

P.M.U.G

October's

Bi Monthly

Hello and welcome to the October issue....

of the P.M.U.G newsletter.

The past months have seen yet another Open Day which was held in Exeter. If you were unlucky enough to miss it you can catch up with events in the article from our member Athos who co-organised the event. We would like to thank Mac Ace for supporting the event by setting up a great stall which included the display of one classic Mac from the mid eighties. Not surprisingly it was in full working order ! And it didn't even look out of place next to all the modern machines.

We are pleased to announce the next Open Day which will take place on November 13, 1999 in the Noah's Ark pub in Plymouth (town center off Royal Parade). The event will include our AGM, so could all members please attend one hour before the scheduled start.

At the moment the club has not got a functioning committee, so committee positions are available and anybody interested should contact the Secretary before the event.

Also if you have any questions regarding the club or its running please do not hesitate to ask at the time. This is your chance to speak up.

We hope to make this event a big one, as we will be able to have a prime location in Plymouth's City Centre - so any additional advertising in your local area would be much appreciated !

The Open Day will commence at 11am , members should be in the pub no later than 10.15 am for the AGM.

If you have any further queries, please contact us ! Let's try and make this one the best Open Day yet !

Enjoy your newsletter

Paul

MacOs 9

When Apple began seeding final candidates of Mac OS 8.6 to developers they announced that builds of Sonata would follow almost immediately; they've surely delivered. Sonata, currently version numbered as Mac OS 8.9, is destined to be one of the most exciting releases of the Mac OS since the debut of the Macintosh Operating System back in 1984. Sonata currently packs over 50 new features and advancements to the Mac OS, some more notable than others. Because of the wealth of information surrounding Sonata, this report represents the first in a series of segmented reports on Apple's Next-Generation OS. We'll start with the juicy stuff first:

Multiple Users

While Sonata does not represent a true multi-user environment like linux or Mac OS X Server, its multiple user capabilities can be closely compared to that of Windows NT. Like NT, Sonata allows multiple users to be created and managed on a single machine or over the network, but does not allow more than one user to log in and access content simultaneously -- the defining factor between a true multi-user system, and a system with limited multi-user capabilities.

Upon installation Sonata appears extremely similar to Mac OS 8.6, and as a single user environment. Sonata's multi-user capabilities are optional and may be activated via the "Multiple Users" Control Panel, which operations in conjunction with a series of Mac OS Extension files. Internally, Multiple Users is commonly referenced as At Ease 7.0, and for that reason carries the version number Multiple Users 7.0.

An Individual User Preference Panel

Sonata automatically designates the machine "owner," which is assigned via ownership preferences or through the Mac OS Setup Assistant, as the machine's administrator of sorts. In order to activate a multiple user environment, the owner must simply access the Multiple Users control panel and create an

additional user. When creating a user under Sonata, the administrator has an overwhelming number of customisation options to choose from. Administrators may restrict or select certain applications and files for each individual user, or they can choose to allow each user universal access.

Administrators may disable a user's access to CD/DVD-ROM titles and External Storage Media, the Chooser, Shared Folders, Control Panels, and custom Apple Menu Items. Additionally, administrators may select printing and login preferences for individual users, as well as manage other users accessibility to a certain users documents. Administrators may also create other administrators whom are capable of managing user accounts.

Once a user has been saved an additional options panel becomes available for setting Global User Options. Under the Global Options panel, administrators may set a custom welcome message and may enable an option that will allow voice verification for individual users, as opposed to a manual login. Administrators may also create a custom list of DVD and CD-ROM titles that may be accessible to certain users who have access restrictions placed on CD/DVD ROM titles.

GlobalOptions for Multiple Users

Under the Global Options there lies additional options for a guest user, automatic log out or screen locks for user accounts that have been idle for a certain period of time, and network user account accessibility. The multiple user login screen may also be altered to either show a list of all users on the system (with custom user icons) and allow individuals to select their name from the list upon login, or require that they manually entered their username followed by their password in a standard login dialog; ideal for systems with a large number of users. As soon as a system contains more than one user, a few things will happen: A "Logout" option will be made available under the Special

or via command-L in the Finder. Logging out of Sonata does not restart the computer but rather quits the Finder and brings forth a login dialog, which is the second thing that will happen. Another user may then log into the system, or the system may be shut down. When the system is shut down or restarted, the user login dialog will always appear before the Finder is launched in order to know which preference set to load. Each user under Sonata will not only retain their own custom desktop and file/application preferences, but they will also be able to save their own internet, Finder, and appearance preferences, among other things. It's also worthy to note that the Multiple Users control panel will replace the need for the traditional Users & Groups control panel, as these features have been consolidated into the Multiple Users options.

The consolidation of Users & Groups into the new Multiple Users control panel is just one of many optimisation and simplification moves that have been made in Sonata, with more that may follow before the release turns beta. See further down in this report for additional information on this subject.

Apple's VoiceVerification Setup Assistant Voice Authentication

As mentioned earlier, one of Sonata's multiple user capabilities is an option for voice authentication in place of a manual login. Once the administrator has enabled this feature, each user may then activate Apple's new "Voice Password Setup Assistant" and begin to create their own voiceprint to be used as a voice login password.

In order to create a voiceprint, the user must record a certain phrase 4 times. The phrase, which will in turn be the users voice password, can be user specific, but it must be more than 3 words; Apple recommends 5 to 6 words. After 4 recordings, the user may test their voice password. From there forth the user should be able to log into Sonata by simply selecting or typing in their name and then speaking their voice password phrase. Apple's new voice password software is based on version 1.0 of a "Voice Verification" extension. Currently there is no word on whether or not this is 100 percent Apple technology, or if it is being co-developed with another party. In its current state the software appears to have some implementation problems with Sonata,

but as a separate entity and technology it appears to function pretty impressively.

Sherlock II (Sherlock 3.0):

The Sherlock II application design its self appears to be a twist between QuickTime 4.0's interface and a NeXT Step application, not too attractive if you ask us. The Sherlock II interface has been consolidated into a single window interface. Searching options and results now appear in the same window as opposed to search results loading in a results window as they do in the current version of Sherlock.

Sherlock II will feature support for Sherlock plug-in sets and LDAP servers, allowing users to search for people over the internet via sites like dap.bigfoot.com, idap.four11.com and idap.yahoo.com. Sherlock II also features full support for eCommerce sites like Amazon.com, eBay, Music Boulevard and Barnes & Noble. Sherlock search results for eCommerce sites have columns built in to display prices and availability of merchandise that matches the users search criteria.

Apple has finally included a direct key command to Sherlock's Internet search option, rather than making users first launching Sherlock and then having them manually switch from a local search to an Internet search. Command-H in the Finder, and also available from the Finder's File menu, will now perform this task on the fly. Sherlock is currently being seeded with search sets for Files, Internet, People, Apple, Miscellaneous, Money, News, Reference, Shopping and Sports.

Software Update 1.0:

Apple's Software Update 1.0, is a control panel and extension combination, apparently based on technology by Mindvision Software. The Software Updater functions extremely similar to the QuickTime Updater application that shipped with QuickTime 4.0 beta and has proven to be extremely useful. Software Updater will allow Sonata users to check for System and System component updates over the Internet. So for instance, if Apple chooses to release a bug fix release of the Apple Menu Items control panel, Software Updater will detect that the version available on Apple's servers is newer than the version installed the users machine and will prompt the user asking if he or she would like to download and install the new version.

Software Updater also has a handy scheduling feature that is almost identical to Sherlock's index scheduling. Users will be able to schedule on which days and at what time to have Software Updater automatically check Apple's servers for software updates. Another option built into the application will make certain that Software Updater prompts the user before downloading or installing any new software.

Taking just these few key points into consideration I believe that MacOs 9 will be a worth Wylie update to the MacOs especially if you are running a pre power P.C machine. But anyone running a G3 machine e.g anyone with an iMac might want to Waite for the up coming release of MacOs x. Some time in the first quarter of the year 2000.

Watch this space for an up coming article on MacOs x Next issue

Members articles

The Wacom Pen Partner

After struggling with a mouse in graphical applications for three years I decided to take the plunge and buy a graphics tablet. There are several models on the market from companies such as Wacom and Calcomp, who provide "low cost" versions right up to top spec graphic artists' models that cost several hundreds of pounds. Not being a graphic designer, I went for the cheaper option - a Wacom Pen Partner. The tablet is A6 in size and comes in two versions, ADB for older Macs and USB for the new Desktop systems, iMac and new Powerbook. Set up was the usual Mac ease, Insert disc, double click on the installer icon and 15 seconds later it was over

Then it was just a case of switching off my machine and plugging in the ADB connector (which has a through port not necessary for the USB version). Switch on and a small LED lights on the tablet, indicating power to the tablet.

As soon as the desktop appeared I had control of the cursor with the pen. Its incredibly intuitive to use, especially with the MacOS. Drag and drop becomes a real pleasure and the pen comes with a button that is pre-configured as a double click, making folder navigation extremely quick.

The pen is cordless making it incredibly easy to use it has two modes, drawing - where you use the pen as normal and Eraser mode. On the top of the pen is a 'virtual' eraser, you just turn the pen upside down and it turns into eraser mode. Both modes have 256 levels of pressure sensitivity giving exceptional control. The tablet has a transparent cover under which pictures can be inserted for tracing

The eraser mode is supported in most graphics and text applications, in some cases a plug-in is required.

The package came with Meta Creations Painter Classic, a fabulous program in itself. I initially bought the pen for photo retouching, but I've found myself drawing and painting, unleashing a creative side I didn't realise I had!

If you are considering getting a tablet, I can definitely recommend the Wacom, at £82 pounds including VAT and delivery, it offers excellent value for money especially considering the excellent bundled software it can be used in practically any application and usually improves productivity by speeding up mouse driven tasks. Anything remotely

graphical will benefit from the use of a pen based input system.



New User

A YOUNG MAC USER

My name is Michael Miller and I'm a young Mac user I've been asked to write a brief explanation of what I think about the mac.

The mac is important to me for school work and various other projects. I use a Windows PC at school and personally I don't like to, because their too complex and their not as reliable as Macs. I spend quite a lot of my time on my Mac because I enjoy what my mac can do for me. I'm trying to get other people interested in the mac world at school.

By michael miller
Aged 12

The Exeter open day

It was a pleasant surprise for two local residents, recently to find the minority market Apple Macintosh computer has a substantial and rapidly growing family in the South West, and particularly in and around Thorverton and Silverton. (Have you seen Silverton's super Web page created on and by an Apple?)

Having been 'volunteered' to arrange an Exeter venue and speaker on behalf of the relatively newly established Plymouth Mac User Group (PMUG) which, although headquartered in Plymouth, actually covers all of Devon and Cornwall, the pair were agreeably astonished at a turnout of nearly 40 enthusiastic Apple Mac users,

supported by two equally enthusiastic dealers, one of whom travelled all the way up from Bodmin (the other from Ashburton) to display and demonstrate a selection of the very latest Apple desktop (PowerMac and iMac) and Apple laptop (Powerbook) technology, together with a 1980's vintage Classic Macintosh still going strong and in daily use.

Speaker, Nigel Ash from Totnes, who describes himself as lawyer, journalist and semi-professional pipe smoker, captivated his audience with a good humoured history and non-technical introduction to the Internet, together with the pro's and con's of Explorer and Outlook versus Netscape and Navigator; plus the pitfalls and problems of each of

Any more mid-Devon AppleMac's out there? Don't be shy. Please make yourself known, via courtesy the Editor of *Focus*, with your address/phone number and/or e-mail, and we'll keep you posted. Don't put it off - bite the Apple and do it NOW!

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