON), but my PICT files must be members of the SimpleText (ttxt) clan. My .lasso and .shtml files must be BBEdit-able. Sometimes, however, I'll get a JPEG or a GIF (or even a PICT) file which has "8BIM" (Adobe Photoshop) as its creator code. I don't like this! After all, I don't want to open a huge app like Photoshop just to look at a picture!



It is for this reason that I employ Fix Type. A Contextual Menu Module (CMM) [available here](#), Fix Type, performs an amazingly simple task: it changes a file's creator and type into the one specified in your Internet control panel's File Map. If you've set GraphicConverter to be your GIF viewer, any file ending in ".gif" will be changed to open in GraphicConverter.

Fix Type is one of the most useful CMMs I own, and it's free! You can easily and quickly batch-process hundreds of wrongfully assigned (or generic) files in a flash. If you haven't grabbed a copy of Fix Type, what are you waiting for? You may also want to check out one of the other CMMs available at that site - Add Suffix. It will add file suffixes (.xxx) according to the file's type.



Don't Just Surf the Net

If you spend much time at all on the Internet, familiarize yourself with the Internet control panel. Download files without worrying about generic icons! Batch-process files with the Fix Type contextual menu module. Life can be good.

Your Mac has a lot of power: the power to control the Internet. Well, the files you'll find out there, anyway! Don't just surf the Net - take control of it.

What do you want to see in A Spider Speaks next month? [Email me](#)! Cya in February!



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January 2000 || Volume 03, Issue 08

When is a "Corona" Better Than "Crown Royal?"

How many aged gen x-er's and millennium babies have really ever touched anything besides a computer? Would they really know how their ancestors typed on "Corona" typewriters? Would they know the feel, looks, and sounds of passionate artistic "written" expression on a "Royal Elite"?

And how many of us remember dialing our young sweethearts using a dial?

I don't know of a word that's supplanted "dialing," but I know that we "enter data" and teach "keyboarding" skills to students. However, when was the last time you "keyboarded" or "entered" a poem - or for that matter a progress report on that overdue project to your boss?

This month, I aim to take us back to a time when things were simpler, when hitting a carriage return meant just that - watching a mechanical device return from right to left - not just generating an "invisible."

Bless us with a Mini-Review of one of your favorite "oldies." Surf to <http://mini-reviews.applewizards.net/> and download the handy-dandy Mini-Review kit. Then make contact with our editor about doing the review. Simply use the form on the website and you're good to go.



It Sounds Like That?



TappyType

TappyType (v2.0.1, Apr/95, 116k) gives you the sound of typing just like "the Olden Days." The sound is a lot like a Selectric typewriter. If you do a lot of word processing you'll never want to be without it. TappyType is "GumbyWare." The author, Colin Klipsh, asks that if you use the program and like it, you should "...show your support by wearing a handkerchief around your head, clenching your fists, and shouting 'WOOOH' at interesting bits of cement." Users in urban areas might want to wear a colorful, but neutral headband. I can't find a website devoted to TappyType, but you can get the latest version at: <http://amsterdam.park.org:8888/Guests/Trace/pavilion/>.



I'm Not Your Type!



TTConverter

Do you need to convert those .TTF (Windows) fonts to something usable for the rest of us? One application does it all! Using Chris Reed's TTConverter 1.5 (v1.5, Jul/93, 50k), just drag that .TTF over the application and poof: a TrueType font. You can find a lot of fonts for free on the Web, and the \$10 TTConverter will ensure that you have equal access to almost all of them. This application also doesn't seem to have a website devoted to it, but can be downloaded at [this page](#).



Smooth Stuff!



SmoothType

SmoothType (v.2.1.1, Sep/99, 101k) is a \$5 control panel written by Greg Landweber that smoothes (anti-aliases) all font sizes on your Mac, and I do mean **all** sizes. The Appearance control panel only smoothes fonts 9 points or higher. SmoothType gives you better control - and better results - than Mac OS 8 or 9. Download a copy and find out <http://www.kaleidoscope.net/greg/smoothtype.html>.



So ends another edition of 'Warehouse. Remember, "Keep Typing." And email your suggestions to me at the address below.



Dan Linneman

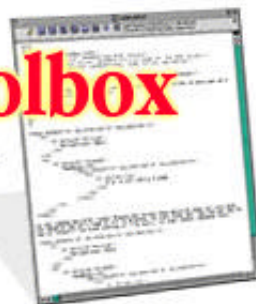
dan@applewizards.net



HTML Toolbox

Bring out the Webmaster
IN YOU!

Rudi Muiznieks
rudi@applewizards.net



Form Your Hypothesis

This month I'm going to move away from JavaScript to cover some more basic Web design. This month's topic deals with something that you will come across quite frequently while surfing the Web. Large companies and individuals with personal homepages both use them. They can add functionality to your site and be pleasing to the eye. In this article, I will discuss... forms.

Forms can be used for a bunch of things. They can act as the interface for a search or can facilitate ordering products online. You've all seen a "shopping cart" right? Forms can provide a means for your viewers to provide you with feedback. I will focus, however, on the latter of these utilities since the first two require linking the forms to CGI scripts, a much larger topic on which I may get into in future articles.

The type of form I will discuss here will simply allow people to send you information from your website. A user fills out information in the form and submits it directly to your email address. This form will have no special requirements, save that the viewer must be using a 3.x or later version of their Web browser.



Forms, and the Code Fragments Who Love Them

To create a form, insert this line:

```
<FORM METHOD="POST" ACTION="mailto:your-email-address">
```

That tag has three parts. The first part (**FORM**) tells the user's browser that the HTML that follows belongs to this form. The **METHOD** attribute tells the browser how this form will be sent. The two possible values for this attribute are **POST** and **GET**. This form uses **POST**. **GET** is used more often when the form is linked to a CGI script. The third part of the tag is the attribute **ACTION**. That tells the browser where this form will be sent to. In this case, it is your email address (be sure to enter it after the `mailto:` with no spaces).

After you've told the browser how to handle the form, you've got to put in form "elements." Elements are the controls and fields that users can fill, select, click, and so on. In this example, it'll be some sort of "feedback" which will be sent to you.



Input Elements For A Better Tomorrow

What elements are there? Don't worry! There are several different types of input elements. Let's go through each one.

Text Inputs

To make a text input, try this out:

```
<INPUT TYPE="text" NAME="Text1" VALUE="Default" SIZE="30" MAXLENGTH="30">
```

The above code would create an input field that looks like this:

As you can see, there are a few different attributes given to the **INPUT** tag. Here is what they all mean:

TYPE is the type of input. In this case it is text input.

NAME is the name of the input. This is used to distinguish each input from others of the same type.

VALUE is the default value that the input will have.

SIZE is how big the input is. In this case, it's the number of characters.

MAXLENGTH is the maximum number of characters the user can enter in this field.

Password Input

The password input is similar to text input, only it hides the characters entered into the text box. You create one like this:

```
<INPUT TYPE="password" NAME="Password" VALUE="Default" SIZE="30" MAXLENGTH="30">
```

Which will make an input that works like this:

Checkboxes

Checkboxes give you a method for users to select predetermined options in your form. You create them like this:

```
<INPUT TYPE="checkbox" NAME="Check" CHECKED>Option 1<BR>
<INPUT TYPE="checkbox" NAME="Check">Option 2
```

Which will make a control that looks like this:

☒ Option 1
☐ Option 2

In this tag, only include the **CHECKED** attribute if you want the checkbox to be checked by default. If you don't include it, the box will be unchecked.

Radio Buttons

Radio buttons give the user the ability to select one of a set of predetermined options. You create them like this:

```
<INPUT TYPE="radio" NAME="Radio" CHECKED>Option 1<BR>
<INPUT TYPE="radio" NAME="Radio">Option 2
```

Which will make a control that looks like this:

☒ Option 1
☐ Option 2

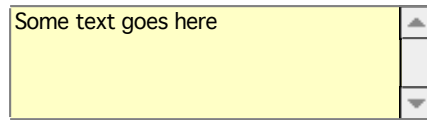
The **CHECKED** attribute works the same way with this tag as it does in the checkbox example. If you want to make several radio buttons that work together, as we did with the two above, give them all the same **NAME**.

Text Area

If you want to give the user a text input field that is not limited to one line, then you need to use a text area. These are created like this:

```
<TEXTAREA NAME="Textarea" ROWS="4" COLS="30"> Some text goes here </TEXTAREA>
```

Which looks like this:



As you can guess, it's quite easy to set the number of rows and columns. Whether you want the field to contain default text or not (whatever you put after the **TEXTAREA** tag will be treated as default text in the field) you need to include the **</TEXTAREA>** tag to close it off. If you forget, a mess will result.

Select Inputs

This type of input presents the user with a pull-down menu of options. It's easy to make these menus a multiple-select input by including the attribute **MULTIPLE** in the **SELECT** tag, in which case the user can select more than one of the options. You make a select input like this:

```
<SELECT NAME="Select">
<OPTION VALUE="Option 1" SELECTED>Option 1</OPTION>
<OPTION VALUE="Option 2">Option 2</OPTION>
</SELECT>
```

Which will look like this:



As you can see, two different tags are involved with this element. **SELECT**, which creates the menu, and **OPTION** which is required for every item you wish to appear in the list. The **SELECTED** attribute determines which **OPTIONS** are initially selected.

Submit and Reset Buttons

These controls are pretty much "standard issue." The reset button is created by this code:

```
<INPUT TYPE="reset" VALUE="Reset Button">
```

The reset's **VALUE** attribute is the text displayed on the button. Reset buttons set all inputs in the form to their default values. The submit button is created with this HTML: **<INPUT TYPE="submit" VALUE="Submit Button">**

Submit sends the user's answers to the email address in the **FORM**'s **ACTION** attribute. The submit button is not necessary when dealing with forms that only have one **TEXT** input item, because the user can just press enter while the cursor is in the field to submit. The buttons look like this in a form:



Close It Up

Like with most (or all?) HTML tags, you've got to tell the browser that the form has ended. To do that, simply lay down a **</FORM>** tag. You can have several different forms on a page, each sending different data to different email addresses or CGI scripts.



Title 4

When people submit the form, it will compile all of their input into an email and send it to the address specified in the form's **ACTION** attribute. The information will usually appear like this in a text file attached to the email:

Name=Rudi+Muiznieks&Email=rudi%40applewizards.net&Comments=You+kick+butt%21

Wait a sec! That's crap! What's going on here? The browser replaces special ASCII characters (the @ symbol for example) with their character value equivalents (%40 in the case of @). There are applications out there with which you can "fix" that info, but even in this state it is still fairly readable. Another way to make the form send nicer looking data is to link it up to a CGI script that beautifies the information and then emails it, but that is beyond the scope of this article.

Of course, there's a bit more to forms than I have presented here. I skipped a few input types - they aren't really useful unless you are using a CGI - and there are some attributes that I didn't bother mentioning - they aren't common and aren't supported by all browsers. If you're interested in learning more about forms and their potential power, I urge you to look up other tutorials out there on the Web.



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Not Necessarily The News

The first cup of coffee apparently hadn't quite kicked in. I brought the bottom of my T-shirt up to my eyes and rubbed a few times thinking that perhaps a bit of sleep was distorting my vision. Nope, still there.

I was staring at a report claiming that the U.S. Army had moved its "Websites" from Microsoft's Windows NT (tm) operating systems to Mac OS (tm) servers running WebSTAR (tm) server software. No need for caffeine now! No doubt exciting in a generic sense to many, it would have great tangible meaning to me. This would be the end of Ol' Blue - that irritating piece of NT 4 scrap iron that sits all too close to my work desk. Ol' Blue seems to snicker at me every time I walk past. It persistently forces Microsoft Outlook to ask me if I want to work offline, the server being "unavailable" and all. Just the right medicine to get the day started off right. As I walk past on my way home in the afternoons, it seems to grin smugly.



'Ol Blue

Ol' Blue was mute evidence that every single erg of energy I'd expended in the last 5 years to inject some sanity into the way computer equipment was selected had been a total failure - a monument to my impotency. If Army Web servers were going Mac, this moody contrivance would be replaced by something sporting that wonderful Macintosh smiley face. Ahhh, life would be good. Suddenly the urge for a cigarette swept over me.

During my campaign, I'd become quite intimate with all the rationale used to justify the Army's slow, but sure, sellout to Microsoft. It has been a sellout of such King Kong proportions. I have been continually forced into uncontrollable, teary-eyed belly laughs pondering the ridiculous image of the Department of Justice prosecuting Microsoft for monopolistic practices while the Department of Defense was feverishly trying to declare unconditional surrender.

I recall a year or so ago when I reviewed the Army's documents describing their requirements for a "Common Operating Environment." Anything was OK as long as it involved "Win32 APIs." For those of you not that deeply mired in the technical aspects of computing, that translates to Windows 32-bit application program interfaces, i.e. Windows. Anything else was an exception for some requirement way out of the mainstream or for loads that Windows NT couldn't hump. If Microsoft wouldn't do the job, then you might get a waiver. Common Operating Environment indeed. To paraphrase a wise man, the only thing wrong with the common operating environment is that it's so damn common.

I was painfully aware that hacking into the Army's home page wasn't going to derail the express train to a WinArmy. All aboard!



I Attempt Damage Control

I knew that most people seeing that report would think that the Army was changing its "Web servers" to the Mac OS - all its Web servers. That's what that statement says. It didn't say the Army changed "one," "a," "some," "a few," etc. It said that the Army changed or was changing its "Web servers." I visualized tens, if not hundreds of thousands of aficionados, swept up in the throes of victory, announcing to the world that the Army had replaced its Web servers (just as the report said) with Macs - and looking like 4-star blithering idiots. Oh great. Just what we needed. What a PR coup for every Win-mesmerized drone who viewed Mac users as "a couple short of a 6-pack."

So I fired up a note to the author of the report (who shall go nameless) to let him know that this migration involved 1 computer. I knew that no change of server software had come up in any of the meetings I've been involved in - and I should have heard something if this was an accurate report.

I thought of my friend Bob, a Mac fan that must watch while his company replaces offices of G3s with NT machines. Nobody reported on the grinning baboons as they ignominiously hauled off machines that were at least three or four times better than the ones by which they were replaced.

I considered the notice we got the other day informing us that mail services for the Macs were being terminated because it was "too expensive."

I remembered the Macs I used to have at work. They're now donated to some operation, somewhere.

I pondered these things when the gentleman wrote me back, telling me that this one computer was indeed important enough to report on. Uh huh.



So, What do I Care?

By and large I don't care if all the news sites out there misrepresent the news on an hourly basis. If it's good enough for CNN and the New York Times, why shouldn't it be good enough for Mac news websites? Except that this could quite easily make the entire Mac community look like a bunch of deranged bozos. I knew they were wrong and felt a weird obligation to get them the truth. Well, that and I hate being lumped in with a bunch of deranged bozos.

So of course, just like clockwork, the "news" swept through the spectrum of Mac news sites. My favorite news site reported that "Army Web servers" had gone Mac. I pointed out to them that it was misleading and please, please realize that this meant absolutely nothing in the Army's grand scheme to go Windows. For my efforts I netted a terse response.

Next, a site that deals in "Definitive PowerBook News" dove in way over their heads. Unless, of course, they thought that Army servers were PowerBooks. I sent them a note asking them to please not read too much into this. One computer meant absolutely nothing. Don't be misleading, I pleaded.

No reply - not that I expected one. Why let reality intrude on a really good piece of wishful thinking? Perhaps you might write about the U.S. Army issued PowerBooks I no longer have?

Next I saw these pearls of wisdom:

Now, this is just too cool. Much of the military has long been under a pro-Windows mandate spearheaded by a particular Brigadier General according to rumor. The result has been dead in the water warships, and that means more than one, problems in Kosovo that resulted in all Windows operated weapons systems being pulled OUT of the theater of war and replaced by Unix operated weapon systems, and all manner of other problems. Why? Win NT is unstable and will not stand up to repeated hammering. Mind you, much of this battle has been between Windows and Unix, but Mac systems also took a hit during the last few years. If the Army's use of the Mac OS and WebSTAR holds up under pressure, and you *know* that the Army's Website will now become a target of pimple faced, Mac hating hackers around the world now, then this could be a big boost for Apple and the Mac.

In the meanwhile, congratulations to StarNine for scoring one of the biggest marketing coups in the history of the Platform Wars for both their own product and the Mac!

What inspired reporting! What this "observation" says to anyone actually in the know is that the writer simply doesn't have a clue. Not one. For starters, the notion that a Brigadier General (1-star) could dictate the Army's computer policy is laughable.

The Army does have a DISC4 (Director of Information Systems for Command, Control,

Communications, and Computers), which is a Lieutenant General (3-star) billet. This man does have considerable impact on the Army's computer policies. The current director, who also carries the title of CIO (Chief Information Officer - not "Corporate"), is [LTG \(Lieutenant General\) William H. Campbell](#). This, like all billets, has a new person rotate in every three years or so. The charge to a WinArmy has been going on longer than LTG Campbell has resided in that billet.

The notion that any Army General's mandate would "result" in "dead in the water warships..." is unadulterated fantasy. If the Army attempted to dictate anything to the Navy, it's very probable that 3 or 4 aircraft carriers would turn into the wind and launch devastating attacks on, oh, say... Ft. Bragg and Ft. Stewart. Always looking for the bright side, this would make future Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) decisions a less complex proposition.

Despite realizing the futility of the effort, I sent these folks a note too. I was kind enough not to mention that their really groovy cool lingo wasn't a substitute for actual journalism. Nevertheless, no response. I ought to blackmail them by threatening to reveal their identity. Heh, heh.

I sent out other notes, but my heart wasn't really in it any more.

When I did get in to the office that morning, I pounced on Scott, Ol' Blue's handler, and inquired if he'd heard anything about replacing the NT servers with Macs. He looked at me like my dogs do sometimes. You know the look. They cock their head from side to side as though you might make perfect sense if they could only pin down the correct angle. I suspect he couldn't figure out if I was just agitating or whether I'd finally done the inevitable and plunged over the brink. He hadn't heard a word about anything relating to Mac OS servers. Nothing at all. Forward, march.



Army Server Software-A Separate Reality

For those who aren't involved one way or another in the Department of Defense's business, it may come as a surprise that the Army has many, many Web servers. I doubt anyone even knows the true number. There are probably only a handful of people in the entire world that even know where all the Army installations are - let alone all the Web servers. Our installation alone is home to a number of Web servers.

The Web server for the [Lead Army Materiel Command Integration Support Office](#) (where I work) is located at <http://www.laiso.redstone.army.mil/>. Please feel free to visit [Netcraft](#), plug in our URL, and see for yourself what operating system and Web server software we use. You'll note that it says "www.laiso.redstone.army.mil is running Microsoft-IIS/3.0 on NT4 or Windows 98". For the record it is actually NT 4.

I've taken a reading of server software and operating systems on some other major Army Websites. Perhaps you'll find Netcraft's description of them interesting:

- [Army Material Command](#), which has overall responsibility for research, development, acquisition and sustainment of all Army systems, from rifles and computers to M-1 main battle tanks and PATRIOT missiles, "Lotus-Domino/Release on Solaris." So they haven't yet fallen to NT. Give them time.
- [Redstone Arsenal, Alabama](#), home of the U.S. Army Aviation and Missile Command, "Netscape-Enterprise 2.01 on HP-UX." Obviously NT 4 couldn't haul the freight for that one. Or perhaps some patriot was standing armed guard over it.
- [Ft. Monmouth, N.J.](#), home of the U.S. Army Communication and Electronics Command, "Apache/1.3.6 (Unix) on Solaris." SUN's still holding out there.

- [Army's Program Executive Office for Standard Army Management Information System \(PEO STAMIS\)](#), "Apache/1.3.6 (Unix) on Solaris." I include this one because this PEO contains many of the Army's Program Management offices that procure and are responsible for life cycle management of - ta da - computers. No Mac OS here either.
- [Army's Corpus Christi Army Depot](#), (responsible for maintenance of helicopters, supporting all U.S. services and foreign customers,) "Microsoft-IIS/4.0 on NT 4 or Windows 98." Oops, another one bites the dust.
- [Army's Letterkenny Army Depot](#), (responsible for maintenance and support of missile systems, supporting all U.S. services and foreign customers,) "HTTPS/0.991 on NT4 or Windows 98." Another one Borged.
- [U.S. Army's Recruiting Center](#), "Netscape-Enterprise 4.0 on Digital Unix." They've probably slipped by unnoticed.
- [U.S. Army Soldier and Biological Chemical Command](#), "Netscape-Enterprise/3.5.1 on IRIX."
- [U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Huntsville Engineering and Support Center](#), "Microsoft-IIS/4.0 on Solaris." Even SUN's been forced to use Microsoft server software? Yikes!
- [U.S. Army Tank Automotive Command](#), "Netscape-FastTrack/2.01 on Solaris." Hmmm. I'm surprised they haven't fallen since all those tanks are busy guarding that G4.

Despite the diversity here, three things are blatantly obvious:

1. These are **all** Army Websites.
2. There is **no** Mac OS entry in this list.
3. There is **no** WebSTAR Web server software entry in this list.

The **only** Army Website I found using the Mac OS is the [Army's home page](#) at <http://www.army.mil/>. One. Un. Uno. Une. Eine.



J'Accuse

This whole affair does not speak well of Macintosh news sites as a group. How could they take one or two sentences from here or there and construct an entire reality around it? Having some knowledge of the subject, I could detect how far off they were. How far off are they on topics of which I have no knowledge? How would I know? How could I know? Are the rest of their stories **this far** removed from reality?

I recall that during the Watergate days, the Managing Editor of The Washington Post required independent validation of "facts" by a second source before they'd put it in print. With the Internet, apparently if you can link to anything remotely resembling what you want to say, heck, that's plenty good enough. Who'll know? Who'll catch us? Ha, ha, ha! Click, click, click.

At least the Mac rumors sites label themselves as such. But the sites reporting the Army about-face were billing themselves as news sites and offering us what was at best misguided, wishful thinking. At worst, well... Now, I was seriously depressed.



There's Gotta be a Bright Side Here Somewhere

On the other hand, there were a few bright spots. MacWeek's report on the subject adhered to honest-to-goodness journalistic standards. In [a September 23, 1999 article](#), Wendy J. Mattson reported, "The U.S. Army's recent switch to a Mac OS server instead of Windows NT..." You'll note that she said "a" and "server." Singular as opposed to plural.

The entire article is interesting and I highly recommend it to you. To those at the majority of the Mac "news" sites, I recommend it as an example of authentic journalism. It is possible to write about Macintosh subjects and practice journalist standards.

Some other sites, for one reason or another, dodged the entire issue. They should be applauded for putting prudence before "Web-bites."



Some Subjects Needing Coverage

If any of these industrious young Jimmy Olsons want something to report on, consider an investigative report on any of these **real** Army/computer topics:

- Investigate the life-cycle cost studies that the Army has prepared comparing Macintosh computers to other platforms. Invoke the Freedom of Information Act. Invest in companies that manufacture paper shredders.
- Write about Army information technology directors who make trips to Mecca, err, that is Redmond, for probing, indoctrination, and release. See how many of these subsequently recommended that DOD just couldn't go on without Microsoft and are protesting against a breakup of that company. Determine, if you can, which other operating system manufacturers they've visited. Listen as various of these Siphonophora break down in racking sobs at the thought of investigations. Be sure and discuss life in federal penitentiaries for added effect. Mention that their new girlfriend will likely be named "Bubba" or "Tyrone."
- Write about government information technology managers who go on to work for Microsoft after retiring. Listen for heavy Microsoft payoffs to Congressional election campaigns. But first, buy a pair of [Doberman Pinschers](#), practice marksmanship, and get a really good security system. Watch carefully for unmarked, black [Chevy Suburbans](#) cruising your neighborhood.
- Look into the Department of Defense's concept to withdraw entirely from the world wide Web, with the exception of the PR home page Website, creating their own secure network. Listen to outright howls of delight from the IT professionals who think they got one over on everyone because they didn't have to do their job - just suck down \$90K+ per year for letting Microsoft tell them what new software they need.



Every Story Tells a Story, Don't It?

The coverage this one insignificant computer garnered does tell a story - just not the one many thought they were telling. What it says is that these folks are not following even the most fundamental rules of journalism. They are writing about the way they want things to be - not the way they are. Perhaps they'll enroll in a Journalism 101 course and try to nail

down some of these concepts.

Look, no one wants this to be true more than I do, but let's deal with reality. Leave the fiction to Hollywood.



A Modest Proposal

In the meantime, to help us sort out fact from frivolous fancy, I propose that we ask offending Macintosh news sites to submit to a voluntary rating system. The ratings would be applied to articles by an independent board of professionals. I'd recommend these ratings:

FS - Fer' Sher'

MA - Maybe Accurate

R - Rumors

WT - Wishful Thinking

IBSOT - Induced By Shots Of Tequila

ROPMAD - Reporter Out of Prescription Mood Altering Drugs

RONMAD - Reporter On Non-prescription Mood Altering Drugs

MOBD - Manufactured Only to Beat Deadline

MOOR - Manufactured Only to One-up Rival

NCATBLTCICDIJ - Not a Clue About Topic But Linked To Cause I Could,
Damn I'm a Journalist!

Back at the ranch, 'Ol Blue still winks at me as I enter and exit the office. I'm afraid he's settled in for a long visit. I noticed Scott seems not to have been chomped on by the undead at our Microsoft seminar. I guess I won't be needing this wooden stake and hand sledge. Let's see. Hand sledge, stake, 'Ol Blue. Hmm...

Be afraid, 'Ol Blue. Be very afraid.



Craig Cox

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January 2000 || Volume 03, Issue 08

Welcome to the latest edition of **Medicine Man**. I am your virtual on-call MacDoctor. To ask a question - sorry, I don't make house calls - visit the [quickie web form](#) and ask your question! The page is open 24 hours a day, 8 days a week. This won't hurt a bit, I promise!



Alas, Alas, Alas! #1

I have a huge monitor and would like to make use of it as a TV too. Any ideas?

Soothing Vapor #1

You are in luck! A year ago, there were only one or two "TV tuners" (devices that let you watch TV on a computer monitor) available for the Mac. Now there is a much more ample selection. On the inexpensive end, you can get ixTV FM (\$99). This PCI card will allow you to watch TV and listen to FM radio on your PCI Power Mac. Formac's ProTV PCI card also costs \$99 and offers similar features minus the FM capabilities.



If you want a full-featured graphics and multimedia experience, go for ATI's Xclaim VR 128. This versatile PCI card offers 3D and 2D acceleration, video-out, video-in, a TV tuner, and more.

However, with all cards, there is one problem. All of the preceding solutions are PCI cards, which means that they are not compatible with iMacs. So what is the TV-loving iMac owner to do? Formac and Eskape Labs to the rescue! Formac's \$159 iProRaidTV (only compatible with Rev. A and B iMacs), offers both SCSI and TV capabilities. Eskape Labs' myTV and MyTV/FM (compatible with all iMacs and USB Macs and seen at right) cost \$180 and \$209 respectively, connect via the USB interface, and pack basic TV and FM (MyTV/FM only) features. All of the above TV tuners work well... so consider each one's features and make your purchase. You'll be able to watch your favorite sit-coms while you surf the web.



Woe is me! #2

I am going to buy an iMac. A lot of my programs are on floppies and I have an Astra 1200s scanner. My scanner is relatively new so I would like to keep it. What is the minimum hardware I will have to purchase to ensure that I can still use my scanner?

Store-Brand Aspirin #2

Although the new iMacs sport USB, Firewire, and DVD, they still lack some of the connectivity features that Macs have included for years. These features include SCSI, serial ports, and floppy drives. To access the devices that you have, all you will need to add is SCSI (for the scanner) and a floppy drive (for your floppy disks).



The best way to gain access to SCSI devices from the iMac is to use a USB to SCSI adapter. The iSCSI from Ariston, the USB-to-SCSI adapter from Belkin, and the SCUS Bee from Second Wave are three such adapters. Be warned, however, the reliability of USB to SCSI adapters has been questioned and support for SCSI devices is limited.

A quick plug here. Apple Wizards maintains a big list of [Mini-Reviews](#), and one of those Mini-Reviews is of the uscsi. Click [here](#) to read it. Daria gave it a bronze medal (the lowest rating), so perhaps it's worth a read.

The floppy drive problem is a much easier one to fix. Many vendors, including VST, Ariston, Newer Technology, and Imation offer fully functional USB floppy drives. Seeing as they all work about as well as each other, pick whichever you think looks best! That is why you want an iMac anyway, isn't it :-)



ZOOKS! I Say a Pox on My Caps Lock Key!

I would like to switch the functionality of the control and caps lock keys on my keyboard. Is this possible?

Never Fear, Medicine Man is Here! #3

As far as I know, there is no way to switch the functionality of the two keys without resorting to ResEdit, which I won't cover in this column for a few reasons... If the problem is that you are hitting the caps lock key by accident, you can use KeySwapper from [John V. Holder Software](#). It will allow you to disable the caps lock key and map several key's functions to other keys. Remember, if you decide to keep the software, you gotta pay the \$5 registration fee!




Medicine Man's Prescriptions

Here are the most important software updates of the past month. Let me remind you that keeping your software up-to-date is one of the most important elements to maintaining a stable Mac. Without further ado:

Stuffit Expander 5.5



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

 Anytime Aladdin updates Stuffit Expander, download it immediately, period. The program is so necessary to using your Mac that any updates Aladdin can provide will be useful.

Apple USB Adapter Card Support 1.3.5



<http://asu.info.apple.com/swupdates.nsf/artnum/n11543>

If you own a PCI or CardBus USB card, this update will fix bugs and offer enhancements in using USB peripherals with your Mac.

IomegaWare 2.1




<ftp://ftp.iomega.com/pub/english/maciom21en.hqx>

An update to Iomega's drivers for Macs. It also includes some pretty cool backup and recording software.

Apple OpenGL 1.1.2



<http://asu.info.apple.com/swupdates.nsf/artnum/n11545>

 If you play newer 3D games on your Mac, download this... NOW! With Apple heading in the direction of more and more OpenGL, you have to stay on top of the new versions.

Brent Hecht

brent@applewizards.net



Part of a Shameless Get-Rich-Quick Scheme by Ron Freeman and Special Guest, Gail Huss (Ron's Mom)

This Month's Theme: Being Paid to Use the Internet!

Lately, my mom has gotten into a bunch of different Web programs that pay you to look at advertising. They force a viewbar onto the bottom of the screen while you're on the Internet and it advertises all sorts of different things that you can buy over the 'net. The thing is: they're all pyramid schemes... She'll dial up and get paid, say, 50 cents an hour for all the time she's online, but she could refer me and get, say, 20 cents for every hour that I'm on. Now you may be saying, "Aren't pyramid schemes usually scams?" and I'd say that they usually are, but all these Web programs are supported by a multitude of reputable companies with more money than brains, so I guess it works.

For your benefit (and selfishly ours) I have listed several sites that can hook you up with such money making opportunities, along with me or my mother's references so you can help us make money if you join. I will refrain from making my typical social commentary this month and simply present you with the URLs, if only because I don't have enough facts to make an opinion just yet... but you might! Check 'em out.

Have you got a good topic? Email me at ron@applewizards.net. I want to hear from you!



AllAdvantage.com

referral address: <http://www.alladvantage.com/go.asp?refid=cul865>

This is the system that my mom uses. It works well and has a goal of each member making at least \$1000 a year. Frankly, I'd sure like an extra grand per year... that would enable me to buy more CDs. The main problem with Alladvantage.com is that the Mac version is not ready yet, so it's almost pointless to tell you about it. The small point, however, is that Alladvantage is currently looking for people to beta test the Macintosh version. If you would like to be involved, stop by and sign up.

Prizewindow.com

referral address: <http://www.prizewindow.com/index.asp?11207>

Desktophorizon.com

referral address: <http://www.desktophorizon.com/index.html?referrer=gailete>

Spedia.net

referral address: http://www.spedia.net/cgi-bin/tz.cgi?run=show_svc&fl=88vid=25051

Epinions.com

referral address: <http://www.epinions.com/welcome.html?member=chicklet42>

I thought it would be really neat if I could somehow make a living reviewing musical albums on the Internet, and if I couldn't make a living maybe I could at least make back what I paid for the CDs I bought. Well, Epinions.com is my chance to do so. It's a site full of reviews on every type of product imaginable. Participants will be paid in accordance with how many people read your reviews. As of right now, I probably can't make fifteen dollars off of one review, but I can make a few bucks, and who couldn't use a few bucks.

What we've learned today: Ron is perfectly willing to abuse his position at Apple Wizards to

make more money.

Stupid Trivia Time!

What was the name of The Godfather's father?

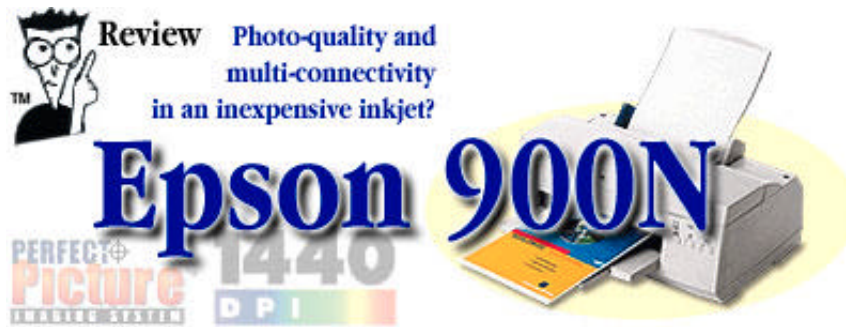
The prize will be an old Christmas card, a signed self-portrait of me (or Rubber Guy), and the winner's name in Apple Wizards.

If you have been enraged or spiritually touched by this column, email me at ron@applewizards.net



Ron Freeman

ron@applewizards.net



Review by Erik J. Barzeski

January 2000 || Volume 03, Issue 08



4.0 stars - 1 Star Poor, 5 Stars Excellent



Title: Epson Printer

Version: Stylus Color 900N

Manufacturer: Epson

Price: \$599 for 900N; \$399 for 900

Contact Info: <http://www.epson.com/prINTER/inkjet/sty900n/>

Genre: Hardware (inkjet printer)

System Requirements: Mac OS 7.5.1 or later, some form of connectivity (USB, ethernet, serial; also supports parallel)



Five Miles Uphill Both Ways Through Ten Feet of Snow

You kids have it so great nowadays with these fancy-dancy printers. I remember the old days before **color**! We had to print with a bunch of dots on an ImageWriter. Hi-tech for us was my StyleWriter II! It'd print a full-color page in the time it took me to walk to school every day - five miles, uphill both ways, through ten feet of snow, kiddie. Yes sir, we had it tough in our day!

The Epson 900N is one of a new breed of inkjets - the breed that approaches the quality of higher-end color laser printers, while still offering speed and affordability. With an amazing 1440 x 720 dpi, virtually unparalleled connectivity (no pun intended), and a price point near \$500, this printer is a good choice for higher-end users and small office networks.

But why?



Love at First Sight?

Not quite. After unpacking the printer and flipping through the manual, I came to a startling revelation. Despite the 900N's multiple connectivity (USB, serial, parallel, ethernet), it comes with cables for **none** of these. Yes, I know that printers don't ever come with cables anymore... but for \$600, you'd think Epson might include a \$30 worth of cables, right? The funny little man needs a moment.

The various connections are all housed in the back, as you can see at right. The Epson Stylus Color 900 is the exact same printer as the 900N, but it lacks the network card (hence the lack of the "N" as well). This picture clearly shows the 900N's connectivity. From left to right, across the bottom, you can see a USB



port, a parallel port, and a Mac serial port. Above that, the network card provides 10/100Base-T ethernet connectivity. The ethernet card has a power input to the right, but it's not necessary - the card works fine without an external power source. Also seen in this shot is the fairly large fan - don't put the back of this printer against a wall.

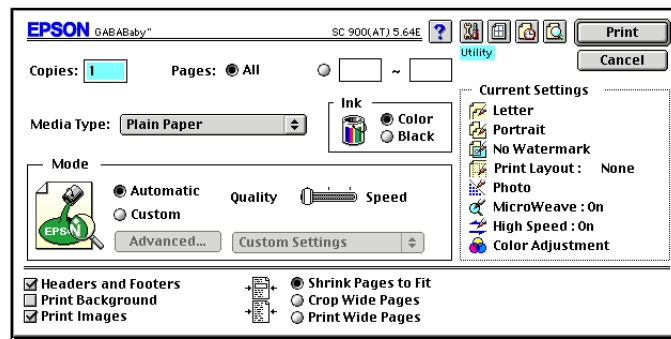
The toughest decision you may have to make is "how do I connect my printer?" Because all recent Macs are equipped with both USB and ethernet ports, either is a logical choice. If you have a network, I'd recommend using it. Otherwise, settle for the plain old 900 (sans ethernet card) model. Even if you don't want to share the printer, or if you only plan to share it occasionally, the network method of connectivity provides a number of benefits: you don't have to disconnect your printer to move your computer (especially important for laptop users), iBook users can print from anywhere within the LAN (think: Airport and wireless networking), your printer can be miles (well, almost) away from your desk, and so on.

I'm happy to report, also, that any form of connectivity works quite well. We tested each of the four on various machines (even PCs), and everything worked as it should. What more is there to say - it's plug and play (after you install the drivers, of course!).



Repeat After Me: Software Is Important

Luckily, then, Epson gets it right. Former staff member Aaron Linville hated Hewlett Packard's printer drivers, and he was quite fond of telling his friends - and Hewlett Packard - how badly they sucked. At the top of his list, though, were Epson drivers. And with good reason - they're among the best to be found.



As seen above, the actual print dialog box (taken here from Internet Explorer) is pretty standard. However, hidden beneath the buttons in the top-right corner and behind the "Custom" radio button (which allows access to the "Advanced..." button) are a wealth of options and features.

The tools in the upper-right corner are, in order, Help, Utility, Layout, Background Printing, and Preview mode. Help does just that, Layout allows you "fit to page," choose the page order, and so on - all very standard. Background Printing allows you to schedule a print time. Preview flips into preview mode.

The best tool is, hands down, the Utility menu. This is where the "goodies" are stored: you can check ink levels, check and clean the nozzles and head, and align the print heads. A "Configuration" button in the Utilities menu lets you specify the location of print spools and set preferences relating to error notification. Very nice.

Regrettably, however, the Epson 900N does not integrate with Desktop Printing. This means you'll get no icon on your desktop. It's becoming more common for printers not to do this, and that's a bummer. Is "Desktop Printing" as we knew it dead?

The network software, unfortunately, is lacking. It's pretty weak, in other words. The interface is bland (it looks almost as bare as a text console) and slow. It "works" but in the same vein as Windows "works." It needs an overhaul. Luckily, once your printer is set up on the network, you really won't need to use it much. The printer itself can serve web pages and it's easiest to change settings via the forms on the mini-website it serves up.



Gots To Have the Quality

Joey Blairwood always said "I gots the quality." So does the Epson 900N. Long gone are the days of dot matrix printers and grainy inkjet prints. Today, inkjets and laser printers dominate the scene. And dominate they do - with "real" resolutions of over 600 x 600. The Epson Stylus Color 900N pushes out a whopping 1440 x 720. The once-lowly inkjet line is approaching quality nearing that of photographs. Actually, with special paper, the Epson 900N is there already.

We've come to see that we can't



actually offer you a sample of the print quality (aside from the pictures below). It's just not possible to accurately reproduce a paper printout on the Internet - either by scanning or digital photography. Quality would be lost somewhere! That having been said, do take a gander at the picture below (the one of Shania Twain). The original JPEG file was 144 x 144 dpi, and the image was printed at that quality. Most of the artifacts and coloration seen are due to the subsequent compressing of the JPEG image for use in this web page, but it still presents a fairly accurate model. In real life, the printout is spectacular - and not just because it's of Shania Twain.

The Epson 900N nails quality smack dab on the head. With a teeny tiny 3 picoliter inklet drop size and high resolution, images are crisp and clear. Though it isn't a six-color printer, colors themselves match very closely with those seen on-screen. Flesh tones are among the best I've seen, and shadows and highlights are not overly dark or washed out. Text is crisp, clear, and dark. No gradients are visible, and examination even with a magnifying glass confirms the high resolution: individual "dots" are all but impossible to find.

In short, unless you're doing absolutely top-of-the-line printing, the Epson Stylus Color 900N will serve your needs well. Whether you're printing photos for a family album or a report on Mark Twain, this printer will get you there in style.



Here He Comes, Here Comes Speed Racer

Speed is important. In everything. Who cares if your processor can do a gigaflop if it takes you thirty minutes to print out a term paper?

We ran the Epson 900N through a series of tests using a variety of images at various resolutions, color modes (RGB, CMYK, etc.), sizes, and so on. We ran three other printers through those same tests - not as a direct comparison, but as a relative basis for comparison. Nobody in their right mind would think the StyleWriter 2500 to be of a similar quality to the Epson 900N (for color prints anyway), but many have a pretty good idea of how fast it can print.



The other models chosen were a [Hewlett Packard DeskJet 970c](#) and a [Lexmark OptraColor 45](#). The HP costs \$399 (no network features) and the Lexmark costs \$749 with a network option. All prints were done at the same resolution and all other variables were kept constant between each print, including print quality (draft vs. final, etc.). All times are in seconds and are an average of ten runs for each image (anywhere from 5-8 different images were tried).

Click on Shania's picture for a larger version (in a new window).

Printer Name	Time (sec.)	Bar Graph
Black and White Text - 15 pages		
Apple StyleWriter 2500	121	████████████████████
Lexmark OptraColor 45	114	██████████████████
HP DeskJet 970c	78	██████████
Epson Stylus 900N	76	██████████

B&W and Color Text - 15 pages		
Apple StyleWriter 2500	187	████████████████████████████████
Lexmark OptraColor 45	193	████████████████████████████████
HP DeskJet 970c	92	██████████
Epson Stylus 900N	91	██████████

Quarter-Page Greyscale Image *		
Apple StyleWriter 2500	113	████████████████████
Lexmark OptraColor 45	104	██████████████████
HP DeskJet 970c	18	██
Epson Stylus 900N	21	██

Full Page Color *		
Apple StyleWriter 2500	forever	██
Lexmark OptraColor 45	241	██
HP DeskJet 970c	107	████████████████████
Epson Stylus 900N	132	██

* various resolutions and images were used



Cost Cost Cost

A lot goes into purchasing a printer - a major factor being that of cost. However, too many users look at initial cost alone, and do not factor in lifelong cost. For example, if a user were to purchase a non-network capable printer, how much might it cost them to replace that printer in the future if he wanted to integrate with a network? How much does ink cost - per "refill" and per page? How long will the ink last?

The Epson 900N is an outstanding purchase in terms of cost. Epson's ink management has long been among the best - putting enough ink on the page to yield high-quality prints but conserving ink well enough to let cartridges last quite awhile.



I can't tell you how many pages you can get per ink tank. We haven't run out of ink yet! And believe me, we printed a **lot** of stuff. Just look at the tests above. The Lexmark went through four ink tanks, the StyleWriter went through three, and the HP went through almost two. The Epson still has about 1/10 of its ink remaining. At under \$30 for black ink and \$40 for color ink, the refills are a bit expensive... but if they last this long, you won't be trekking to Staples too often.

At \$200, the network card is reasonably priced. People who don't have a network now should settle for the \$399 Stylus Color 900 and consider the network card for a later purchase.



That's All She Printed

The Epson 900N is a solid printer. It prints fast, high-quality images that look great (especially on good paper). It can connect via USB, serial, ethernet, or parallel and offers good software drivers. It doesn't support desktop printing and its network software could use a little work. Overall, it's a great printer at a fairly reasonable price. Home users may want to look at the 900 model (sans "N"), unless they've got a home network into which they'd like to integrate the printer, and style-conscious owners might want to look into the 900G, which comes in candy-flavored plastics. The entire 900 series is great for any semi-professional work, including the printing of Shania Twain pictures to decorate the office. :)



Erik J. Barzeski
erik@applewizards.net





4.0 stars - 1 Star Poor, 5 Stars Excellent



Product: Graphire Tablet

Version: USB

Manufacturer: Wacom

Price: \$99.95

Contact Info: <http://www.wacom.com/>

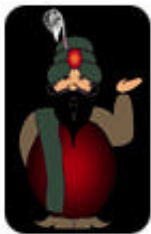
Genre: Cordless, Batteryless Pen and Mouse Set

System Requirements: iMac with Mac OS 8.5 or later or PowerMac with Mac OS 8.0 or later, USB port.



Input Different

A little over a year ago (Nov/98), I was lucky enough to review a \$289 graphics tablet/cordless mouse and pen combo called the Calcomp Creation Station. That tablet has an ADB interface and a 6x9 inch surface area. I was only moderately satisfied with that product for various reasons, and gave it 3.5 stars. I later realized that I should have given it an even lower rating. Eventually, I bought a Griffin iMate ADB to USB adapter so that I could use that tablet with my iMac. The ensuing performance was terrible. The cursor would jump erratically across the iMac screen and the mouse was 100% useless as the buttons refused to work. To top it all off, the tablet would often crash the whole machine, often in the middle of very important graphic design projects, and would have been especially terrible if I wasn't in the practice of saving 10 minutes. When I heard that Wacom was introducing a new USB tablet/pen/mouse package, I immediately started begging for an evaluation unit.



To my delight, Wacom obliged my request and I am able to share my experience with this new unit with you. For only \$99, USB-enabled Mac owners (I mean Macs with USB ports, not Mac owners with USB ports - though that is an amusing thought!) can enjoy an entry-level graphics tablet with a 4x5 inch surface area, a pressure sensitive two-button pen, and an accompanying three-button scrolling cordless/ball-less mouse (I wonder if it was the run of the litter!). Let me assure you that the Wacom tablet is about 150% better than last year's Calcomp model. I spent three months writing this review, so the 4.0 rating is one that was very much earned. During that three months, I made the cute little swami you see at left. That's not clip art, friends! I made him myself with this product. My brother drew the outline, I traced him in with Graphire, and used Adobe Illustrator 8 to fill him in and bring him to life. I simply could not have done it without Wacom.

Graphire also comes complete with Painter Classic v1.02, an advanced drawing and paint program (which I won't be reviewing here) that takes advantage of all of the tablet's capabilities. Of course, Wacom's tablet software is included to allow complete customization of Graphire's behavior. Graphire works great with all of your Mac's software and especially with graphics programs like Adobe Photoshop, Illustrator, ImageReady, and the like. You can even use it in the Finder or with games!



Hardware Analysis

The Tablet

The actual Graphire tablet has a footprint that's quite a bit larger than 4x5 inches, due to a two-inch border around the drawing area, sectioned off by a thin white border. If it wasn't for the white border, it would be impossible to tell which part of the tablet surface is active and useable and which part



is "dead," since the different areas look and feel the same. One of my few gripes stems from this design aspect - when I'm using the cordless mouse, I'll occasionally inadvertently move the mouse out of the active area and not be able to control the cursor on my screen until I lift the mouse and relocate it to the proper area. After a while, however, I got a feel for my "mousing area" and had less problems.



Laying atop the Graphire's surface is a thin sheet of plastic under which you can place items for tracing. If you don't consider yourself an "artiste," then I highly recommend this technique as a way to "create" somewhat "original" artwork without actually having to draw!

At the top-center of the device Wacom included a pen holder, reminiscent of the ink wells of days past, where the user can store their Graphire pen when they are using the cordless mouse. It looks cute, but if you use a computer desk with a keyboard drawer (where you'd put your mousing surface), then you won't be able to store the pen in the "ink well" without knocking the pen out of place every time you close the drawer. A better and more convenient pen holder would have allowed users to horizontally snap the pen into place along the top of the tablet. However, this is a very, very minor complaint, since not everyone is going to have the same computer setup that I do.

The Pen

Wacom threw a very well-made pen into this product bundle. It is contoured like an expensive Cross pen, and weighted so that drawing with it feels natural. The two customizable buttons, which are combined into one rocker-switch type of widget, are placed at near the location where my thumb grips the pen, making it easy to access the functionality offered by the buttons. Essentially, I can control the pen without changing the position of my hand. To top it all off, the blue knob on the top of the pen functions as an eraser in Painter Classic and other graphics programs (Adobe Photoshop, ImageReady, etc.) that support the included Eraser plugin. Of course, the entire Mac OS can easily be navigated by the Graphire pen.

The Mouse

Unlike the pen, the Graphire mouse is lighter than its traditional equivalent, though it functions as a completely viable replacement for the "hockey pucks" that Apple has been distributing with recent USB enabled Macs. In addition to a right and left mouse buttons, it boasts a rubber, texturized scrolling wheel that doubles as a third button. This scrolling wheel is compatible with Internet browsers, the Finder, and most recent Mac software. The only application in my collection that does not react when I operate the blue wheel is BBEdit 5.x.

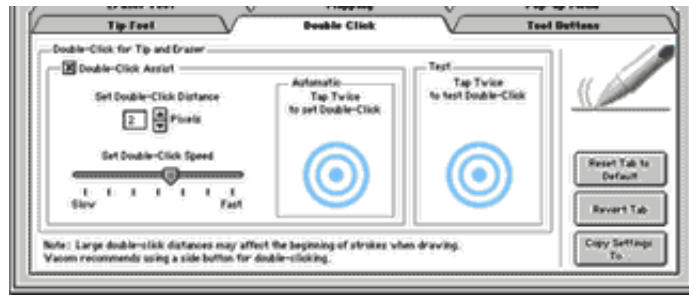
An ergonomic shape makes the mouse comfortable to use, though I did have to place a gel support under my wrist to accommodate my RSI (repetitive stress injuries caused by my dedication to y'all). No mouse ball means that I always experience smooth mouse movement, regardless of how long it's been since cleaning the device. I'd feel comfortable letting a child use this product without fear of its destruction.



Customization Mania

Almost as if a millennium resolution had been answered early, Wacom provides tablet customization software with so many options that even Steve Jobs could be satisfied.





The tabs you see in the driver screenshot above let you define preferences for the pen and mouse that can either be set as universal behaviors or as behaviors that are specific to different applications. Everything is intuitive, though the user can even choose to mess around with more advanced settings if the "newbie friendly" controls are too basic for them.

I know you're all just dying to hear exactly what controls Wacom includes, so let me fill you in on the most important ones:

Tip Feel and Eraser Feel

The "Tip Feel" and "Eraser Feel" tabs allows the user to modify the responsiveness of the Graphire surface as it relates to the pressure being applied by either end of the pen. A slider lets you move between "soft" (which requires a feather's touch for the pen to activate the cursor) and "firm" (which requires much more pressure from the pen). There is also a "test" area within the tab where you can try out your new settings before closing the control panel. Advanced users can set the "Tip Feel" and "Eraser Feel" through a control widget that allows the user to move click force and responsiveness along an "x" and "y" axis.

Tool Buttons

As would be expected, there is a tab which controls the actions of the buttons on the cordless mouse and pen. Any of the Graphire buttons (or scrollwheel) can be set to Click, Double-Click, Control-Click, activate a special pop-up menu, macro, or keystroke, and so on. If you can dream it, you can make it happen.

Fingerwheel

This little tab delivers options for the behavior of the scroll wheel on the cordless mouse. Users can choose how far up or down the page will scroll when moving the wheel. Unfortunately, the scrolling action is a little jumpy when you actually put it in use - not at all smooth like the action on a Microsoft scrolling device.

Pop-Up Menu

Remember that pop-up menu I mentioned in the "Tool Buttons" section? Well, this is where you get to define the items that will be included in that pop-up menu!" Different menus can be defined for the pen and mouse, and both keystrokes or macros can be added to menus.

Mapping

This panel is very important and I had to do a lot of struggling with it when I was trying to trace in the swami I showed you earlier. Basically, you've got a 4x5 inch tablet and a monitor that's at least 15 inches, right? Well, by default the tablet is mapped so that the 4x5 inch tablet corresponds to that 15 - 21 inch monitor. Not a problem when you are just trying to surf around your desktop and the Internet. Now imagine trying to trace in a swami that your brother drew. The original drawing is about 4 inches high. When I started tracing in the "said" swami, he starts to appear as large as the monitor on my iMac. Not the desired effect! Especially when the drawing area in my copy of Illustrator doesn't cover the whole screen of the iMac. What I really want here, is the item on the monitor to appear 1:1 with the drawing that I am tracing in. Therefore, I needed to use the mapping option to define the area of the screen that I wanted the tablet to "map" to when I am drawing in Illustrator. You can also map the area of the tablet that you want to be active. Figuring this out wasn't as intuitive as it could have been, but eventually I got the settings to match what I wanted. The desired behavior may have been easier to define in Calcomp's software, but at least the end results work correctly with Wacom's Graphire!



Fulfilled Promises

The title for this section refers to more than just Wacom's ability to release a damn good USB tablet. Wacom has also fulfilled a promise that Apple made around the time when USB was first announced. We were told that the world would soon be filled with hundreds of Mac-compatible USB goodies, all at an affordable price. It's the "affordable" part that most companies just don't seem to get. In the retail peripheral market, consumers are still charged a premium for USB versions of most items when compared to their parallel port/serial port equivalents. Wacom, however, has taken a step towards a world of cheap (yet first-rate) USB computer toys with this \$99 tablet.

With the exception of professionals requiring higher levels of pressure sensitivity, this is the item to purchase. If you are still using the Apple "hockey puck" mouse, look at it this way - you are killing two birds with one stone. You get a better mouse, and you get to moonlight as a weekend Picasso. There's something here for everyone in your family to love.



Daria Aikens

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Review by Marc Messer

January 2000 | | Volume 03, Issue 08



4 stars - 1 Star Poor, 5 Stars Excellent



Title: Tanaka

Version: 1.0.3

Publisher: Pacific Media WorX International

Price: \$24.95

Contact Info: <http://www.pacmedia.com/>

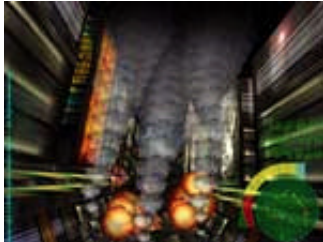
Genre: 3D Racing Game

ESRB Rating: None

System Requirements: Mac OS 7.5, 4x CD-ROM, 16 MB RAM, 40 MB free hard disk space, 150 MHz PowerPC



Welcome to the Future... Now Get Out There and Race!



In the year 2525, the city of Tanaka serves one great purpose - as the site of spectacularly fast and violent races. [Tanaka](#) by [Pacific Media WorX](#) employs you with one task... utilize your skills as a racing pilot to win the contest and reap the rewards. Some races will be simple enough - finish first and you win. Others may require a little more effort and will test your ability to drive and whether you can shoot to kill. As you complete each race, you will take your prize money and prepare your vehicle for the next race. It's all up to you. Can you adapt? If so, get in there and

destroy someone.

Note: Click all screenshots for a larger version of the picture.



Gameplay

Tanaka is designed like most other racing games. You configure your vehicle, deciding where to spend your precious credits... on weapons, shields, a new engine, or a new vehicle altogether. Once you have your racer configured, you move on to the race. In Tanaka, there are three basic types of races - "Race Against the Clock," a duel to see who will finish first, "Total Carnage," where the objective is to be the only one standing at the end, and an "Escort Mission," where you must defend another ship from destruction. As you finish each race, you'll receive more credits for further outfitting your craft and hopefully gain an edge over the others.



Tanaka is a little bit racer, a little bit strategy, and a whole lot of carnage... depending on the type of race, of course. When I first started racing, my personal strategy was to get to the end as fast as possible... something that I had learned from every racing game from Pole Position to Gran Turismo. However, after a few crash-and-burns, I learned that you really have to modify your strategy in Tanaka. In a race where the objective is to be the last one standing, I had to force myself to stay back, away from the pack and take advantage of my weapons inventory and other racers' mistakes in order to finish at all. Remember, it's always tougher to shoot backwards. But if you must, there's a special weapon for that too. Plan wisely when in the shop.

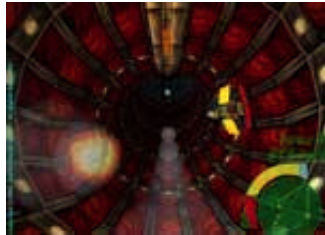
Aside from the standard series of races, there is also a customized option that lets you configure your race down to the last detail: number of laps, race type, number of opponents, track style, and other track features (like bombs and bonuses). There are a great number of options and they keep the game interesting.

There are a few more differences in Tanaka over your basic future racer. The makers of this game did a great job of thinking in all directions, including up and down. As you can see in the next screenshot below in the Controls section, you can easily find yourself cruising through a tube turning practically any direction and not giving much of a clue as to what obstacle you're about to hit head on if you don't swerve. In fact, the tubes force you to adopt one of the most interesting strategies of all - thinking on the fly. Since each track is randomly generated as you start the race, you must depend on instincts or a quick eye to get an idea of

what's ahead by looking at the on screen map. This kills that theory of just playing the same level over and over again until you have the whole thing memorized, doesn't it?



Controls

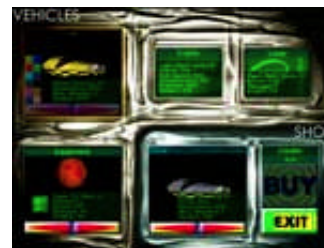


Tanaka's default controls are full-keyboard, using the arrow keys to control steering and acceleration/deceleration. The shift and option keys control weapons and N and M scroll through weapons. F1 - F3 control the camera (viewpoint) and the other F-keys control music and graphics. I was unable to test Tanaka with a game controller, although Tanaka supports controllers. I'm sure this improves the experience dramatically. However, even with just the arrow keys, I didn't have a hard time controlling the racer (well, when I did, it was just because I was really bad at steering). And I had to, because I didn't have any luck using my Kensington Orbit (trackball) to steer. The game recognized the fact that I had the Orbit plugged in, but that was it.



Graphics and Sound

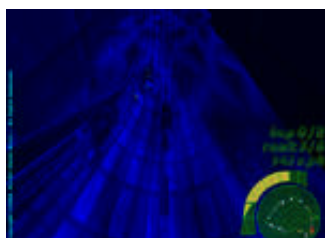
Tanaka is an attractively-designed 3D game. The graphics are smooth and flow well, even on machines without the best graphics system. On my test system, a Power Mac 6500/300 with a Rage IIc graphics card, I was able to race fluidly in 640 x 480. Although that isn't impressive by today's standards, users with G3s and G4s are reporting great results at much higher resolutions. Unfortunately, it seems that Tanaka doesn't take advantage of 3dfx technology... bummer. Fortunately, the game looked great without it (especially in the tight turns where things come at you really fast).



Tanaka's audio environment is impressive. With full stereo effects and blended music, you feel the pressure of the race and get into the concept of a future society. The music is varied although it maintains a constant hard techno feel, and the sound effects often do more to help than visual cues. A soft female voice provides audio information throughout the race, keeping you up on what bonuses you've picked up and whether you got that last fuel refill. Overall, I found the music great and wish that they offered Tanaka on CD with audio tracks (more on that later).



Miscellaneous



Tanaka is designed for networking up to 8 racers together. Unfortunately, I was unable to determine if there was a minimum network speed necessary, since the game doesn't come with much documentation - no manual whatsoever. Therefore, I am also unable to rate the manual. There is a readme file which is one of the most informative readme files I've ever seen, but a few pages of text pales in comparison to a booklet - dead tree or electronic - with pictures and in depth descriptions of the game.

A little bit of info about Tanaka which is just cool: the vehicles are "smart" in that they

observe the laws of physics fairly true to form - for a floating vehicle. As you stock up your weapons, you will experience an increase in drag and weight on the craft. And as you use up those weapons during the race, your vehicle will get lighter and faster... neat. This also means that if you buy two missiles, you only have two missiles. No more weapons regeneration crap, except for with the laser (but that makes sense).

Unfortunately, Tanaka isn't available at a store near you or even mail order from the company. Pacific Media WorX is only releasing it as a purchase and download option. While I applaud the manufacturers because they want to keep the cost down for the gamers and they aren't making a million gigantic cardboard boxes for the shelves, it's still a 26 MB download. I would think that it wouldn't be too difficult for Pacific Media to offer a mail order CD at only a slightly higher price, still keeping the cost down and giving the customer another option. Some of us, still stuck with modems, might not be willing to go through such a long download... and I still want the soundtrack CD option to listen to while I'm writing reviews.



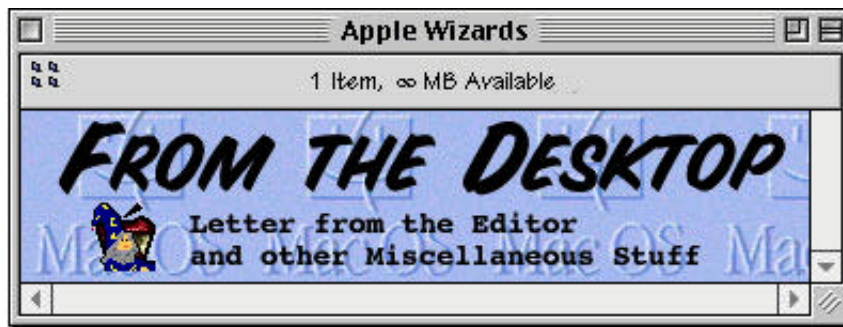
Conclusion

From the moment I started playing [Tanaka](#), I could tell that [Pacific Media WorX](#) put a lot of effort into creating a quality game. This is great, since I've noticed a few crappy "lets get it out on the shelves to catch the iMac rush" titles sneaking their way out in the last year. This is the first Pacific Media game that I've ever played and I will have no reservations about checking out any other game that they release for the Mac - in much the same way I felt about Bungie after my first taste of Marathon. For all of its qualities, and addition of some unique ideas to a standard racing concept, Tanaka has earned itself 4 stars. The developers have placed a link to the demo at one their [Tanaka specs page](#). I don't think I need to tell you to check it out. If Pacific Media WorX calls me tomorrow offering me the game on CD with the aforementioned soundtrack, I'd even be willing to kick it up to 4.5 stars. Oh yea, and a manual too.



Marc Messer

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January 2000 || Volume 03, Issue 08

Advertising Pays the Bills

I hate the overly-saccharine "editorials" I see in other magazines. Cough, MacAddict, ahem, cough. My goal is to communicate with my readers - and that's what I'm doing. Like it? Hate it? [Let me know](#). This past month, I've received more than a few emails from people complaining about the "excessive advertising" on the Apple Wizards site, as one reader put it. I was somewhat surprised - after all, we've only got two ads - far less than most other sites.

I too dislike ads. This is why I've strictly limited the number of ads - one banner and one text - on the Apple Wizards site to two. **Two!** I'd do away with advertising in every form if it weren't for one little sticking point: **advertising pays the bills**. Without advertising, in other words, there would be no Apple Wizards. You wouldn't have the pleasure of reading what we think is one of the best Mac sites around.

I would say "ignore the ads and just read the site if you don't like them," but we don't want you to ignore the ads! We don't allow just anyone to advertise - only reputable companies. For example, Other World Computing has been advertising with us for over two years. In my own dealings with them, they've been very professional, and I've rarely heard bad things about them. So, it's in your benefit to see what deals our advertisers have got for you. After all, they're some of the best around.

Advertising can also play into a reader's impression of a website in other ways. For example: ads affect loading speed. More images = slower page loads. We've got strict requirements on how large an ad can be - 12k or less. Other sites may have smaller requirements for their "square" ads - 6k or so - but may also try to cram six or more of those 6k images onto their site. That's 36k you've got to download that isn't part of the actual content! Eek! Gads!

There are other reasons why Apple Wizards has only one banner ad and one text ad. Basically, however, it's enough to pay the bills without interfering with the content. We hope that you agree. Could you live without ads? Yeah. But Apple Wizards can't.



Erik J. Barzeski
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January 2000 | | Volume 03, Issue 08

Thank you for taking the time to read Apple Wizards, **Volume 3, Issue 08**. We sincerely hope that you enjoyed it. Each month, Apple Wizards is published online and is created with BBEdit and some other tools. We use Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) to maintain a "print-like" look.

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Staff



Editor in Chief / Webmaster

Erik J. Barzeski
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I am an avid Cherry Coke drinker. I get too busy. When I'm not burning CDs, working on Apple Wizards, writing reviews for MacAddict, or otherwise using my G3, I'm usually playing some sport or another or designing a website for someone. I've been an Apple fan since I first played Oregon Trail on my family's Apple IIe. Too bad little Billy Gates always died by the time we got to Blue Ridge Run...

I enjoy working on Apple Wizards because I have a serious distaste for free time and society in general. <GRIN>



PR / Business Director

Daria Aikens
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I am a 22-year-old graduate of the University of Florida who is sick and tired of the inconsistency of the Gator Football program. But hey, at least I'm not a Seminole! When I'm not webmastering in front of my iMac or fighting over the Powerbook G3 with my boyfriend, I can be found rehearsing and choreographing for dance companies or ranting about the spiritual constraints of our bank-account-obsessed country. Apple: If you are looking for anyone to choreograph a dance piece for next year's "Apple Road Show," I'm available!

My work at Apple Wizards is dedicated to the memory of my Apple IIe and beloved Macintosh Classic.



Columnists and General Staff

Pete Burkindine - Reviews

pete@applewizards.net

An Apple/Mac lover since 1986 (remember Lemonade Stand?), I am a Web designer, Mac consultant, and freelance humorist. I'm starting college all over again in Fall '99; a second-year freshman studying philosophy, music and computer science at Drury College in Springfield, MO. I want to be a leech on society when I grow up!

I write for Apple Wizards because I just can't say no to Erik (he's so cute!). I hope you all enjoy my columns otherwise I will be deeply and emotionally wounded and go sulk.

Craig Cox - The CoxFiles

craig@applewizards.net

I am a logistics information systems manager for the US Government. When I'm not battling the takeover of the government by Bill Gates, I'm playing with my daughters, swimming, reading, or trying to keep the "money pit" from collapsing in around us.

Apple Wizards looked like a cool bunch of folks with the same general philosophy of combating banality and enjoying the finer things in life - like Macs.

Dennis Field - Connect

connect@applewizards.net

A Brit transplant to Canada, I used to be a High School teacher of Physics, Chemistry, Math, and suchlike. I wrote some books, which was fun and made some money. I was also active in the Teachers' Union, which wasn't always fun and made no money at all. Now, thanks to a combination of these activities, a pension fund that did well in the market, and a government which wants to get rid of people like me in order to replace them with younger, cheaper versions, I've retired to a life of smelling the coffee in the morning and the beer in the afternoon and the evening.

Everyone's out to get us paranoids.

Ron W. Freeman - Website Watch

ron@applewizards.net

Born in the greatest decade known to man - the 1980's (what else!?) - I have progressed through various levels of schooling to become a high school graduate. R.E.M. is the band he grew up with, though other favorites include U2 and 10,000 Maniacs. I enjoy spending time learning to play the guitar and working in ice cream parlors.

Apple Wizards to me has a very special place. You know, that place on your back that you can't quite reach no matter how hard you try...

Brent Hecht - Medicine Man

brent@applewizards.net

I am rather new at this writing stuff. I currently author articles for Mac OS Daily and 32 Bits Online when not hard at work for Apple Wizards. Contact me at the email address above to ask a question, comment or just to talk to someone!

"If someone gives you lined paper, write the other way." - Fahrenheit 451

Dan Linneman - 'Warehouse

dan@applewizards.net

I've been using Macs since 1987. My first was a Mac Plus. I gave it to my ex-wife and got an

LC. She gave the Mac Plus to my former sister-in-law, when I got an 81/110, and now has my old LC. I'm supposed to use my Macs to work, but have been accused of mostly "diddling" with them. I am an Assistant Professor of Special Education at the University of Illinois, and have used Macs extensively with school-age kids I work with.

I got my first Mac because I didn't know how to type, but I could point and click. I learned to use SuperPaint before I could type.

Marc Messer - Game Reviews

marc@applewizards.net

I'm a 22-year-old-senior at the University of Florida studying Computer Science through the college of business. When I'm not on my 6500, Gustav, I'm doing such useless time consuming things like sleeping, eating, and occasionally going to class. I'm forever struggling with Java and nothing ever compiles. Other than that, I like to watch UF sports and listen to hardcore, ska, and hardcore ska music.

I love to play with PCs! I especially love to play with the autoexec.bat. But for some reason, no one will let a Mac user play with their PC.

Rudi Muiznieks - HTML Toolbox

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I'm a pure Canadian, born and raised. I'm currently majoring in computer science here at the University of Calgary. When I'm not skipping lectures to sleep in, I'm probably skipping lectures for some other reason. My main source of income is designing web pages and shareware. Email me if you have any topics you would like to see covered in my column here at Apple Wizards.

Where there once was a hole in my soul, there now lies Apple Wizards. Oh well, beggars can't be choosers...

Randy Overbeck - Database Wizard

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I am a 5th year Microelectronic Engineering student at Rochester Institute of Technology. I spend my time creating FileMaker Pro Databases, making Lasso based web sites, doing digital video work and of course playing games. :-) I am the Gaming SIG Leader of our Macintosh User Group at RIT and although I have experience on just about every major platform, when the choice is mine, the answer is simple: Macintosh.

We all make dumb decisions in life, I at least can rest easy in the knowledge that my computing platform of choice is not one of them.

Robert Zimmerman - Macintalk

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I am a 19-year-old student at Karl-Franzens-University in Graz, Austria. Addicted to my two Macs and caffeine, I try to keep my webpages up to date and even spend some time on bungie.net. Whenever I don't have to struggle to pay my phone bill, I seek interesting people for my Macintalk column.

I work with Macs because PCs don't like me: Every time I work on one, it turns blue and rejects input from me.

Next Issue...

Volume 3, Issue 09 is scheduled to be released 05 February 2000, on our website. Visit <http://applewizards.net/> at that time for our first online issue!

