

GET # INFO

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Upcoming Programs

November

TMUG's Wiki Web Site

Find out how to add to, edit and add your own page!

Delicious Library Demo

It scans, it catalogs, it searches!

December

Christmas Party

Alec Whittaker will demo Circus Pony Software's Notebook – there will be a copy for a door prize.

Allen Emory will demo iRemember – and we also have a door prize copy of that!

There will also be a raffle for a significant piece of hardware and, as always, a great party!

And of course at every meeting, our Q&A Session led by Bob Chandler!

PREZ SEZ



*Allen Emory,
TMUG President*

Twenty Years of TMUG: Where Do We Go From Here?

I was recently interviewed by Chuck Joiner of The Mug Center (<http://www.mugcenter.com/>) for his podcast "The User Group Report." Our topic was the Macintosh User Groups (MUGs)—where they are and where they might be heading. In that vein, as we start to close TMUG's 20th year, we need to look backwards and forwards. And we need to see what paths lie ahead.

Reflecting on twenty years of TMUG generates some interesting images.

If you grew up in the Triangle and are now completing your high school education and preparing for college, TMUG has always been around... so have microcomputers. Twenty years ago, though, we didn't have iPhoto, ...iMovie, ...iDVD, ...GarageBand, ...Keynote, ...Pages, ...an iTunes Music Store or an iPod. Come to think of it, we couldn't surf the Web ...or send e-mail, ...or chat with IM ...or chat and see the other person with today's audio and video chat options. We couldn't set up our own Web page ...or use HTML, CSS, PHP, Python or Perl, ...or manage an Apache server, ...or set up an e-mail distribution list. Furthermore, there was no WIKI for a website ...or MySQL to manage a membership database ...or RSS feed to keep on top of all sorts of issues. We couldn't create a Podcast, ...or a Web log, ...or a WIFI network in our home.

So what was the spark of interest (in that dull computer world twenty years ago) which caused local Apple Computer Users to create TMUG? Back then, buying a Macintosh was both progressive as well as a big investment—for both hardware and software. Remember the Macintosh Plus?—it cost \$2,500. Those first

TMUGers met each month so that they could learn what their computer could do and how they themselves could participate in the process.

They wanted to get the most out of their investment. Sound familiar?

Did anything really change over those twenty years of TMUG meetings?—yes, they did. Now many users (of all ages) struggle less and use their Macs more to accomplish a multitude of tasks. Still others struggle with the learning curve, often because they are new users.

The resulting polarity is not a disadvantage, but it is a challenge, an ongoing challenge for TMUG and all the other User Groups. We need to think about the challenge and devise ways to address the needs of everyone who has chosen to invest in both a Macintosh and a TMUG membership.



TMUG Officers

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WANT TO KNOW?

From the Treasurer

The TMUG Treasurer reports that with all expenses paid through the end of 2006 (except for the Christmas party), we have \$4,356 in the bank. As of mid-October, we have 89 paid members.

New members include:

Alex Silbiger
Guy Brooks

Newly-renewed members include:

Tim Clark
David Filpus
Mario Gatti
Richard Schenck
Sam Webb
Robert Buchanan
Thurletta Brown-Gavins
Frank Sargent

*Thanks for all the support
our members give us!*



On the Web site front, we made a big push to get the new wiki-based site up for the October meeting. The member pages have been condensed, and will be worked on further to integrate them to the wiki. Transitioning from 2 e-mail servers to 1 has been delayed a bit while we get the wiki fully up and going. As always, any questions should be directed to support@tmug.org.

WANT TO JOIN?

Just fill out the form below and mail it in (along with your check). Or better yet, bring this form with you to a meeting! TMUG meets the second Monday of each month in the Mutual Life building in downtown Durham.

TRIANGLE MACINTOSH USERS GROUP

Membership Application

Renewal

Name: _____

Business (if applicable): _____

Street: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

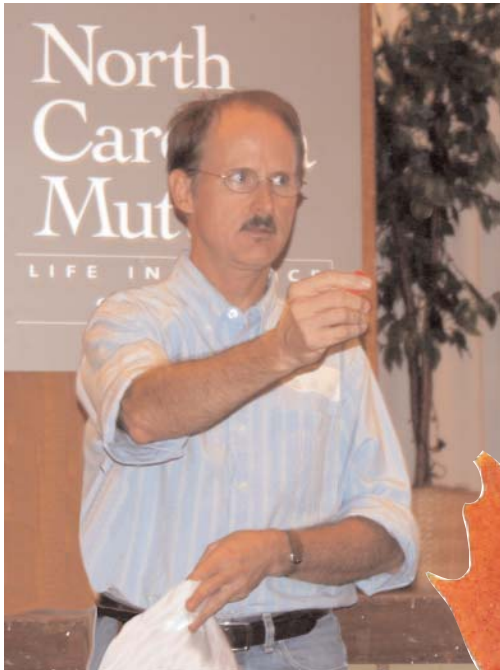
Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

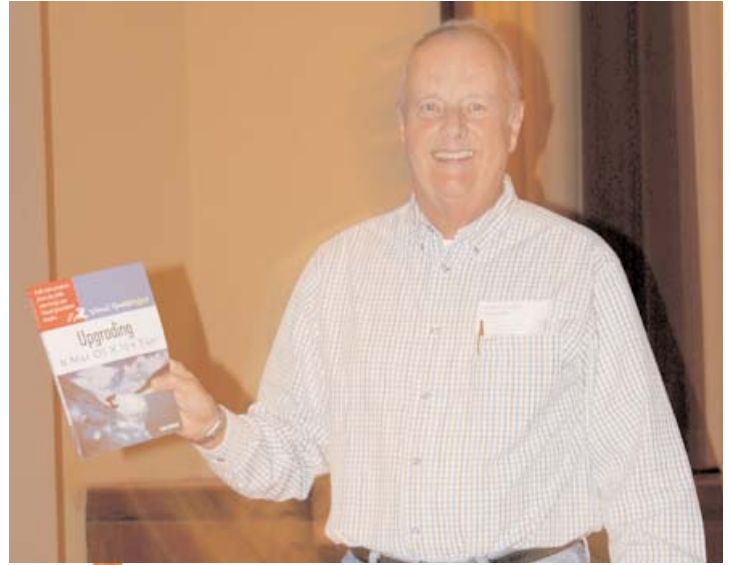
Membership dues are \$35/year. Make check payable to **TMUG** and mail to:
TMUG, P.O. Box 14724, Durham NC 27709

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OCTOBER HIGHLIGHTS



Chips gets ready to call out a ticket number...



And the door prize winner is... Richard, who displays his new copy of *Upgrading to Mac OS X 10.4 Tiger*!



Submitted by Duane Reaugh, TMUG

The following is an e-mail interchange between an 81-year-old Mac user and a PC user.

Claudius wrote:

On Thursday morning last, I opened my computer only to find to my unbelieving eyes that my Calendar had disappeared into thin air. This, as you might imagine, is akin to having an unwanted pre-frontal lobotomy. A home visit by my computer consultant, John, certified the loss. He took full responsibility for not including the document among the daily back-ups by Retrospect.

Stunned, yea flabbergasted, by the loss of this intricately evolved, irreplaceable data over the course of the past ten years, I reminded myself that it is not how one deals with success but how one deals with defeat that determines the quality of one's life, and I imputed theological meaning to my cruel loss; in other words, this was a sign from the gods of the computer world that I was to stop hiding in Mac OS 9.2.2 and step bravely into Mac OS 10.4, "Tiger," before they change it to 10.5 next spring.

Meanwhile, from Thursday until today, I have neither shaved nor bathed nor brushed my teeth. (I have used Crest mouth wash.) John will come tomorrow and restock this computer with new brains for a new world, but I am a new person. I now look at this box and I no longer trust it as I once did. It is an altogether different relationship. It grins at me. It mocks me.

Affectionately, Claudius

Nancy wrote:

See there? That's the problem with a Mac. It lulls you into a false sense of security, and then when it betrays you (as it inevitably will), you have not developed the requisite coping skills to deal with your loss. PC users, on the other hand, are dealt regular lessons in strength and versatility. A lost calendar? Pshaw. Child's play. It was only a calendar. Any PC owner can top that with a tale of woe from his last week of computer use alone. But larding the tales of disaster are occasional tales of triumph over diversity: A lost dissertation restored with Norton Utilities. A lost spreadsheet restored from a temp file buried in

PC users,
on the other hand,
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regular lessons in
strength and versatility.

a mailer. An unexpected windfall from helping a farmer recover a bank deposit in Zimbabwe.

Yessirree, I've had my problems with my PC, but what has not killed me has made me stronger. As I type this message, I am bathed, coifed, and tastefully made up with a touch of Covergirl Canyon 341 lip gloss. I may or not be flabby, but I am not flabbergasted. And I am a better woman for having developed robust coping skills.

Ultimately, you will come to see that losing data is like baptism. You will be born again. Trust me on this.

Claudius wrote:

Some more of your insufferable Ohio, know-it-all, self-righteous-Republican-always-look-on-the-bright-side-of-life nonsense. You ought to be ashamed of yourself if you had the slightest idea what that was. I know I'll never share another tender part of my life with you again as long as I live.

Nancy wrote:

I don't care what kind of abuse you sling at me, but leave Ohio alone. It is a union stronghold and the Democratic party's best and brightest hope for a happy November 7. You don't want to be singing "Why oh why oh why oh, did I ever diss Ohio."

Take Control of Thanksgiving Dinner

Author: Joe Kissell

Publishers of new Thanksgiving book predict a drop in frantic calls to the Butterball Hotline. Panic is out, control is in, with a new book about cooking Thanksgiving dinner with a techie spin

Few events are as stressful as cooking Thanksgiving dinner, but the publishers of Take Control Books are predicting a significant drop in frantic calls to the Butterball Hotline this year as cooks turn instead to a new user-friendly book Take Control of Thanksgiving Dinner. The 104-page book offers delicious, stress-free results for readers who follow its clearly laid-out steps for planning and preparing the massive holiday meal.

The book is the brainchild of Joe Kissell, well-known computer book author and head of the new Geeky Gourmet blog. “I’m a foodie from way back, but I put food on the table by writing about computers,” Kissell said. “In technical writing, my goal is to break down complex and confusing computer tasks into simple, easy-to-follow steps. In this book, I do the same with the tasks necessary for Thanksgiving dinner.”

Kissell walks readers through all the steps: planning, shopping, preparations the day before, and finally cooking the turkey and trimmings on the big day. Detailed recipes are provided for traditional Thanksgiving dishes, from turkey and stuffing to cranberry relish and pumpkin pie. “What you see in this book may not be exactly the way your mom or your favorite celebrity chef does it,” Kissell says. “But after extensive testing of the recipes, I can assure you that if you follow them, you’ll enjoy cooking and eating on Thanksgiving.” Many of Kissell’s friends in the tech industry were involved in a pre-publication online critique of the book, some of them beta-testing complete Thanksgiving feasts in kitchens coast-to-coast in August.

Appendixes cover special cases from allergies to vegans, offer an optional vegetarian main dish, and provide advice for anyone who needs to start preparations late. A special, downloadable “Print Me” file provides shopping lists and schedules, as well as concise versions of the recipes to tape up in the kitchen. Readers are encouraged to modify the included shopping lists, schedules, and recipes to suit their holiday plans and traditions.

Take Control of Thanksgiving Dinner costs \$10 for the instant-gratification ebook version or \$19.99 for a printed copy. The ebook version is a carefully designed PDF file with hot links for cross-references and mentioned Web sites, making it easy to



navigate the book and access recommended recipes and sites quickly; the print version is professionally printed and bound with a lay-flat binding.

Take Control of Thanksgiving Dinner

Author: Joe Kissell

Details: PDF or print format, 104 pages, free 31-page sample available ISBN: 1-933671-19-X Price: \$10 for the ebook; \$19.99 for the print book. More info and ordering: <http://www.takecontrolbooks.com/thanksgiving.html>

About Take Control Books: Take Control Books, begun in 2003 as part of TidBITS Electronic Publishing, has helped tens of thousands of readers get more out of their computers with high-quality, real-world documentation. To learn more, visit our FAQ: <http://www.takecontrolbooks.com/faq.html>

GoLive Booted from Adobe Creative Suite, Acrobat 8 Released

by Glenn Fleishman, glenn@tidbits.com

The fate of Web design and management tool Adobe GoLive has been sealed: the program has been booted from Creative Suite, Adobe's bundle of applications designed for print and electronic production professionals. Dreamweaver 8 will replace GoLive CS2 in version 2.3 of Creative Suite, which also has been updated to include Acrobat 8 Professional, announced today and shipping in November. Adobe expects to ship the CS 2.3 bundle in the fourth quarter of 2006.

<http://www.adobe.com/aboutadobe/pressroom/pressreleases/200609/091806CreativeSuite.html>

Adobe acquired Dreamweaver as part of the Adobe-Macromedia merger last year.

Dreamweaver has long been viewed as the tool of choice for creating interactive Web sites that incorporate rich media, database content, and scripting with PHP. GoLive was preferred by designers for its integration with Photoshop, direct support for Acrobat internal linking and PDF creation, and ease of use.

In June, I described a leak that had occurred when an Adobe Europe product manager seemed to be saying that both GoLive and the illustration program FreeHand would be dropped. After further examination across three languages and a statement from Adobe, it was clear that GoLive and FreeHand wouldn't be part of Adobe's core programs, but would still be developed. (Today's announcements included no news about FreeHand.)

<http://db.tidbits.com/article/8551>

Adobe says that GoLive will continue to be developed as a standalone program, although it's unclear to what audience it would appeal. Credible rumors indicate GoLive may be revamped to be a friendlier Web design tool, with a focus on entry-level users.

The other update to the Creative Suite is the refresh of Acrobat, now at version 8, which is also offered in a variety of versions. New features are a grab bag of miscellaneous items, many of which are only of interest to users in particular industries. Of note, however, is the capability to remove any hidden metadata, layers, and other invisible information that could reveal more than you want, and "redaction" tools that permanently delete text and images from a PDF file. Acrobat 8

Professional will also allow shared PDF commenting and mark-up among a workgroup.

<http://www.adobe.com/aboutadobe/pressroom/pressreleases/200609/091806Acrobat.html>

http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobatpro/upgrade_customer.html

Adobe has slapped the Acrobat name on the latest version of Macromedia Breeze, now known as Acrobat Connect. Connect is a meeting tool, much like WebX or NetMeeting, that enables all kinds of media - PDFs, images, video - to be pushed to all participants. The basic version allows hosted meetings of up to 15 people with limited media use; a Professional version can be installed on a company's own servers with no preset attendee limit. The Professional version contains a full suite of tools for media sharing, voice over IP, and a variety of reporting tools. The hosted version of Connect ships in November, along with the rest of the Acrobat suite; the Professional version is expected in December.

<http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobatconnect/>

Creative Suite 2.3 has a street price of \$1,200 for the premium edition, which includes Acrobat 8 Professional and Dreamweaver. Existing CS2 owners can pay \$160 for an upgrade. Owners of any other version or edition of Creative Suite can pay \$550 for a full upgrade. Acrobat 8 Professional will cost \$450, with upgrades for many previous editions costing \$160. Acrobat 8 Standard runs \$300, with a variety of upgrades at \$100. Acrobat Connect will cost \$40 per month per user for the basic hosted version; pricing for the on-site professional flavor wasn't announced. The basic

Acrobat Connect will have a free trial running from its release through the end of the year.

Staff Roundtable

We're trying something a little different with this article. Rather than attempt to have one person integrate into the article the kind of internal discussion that inevitably takes place after an announcement of this ilk, we thought we'd let you listen in on our more trenchant thoughts and comments. Glenn and Jeff have significant background with GoLive, having written three editions of "Real World Adobe GoLive," whereas Adam has spent vast amounts of time in Acrobat Professional fiddling with PDF files for Take Control.

<ftp://ftp.tidbits.com/info-mac/info/real-world-golive-6.hqx>

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Glenn Fleishman:

Despite an extremely talented group of people who have been developing GoLive since its CyberStudio days before the Adobe acquisition, the program faltered by release 6.0 several years ago and never recovered its position relative to Dreamweaver. Dreamweaver outpaced GoLive on integrated handling of scripts and database results, while GoLive could only marginally handle these tasks. GoLive 6 included a lot of database integration and scripting preview tools that were all abandoned in GoLive CS, along with any hope of competing directly with Dreamweaver. It's been clear since about 2002 that Adobe management was putting substantially fewer resources behind GoLive than Macromedia was putting behind Dreamweaver. GoLive was never a flagship Adobe product, while Macromedia positioned Dreamweaver alongside Director and Flash as a critical tool.

As for Acrobat, it's becoming ever harder for a mature product to learn new tricks. Much of Adobe's focus in recent years has been the split focus of improving workflow for print production, in which a PDF file is not just an intermediate stage, but is the intermediate and end stage from which the final piece is produced; and workgroup collaboration, where comments and markup are allowed within PDF files so that groups never need to print anything out. Version 8 continues along those lines but seems to offer little that's remarkable, other than perhaps the improved security features.

One might call the "redaction" feature the "oops, we thought it was a Sharpie" feature. Many documents have been converted from, say, Microsoft Word into PDF and then had black marks placed over sensitive areas. But any Acrobat Professional user could remove the black marks to view the underlying text. No more. Deleted items will now be entirely removed from the PDF.

Jeff Carlson:

I think GoLive is dead, despite Adobe's words. While Adobe continues to claim ongoing development, pulling GoLive out of the Creative Suite is almost certainly a death knell for the program; most people are using it because it's part of Creative Suite (with some others sticking with it from pure inertia). That said, I'm sure some designers will stick with GoLive (assuming it's updated and not turned into something else) because they've developed a familiarity with it, have built templates with it, and otherwise grok its interface – a significant feat. But if I were currently making my living in GoLive, today's announcement would have sealed the long-pondered decision to switch to Dreamweaver.

Adam C. Engst:

I'm uninterested in GoLive and Dreamweaver, since I decided

long ago that learning one of them wasn't really any easier than learning HTML and CSS and working in BBEdit or the text editor of my choice. What interests me more is the announcement of Acrobat 8, since we rely heavily on Acrobat for our Take Control ebooks. From the sound of the press release, Adobe has focused on simplifying Acrobat's interface and enhancing its collaboration tools, which sounds nice, but I'm reserving judgment until I see if they've exorcised the numerous devils in their details.

Using Acrobat Professional to work with PDFs is largely an exercise in constant irritation. For instance, to add a line of linked red text to the bottom of every page, as I do when creating samples of our ebooks, I can create a footer fairly easily, but I must manually change the color of each line to red (because Acrobat doesn't provide color controls for footer text), and I must manually paste and move a copied link into place on each page (since Acrobat doesn't allow footers to contain links, and since pasted links always appear in the middle of the page, rather than in the same relative location as the copied source link). Is it any wonder people create such lousy PDFs when the preeminent tool for working with PDFs makes such simple tasks so difficult? My fingers are crossed for Adobe to get it right with Acrobat 8, but I'm not hopeful, given the number of years they've gotten it wrong so far.

Glenn Fleishman:

Adam's lack of interest in graphical front ends to Web page building and management highlights one of the key reasons why Dreamweaver has done so well. Most Web sites of any scale now aren't a random collection of individually edited pages. Just like TidBITS and our Web Crossing solution and, in fact, most blog sites are constructed around database-driven templates, which are often extremely difficult to preview outside of specialized tools or a Web page used to edit the template and then view the results. Dreamweaver has reasonable support for previewing scripts, but it is also extensible. What a truly useful Web editing tool would offer now is not just the capability to write and preview in templates – GoLive CS2 has some limited support for Movable Type's format – but the simplicity to write one's own modules to work with programs like Web Crossing that aren't popular enough to warrant direct support. With that kind of support, you could have the power of a visual editor that manages Cascading Style Sheets and helps ensure consistency across all the pages in a site, while still having the power of template-based page creation.



Mac OS X 10.4.8 Fixes Numerous Issues

by Jeff Carlson, jeffc@tidbits.com

The autumn harvest from Apple's programmers has come in, as Apple updated almost their entire software product line.

Although each major application saw revisions, most Mac users will be interested in Mac OS X 10.4.8, a bug-fix update that spans several areas of the operating system.

Notable changes include security enhancements, improved connections using the Apple USB Modem, support for the EAP-FAST protocol to improve wireless network authentication security, better compatibility with third-party USB hubs, better performance on some broadband networks, and improved camera RAW support. Also, Apple has addressed a few bugs that affect Microsoft Office, and fixed a problem where Rosetta code translation on Intel-based Macs could be inaccurate.

<http://docs.info.apple.com/article.html?artnum=304200>

The coolest new feature is that if you hold down the Control key while scrolling with a scroll wheel (or a pseudo scroll wheel, such as is provided by Raging Menace's Side Track utility), the screen zooms smoothly. Screen zooming has been available for a long time (see the Universal Access preference pane), but using keyboard shortcuts to zoom in and out is awkward. Scroll wheel-based zooming, which you can control in the Mouse view of the Keyboard & Mouse preference pane (and where you can also choose another modifier key besides Control), will be a boon to anyone with less-than-perfect eyesight or presenters who want to focus on a particular aspect of the screen.

<http://www.ragingmenace.com/software/sidetrack/>

Mac OS X 10.4.8's release notes were chatty for Apple, but we're still pondering several of the items, such as "Windows File Sharing now generates only one process, avoiding an issue that could cause a Mac OS X computer to become unresponsive if it won a master browser election" – might a recount help?

Then there's "Resolves an issue in which a Finder alert message with the buttons 'Initialize', 'Ignore', and 'Eject' might not appear after connecting a partitioned FireWire hard drive." We generally prefer *not* seeing that dialog when we connect FireWire hard drives of any sort, other than uninitialized ones.

And although Apple does explain this next comment in a link, our first reading had us desperately trying to recall our classes

in theoretical physics: "Improves Apple File Sharing client performance by changing the default AFP WAN quantum size."

The update is available in several forms, depending on your machine. Software Update should deliver the correct version, but updaters are also available as stand-alone downloads. For the Intel updates, Apple notes that the computer will restart *twice* after the update has been applied. *As with all system updates, we recommend making a backup before proceeding.* You can find the updaters here:

Mac OS X 10.4.8 Update (Intel) (206 MB)

<http://www.apple.com/support/downloads/macosx1048updateintel.html>

Mac OS X 10.4.8 Update (PPC) (31 MB)

<http://www.apple.com/support/downloads/macosx1048updateppc.html>

Mac OS X 10.4.8 Combo Update (Intel) (294 MB)

<http://www.apple.com/support/downloads/macosx1048comboupdateintel.html>

Mac OS X 10.4.8 Combo Update (PPC) (149 MB)

<http://www.apple.com/support/downloads/macosx1048comboupdateppc.html>

Mac OS X 10.4.8 Server Update (PPC) (62 MB)

<http://www.apple.com/support/downloads/macosxserver1048updateppc.html>

Mac OS X 10.4.8 Server Combo Update (PPC) (196 MB)

<http://www.apple.com/support/downloads/macosxserver1048comboupdateppc.html>

Mac OS X 10.4.8 Server Update (Universal) (202 MB)

<http://www.apple.com/support/downloads/macosxserver1048updateuniversal.html>



Using MySQL on a Mac

by Jonathan D. Sousa, jonathan@jonathansousa.com



For many Macintosh users, the relational database is first and last encountered through recent versions of FileMaker Pro. While Windows users have long utilized Microsoft Access, there has never been an equivalent product included in the Mac version of Microsoft Office. Since the move to Mac OS X and its BSD underpinnings, however, several

of the favorite databases of the Unix crowd now run with little fuss on your Mac. One of the most popular of these databases is the open source MySQL. It is certainly not the only option if you are looking to try your hand with a full relational database, but it does have a number of friendly interface options and the additional advantage of being packaged with Mac OS X Server.

<http://www.mysql.com/products/database/mysql/>

Recently, new or improved applications have made it possible to access most features of MySQL without having to master a command line interface or the nuances of SQL (Structured Query Language). Power users can still take advantage of the extensive capabilities for storing and retrieving complex data, but one no longer needs to become a full-time database administrator to create a handy index of clients, books, sales figures, or whatever material you need to store. There is even a program to import your iTunes library directly into MySQL (SQLTunes). If you are finding spreadsheets useful but unwieldy, you might want to consider MySQL.

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

Using most current relational databases requires knowing a bit about how their pieces fit together. The core of the database is software designed to store, index, and retrieve data efficiently, but it normally has no graphical user interface at all. You communicate with the database through a text console by sending it commands in SQL or its own variant of SQL. In effect, the database acts as a server, and its actual location matters little so long as you have an IP connection directly to it and the appropriate ports open in any firewalls along the way.

The front end to such a database is really just the equivalent of a Web browser in that it interprets your requests, sends them in language the database server can understand, and displays the output in a friendly fashion. In theory, a single front end could

not only connect to multiple MySQL databases, it could connect to any database that speaks SQL. Unfortunately, there are many eccentricities in how different database products interpret SQL, so you are often limited to certain pairings of database and front end. ODBC (Open Database Connectivity) drivers are supposed to act as the interpreters between SQL and the database's internal language, but they are sometimes proprietary pieces of code and not available for all situations. MySQL, as an open source product, offers more flexibility than many databases in letting you pick the front end you want to use.

Installing the MySQL Server

But before we get to the fun part of working with the graphical interface, you need to start the database server humming on your Mac. As I mentioned, if you are already running Mac OS X Server, you probably have MySQL installed and simply need to start it using the preference pane (in System Preferences) for that purpose.

Otherwise, if you have Mac OS X 10.3 or 10.4, a version is ready for you at the MySQL organization's Web site. The current stable release is 5.0, with 5.1 undergoing further testing and development. Note that Apple includes a fairly old version with Mac OS X Server, so you may wish to upgrade to access the latest features. Simply follow the instructions in the Readme file to install the database (most often double-clicking on the package installer is all you need to do) and add the System Preferences pane included on the disk image. The preference pane needs to be placed in /Library/PreferencePanes; again, double-clicking the file should handle this task smoothly. The forums on the site can be helpful if you get stuck. The moment of truth comes after the database is installed and when you open System Preferences. Select the MySQL icon that should appear at the bottom of the window and click the Start MySQL Server button. You will need to supply an administrator password. If you are informed that your database is running, then you have successfully installed and started a full relational database.

<http://dev.mysql.com/>

<http://forums.mysql.com/>

Now you need to pick a front end, or several. There is no reason not to experiment with a number of the products I mention to find the one that best meets your needs. A good place to start, however, is with the tools offered by the MySQL organization. You will need, at a minimum, MySQL

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Using MySQL... *continued from page 9*

Administrator installed on your computer. Remember that what we have installed so far is only a server, so we must give instructions to the client you use on how to access it, just like you tell your Web browser what site you want to visit. When you start MySQL Administrator for the first time, it will ask you what database you wish to connect to. You should enter a server hostname of 127.0.0.1 (that IP address is a shortcut to your computer; the address “localhost” will also work), a port of 3306, a username of root, and no password. If all has gone as it should, you will be looking at a window with all sorts of information about your database. The first thing you should do is add a password for the root account (you will need to use it the next time you log into the database) and create an additional account for day-to-day use. Be sure to give this new account most of the privileges available, or at least Select, Insert, Update, Delete, Create, Drop, and Alter. Keep in mind that these privilege restrictions exist in case you want to create an account that, for instance, can only select data from the database but not make any changes.

<http://www.mysql.com/products/tools/administrator/>

Working with Tables and Data

Now that you have the database installed and running, and you have a way to administer it, you can begin to work with tables and data. Several software choices are available, all of which attempt to do the same thing: let you work with MySQL while limiting your reliance on SQL. Many people will opt for the MySQL organization’s toolset that includes MySQL Query Browser and MySQL Workbench. These programs overlap somewhat in features - the Table Editor is built into both MySQL Query Browser and MySQL Administrator.

Workbench, also included in the download, aids in visually laying out and constructing a complex database. These programs are good, if basic, tools for creating tables and the data fields that they contain.

<http://dev.mysql.com/downloads/gui-tools/5.0.html>

<http://www.mysql.com/products/tools/query-browser/>

Unfortunately, these tools don’t always work as would be ideal. For example, creating a field using the CHAR data type to hold text prompts you to fill in the maximum number of characters that should be allowed. Using the similar but more flexible VARCHAR data type, however, does not prompt you for the field length, and if you forget to add it, applying your changes brings up a notice that there is a syntax problem with your SQL, but doesn’t specify the error. Given that one of the reasons to use the graphical interface is to avoid memorizing SQL, you are left with little recourse but to dive into the copious online documentation. That’s not to say the documentation isn’t use-

ful; it is constantly expanded by helpful users through comments added at the bottom of each entry. In fact, I highly recommend you spend a few minutes learning about the different data types that MySQL offers for storing your data. There is always more to learn about using relational databases, but you can get surprisingly far with only a little bit of study.

<http://dev.mysql.com/doc/refman/5.0/en/>

The MySQL Query Browser won’t do enough for many novices in avoiding SQL when it comes to selecting specific data. Its features are more those of a drag-and-drop syntax helper for creating queries than a fully graphical interface. If you have never encountered a basic SELECT statement before, you might want to look to one of the more friendly free or commercial applications.

When we venture beyond the MySQL application family, we encounter some other open-source projects designed to interface with your database server. CocoaMySQL is a clean, exceedingly Mac-like piece of software built to let users administer MySQL databases. While it does not provide functionality much beyond that of MySQL Administrator, it manages to be more intuitive at practically every step of the way. It won’t help you build queries to retrieve your data, nor lay out a complex database diagram, but for quickly constructing a table with many columns it is an excellent application. Note that you will need the beta version to interface with MySQL 5.0, since the stable edition is now some three years out of date.

<http://cocoamysql.sourceforge.net/>

The Squirrel SQL client is built on Java so as to be cross-platform, but it also requires that you have a recent version of Java installed on your computer and forsakes most Mac interface conventions. Because the Squirrel client runs inside the Java runtime environment, you end up with an awkward double set of menus. Installation instructions suggest you need to venture into Terminal, but simply double-clicking the downloaded file works for most people. In general Squirrel is an ungainly piece of software and only something the most advanced users will want to explore.

<http://squirrel-sql.sourceforge.net/>

Another free, albeit limited, option comes from the phpMyAdmin Project. If you are already running a Web site using PHP and MySQL, then installing their set of PHP scripts enables you to administer most aspects of the database through a Web browser. It can also retrieve data for you if you already know enough SQL to create the queries you want to

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use. The situations where phpMyAdmin is handy are very specific and mostly concern webmasters, but using it can make your job easier, or at least keep you from having to go into the office on the weekend to clean up a database problem.

<http://www.phpmyadmin.net/>

A similar but more extensible software tool is Webmin, based on the Perl language. This free product not only manages your MySQL database, but adds system accounts, configures file sharing, and performs dozens of other common server administration tasks. Webmin aims to be a complete and expandable system for running most common types of servers through a Web interface, but unless such servers are your everyday companions, the package is likely overkill for simply interacting with MySQL.

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

Moving away from the free tools and into generally more polished commercial products, we find a number of options at various levels of maturity and sophistication. Luckily, as with text editors and Web browsers, the variety of alternatives ensures there is probably a database front end that will suit every user's needs, likes, and dislikes. Better yet, most of these products offer trial versions for download on their Web sites.

One of the most Mac-friendly applications out there is SQLGrinder from Advenio. At \$60, SQLGrinder provides an elegant, universal binary front end with nice features like SQL auto-completion, excellent import and export capabilities, and AppleScript and Automator compatibility. Images are stored and viewed directly through the program and it even remembers query results locally, allowing you to flip back to recent sets of data without having to rerun complex queries. The application uses a single window approach that makes it fairly intuitive to use and speeds navigation through multiple connections to different databases. Unfortunately, it does not offer a graphical SQL query builder - an omission that will leave novices struggling to create basic queries - yet it remains an excellent and well-designed tool for the user already familiar with writing SQL code.

<http://www.advenio.com/sqlgrinder/>

The awkwardly named SQL4X Manager J from InterServices is a universal binary program for \$60 that allows one front end to manage most major relational databases, including the big commercial ones such as Oracle and Microsoft's SQL Server. It is smart enough to adjust to whichever database you are connecting to by downloading recent database drivers, and it shows you only the features that work with that server. The

interface is fairly complex (and could benefit from the addition of tooltips) but offers some very advanced features. You can add image files directly into BLOB (binary large object) fields and then view them in a slide-out drawer. There is even a basic reporting module like that found in the venerable Windows program Crystal Reports for creating dynamic documents from your data. Unfortunately for novices, there is no non-SQL query builder included, so with this product you must learn the language to leverage the power of your relational database. For people already comfortable with databases, however, SQL4X Manager J offers some unexpected capabilities in a single package.

<http://www.dbsuite.de/?action=product&actionid=sql4xmanagerj>

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

<http://www.microsoft.com/sql/>

<http://www.businessobjects.com/products/reporting/crystalreports/>

Of all the commercial products (and there are more I tested but found either too unstable to mention or lacking the updates necessary to use with MySQL 5.0), two remain on my hard disk after experimenting with their features. The first, and the best one for power users, is Aqua Data Studio from AquaFold. This program requires Java 1.5 to be installed on your Mac, and it feels a little sluggish despite being a universal binary application, but it offers an excellent feature set that behaves similarly to the tools supplied by Microsoft to manage their SQL Server product. The average user will never utilize all of this program's capabilities, but it includes a powerful graphical query builder, a full query analyzer to ease writing SQL by hand, and complete database administration functionality. The license allows for free personal and educational use; otherwise it costs \$150. Aqua Data Studio has its quirks and takes some time to learn, but it is an expansive and exceedingly useful product.

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

The other standout program is Navicat from PremiumSoft, which delivers a clean and efficient front end for MySQL for \$100. A 30-day trial is available for download. The program's single primary pane and detailed editing windows let you create tables, modify their fields, add data to them, and retrieve result sets through complex queries, all without knowing a bit of SQL. If you switch between operating systems, Navicat is available for Windows and Linux in addition to Mac OS X. Navicat's interface is very Mac-like and friendly, with clear, labeled icons and a sensible layout. The graphical query builder provides an introduction to SQL by enabling you to create queries through arranging and connecting representations of tables, while showing the code your actions produce in another tab. The query builder does not let you set selection, grouping,

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OmniWeb 5.5 Goes Universal, Switches to WebKit by Adam C. Engst, ace@tidbits.com

The Omni Group has completed a deceptively minor update to OmniWeb, their feature-laden Web browser that sports iconic tabs, workspaces, RSS news feeds, site-specific preferences, and more. New features in OmniWeb 5.5 include support for saving pages in the WebArchive format, a warning that appears upon reloading a page that would resend a form, and a global and site preference for user-defined style sheets. But OmniWeb 5.5 isn't about features. The real news is that it's now a universal binary, providing better performance on Intel-based Macs, and it's based on a slightly customized version of Apple's WebKit browser engine framework, which means greatly improved Web site compatibility, rendering performance, and stability. In short, OmniWeb should now perform like Safari, which also relies on WebKit. The \$30 OmniWeb 5.5 requires Mac OS X 10.4.6 or later, is a free update for owners of OmniWeb 5.x, and is a 10.1 MB

Interarchy 8.2 Adds Growl Support and More by Adam C. Engst, ace@tidbits.com

Stairways Software has released Interarchy 8.2, the latest version of their highly flexible file transfer tool and network utility. Notable new features include support for Growl notifications (an independent system-wide notification method), file converters that automatically convert files on upload/download, and easier bookmarking via a Bookmark button in every window's status bar. Most amusing, though, is the fact that Interarchy 8.2 now offers spell checking; as the release notes comment dryly, "Just what you always wanted in a file transfer program." There are a slew of other minor enhancements and plenty of bug fixes, and since it's a free upgrade for owners of Interarchy 8.x, it's worth the 8.3 MB.

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and sorting criteria in a single window the way Aqua Data Studio or Microsoft Access does, but its approach using multiple tabs to build the parts of a query works reasonably well. Navicat is currently my choice of the commercial options for the SQL beginner because of its ease of use, intuitive design, and graphical query builder.

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

If you end up spending a lot of time working with MySQL or value the time savings a well-designed interface provides, you may want to consider either of these two commercial products, which come with the added benefit of technical support.

Parallels Desktop Updated for Mac Pro and Leopard by Mark H. Anbinder, mha@tidbits.com

Parallels, Inc. last week announced a release candidate for an update to their Parallels Desktop for Mac, adding compatibility for Apple's new Mac Pro computer and the developer builds of Mac OS X 10.5 Leopard. The "Update RC," a free update for all Parallels Desktop users, adds additional improvements such as improved compatibility for Solaris and OpenBSD 3.8 guest operating systems, and an improved Parallels Tools package. <http://www.parallels.com/en/products/workstation/mac/> The \$80 Parallels Desktop allows owners of Intel-based Macs to run Windows or other Intel-based operating systems in a virtual machine while still running Mac OS X. Apple's Boot Camp solution, still a public beta until Leopard's release, requires the user to restart the Mac to switch between Mac OS X and Windows operating systems. Parallels offers a 15-day free trial of their software. (Don't forget that you can save \$10 off the cost of a Parallels Desktop license using a coupon from Joe Kissell's "Take Control of Running Windows on a Mac" ebook, rendering the ebook free.)

<http://www.apple.com/macosx/bootcamp/> > < <http://www.take-controlbooks.com/windows-on-mac.html?14@@lpt=TRK-0034-TB846> Another option for Intel Mac users who wish to run Windows applications is CrossOver Mac, a forthcoming product from CodeWeavers, Inc., released as a public beta late last month. This application doesn't even require the user to install Windows. Based on Wine, which re-implements the Windows developer APIs, CrossOver Mac lets Mac users run many, though not all, Windows applications in their own separate windows under Mac OS X.

<http://www.codeweavers.com/products/cxmac/>
<http://www.winehq.com/>

Regardless of the front end selected, Mac users at last have access to the power and efficiency of a full relational database. When spreadsheets no longer meet your needs, it might be time to give MySQL a try.

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