



MAC FACTS

from

Mac Help Desk

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A Message from Dru

Branson was great! If you've never been (and you like country music, wholesome entertainment for the entire family, great activities, and a chance to spend 'quality' time with loved ones) then you owe it to yourself to go.



This and That Revisited – Over the past few months I've received a number of questions over and over (and over and over) again. So here, once again, are the answers!

Y2K compatibility – **No Macintosh computer has a Year 2000 problem.** Period! Macintosh computers have a Year 27, 940 problem. I am advising all Mac Help Desk client/friends to call me in January of 27, 938 and we'll solve the problem then. ☺

To rebuild the desktop – Rebuilding the desktop is the equivalent to giving your Mac an electronic colonic. You should rebuild the desktop at least once a week. Here's how – Restart the Mac and hold down the Apple + Option keys through the entire startup process. At the end you will see a dialog box that asks if you want to rebuild the desktop on your hard drive. You can release the keys and select 'OK' with your mouse. The desktop will then rebuild and be nice and clean when finished.



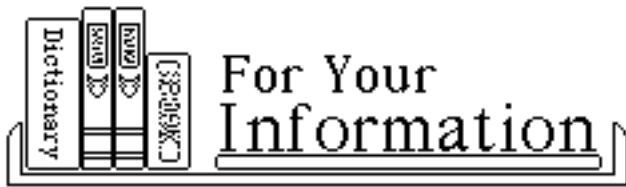
The beginning of summer brought these new folks to our party – True Lee Missionary Baptist Church, Dennis & Deloris Winds, Emanuel Borok, Page Parks, Tom Ryan, Christina Headings, Jim Jackson, Joe Rhodes, The Septien Group, Mary Humphrey, Greg Evans, Bill Daugherty, Dan Hill, Keith Ross, and Shel Stern. Howdy y'all!



Mac Mania on WBAP's Cyberline (<http://www.cyber-line.com>) is this Sunday June 27th, 7 – 9 pm (820 on your AM dial). Two hours of nothing but Mac and Mac stuff. Listen and call in. See if you can stump the Guru (me, that is). Did I mention we'll have prizes, too!



We will be closed from July 1 – 4th for the July 4th holiday. We'll be open on Monday July 5th



The Mac and the Movies

by SemperMac

Cast your eyes over the current list of AppleMasters and you'll notice not a few of them are involved in the film or television industries in one way or another.

The latest recruits include Tracey Ullman and Lauren Bacall amongst the acting ranks, Digital Domain's Scott Ross and musician/composer Herbie Hancock on the allied creative fields side. Their Mac-loving confreres include numerous actors, producers, directors, writers, screenwriters and musicians/composers already: Jennifer Jason Leigh, Gregory Hines, Harrison Ford, Richard Dreyfuss, Douglas Adams, John A. Alonzo, Tom Clancy, Michael Crichton, Kathleen Kennedy, Terry Gilliam, Michael Kamen, Bryan Adams, John Knoll (Left), Jim Ludtke, David Puttnam, Sydney Pollack, James Woods and more. All or most of them familiar names.

Mac and Hollywood are like "that". This list and others more informally published on the Web by Mac enthusiasts prove that Hollywood truly does "get" the Mac. In fact few production houses there would take seriously the idea of basing their whole business around anything else, although I have known the odd PC-toting freelancer.

Yet despite this domination of the more creative end of the entertainment industry Macs have been losing ground in other areas of the business, and in some specialist applications never had a place from the beginning. And for some very good reasons.

Until recently, few would have suggested that Macs be used in the most processing-intensive aspects of 3D computer modeling and animation, for example. Workstations from Sun Microsystems and SGI are the more obvious choice, most often wired up into massive render farms. NT has been creeping into the equation under the guise of the second OS that now drives such high end 3D modeling and animation software as Maya, 3D Studio MAX and SoftImage.

A FAMILIAR PLOY

When Microsoft bought Canadian software firm SoftImage it was as part of a move to persuade the world of the utility value of Windows NT. Before that the OS was languishing and in need of more elevated applications than as an IT department file server.

The nature of Microsoft's investment was proven when they suddenly divested themselves of it to Avid, who are reportedly mired in the endless fiscal woes of both paying for their acquisition and for its porting from SGI to NT. Industry informants have been reporting to SemperMac on a sudden reverse in attitudes amongst 3D software developers, to the degree that a number are now

openly stating they have always had misgivings about NT but the cash and other support Microsoft waved in front of them was simply too tempting in the past.

THE WORM TURNS

What has caused this turn in events? Although NT is notorious for "crashing every 15 minutes" when subjected to the demands of a film production environment, its user base adherents stick by it like flies to fresh manure. Often they sit next to SGI operators using the same product on that particular platform yet who benefit from all the real stability that UNIX bestows. Love is blind. UNIX is the four letter word that is responsible for the slow and steady turn in 3D developer OS allegiances, and it is not the SGI or Sun varieties, good as they may be, but the prospect of another UNIX altogether, a NeXT-born UNIX, a UNIX with a human face, Mac OS X. Couple OS X with the G4 chip alone or in a multiprocessor setup and you have a price, stability and usability combination that will be difficult if not impossible to beat.

"We have always loved the Mac," some developers are now opining, but their past mass abandonment of it seriously damaged regard for the platform in the movie special effects industry. That explains why Play, Inc. co-CEOs Paul Montgomery and Mike Moore felt the need to publicly expose the long-rumored Jedi Agreement with an open letter to George Lucas in The Hollywood Reporter in May.

"We were thrilled and honored when Rick McCallum, the producer of Star Wars: The Phantom Menace, approached us in late 1996 asking for our help. Rick and his team of artists asked us to develop ambitious new 3D effects technologies specifically to make several of the most spectacular shots in the movie possible," the letter states. "In exchange for custom programming these special features into our Electric Image 3D animation product, Mr. McCallum offered us something of great value - public acknowledgment letting the world know how essential Play's Electric Image was in the creation of this landmark film."

THE ELECTRIC MAC

Public acknowledgment not only for Play and a reportedly very fine 3D product in the form of Electric Image, but also for the Macintosh platform itself. The Jedi Agreement is a film biz open secret, an arrangement between Lucas' Industrial Light & Magic special effects house and SGI, formerly Silicon Graphics Imaging, whereby ILM receives the benefit of SGI's technology at a discount or free in return for never mentioning any other computer platform than SGI. ILM staffers have let slip about the Jedi Agreement in the past.

THE WORM BARES ITS TEETH

In fairness to ILM every such major special effects facility uses a wide variety of software products that run on one or all of the four operating systems: Mac, NT, Sun Solaris and SGI Irix. But their adherence to Jedi has ensured that fundamental misconceptions about the essential role of the Mac in their movies and many others has been actively perpetuated. That ignorance has found sustenance away from the light, and grown out of all proportion.

Mention of manure and the dark leads back to the question of Electric Image and Play, who have been given the mushroom treatment since their letter.

According to Ben Yoder, Play spokesman, "Electric Image was used extensively for key scenes and sequences in The Phantom Menace, and not just as an aid to previsualization, essentially a storyboarding process, as ILM spokespeople suggest.

"Electric Image was used to create most if not all of the desert scenes in Tatooine as well as the city of Naboo," says Yoder. "There was also the famous pod racing scene where the rocky landscapes they fly through were rendered in Electric Image.

AppleShare IP 6.2 with Mac OS 8.6. The new systems are available immediately from Apple's online store.



Apple Ships QuickTime 4.0 -- Apple Computer has released the final version of QuickTime 4.0, the company's all-encompassing cross-platform media playback and authoring software. QuickTime 4.0 is powerful technology, supporting an enormous variety of data formats used for video, audio, images, and other data (including MPEG, Windows AVI, Photoshop images, PNG, and FlashPix) along with a slew of compression and transport technologies. QuickTime 4.0's most prominent new features involve streaming media such as live broadcasts or pre-recorded audio and video. Apple is seeking to extend QuickTime's dominance in digital media production to real-time Internet-based content, competing against RealNetworks' well established RealPlayer and Microsoft's Media Player. QuickTime 4.0's most visible new features, however, revolve around radically redesigned playback and application interfaces designed to look like consumer electronic devices. Apple's QuickTime 4.0 announcement claims the new controls are "stunning" and "intuitive"; nonetheless, the revised look and feel has drawn criticism.

