

The Macintosh Guild

Mac Guild Newsletter

VOLUME 4 ISSUE 2 MAY 2003

IN THIS ISSUE:

- MacWorld 2003
- OS X Foibles
- Contivity VPN 2.1 for OS X
- MacPlay Soldier of Fortune II Review
- Microsoft Word X Review
- Unsanity Xounds 1.4 Review

MacWorld 2003

By Bill Catambay

The Mac Guild explores the Mascone Convention center at MacWorld 2003 San Francisco to discover the new Macintosh gems available.



Apple Presentation



Powerbook with speakers

Many other pictures are available on the Mac Guild web site at <http://mac.excaliburworld.com/mw2003/mw2003.html>.

Guild member Mike Lachance attended the off-site Keynote at the Argent, and had this to say: "I've now done both [Keynote live and Argent off-site] and can definitely say that the off-site was the better deal. I'm going to opt for off-site in future MacWorlds. The breakfast fare was outstanding - great food, wide variety, and plenty of it. I sat a table full of Apple guys, and we talked about our OS X migration issues. Also talked with the guy who helped Jobs write his keynote address. Excellent experience. The insights afterward were pretty good, too - they talked about how Apple has their networks set up and how System 10 has increased their productivity. They also had some interesting numbers regarding maintenance and upkeep vs Windows solutions. We also arranged to have an entourage of Apple people come to talk to our IS&T guys. They were excited about the prospect, and no wonder. With the coming of XServe as a network solution, they can finally and honestly say they have an alternative method to handle networking."

by Robert Zimmerman

OS X Foibles, or Dealing With Office X in OS 9

The Problem

Many people have found after installing Microsoft Office V.x on their Macs that attempting to open an Office document (Word, Excel, or Powerpoint file) by double-clicking the file while booted into OS 9 results in a failed opening of the OS X version of Office instead of the OS 9 version of the program. This is despite having a perfectly serviceable OS 9 compatible copy of Office installed on their Macintosh (Office 98 or Office 2001). This is, to say the least, maddening. Thoughts of Gate-icide have been known to spontaneously erupt upon encountering the problem.

A temporary solution is to open the corresponding application prior to double-clicking your file. But, as they say, "There ought to be a better way." The Macintosh ought to be able to distinguish what is being asked of it and respond accordingly. After all, not everybody experiences this exasperating chain of events.

Description of "The Problem"

When a Macintosh program creates a file, the file includes information to be used in linking that file with the program that created it. Unlike Windows, which uses a suffix to identify the file type, the Macintosh utilizes "Bundles" that contain both file type and creator information. This information can be gleaned using programs that examine and decode the file's resource fork, which is a special portion of the file (actually a separate file but associated with the file in question) containing information used by the Macintosh to help create the Macintosh look and feel. Using Microsoft Word as an example, making a normal Word document in Office 98 results in the file type becoming "WDBN" and the creator is "MSWD". File type codes and creator codes are always four characters long. If the same file had been created in OS X using the Word program from Office v.X, the file type would be "W8BN" and the creator would again be "MSWD".

The figure below shows the file icons associated with the Office 98 created Word files and the same file created using Office v.X in OS X.



Within the Mac operating systems prior to OS X, the Macintosh utilizes an invisible file system of databases which contain correlations between file types and creators and the programs that correspond to these codes. This is the "Desktop Database", and it is what gets updated when a Macintosh "Desktop Rebuild" is performed. When a user double-clicks on a file icon (or file name in a list view), the Macintosh consults the file type and creator obtained from the file and performs a lookup operation within the Desktop Database, and summons the corresponding program to open (if it is not already open) and then open the file which was double-clicked.

The desktop database files are updated whenever a new program is installed on the Macintosh. So, if Office 98 is already on the machine, and Office v.X is later installed, the database is modified to include the file associations present in Office v.X.

You might see where there could be problems. What happens if more than one copy of a program exists on the hard drive(s)? What happens if two programs have the same creator code? It is possible to create chaos from either of these situations.

Fortunately, the Mac OS tries to avoid chaos in these situations. After determining the program to be used in opening a file, the Mac first checks to see if that program is already running. If it is, it uses that running copy to open the file. That is why first opening Word 2001, for example, will result in a Word document opening in Word 2001, even if "The Problem" exists. Otherwise, the OS searches the boot drive, then other attached drives in order (alpha-numerically, I believe, with local drives searched before

network drives) for the program in question. Most people only have the boot drive, which simplifies the search. But if two copies of a program are on the same drive, the operating system will try to open the first one it encounters.

But, you say, Word v.X and Word 2001 are two different programs. Indeed they are, but if the desktop database points Word files (those with a creator of "MSWD") to Word v.X, then the operating system will dutifully try to open the OSX program, which it can't do in OS9. Hence, "The Problem" manifests itself. Note that this just won't happen if Office 2001 or 98 is on a different drive or partition searched earlier than the one with Office v.X, one possible reason to create a separate OSX partition.

The Solution

As pointed out, a temporary solution is to open your OS 9 Office programs prior to trying to double-click your documents. This is inelegant, and therefore not a preferred solution. Another method would be to repartition your drive, but this is a major hassle which is guaranteed to wipe out your hard drive, so you'd better back up first. Again, not a great solution. Fortunately MacFixit contributor Richard Bottigliere came up with a simple, non-destructive answer to "The Problem". Let me quote from his December 2001 post:

"I recently came across a somewhat common problem with Office v.X applications launching in OS 9 after installation, and the problem was driving me crazy. ...

I found a solution to this problem. A little freeware Mac tool that has been around for a while called "Save a BNDL" will fix this issue."

Richard's solution works. After a bit of searching, the aforementioned utility revealed itself to still be extant on the Info-Mac archives, and can be snagged at:

<http://hyperarchive.lcs.mit.edu/HyperArchive/Archive/cfg/save-a-bndl-14.hqx>

Quoting from Richard's post again:

"To use it, you must be booted into OS 9. Simply drag all of the Office 2001 or 98 application icons onto the Save a BUNDL (sic) icon. This will basically tell the Finder's database to get the icon information for any office documents (determined by the documents' creator codes) from the Office 2001 version of the applications. In addition, double-clicking any Office file now launches the appropriate application in OS 9.

I'm a happy camper again, and can now use the appropriate Office suite when booted either in 9 or X."

This small program and its application should banish "The Problem" once and for all.

Contivity VPN 2.1 for OS X

by Dave Leary

Setting up: Contivity VPN 2.1 (OS X 10.2.3) @ Lockheed Martin

Setting Up Contivity 2.1

I have a DSL connection, so this is based on that kind of connection. If you have dial-up you will have to modify to suit your needs. Setting up the VPN client is pretty easy. First step is read the directions. If you don't want to do that, here is how I did it.

1. Boot into OS 9 and remove the old client. Be sure to get rid of the extensions (especially the one that prevents Classic from working in OS X).
2. Install the Client.
3. Open the client and set up your connections.

The important thing here is to click the options button and fill out the screen that comes up. Be sure to select "Group Security Authentication", and "Response Only Token". Enter the group ID and password.

Also, we have to put in the IP addresses for each connection. See the internal LM VPN pages for a list of these IP addresses as well as the LM group ID and password.

That is all there is to it. I put in my PIN and Token numbers and got a good connection the very first time. Now the issue is what to do with the connection.

Email

I only do two things with the VPN connection, one is read email and the second is access servers. Under OS 9, by far the best email program I have found for use at LMMS is Microsoft Outlook 2001, which is a free download from <http://www.microsoft.com/mac/>. Not only is the price right, but it is designed to use Exchange Server, and works just like Outlook on the PC. The main drawback is that Outlook will freeze my computer if anything goes wrong with the connection, even for a second. Unfortunately there is no Outlook for OS X. Since I already had Outlook set up in OS 9, my first thought was to try it under Classic in OS X. This was not as successful as I had hoped. Either the connection was bad all weekend, or there is a problem with either Outlook or Classic. At home I could read email, but not send any replies or new messages. Any attempt to send would result in a freeze. At work I could both read and send, but if the connection was the least bit flaky, Outlook would give me a spinning beach ball and try to freeze. (Force Quit is a wonderful feature of OS X)

Apple Mail

For Apple Mail the set up is a bit harder than for the VPN client. I set up a new account with a user name of Dleary and the account type of IMAP. I had to set up all of the options for keeping mail on the server, etc.. Doing this allowed me to read my email and reply to messages, but did not enable me to look up names from the LMMS directory. To do this, I had to enable LDAP. LDAP is the directory protocol, and it is set up from the Address Book, not from within Mail. Open the Address Book application, open Preferences and click on the LDAP tab, then enter your LDAP server. The port is 389, the scope is "subtree" and search base is left blank. This will cause a little blue icon called "Directories" to appear in the group pane of the Address Book, with the address of the server next to it. If I connect through VPN, I can search the directory for email addresses. I haven't found a way to get the full information back from the directory yet. Anyway, now close Address Book and with the VPN connection still active, open Mail. Click on the compose mail button, and a new message window opens. Now click on the Address Book icon and notice that the "Directories" icon is nowhere to be seen. Go ahead, say a few bad words (this is called "blessing the keyboard") and take a breath. Now comes the most interesting part. In the "To:" box of the new message, type the last name of someone at LMMS and in a few seconds a list of people with that last name will appear, choose the one you want, and keep adding more as desired. Directory Services is there, Apple has just chosen not to let you know this. The drawbacks I have seen so far are that I can not get my distribution lists into Mail, and Outlook has no way to export the stuff in my personal folders while Mail has no way to import either from an Outlook file. If anyone finds a workaround to that little torment, please let me know.

Entourage

For Entourage, the setup is even harder still. For me, the account ID is now Acct01\Dleary. For the IMAP server I had to put in the numerical IP address instead of the DNS name. To get the numerical IP address of your server, connect to LMMS via VPN and then open Network Utility. Click on the "PING" panel and send a ping to the Exchange server. If you have a good connection, the window in the ping panel will report 10 times that it received back 64 bytes from an IP address. This is the numerical IP address of your Exchange server. Just this setup allowed me to read and reply to email, but I could not get directory services to work. Supposedly there is a way to make the LDAP server work (at least the Entourage help file has information on it, but I haven't found it yet).

SOLDIER OF FORTUNE II

Reviewed By Bill Catambay

Soldier of Fortune II puts you in the role of John Mullins, a military specialist trained in a vast assortment of weapons, anti-terrorist strategies, and how to be a badass. Your mission in the game is to hunt down a terrorist group that is using a new bio-weapon called the Gemini Virus. The task will take you across multiple continents and real-world locations, requiring the use of both stealth and full-out assault.

Soldier of Fortune is an adrenaline rush, and currently the only software I have that has encouraged me to boot up under OS X (it only runs in OS X). Due to productivity needs and personal preferences, I am not compelled to use OS X, and only boot up in it when I absolutely have to. After I received Soldier of Fortune II: Double Helix, built for OS X, I found myself compelled to boot up in OS X daily. After completing the game, I returned to OS 9, but fond memories of the game still linger with me, like an exciting memory of my own personal history. Was I playing a game, or did I really just save the world?

Game Play

Soldier of Fortune (SoF) is a first person action shooter built around the character of John Mullins, a military special agent. While the story is very captivating, what really makes this game shine is the graphics, sounds and realistic physics. The realism in this game far surpasses anything I have ever played on the Mac or PC. The graphics and sounds are awesome, really pushing the envelope for a first person action shooter. It also pushes the envelope on system requirements, as you won't be playing SoF with anything less than a 400 Mhz G4 and 128 MB of RAM (and I'd recommend double of each).

As the story unfolds, you find yourself taking on different missions, and within each mission are different tasks that need to be completed. Some tasks are given at the beginning of the mission, and others are revealed as you go along. With the exception of the beginning, where you start with a minimal supply of weapons, each mission starts with a mission screen where you decide which weapons you want to start the mission with (each mission also provides a suggested list of weapons). From pistols, to shot guns, to automatic rifles, there's plenty of hardware to choose from.

The tasks involve many different kinds of things, from meeting someone, to locating an area, blowing something up, infiltrating a building, or an assassination. This game does a great job of integrating the story with the action, and there is lots of variety. I never felt like I was just doing the same thing but in a different place. The stealth missions were a real challenge, and the sense of sneaking around so that you are not discovered adds a lot of suspense to the game.

The graphics and the sounds are two key factors to what makes this game so realistic and thrilling. I remember the first time I was running through the jungle, and the leaves from the ferns and other plants slid by my face so realistically that I could almost feel them brush up against me. The character graphics are photo-realistic, and close-ups show an amazing amount of detail. In fact, in-play graphics are so well done that the game utilizes them for the cut scenes that are played through out the game.

The ambient sounds and the music also add much to the action and suspense. Each mission takes place in a different location, and in different countries, and SoF does a remarkable job at making the characters feel true to life. There are dozens of different phrases that characters shout out in each country in the dialect of that country. I never really understood what most of the phrases means, but the accents were authentic, and after a few encounters, you quickly learn which phrases in each language indicate that a grenade has been tossed at you.

The feature of SoF that really blew me away was the physics of the game action. Virtually anything you shot at had an effect associated with it, and the effect was different depending upon what you hit. Once I was on a machine gun and had already cleared the area, so I expended the remaining bullets at a bunker wall and proceeded to spell my name. That was really cool. When striking another character, there are all kinds of effects, whether wounding an arm or a leg, or a shot at the groin (amusingly the character

immediately covers the groin with both hands as he screams in pain), or a head shot that takes the enemy out immediately. You shoot someone in the arm, and they drop their gun and run away; but soon after, they pick up another gun left by someone else, and return to the fight. You shoot someone in the leg, and they limp around, still firing at you. Toss a grenade in a group of enemies, and one of them usually picks it up and throws it back at you. Using strategy, you learn how to toss grenades so that at least one of them blows up and takes out the enemy.

The gore level can be controlled so that blood and guts are not displayed, but I had my game on high gore, which also added to the intensity. You could literally sever limbs with the right shots, or even blow someone's head off, and the bloods trickles out, sometimes even spurts (like an artery was hit), complete with the spurting sound. Actions allows besides walking, running and shooting are jumping, crouching, crawling, and leaning. I remember many scenes where I was behind a building, and the enemies were behind other buildings, and we were all leaning over to take a view, take a shot, and then retreat back behind the building. It was just like out of a movie, and felt incredibly real. Sometimes you couldn't tell the cut scene movies apart from the action. In once scene, you are being extracted on a helicopter. At first I just stood there and watched, but then realized that I was still in control of the character, and I proceeded to man the helicopter machine gun and shoot at enemy targets as we flew by. There were other instances like this throughout the game, whether a helicopter, a truck, or a gondola.

Besides the standard single player game, SoF also provides random missions and multiplayer games. The random missions let you pick what type of mission to play (assassination, infiltration, etc.), as well as other aspects of the map (day/night, terrain type, etc.), and then randomly generates the map. These are timed missions (or you can turn off the time limit if you prefer) where you must achieve your goal and then find you extract point. These games are like taking a single task out of the main game and just focusing on that, with the exception that you cannot save your game in this format. You must complete your mission, and if you die, you have to start over again. It's a great way to become better at navigating your character, but it can be more frustrating as well. I couldn't review the multiplayer aspect of the game because every time I went to GameRanger to look for another player, there was no one there.

There just isn't enough time or space in a review to illustrate all that SoF has to offer, but it's been a long time since I remember enjoying a game this much. SoF is not without it's problems, however. Both in the random missions and the main single player game I occasionally had the program crash on me. Being that it is a native OS X application, it didn't affect the system, and I was able to start the game right back up, but it was still annoying. I found that as I got deeper into the single player game, the crashes were more infrequent (in fact, past the halfway point, I don't recall the game crashing at all). The saved game screens were a little quirky. When selecting the game to load, it is supposed to show a still from the saved game to help remember where that saved game took place. Sometimes this worked, sometimes it didn't. Also, as you move the cursor from saved game title to another, I also noticed that the background screen was still active, so the cursor was affecting the background as well as the foreground. And as a minor nitpick, when loading a game you first select the saved game, then click load the game, and then are given but another prompt to verify that's the game you want to load. That in my opinion was just one click too many.

In terms of game play, I am hard pressed to find anything I didn't like, but there are a couple of things that stand out in my mind. Neither of these are a criticism to the game play in general, but are very specific to different time points in the game. One is when I was infiltrating the mansion in stealth mode (trying not to be discovered). After finally getting into the building, there was one point where I had to use my silencer on the maid because if I let her see me, the jig was up and I became toast. Due to the realism of the game, I did not like being put in a position of taking out an innocent. It was the only point in the game that required it. The other game event that was not my favorite were the fights against the helicopters. The first encounter of a helicopter fight, you can only take it out by a cannon in a building. This set me up to believing that the weapons that I carry would not take out a helicopter. Hence, in the second encounter on a rooftop, I ran around for literally hours (days really) trying to find some room, some button that would clue me in. Every once in awhile I'd take some shots, but they did not appear to have any affect. After a long long time, I finally concluded that I had to take out the helicopter with my weapons, and it was extremely difficult. Providing some clue that I needed to take out the helicopter would have saved me a lot of wasted time, but taking out the helicopter was still not my favorite. It appears the last two helicopter scenes were meant to be climatic battles, but they just were not that much fun to me. Perhaps if it were possible to shoot a grenade into the helicopter rather than hitting it with well over 300 long metal jackets I would have enjoyed it more.

Summary

With its integrated story, physics, graphics and sound, Soldier of Fortune II: Double Helix was more than I ever imagined a first-person action shooter could become in terms of realism. Parents will need to be careful about the gore control for the young ones, but for adults, SoF scores a home run for suspense, action, intensity and realism.

Pros:

- Photo-realistic graphics and crisp high quality sounds
- Well integrated and captivating story
- Realistic physics
- Random mission generator

Cons:

- Some instability problems
- Quirky screens when loading saved games
- Helicopter scenes needed some prep, and can be tedious
- Why did they make me shoot the maid?

Overall Rating:

4 1/2 out of 5 Mice

MICROSOFT WORD X

Reviewed by Robert Schumann

Introduction

Microsoft Word X is the ninth iteration of Word on the Mac and as such this version is an evolutionary advance. This version runs natively under Mac OS X, has a nice Aqua interface, and renders text beautifully using Quartz. But Word 2001 does run under Classic mode and there are few other new features in Word X. If you already have Word 2001, is it worth the cost of the upgrade? Word X has a suggest retail price of \$399 for full product and \$149 for the version upgrade.

This software was reviewed on a Power Macintosh G4 Quicksilver 867 MHz with 1.125 GB of RAM running Mac OS X 10.2.3.

New Features

Besides being Mac OS X native, Word X has a couple of notable new features:

- Multi-selection - You can select multiple items in paragraphs, lists, or table cells that are not contiguous. Select the first item, then hold down the Command (Apple) key, and select any additional items you want to change or format all at once. You can also use Multi-selection when finding and replacing text or formatting.
- Clear Formatting - Under the Edit menu, you can use Clear Formats to remove and reset formatting. Clear Formatting removes any applied character and paragraph formatting, and resets the default text style.

User Interface

As expected with any native OS X application, Word X has a nice Aqua interface. Below are screen-shots of the Word X and 2001 interfaces. As you can see, interfaces are functionally identical. The Word X toolbar icons are larger and their functions are easier to interpret. One notable interface difference is the Word 5.1 Menus and toolbar are now gone. If you also use Word for Windows, you find that the menus and toolbars are similar which makes it easy to switch between platforms.

Compatibility

Word X for Mac uses the same file format as Word 98, Word 2001, as well as Word 97, Word 2000, and Word XP for Windows. Exchanging documents between platforms is easy as long as you append the extension when you save the file. Also, use fonts that are standard on both platforms for best results. I used both Word X and Word 97 for Windows to create this review.

You can now open AppleWorks 6 word processing documents as well as AppleWorks 5. I do not have AppleWorks 5 or 6 to try this. You cannot save a document to AppleWorks format, however.

Usability

After starting up the Mac, Word X initially launched in about 4 seconds and you barely see the splash screen before the Project Gallery appears. Subsequent launches took less than 2 seconds. Word X took 13 seconds to scroll through a sample 73-page document in Page Layout View. It only took 6.5 seconds for Word 2001 running under Classic to perform the same task although it seems a bit clunky and has a few display glitches. Although the operation of Word X seems to be crisp and performs solidly, it appears a bit of performance tweaking could be done.

Support

As with Word 2001, Word X has no printed manual, but it now comes with a Getting Started Book PDF file on the CD. As the title implies, this document will help you to get started, but if you want a more comprehensive manual, you have to get out the wallet for a third-party book.

The friendly Office Assistant returns with a nice improvement in the Help window. You can now print a help topic for future reference.

For further support, visit Microsoft's Mactopia web site.

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

Summary

Word X is an excellent word processing application that has evolved nicely over the years. My only solid gripe is its cost. If you do want to buy Word X, consider the full Office X suite unless you have no use for Excel or PowerPoint. Office X costs relatively little more and there are more deals available. Also, consider the Mac OS X compatible ThinkFree Office or OpenOffice for a fraction of the cost.

Pros

- Native for OS X
- Aqua interface
- Solid performance
- Excellent compatibility with Word for Windows documents
- Getting Started PDF file now included on CD

Cons

- Expensive to buy or upgrade
- No paper user manual

Overall Rating:

4 out of 5 Mice

UNSANITY XOUNDS 1.4

Reviewed by John Gephardt

Xounds is a "haxie" that provides the functionality of Mac OS 9's Appearance Sounds for Mac OS X. Basically, it provides sound feedback when you perform certain actions, such as selecting menus, dragging windows, emptying the Trash and more. At this time, not all event sounds are supported, but the developer plans to add more sounds in future versions. Xounds is able to convert Mac OS 8 or 9 Sound Sets. A haxie is an Application Enhancer in OS X, much like an extension in OS 9. That means that along with the added functionality comes some added risk of operational complications.

Xounds installs easily from a disk image file and will import your existing Appearance sounds directly from your Mac OS 9 Appearance folder. Xounds is controlled in its own Preference Panel placed in the "Other" category at the bottom of the System Preferences window. There are three settings tabs: XoundSet, Advanced, and Exclude List. The XoundSet let's you choose the set to use, as well import, delete or download more sounds. Note that only system sounds can be imported or used. Entourage and other e-mail sounds won't work without some kind of conversion process.

The Advanced options lets you choose different volume levels depending on the type of action that is performed (aka, Menus, Windows, Controls, and Finder). The Stereo Panning effect, when activated, matches the sound location from your speakers to the location on the screen where the action occurs (provided you have stereo speakers). For example, clicking into the left menu would make the sound come out of the left speaker. The Exclude List lets you eliminate sounds from selected applications while permitting sound enhancement in the Finder and other apps. You may want to use this feature for applications that already has its own sounds built-in.

Having used Xounds for several months now, I have not encountered any problems or conflicts. I have noticed that some of the longer duration sounds form an R2-D2 Sound Set seem to get cut off. This is a bug that was identified in version 1.3 (1.4 is the current version) and corrected. The bug note suggests that reloading form the original Sound Set will correct the problem.

Summary

If you used Appearance sounds in OS 9, then moving from OS 9 to OS X can be quite disturbing, making your computer seem like it lost it's sound capabilities. Sounds have a way of breathing life into inanimate things, especially a computer. While Apple's Appearance sounds breathed life into Mac OS 9, it takes Unsanity's Xounds to restore audio life to Mac OS X. It is a low cost shareware add-on, and lifetime upgrades are included in the price of \$10. Well worth the price!

Pros

- Brings Appearance sounds to OS X
- Low shareware fee includes lifetime upgrades
- Supports converting any OS 9 Sound Set
- Easy to install and use

Cons

- Not all Appearance sounds are currently supported
- Limited selection of Sound Sets

Overall Rating

4 out of 5 Mice

The Mac Guild Newsletter © The Mac Guild, 2003. All rights reserved.

Editor: **Bill Catambay**

Mac Guild Home Page: <http://mac.excaliburworld.com/>