

# About this Particular Mac



## Welcome

to About This Particular Macintosh 1.05

August 2nd, 1995

ATTENTION! PLEASE NOTICE that ATPM has arrived at the beginning of the month! In an effort to improve my on-time ranking to somewhere ahead of that of the national airlines, I will begin printing the actual date of publication. (See above) Hopefully, this will keep me on schedule.

The graphic re-design that's been going on since issue 1.02 is finally nearing an end, and with the changes in this issue, ATPM is now ready to grow. The call for personal submissions continues, but I'd like to add a broad request for reviewers, feature writers, and columnists. Please see the endnotes for guidelines.

While some headlines are in final form (see eMail) others, like the one at the top of this page, are not, and should be considered subject to change. If you happen to be really attached to anything I've discarded from previous issues, write and let me know.

In this issue you'll find a number of changes. There's a new column dedicated to bringing you the news in a sort of timely, not really complete, and very opinionated fashion. The guest column has become "Segments: Slices of the Mac Life," where I'll publish stories from readers about their experiences with Apple and their computers. And, unfortunately, I must announce the loss of Something to Talk About, gone to greener pastures. You will find, however, my usual column on real life computing and (finally!) the long awaited feature on the three online services I frequent. We also have a full complement of eMail, and the Contest, of course.

Remember, to navigate ATPM, use the Contents menu (on the menu bar above), the horizontal scroll bar (below) or the buttons at the end of each chapter. Thanks for reading.

**RD Novo, editor**  
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# eMail



Send your comments to: [rdnovo@eworld.com](mailto:rdnovo@eworld.com)  
All your mail becomes the property of Only Boy  
Productions & may be edited for length & clarity

## Ingrate. ;)

GOT THE PRIZES -- thanks! Now I just need to win something valuable to put in it. ;) Great, you've told the world what the book really is, and now if anyone breaks in here they'll know just where to search. ;) Good thing nobody reads your mag! ::ducking:: Thanks for the laces...I'm not sure they were worth the added long distance call, but I'll figure out a use for 'em. (No matter how embarrassing to the laces or myself it is.) Thanks again. :) May I enter future contests, or are the laces enough to tide me over?

**David Freitas**, *America Online*

Readers with a good memory will remember that Mr. Freitas received a safe book and a pair of Chester Cheetah™ shoelaces for winning the ATPM contest a few issues back. David, if it's any consolation, I continue to own a safe book much like yours. Now everyone knows I have one, too. And yes, past contest winners can enter future contests. (This is a change in policy.) In the case of a tie, however, the unknown will probably win the resulting coin toss. <grin> Oh, and for the folk who don't understand, if you turn your monitor sideways (turning your head might be easier) the semicolon-parenthesis pairs sprinkled throughout David's eMail (and my title) look like smart aleck smiley faces. It means we're all really friends. (Right, David?)

## Yowza, indeed.

COOL LOOKING LAYOUT, elegant but not boring choice of typeface and color, well-written and informative articles, excellent choice of topics, impressively humble honesty, honor for others doing the same kind of thing, and great story telling! AOK stuff, IMHO. And all for free!! Yowza!

**Dyanee**, *America Online*

I find myself humbled before your praise. Please tell your friends. <grin>

## Do you like my logo?

I LOVE YOUR magazine! i like your only boy productions logo!

**Tigdn**, *America Online*

▀ Gee, thanks for the kind words about Only Boy. Actually, coming up with that logo is what really got me started on ATPM. I made the logo one day while I was avoiding my thesis, and fell in love with it. But I needed something to put it on. My high school newsletter? Hm. T-shirts? A book? I wasn't sure. Then I put two and two together and decided to publish my own 'zine, ostensibly for the sole purpose of displaying my cool logo. Glad you like it. Hey, would anyone want a t-shirt, if I made one? I wonder how cheaply I could get it done here... <bye, I'm off to plot and plan>

## Something to write in about

I DOWNLOADED YOUR issues of ATPM, and I'd just like to say that I love your e-zine. The personal touch you put on it is great, and I really like the "Something to Talk About" feature.

**Frohicke**, *America Online*

▀ Alas, Something to Talk About is history. That is, it no longer has a place in ATPM. I enjoyed it very much, and I have received several letters from people who look forward to it each month. Unfortunately, it had to be sacrificed on the altar of relevance. While I consider the thoughts it generates extremely relevant to our lives, it didn't really have anything to do with the Macintosh, now did it? Look for Something to Talk About to resurface in a new Only Boy publication in the near future. (Give me a couple of months.)

## Isla Bella author finds himself

LAST MONTH I discussed the font, **Isla Bella**, and asked any readers who knew who the author was to let me know, too. Well, I received a very nice eMail from the author himself, B. Haber, in which he said, "just checked out your e-zine, and it's a groove. Thought I'd let you know—since you asked—that I'm the author of Isla Bella. If you'd like to mention Isla Bella in your beautiful 'zine, say it's ten bucks and that includes one secret bonus font, and I'll send 'em something extra and great." Yes, you heard him, kids. He used the word, "groove." <grin>



# Introduction

BUT WHY, YOU ask, am I writing a second column for ATPM? Let me tell you a little story, in which the names have been changed to protect a whole bunch of people (me included).

Eleven months ago a call went out from a popular electronic magazine for new writing talent. I wrote a sample something and sent it off posthaste, hoping for a place in this new order. I wanted to write about what happened to my computer in any given month. You know, "I installed a new version of the System software last week and this happened and I had to call these people and you should do it this way instead..." Alas, three versions later the editors and I could still not agree on my writing style, nor on the subject matter. I hung my head and got out of line.

Six months later, a completely different electronic magazine mentioned that it was looking for additional writers for regular columns and feature stories. Bolstered by six months of not submitting my work for review (and hence, not getting rejected) I spruced up my old ideas and sent them in. Again, the editors and I could not agree on a place for my writing or my inclinations. We parted amicably.

And yet, I still thought it was a good idea. The problem was that nobody knew what to do with my personal style. I was too up front, I brought too much of myself into my writing. They didn't know how it would go over, I guess.

Two months later I decided to publish my own writing, my own way. I produce **About This Particular Macintosh** in April, and the cornerstone of my effort was "About My Computer...", the opinionated, personal column I'd been trying to sell for eight months.

The rest is (recent) history.

Well, a short while ago, I received a very nice piece of mail from a former recipient of my writing. They were suitably impressed with my effort on ATPM, and seemed to believe in my ability to produce material people would want to read. In my style. We began talking again.

Not wanting to cannibalize "About My Computer..." from ATPM, I suggested a different kind of article. I wanted to write an opinion piece on what had made the Macintosh news that month. I thought it would be a nice way for readers to get a summary of what had happened, while also receiving a bit of humorous commentary. Alas, they couldn't see how such a column would fit into their magazine, as they already carried news items. We, too, parted amicably.

And yet, I still think it's a good idea. So here you have a sample of all the news that fits...

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# Taking stock

OWN ANY APPLE stock? Right now it's trading at about \$44 a share. If you happened to have bought it a year ago, when it traded for \$26 (give or take) you aren't interested in this article. You've just about doubled your money and I don't much care what happens to you now. Go away. (Yes, I'm jealous.) But if you just recently bought Apple stock—or you bought it the last time it was at \$44—you're more than a little interested in where it'll go from here.

Unfortunately, I don't know.

But thankfully, neither do the well-heeled Wall Street analysts.

[ I should take this opportunity to mention that, well, I *really* don't know anything about where Apple's stock will be going. I have no investment saavy at all, very few investments, and absolutely no credibility as a stock analyst. I'm just the color-commentator here. Take nothing as gospel, no claims as set in stone, and don't quote me. <grin> ]

Apple Computer, Inc. Stock ticker: AAPL. A little over a year ago there seemed to be nothing this small, Cupertino-based, \$9 billion company could do to survive in the personal computer market. What hope could there be, after all? Apple held a miniscule portion of the market, had no presence in business computing, and Microsoft's next operating system (code-named Chicago) was bearing down on America. The death of the Macintosh was much anticipated. That or the outright purchase of Apple by Sony, or Oracle, or AT&T, or IBM, or Motorola... etc.

Then sales of the new PowerPC Macs took off, Apple announced that they were licensing the Mac operating system (now known as the Mac OS), and Chicago was punted to 1995. The stock price began to rise. Analysts began to lift their heads from the Microsoft-Intel trough, putting their noses to the wind. But only recently did they find a favorable scent.

This past Spring Apple told a select few that they would be changing their market strategy. Instead of trying to increase market share (currently just above 8%) they were going to begin paying more attention to keeping their installed base happy. After all, a recent survey by Computer Intelligence InfoCorp noted that 87% of Macintosh users surveyed bought another Mac in 1994, the highest percentage among all personal computer makers. When news of this strategy reached the marketplace, analysts raced to give Apple good marks.

Fidelity Management increased the number of shares it holds to 13 million, or 10% of Apple's outstanding shares. Sanford C. Bernstein & Co. raised Apple stock to "outperform" the overall market, and predicted an eventual stock price of \$60! Smith Barney raised Apple to "buy" from "outperform." Analysts began predicting profits of \$0.90 a share for the third quarter, with revenues above \$2.5 billion. Things were looking up.

The stock hit a high of almost \$49 a share.

(Is it interesting to anyone else that on July 7th, Ian Diery, former Apple executive, chose to sell 30,000 shares of stock he owned? Some guys have all the luck, I guess.)

Then, on July 20th, Apple announced third quarter results. Sales had increased 20%. Twenty million Macs had been sold worldwide, which means that there are twice as many out there as there were in 1992. The company is on target to sell more than \$10 billion worth of stuff this year. (Microsoft sells about \$5.6 billion a year.) And yet, profits were lower than the analysts expected, coming in at **only** \$0.80 a share.

Uh oh. Company's going down the drain. New market approach bites. Windows will squash Apple. The second biggest computer manufacturer is a washout. Phillip Ruppel lowered his estimates of Apple's profitability. Morgan Stanley downgrade Apple to "neutral." Even Smith Barney blinked. Apple stock fell to \$44.

Now, excuse me for being thick-headed, but exactly whose fault is it that Apple didn't meet the predictions made by the analysts?

Like I said, I have very little market know-how.

In the meantime, Windows 95 has been sent to manufacturing. In order to get it out and on the shelves in time for the roll-out date of August 24, they finalized the software on July 14 and mailed it off. No more changes can be made. (Dare we hope that this early date means some of the beta-testing complaints were not fixed in time?)

The Microsoft ball has begun rolling, and you better scramble to get out of the way. What is Apple doing about it? Well, they've finally promised to fight fire with fire. According to an article in MacWEEK, Apple is on the verge of launching a huge advertising blitz to counteract Windows 95's marketing push. No, it's not the brilliant "Been there, done that. Macintosh." campaign envisioned by Robert Hess of MacWEEK, but it promises to finally make us feel like Apple wants to succeed, too. Look for the first ads soon, in your favorite computer publications.

No, there will be no television spots.

Apple executives are predicting an increase in sales and market share during the Christmas season. If they do manage to do that, even in the face of the Windows 95 juggernaut, I think we'll finally start to see things turn around. Maybe the stock will even reach that \$60 mark the analysts predicted. But then, I don't trust their track record.



# Real Life Computing

NOTES FROM THE field. With my thesis still in post-production I find myself at a strange place in my life: the job search. I'm looking for regular pay, but I want to find work in my field—environmentalism. Until my thesis is done and I've completed an internship, however, I cannot claim to have been awarded a Master's Degree. I am, therefore, not eligible for Master's Degree level jobs. The time is coming—hopefully Real Soon Now—when this technicality will be banished by a crisp diploma.

But until then I am forced to fall back on my other skills. Let's see... I can draw, I have a good eye for design, I write well, I'm real friendly, and... oh yeah, I'm a computer wiz. I have real life computing skills that are sure to be valuable to somebody, somewhere.

Or not.

I visited a temp agency about a month ago now, to sign up for temporary work. They were very technically oriented, going so far as to having me fill out my application on a computer. A PC, I noted with dismay. I don't know anything about PCs, but I Tabbed and Entered my way through the non-intuitive forms in a very game fashion, I thought. And praise be! Here under "Computer Experience" was a whole Macintosh section. FileMaker, ClarisWorks, Word, Excel, WordPerfect... I gleefully checked "Experienced" and "Expert" on all of them.

(I am, you know. Expert, that is, not gleeful. I mean, I'm gleeful some of the time... whatever.)

Done with the application, I moved on to the skill testing. Sitting in front of another computer, they started up Windows <shudder> and booted their testing software. Three little buttons appeared: Windows, DOS, Macintosh. The job counselor clicked on Windows and showed me all the programs they had, about twenty by my guess. Then she clicked on DOS and lamented that they only had a few programs. I counted eight. Then she clicked on the Macintosh button, and the list was blank. Not that I was surprised. After all, I was sitting at a PC.

Now, if I'd been sitting at any of the many recent Macs that take the DOS card I would have expected Mac applications, DOS applications, and yes, even Windows applications. But I felt it wasn't my place to tell them this.

So I tested on Word 6.0 for Windows. I got 100% (Expert) on mouse skills. I got exactly 0% (Fumbling Idiot) on keyboard shortcut skills.

They haven't found work for me yet.

A week later I was reading the classifieds and came across an ad for a computer lab assistant for one of the public school districts. Macintosh experience necessary. Part-time. Perfect! I can do the Mac part with my eyes closed, and being part time it would still give me the opportunity to write and complete my internship requirement.

I applied for the job, and I made a great first impression. I'd just picked up an application from the secretary at the school district's main office when I heard a voice down the hall cry out in despair, "How do I print my page sideways?"

Seeing my chance, I spoke up. "What kind of computer is it?" I called.

A man walked out of his office, "A Macintosh."

"We don't know this man," the secretary offered to him.

In ten seconds I had his page printing sideways. He thanked me, we chatted, and I left. A few days later I went in for my first interview. No problem. I was a little nervous because I had no work experience, but the human resources woman was very nice and asked me all sorts of good questions about my volunteer experiences instead. I got a call for a second interview at the actual school, a junior high in the area.

I was more than just a little nervous this time. I would be meeting with the computer teacher—most likely an expert—and the principal. I had no professional consulting experience, but I hoped that knowing the computer and the software inside out would count for something.

Sure did. After fifteen minutes of telling them about my computer expertise they changed the subject. Turns out that, while knowing computers is a bonus, they really want a teacher's assistant to deal with the children, the grunt work, the inventory, the slow teachers, and all that stuff. What can you expect for a part-time job at \$6.75 an hour, seven hours a day, with no benefits?

<think, think, think>

Hold it!

My brain started sending out distress signals, and the following took place inside my head...

Job = part-time

Job = part-time benefits (i.e. none)

Job = part-time pay (i.e. lousy)

Job = 7 hours/day

Hm. Full-time = 8 hours/day. So...

Job = full-time hours/day (or at least close enough for government work)

Job ≠ full-time benefits (and I don't plan to get married just for benefits)

Job ≠ full-time pay (seven hours a day for 180 school days is \$8,505 before taxes)

Hello? I thanked them nicely and left. My guess is they'll get somebody's grandmother to do the work, and she'll be very grateful for the opportunity to be out of the house and make a little

extra pocket money. There should be a law banning frivolous classified ads.

So I'm still jobless, but not for lack of real life computer skills. I'm just overqualified for the market. I don't know PCs (I consider that an overqualification) and I know too much about Macs to get paid for it.

<sigh>

No, don't worry. I won't start charging for ATPM.

I'm just going to go beat the bushes for environmental jobs again.

(Something of a dismaying idiom, that, for someone in my field.)

IN OTHER NEWS this past month, we had a freaky brown out in our apartment building on one of those 108° nights. Tiffany and I were exploring her new account on America Online when, all of a sudden, everything died. The air conditioner shut off, all the lights died (except one in the bathroom), and we were bathed in darkness. Except... the computer was still on. I blinked, like a deer caught in the glow of a monitor, and stared stupidly at my power strip.

You see, I have the coolest power strip on the planet. It's a Radio Shack model that they don't make anymore, and it turns all of my peripherals on when I turn the computer on. I hit the power button on the keyboard and the computer comes to life, my modem blinks on, the speakers power up, my CD-ROM starts spinning, my SyQuest hums to life, and my DeskWriter does that thump-thump thing that means it's ready to go. And with System 7.5.1 I can turn the whole kaboodle **off** with the keyboard too.

I knew it was really cool. But I sat there, my girlfriend gone to check fuses, staring at my power strip. Wow, I thought, it's like an uninterruptible power supply (that's UPS to folks without a dictionary handy).

Ten seconds later it died, too.

I sat in the complete darkness, like a deer locked in a small, dark room.

Maybe it's just a power strip, I conceded to myself.

Turns out that only half the circuits were dead, and those only part-way. We were willing to wait it out until we discovered the fridge was on one of the dead circuits, and then a frantic phone call to Mike, repair-god, made everything got better.

The power strip still works, too.



# Lessons from Dove

by E. A. Boase

ONCE UPON A not very long time ago, there was this really cute little PowerBook 145 named ~Dove~. Now this little Mac's owner was a recent college graduate struggling to survive at a first job in a very small town.

Because of a certain lack of buckage as well as a decidedly small number of available apartments, the little Mac's owner took the first apartment she could find that didn't have an adjoining wall with some little old landlady's house.

The apartment was a shadowy, damp place, and—except for the rotten floor in the kitchen—seemed safe enough for the little ~Dove~ and her owner. After all, computers are not often kept in kitchens.

Now the owner, although a very busy young woman, tried to be responsible and back up her data every couple of months or so. She had heard dire warnings of hard drive crashes and other serious ailments, so now and then, as the mood occurred to her, she backed up her financial statements and put the disk on one side of her desk.

One day, the young woman arrived home to find that the evil fixit man John (names have been changed to protect the computer illiterate) had been fixing the drain in the shower upstairs. She knew this, you see, because when she arrived home, she found her ~Dove~ under what was left of her drop ceiling, as well as all the stuff that had been clogged in the shower drain. Three feet further to the left, and she wouldn't have had to water her potted tree. Or fertilize it, for that matter.

Unfortunately, both ~Dove~ and her disk of financial records wandered off to a higher Mac plane that very afternoon. But, strangely enough, when the owner discovered the disaster, she learned a few obscenities that she didn't know she knew.

The moral of this story, good readers, is (a) back up your financial records; (b) don't live on the first floor; (c) keep a lawyer under your bed for just such emergencies; and (d) listen to yourself very carefully when a disaster strikes—you might learn new words!

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**E. A. Boase** is just an average kind of photographer in an average city in the Midwest. She ain't rich or famous or anything, she just loves Macs. Still, she'd like to hear from you about ~Dove~ at Bethany13@aol.com This article is © 1995 by E. A. Boase.



**Segments: Slices of the Mac Life** is a regular feature where we publish the stories, artwork, and commentary of readers who have something to say about life with a Mac. Please consider writing. Opinions expressed in Segments are not necessarily those of this particular Macintosh.



# Online Services

SO YOU NEED a place to live online. You're looking for a spot to hang your mailbox. Hunting for that community that just seems to call your name. Or maybe the information superhighway comes too close to your current plot of land. Look no further. I've tried three of the biggest and I've made up my mind.

Welcome (finally), to my study of the online services I frequent. A little history. I began my online life with an account on CompuServe back during my college years, and for a very long time my loyalty lay with their extensive libraries and forums. I used a 2400 baud modem (lickety-split fast in those days) and I navigated the command line interface like a pro. Then, as excited as any other Mac user, I signed up to the fledgling America Online (AOL). They promised an environment with graphics and buttons and menus and everything I'd come to love about the Mac. And they delivered, but in those days they didn't have the content to overcome their friendly but weak interface. Coming from CompuServe I was disappointed in the terrible message board software AOL used. I couldn't get a conversation going, and I couldn't follow a topic. I never got to know people the way I had on CompuServe. I so wanted America Online to succeed that I suffered for several months before finally giving up and cancelling my account. Three years later I renewed for business reasons, and discovered that it had changed significantly. They had a lot more content and a lot more people, but the message boards still suffered. So I stuck to CompuServe for my community. Then I signed up to eWorld. No, I wasn't a beta-tester, nor even a charter member, I signed on after it had already received poor reviews on the unfinished nature of the place. But I fell madly in love with it.

Alas, this is not a love affair review. I'm going to try to give an accounting of the ways in which I use these online services, what each is good at and where each fails to deliver on interface issues, eMail capabilities, Internet access, content, and cost. Wish me luck.

## Interface

Let's get it out of the way. **CompuServe**, even with the CompuServe Information Manager (CIM), their graphical interface software, looks plain ugly. Certain areas, People Magazine (GO PEOPLE), Sports Illustrated (GO SI), the Entertainment Drive (GO EDRIVE), have attempted to introduce spiffy graphics in the style of America Online, but the colors are garish, the images never quite meet the edges, and, well, it's just hard to look at. Clearly meant for Windows and handed down to Macintosh users. You get some buttons (but sometimes you have to double-click

<b>CompuServe</b>	> ?
<b>America Online</b>	Hollywood
<b>eWorld</b>	Friendly town

and sometimes you don't, and it's never clear which), you get some pictures (no cool online picture/news stories like they have on AOL and eWorld), and you get some menus (most are boxes with a text list you pick from by clicking), but the command line prompt appears all too often on this service. The "graphical interface" seems an afterthought. There is a promised re-drawing of the interface slated for sometime next year, but in the meantime you're stuck with this.

On the bright side, CompuServe does offer the best message boards of all the online services. Each forum has a message board, and each board has a series of sections devoted to certain topics. Within those sections you can post a message, or you can add your message on the end of another. Thus, you could respond to the first message, or you could respond to someone who had responded to that first message. This branching, threaded system makes it very easy to follow a conversation, and to keep clear who is responding to whom. While it may be difficult to get there, you can have clear, intelligent, logical conversations on CompuServe's message boards.

**America Online's** newest software (version 2.6 for the Macintosh) is "very nice looking." The original graphical online service, they've made good use of digitized pictures—my favorite being the sunset-jumbo-jet on the travel screen—and good use of colorful buttons. Plus, the individually owned areas, such as ABC Television or the MTV area, are allowed to customize their graphics in any way they please. The result is a gorgeous, varied service.

And yet, to my taste, the AOL interface is overkill. Where they were once concerned with a graphical interface in order to make the experience easier for users, they seem now to have been consumed by the multimedia monster. Everything is overblown, and sometimes it takes five or ten minutes to download all the custom graphics for an area (again, see ABC and MTV). Then you'll find an area where all they've done is make a menu list, much like CompuServe's.

And they own the single most confusing, unintuitive, hard-to-follow messaging system on the planet. (Well, along with eWorld.) You can post a new message, or you can post a message in reply to a new message, but that's it. So if you like the original message, but you think someone posted a stupid reply, you have to reply to the guy you liked. Though you could always just send eMail to the twit involved. Communication suffers, as a result.

**eWorld** came on the scene a year ago using AOL's interface software, but they took a different spin on the graphical side. The main screen, instead of being a bunch of buttons, looks like a small town, with buildings for each general topic. And each vendor area follows the same guidelines as to presentation, icons, and format, making the services consistent and very simple to navigate, even in an area you've never visited before. Everything works like a Mac should. With the new version of their software (eWorld 1.1) they've added some nice touches not available on AOL. For example, some areas have specialized screens with buttons that open up articles, like the eWorld Weekly News area. eWorld now has an interactive calendar available for download each week (it takes less than a minute) which displays all the conferences for that week. The times are modified to the local time by your software, and conferences are highlighted if they're going on now. There's a mail assistant to automatically sort and reply to your eMail. And so on. Unfortunately, despite all the neat stuff and the improved interface, eWorld suffers at the hands of the same message board software America Online has.

Nevertheless, eWorld, to my design-oriented eye, is the most pleasing of the three, a return to a cleaner interface than AOL's, and yet simpler and more fun than CompuServe's. CompuServe comes in a close second on the strength of its message board software.

## eMail Options

I have always used my online services for eMail, and no matter what else can be accomplished online, it is the single most important function I require. All of the services can send eMail to and from the internet (and hence to and from each other). All of them let you save the eMail you receive (though only CompuServe has an easy way to save a copy of what you send, too). All of them let you send files to other people on the same service, though none of them let you send files to other internet addresses. (They say they're working on it, and in the meantime you can convert your file to text—using BinHex 4.0—and send it as a mail message, only it's 103 pages long and the person on the other end might not know how to decode it...)

<b>CompuServe</b>	Costs extra!
<b>America Online</b>	Bare bones
<b>eWorld</b>	Very cool stuff

**CompuServe** has a very powerful eMail system. The address book is very flexible and easy to use, letting you group people into bunches by topic. eMail can be sent to a fax, to a telex machine (I've actually used this option!), via the postal service (they print it out and stamp it for you), over the internet or internally within CompuServe. You can send files, you can get receipts, you can do pretty much anything you want with it. There's even an option (that neither of the other services provides) to automatically save a copy of any mail you send, something I used to use all the time.

But I don't use CompuServe for my eMail anymore. You see, they charge you to send eMail over the Internet. And if someone sends a piece of mail to you from the Internet, they charge you to read it. Who thinks this is a good idea? Each piece of mail is 15¢ and believe me, that adds up to a lot when you deal with the amount of mail I do. Even if it didn't, where do they get the gall to charge us? The other two services let you send and receive as much mail as you want for your monthly fee. Having to pay for eMail is the main reason I stopped using CompuServe.

I briefly considered using **America Online** instead. But their mail system is terrible. The address book is limited to one list of people, with no place to make notes about who they are. They call it "Flash Mail," instead of just eMail. There are no simple commands like, "Save Mail to Disk." Instead you have to "Save to Flash Mail." There are six icons down one side of the eMail screen, and I've never been completely clear on what they do. Plus, when you've composed mail offline, and you go online, you have to run a "Flash Session" to send your mail while you're online. There is no "Send Mail in Out Box" command like both CompuServe and eWorld have. I guess they're being consistent, but it irks me. Especially having come from CompuServe. Oh, and there's no way to save the mail you send out. That really bugs me.

**eWorld**, unfortunately, followed right in AOL's footsteps. When I first signed up they were using a clone of AOL's software, and the eMail system was terrible. I stayed with eWorld because of the interface, but I suffered for it. At least mail was free with my membership fee. However, just recently eWorld released a new version of their software (eWorld 1.1). Still based on AOL's software, they have made some marked improvements that are not available to AOL subscribers. For example, you can now have several address books. I have one for people I write to, one for ATPM Subscribers, one for those pesky ATPM Announcements, another for companies I do business with, and a last one for people from high school (I publish my high school newsletter in between breakfast and showering). You can create several folders for your

mail files, move files between them, replying and deleting, sorting mail by date, name, or whether you've already read it, and all right from within the application. I used to have to move files to different folders manually, in the Finder. And then there's the Mail Assistant. This is a portion of the new software that you can direct to read your incoming mail and file it, reply to it, ignore it, or delete it, all depending on what is contained in the subject, on who it comes from, or on the text within the message. For busy eMail boxes, this is an incredible tool. Combine the ability to have eWorld retrieve your mail unattended (AOL can do this one, too) along with the Mail Assistant (unique to eWorld) and you have the best eMail management system available.

These are very cool improvements to the eWorld software that confirm my decision to stick with eWorld for my mail—I now think it's the best system out there—but they are still missing a few key features. You still can't send mail by postal service or to a fax, and you still can't save a copy of mail you send. (Instead you have to go online and open up a copy of each message you've sent, then save it to your hard drive.)

The mail assistant, multiple address books, and multiple saved mail folders clearly push eWorld ahead of America Online in this area. While these features may even have pushed eWorld past CompuServe (which does not have these capabilities) the latter shoots itself in the foot by charging for eMail when nobody else sees the need.

## Internet

All three services offer access to the Internet now, and I've played with them all. I've even compared them to my direct-to-Internet SLIP account. And you know what? They actually

measure up. Most of the services offered by these three are at least on par with what I can get through a direct intravenous feed to the Internet. Of course, I'm still using a modem. If you're hard-wired to the 'net, then you have something of a speed advantage over the rest of us. Both America Online and CompuServe offer 28.8 baud modem connections in certain (currently very limited) areas. At this point eWorld only offers 14.4 baud connections. Hardwired computers can access the Internet at two to four times that speed. Internet services, especially the World Wide Web, require a lot of time to download graphics and information, though they are very useable at 14.4. On the basis of connection speed, CompuServe and America Online rush ahead of eWorld.

All of the Internet options offered by the three services are pretty much the same. No, CompuServe doesn't have a Mac Web browser yet, but they will soon. America Online and eWorld both present much the same approach to Internet access, seeing as they use the same software. All three let you access newsgroups, file transfer protocol, and gopher services. eWorld's interface is cleaner and easier to navigate, but America Online's Internet areas have been around a lot longer, and their members (citizens?) know more about what they're doing. But once you're up to speed you'll appreciate eWorld's easier screens.

You won't go wrong with any choice, but you'll appreciate the speed of AOL. Assuming, of course, that your modem is a zippy 28.8 model. If you're getting a new modem now, don't get anything slower than this. It's just not worth saving fifty bucks.

<b>CompuServe</b>	No web available
★ <b>America Online</b>	Fast and now!
<b>eWorld</b>	All there but slow

## Content

After you've done all the stuff you know you want to do, what else is there? You've sent your eMail, you've cruised the Internet, you've gazed at the pretty interfaces. You just want to browse... how much do these services offer? What places can you explore? How much research can you do? What resources are available? Medical questions? Advice on throwing a frisbee?

★ <b>CompuServe</b>	More than God
<b>America Online</b>	Slightly less
<b>eWorld</b>	A quick survey

This is where eWorld is outmatched and outclassed. There is no contest. **CompuServe** crushes every other online service in the business. They have more files, more forums, more people, more databases, more references, more news sources... more of everything you might ever want or need or think you might want ten years from now. And with better message board software, it's easier to ask questions and get information. **America Online** is not far behind, mind you, but their offerings seem to be much more shallow. You get references and resources, but they aren't quite the power tools that CompuServe offers. Instead, AOL excels at providing popular culture direct to your screen. Here you'll find Entertainment Weekly, MTV, ABC Online, *BusinessWeek*, the Atlantic Monthly, the New York Times, and Tower Records, among others. No other service has quite this collection. **eWorld**, alas, has only a few of each category. They seem to be concentrating on building an eclectic collection of services, rather than a comprehensive one. Hopefully they'll get a clue, soon. They do have exclusive access to Apple Computer and Apple's question and answer board, and they offer access to ZiffNet/Mac, the people who publish MacWEEK and MacUser. But a few exclusives does not a service make.

AOL and eWorld both offer access to the World Wide Web, which broadens their scope considerably, allowing subscribers to access almost any computer related company, most other companies, all the entertainment and news you could desire, research materials, and so on. But Web surfing can take a long time and run up your bill considerably.

While it does not yet have a Macintosh Web Browser, CompuServe offers many more choices within the service's boundaries, and beats AOL with both the breadth of its offerings and the easy message posting system. No better place to get answers to your questions.

## Cost

Face it, if you spend a lot of time online, you'll be racking up huge (and I mean HUGE) bills. If you spend three minutes online each month, you won't. Doesn't really matter how much each service charges. (Unless, of course, you live outside of the US or Canada, in which case you can pay almost double what continental customers pay.) For example, CompuServe's software allows you do write message board postings offline, then connect and send them as you would with eMail. This is much cheaper than writing your posting while you're connected. Neither AOL nor eWorld allow you to do this. In fact, because of their terrible messaging systems, users of these services tend to spend more time in conference... and time is money. The charges you incur will really depend on how you use each system.

That said, **America Online** charges \$9.95 and offers five hours of online time a month. Each additional hour beyond five is charged at \$2.95 an hour.

**eWorld** charges \$8.95 a month, and offers 4 free hours. They then charge \$2.95 an hour.

**CompuServe** currently charges different amounts depending on your modem speed, and different amounts depending on what kinds of services you want to use. It's all very confusing, but don't despair. On September 10th—according to their recent press release—CompuServe will begin charging \$9.95 per month for five free hours and access to "virtually all of CompuServe's services." I don't know what that means, and they weren't saying. Additional hours will be charged at \$2.95.

All prices will be comparable to each other once CompuServe joins the fray in September, so, while cost should enter into it when deciding whether to go online or not, it shouldn't play much of a role in deciding which service to do it with. Use the other criteria mentioned above.

## Overall

So which one do I like best? More importantly, which one do I think you should stick with or move to? eWorld, without a doubt. Yeah, I know I'll get a lot of hate mail for this, but it's the better system. In fact, the only thing not going for eWorld is the length and breadth of its content, and that can only get better from here on out. Apple needs to do a little marketing and recruiting, but from what I've seen online, they know that. With eWorld 1.1 they have the best interface of the lot, and they know that, too.

<b>CompuServe</b>	Big and bulky
<b>America Online</b>	Pretty slick
<b>eWorld</b>	Cool and easy

(Does this remind you of anything? Maybe that pesky Mac vs. Windows thing? Is America Online the Microsoft of the online world? The provider of lowest-common-denominator services for the masses? Maybe not, but you heard it here first.)

But wait, I said this wasn't going to be a love affair review. Sorry. (Sort of.)

**CompuServe** has a huge number of subscribers, a huge amount of information, and with the addition of Internet resources, a huge number of files and stuff. In addition, their forums and message boards are the best for providing you with friends and a sense of community. If you want any of that, don't look anywhere else, CompuServe is the beast for you.

If you want the latest and the greatest, the cutting edge of online services, with all of America online (complete with scrawny teens, unsavory types, moms and pops, grandfathers, merchants, and celebrities), then you want **America Online**. More and more, this has become a service representative of America-at-large. It's easy, slick, fast, and will provide endless hours of browsing for you and your loved ones.

eWorld, on the other hand, is better suited for Mac loyalists, quirky people, women (I didn't say that first), and people (like me) who think having America right outside their window is enough for them. It's friendly and capable.

All three services will offer you a certain amount of free time for signing up, and that remains the best way to shop for an online service. 'Cause you have to remember, this isn't a review. This is only opinion. And you'll have yours.



# 550 Reasons to Love Apple

by Mark Thomas

SO IT'S LIKE this: My brother calls Apple and asks them how he can upgrade his Performa 550 to Power Macintosh technology. Apple tells him to purchase the PowerPC Upgrade card.

My brother purchases the PowerPC Upgrade card, but when it arrives, he discovers that there's no way to install it. It doesn't fit.

He calls Apple again and asks why he was told to buy the PowerPC Upgrade card for his Performa 550 when the card obviously doesn't fit in the 550. Apple tells him he got the wrong part; in fact, there IS no part for the 550. My brother explains to Apple that it was APPLE who told him to GET this part. He tells them the date he called. Apple checks its records, then claims to have no record of a call.

My brother asks, calmly, how he is supposed to upgrade his Performa 550 to Power Macintosh technology. Apple's response: The Performa 550 can be upgraded to PowerMacintosh technology only by first upgrading it to an '040-based Performa 575. In other words, the 550 itself can't be upgraded.

When my brother purchased his Performa 550 there was no such thing as a 575. Surely, then, the sticker stuck on the 550's case, notifying the world entire that the Performa 550 was "Ready for PowerPC Upgrade," was an uncouth untruth.

No matter. My brother needs to upgrade his computer. His boss is paying for it. So he does it.

He pays \$900 for the Performa 575 motherboard. He pays \$600 for the PowerMac upgrade card. Then he discovers that the upgrade must be installed by a dealer, so he takes the 575 logic board and the PowerPC upgrade card to a local dealer, and pays them \$60 to do the work. The next day, he picks up his upgraded-to-PowerPC Performa 575 motherboard, and as he is preparing to install the board into his 550 case, notices that the battery has not been attached to the motherboard. The prongs on the 575 motherboard to which the battery must connect are blocked by the PowerPC upgrade card. No problem. The card pops off, the prongs are bent at a right angle, and the battery is attached.

Fine. Dandy.

The computer hums along marvelously. My brother is satisfied with the speed boost over what he had with his original 550. He is still disgruntled about the upgrade hassle, but that is over-done-with-gone.

Then something unexpected happens. The power goes out. It stays out for 13 hours. When the power returns the computer won't boot. My brother takes his computer back to the dealer to have it checked. Diagnosis: dead battery.

"Dead battery?" my brother asks.

"Dead battery," the dealer tells him. "I can order you a new one."

"Fine."

The dealer calls the next day. Turns out Apple won't sell him JUST a battery. To get a battery he must get a WHOLE NEW MOTHERBOARD.

My brother fumes. He wants satisfaction. He wants good service. He wants a gun.

"BUT," the dealer explains, "since the Performa 575 motherboard carries its own warranty, you can have the replacement motherboard at no additional cost."

My brother stares stonily. "I can't have a 30c battery, but I CAN have a new \$900 motherboard?"

"That's Apple's policy."

"Fine," my brother says. "Do it."

'Tis done.

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**Mark Thomas** is an artist, sometimes-musician and aspiring screenwriter who loves rats but wishes he had a ferret. In his spare time he cultivates a persnickety disposition. If you would like to praise, worship or otherwise offend Mark, please feel free to riddle his mailbox with leftist propaganda at FredaPple@aol.com This article is © 1995 Mark Thomas. Portions can be used by John C. Dvorak as per a previous agreement. (Can you say, "Name dropping," boys and girls?)



**Segments: Slices of the Mac Life** is a regular feature where we publish the stories, artwork, and commentary of readers who have something to say about life with a Mac. Please consider writing. Opinions expressed in Segments are not necessarily those of this particular Macintosh.



# watch this space

I am renewing my commitment to reviewing shareware items with the announcement of a regular shareware feature arriving in the next issue. I, my very own self, will review at least one item of shareware each month. I will also publish reviews that are submitted to ATPM and accepted for publication. If you think you'd like to review shareware for ATPM, check out the submission guidelines in the endnotes.



# The Contest

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**LAST MONTH'S CONTEST** was won by **Greg Schwartz**, who provided me the the exact source for almost each and every passage. Here is his answer:

"Rosabel Antique: The song "Duke of Earl" recorded by The Dukays, written by Gene Chandler [who was born with the name Eugene Dixon :)]; Nuevo Litho: \_Alice In Wonderland\_ by Lewis Carroll; Texas Hero: The Bible (Genesis) (BTW: That's a really cool font!); Isla Bella: \_The Princess Bride\_ by William Goldman; Attic: Macintosh Startup (and since its a "Bing!", that sounds like a Mac Classic startup sound, pre Sys. 7.5.1, or else it would be Welcome to MacOS)"

I say "almost" because the Nuevo Litho passage is actually from the poem, "The Walrus and the Carpenter," in Lewis Carroll's *Through the Looking-Glass*, part two of Alice's adventures.

Sue Beth and Jim Bob came in second, correctly identifying which tome of Alice stories the poem snippet came from, but failing to have read the *Princess Bride* (they wondered if Buttercup wasn't from Gilbert & Sullivan's *HMS Pinafore*) they did not manage to win outright.

Greg will receive my only copy of "Star Wars III: Fall of the Republic, a story treatment by John L. Flynn" as his prize. For getting almost everything absolutely right he'll also get a small pocket frog to hang wherever he likes. Sue Beth and Jim Bob will get a little something, too, if they get in touch with me. (Their eMail address has lapsed.) Congratulations to all.

Now...

Before I go any further I should like to point something out to my friends and relatives, since they all read my magazine. Much of the free stuff given away in the ATPM Contest was once given to me, in many cases, by these people. That I am now, in turn, giving this stuff away should not be taken as a snub. I love getting stuff from you all. If I did not think your present worthwhile I would not now be handing it out as a prize. It's just that I have either outgrown it, there is no longer room for it on my shelves, or I think someone else might get better use of it.

A perfect example is the pocket frog. It is very cute, and I enjoyed having it up in my apartment in New York City. Unfortunately, it does not really fit in our place here in Omaha, and it is not quite as cute in a shoebox in the basement. I think someone else (i.e. Greg Schwartz) will enjoy it more than I will.

Okay.

**THE NEW CONTEST.** This month I'm looking for the most amusing thing your Mac has ever said

to you. It could be a dialog box, or an error message, or even a funny Easter egg. Yes, I am the final arbiter of what's amusing and what's not.

I'd prefer to get a picture, if you can produce one, but a text version by eMail will do if you can't. How do you go about getting a picture? Well, the easiest way is to take a screen shot (press command-shift-3) when the error or dialog box is showing, assuming you can get your computer to reproduce the message on command, of course. That takes a snapshot of your screen, and places the picture at the top level of your hard drive. It'll be called "Picture 1" or something similar. Send me an eMail message and I'll tell you where to send the picture.

Contest entries are due by August 25th or so. There's no rush.

Good luck.



# the very, very very, very, ve ...endnotes

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## Next time in ATPM

THE NEXT ISSUE of ATPM should have a real treat, a review of Claris EMailer 1.0, the first fruit of my "Free Stuff" plea. Hopefully you'll find the whole story, plus the in-depth review, in the September issue of ATPM. There will also be a review of the new Macintosh version of Ultima III. Yes, that's right, Ultima III has been re-done and it's now shareware. (If you want it now, you can find it in the new files areas of eWorld and AOL.) We'll also have submissions from our readers, and the whole slew of new and regular departments. If you have any topics you'd like to see covered in the future, write to me at: [rdnovo@eworld.com](mailto:rdnovo@eworld.com)

## Submission Guidelines

ATPM IS NOW accepting all kinds of submissions. I continue to encourage you to submit any personal accounts of Macintosh computing for what is now known as Segments. But I am also looking for regular contributors to supply news reports, software and hardware reviews (including shareware), regular columns, and/or feature stories for publication in ATPM. I'm getting a job soon and I won't have the time to write a full, 300+k issue of ATPM every month. Please consider writing for ATPM. Thanks.

**SEGMENTS:** *Slices of the Mac Life* is looking for contributions, and I'm looking for just about anything. Have you got a one-shot story? Send it in. Did your four year-old digitize Mommy or Daddy? I'd like to see it. Poetry, fiction, whatever. It only has to be entertaining (and yes, I'm the judge of that) and about your particular Macintosh(es).

**COLUMNISTS** If you would like to write a regular column for ATPM, I encourage you to submit a sample of your writing along with any ideas you have on the topic, scope, and whatnot. I am looking for one or two (or maybe more) people who have entertaining views on Macintosh computing. Columnists should be prepared to write something once a month, though I'll consider a less rigorous schedule if you ask nicely.

**REVIEWERS** If you would like to review hardware or software, write up a short proposal (including the name of the product you'd like to review) and send it to me. I am looking for feature length reviews as well as short shareware reviews for the new shareware column debuting next month. Your reviews will be your own, and will not represent the views of ATPM, at this point. As I get to know you, I may take your opinions under my wing. <grin>

**ALL WRITERS** This is an opinion forum, so don't be afraid to be opinionated, but try not to be pushy. I like the "gentle humor" comment from ZiffNet/Mac's reviewers, and I hope to keep that tone. I cannot promise that your stuff will get published, but I will read it, and I will at least deliver comments back to you. All submissions become the property of Only Boy Productions upon publication (not upon submission) for purposes of reproduction unless otherwise agreed upon with the author. Send your work to: [rdnovo@eworld.com](mailto:rdnovo@eworld.com)

## Where to get ATPM

ATPM IS (as far as I know) AVAILABLE on eWorld, CompuServe, America Online, a small BBS called Raven Net in British Columbia, Canada, and somewhere in Tulsa, Oklahoma. While the buttons that used to be here were really cool, I'm trying to save space to make ATPM as short a download as possible while still enhancing the graphics. The buttons didn't make the cut. (Yes, I'm a wee bit leery of the copyright issues, too.) Here's how you can get ATPM:

**BY SUBSCRIPTION** By far the easiest way to get ATPM is to have it delivered to your eMailbox. Subscriptions are free (and will remain so as long as there's money in my bank account) and are available to people with accounts on eWorld, America Online, and CompuServe, and also to Internet accounts that can receive mail attachments. Send requests to [rdnovo@eworld.com](mailto:rdnovo@eworld.com)

**ON eWORLD** All issues live in the ZiffNet/Mac Software Center (go SHAREWARE) in Software Central. The latest issue can be found in the New Files area of the Member Exchange, while back issues reside in the Electronic Publications -> Additional Publications folder.

**ON AMERICA ONLINE** Do a software search (by menu or using the keyword "filesearch") and look for the search string "atpm". That'll get you all the issues.

**ON COMPUSERVE** All copies of ATPM live in the Macintosh Community Club forum (GO MACCLU) in Library 8, Magazines/Reviews.

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**The End**