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Mac VPN Client

By Bill Catambay

At long last, VPN client support has come to Mac users at Lockheed Martin! Nortel has released a Mac VPN client from Netlock which allows Mac users to connect to Lockheed Martin's Nortel VPN servers. The bad news is that Mac users must purchase the client themselves, as it is not covered under Lockheed Martin's license agreement with Nortel. The good news is that you can now utilize your high speed DSL or Cable Modem connection to connect to work, and access Lockheed Martin internally, just as if you were at work. The Mac Guild is the official support center for VPN users, and the internal Mac Guild web pages should provide you with all the information you need to get started. If you have any other questions, or are outside the LM firewall (and therefore cannot access the VPN pages), be sure to send an email to the Mac Guild mailing list.

<http://www.bobrk.com/lmms/mac/maillist.html>

Cassidy & Greene Specials

By Bill Catambay

Grammarians X - \$19.95

Grammarians X is Casady & Greene's popular universal grammar checker. It works with virtually every program on your computer, whether or not that program has its own grammar checker.

Time Slice - \$19.95

Time Slice is an easy-to-use time-tracking and billing application for Macintosh and Windows users.

Captain Bumper - \$19.95

Captain Bumper is an Action/Arcade game for ages 6-65 that will have you on the edge of your seat. All your tricks, reflexes, and courage will be needed to defeat the awful Zeurbella...

Glider Pro X - \$14.95

Glider Pro is one of the all-time Mac favorites for people looking for great fun and hours of family entertainment, now for OS X.

Zone Warrior - \$14.95

Zone Warrior II is a 3D space flight simulator in which you, the pilot, defend your space station from attack by blasting away incoming asteroids and enemy ships.

These prices are good until May 30, 2002. To take advantage of these prices, visit the Casady & Greene user group web site.

<http://ug.casadyg.com/>

MacWorld S.F. 2002

The 2002 MacWorld Expo held in San Francisco in January has come and gone, and the Mac Guild was there! Below are a few pictures from the show.



To view more pictures from the show, visit the Mac Guild web site.

<http://www.bobrk.com/lmms/mac/>

FREEHAND 10, BY MACROMEDIA

Reviewed By Robert Hanno

Macromedia FreeHand 10 is an OS X-native vector-based application for coupling of print and web graphic illustration production. New tools and an enhanced feature set add to an already impressive toolset. Flash integration allows the conversion of drawings into animations and the export of FreeHand objects directly to Flash.

FreeHand 10 Price: \$399.00 US (full) \$129.00 US (upgrade).
Flash 5 FreeHand 10 Studio: \$499.00

The Macromedia Flash 5 FreeHand 10 Studio bundle is a complete multi-publishing solution, providing both the full version of FreeHand 10 along with the full version of Flash 5 at a savings of \$299.

Test Environment:

B&W G3, 350mHz, 896 MB of memory
Mac OS 10.1.2 (9.2.2)
WACOM Graphire 1 tablet
Epson Stylus 740 printer

FreeHand 10 is a tool for graphics illustrators, designers and web artists. If you used older versions of FreeHand, the new tools and capabilities will allow you to become a true multi-publishing professional, allowing you to create sophisticated designs and illustrations that can be repurposed across multiple mediums quickly and efficiently. With Macromedia FreeHand and Adobe Illustrator competing for the desktops of graphics professionals, FreeHand 10 is the first of its class to go native on Mac OS X.

The advantage of working with vectors rather than bitmapped graphics is due to the vector graphic's smaller size and ability to be scaled and printed at any resolution without loss of detail. The vector graphic document contains instructions for drawing lines and how to fill the shapes these lines create rather than a complete pixel map. From Mike's Sketchpad: "An ILLUSTRATION is composed of vector OBJECTS each having one or more PATHS which are composed of LINE SEGMENTS having ANCHOR POINTS at each end" which may contain one or two control handles.

After an initial stint running FreeHand in OS 9.2.2, I found performance fairly unbearable: page re-drawing was not crisp, artifacts from drop-downs would cover panel buttons, pop-up menus contained artifacts, viewing hidden drop-down menu items involved an intermediate selection, and opening a document (or a Save) required a trip to the Finder before the activity would complete. In fairness, a 350-mHz machine is a tad under-powered for a graphics program of this sophistication.

The remainder of my testing was performed under OS 10.1.2. FreeHand 10 now was humming along with the power and beauty of the new OS. Re-drawing of layers and other processor-intensive activities still reflected the G3's speed handicaps, but the anomalies seen in 9.2.2 were no longer evident.

Given that FreeHand 10 was my first dive into an illustration program, I can attest to FreeHand's steep learning curve. With seven standard toolbars comprised of over 100 toolbar icons, a Tools panel, Inspectors, palettes, etc., a thorough understanding of FreeHand only comes with frequent use and perhaps a knowledgeable teacher to help the novice along the way. I scoured the *Using FreeHand* manual (included as a 500-page PDF or HTML), various websites and newsgroups to facilitate an acquaintance.

The lessons were hampered by sloppy case usage, wherein URLs for the "UsingFreeHand/" directory were mislabeled as "UsingFreehand/" (note the lower case "h"). This can become more than an annoyance if you try to use the HTML help and receive the "File not found" error.

Installation was fairly simple, although the OS X version contains special instructions to relax the privileges on a number of directories to allow multiple users update access to a dozen folders. It would have been better to have delivered as a single shell script with which to make the alterations.

Printing from FreeHand 10 was difficult since I don't own a PostScript Level 2 printer. I was only able to get the Stylus 740 up and running under OS X after fiddling with it for a couple of weeks. You are able to use a non-PostScript printer by choosing Preview and then printing from there or by saving (in FreeHand or Preview) as a PDF and then printing the resulting file. However, the Graphire 1 graphics tablet was a different story as this tool worked without a hitch.

As the flagship of Macromedia's fleet, Flash has now become an integrated part of FreeHand. This enables the designer to assign Flash actions to objects and to export these as SWF's. Animations can be previewed by using the new Navigation Panel and the new Flash Player Test Window. FreeHand files can be directly imported into Macromedia Flash 5. URLs may also be attached to text or objects. The actual amount of Flash work that can be done in FreeHand is still rather limited. You can create objects and FreeHand will apportion those to layers and the animation will be based upon layers or you can set up the layers themselves. The Controller contains Test Movie, Export Movie and Movie Settings buttons along with the navigation buttons. This may be sufficient for those wishing to add a small animation or to assign a URL or a Flash action using the Navigation panel. The good news is that you can get the full version of Flash as part of the Flash/FreeHand package (and save \$299).

The "Publish as HTML..." option saves an HTML page containing a layer for some objects in the original file. This seems to be somewhat random as during one publishing session, objects are bundled into several files and the next into a single file. An HTML Output Assistant allows you to choose positioning with tables rather than layers for pre-4.x browsers. These may be saved in an images directory as Flash format (SWF), GIF, JPEG or PNG. Some features (fills, strokes or images) are not supported in the Flash format.

Print area allows you to define a rectangular area of a document or an entire work area for printing. This is saved as a part of the document and can be re-sized or deleted.

The new Pen tool is now the typical pen nib rather than the cross-hair, reflecting the "standardization" of the Macromedia pen tool between Flash, FreeHand and Fireworks (and other illustration tools.)

The Brush Stroke feature allows you to arrange a graphic symbol along a path as a repeating stroke or a single stretched instance. Brushes can be created and saved from all manner of FreeHand objects including gradients. The notion of brush use takes a bit of thought since the application of a brush "fill" to an object seems counter-intuitive to the sable brush user. It did work nicely once I stopped expecting each path to display my chosen brush until I applied it.

Master Pages are template pages that can be used for any object or symbol other than page numbers. These may be shared by multiple children within a document. Changes to the master page are reflected throughout the child pages. These may be imported and exported.

Contour gradients have been enhanced to allow objects to be filled based upon an adjustable center point. A new File Info dialog allows the user to enter the IPTC (International Press Telecommunications Council) header information for your files which may be used by the news media. Third-party applications (or the Perl freeware IPTC Info Extractor) can access these meta tags such as copyright, credits and search words. These will assist even the casual user with a way to create a database to allow easy search and recovery of graphic files.

Summary

This version might be a bit long in the tooth, overdue for some bug fixes or minor enhancements before 11. The early port to native OS X is to be commended along with the convergence of the various Macromedia tools. I enjoyed working with the elegant OS X version despite the steep learning curve. The virtual world is full of willing tips and tricksters and I'm ready to invest in a good book (e.g., *FreeHand 10 f/x & Design* by Ron Rockwell). For illustrators, designers and web artists looking for the most advanced illustration solution, I strongly recommend FreeHand 10. It's a powerhouse of a graphics tool, especially when running native on OS X.

Import File Formats

EPS

Illustrator 1.1, 88, 3, 4, 5.5, 6, 7

Photoshop 2.5, 3, 4, 5

Acrobat PDF 4

FreeHand 5, 5.5, 7, 8, 9

DCS 1, DCS 2, DXF, PICT, PICT2, RTF, ASCII, TIFF, GIF, JPEG, PNG, Targa, BMP

FreeHand 10 template

System Requirements

Power Macintosh with Mac OS 8.6, 9.x or OS X

32 MB of free available system RAM

40 MB of available disk space

256-color monitor capable of 800x600 resolution

CD-ROM drive

Pros

Flash integration

Macromedia tool convergence

OS X Native

Extensive new features list

Excellent bundle pricing for FreeHand 10 and Flash 5

Cons

Inconsistent performance and GUI under OS 9.x

\$399 is still a lot of money for just FreeHand

Printing requires a PostScript level 2 printer

Steep learning curve

Overall Rating:

4 1/2 out of 5 Mice

PREMIERE 6.0, BY ADOBE

Reviewed by Jerry O'neill

Reviewers previous experience with product: The reviewer has used Premiere 5.0 and 5.1 (and iMovie 1 and 2) to make amateur wedding videos.

Price: \$549, \$149 upgrade

Minimum Requirements:

Power PC processor

Apple System software OS 9.0.4

32 MB of available RAM (128 MB recommended)

50 MB of available hard disk space required for installation

Apple QuickTime 4.1.2

Large-capacity hard disk or disk array

Netscape Communicator 4.0 or later, or Internet Explorer 4.0 or later

Additional Requirements for DV:

Power PC processor (@ 300 MHz)

Apple FireWire 2.4 or later

QuickTime-compatible FireWire (IEEE 1394) interface

Large-capacity hard disk or disk array (capable of sustaining at least 5 MB/sec)

Additional requirement for third-party capture cards:

Adobe Premiere-certified capture card

Test system: iMac DV 400, 576MB RAM, Mac OS 9.0.4; Sony DCR-TRV7 Mini DV FireWire camera.

General Description

Adobe Premiere is a digital video editing application that allows users to import, edit, and create movies on a Power Macintosh, and save those movies to digital tape or the hard disk for use on optical disks and the Web.

Installation

Installation from CD went smoothly on my test system. Very straightforward, no problems.

Performance

Good overall performance on test system, interface responsiveness is noticeably quicker than Premiere 5.1.

Unlike its predecessor, Premiere 6.0 doesn't demand turning virtual memory off, and thus saves a trip to the memory control panel and the accompanying restart. Upon launching Premiere 6.0, the new Load Project Settings dialog box and available presets is a welcome surprise and clear improvement over the previous versions' configuration screen. Most users in the U.S. will likely choose the default preset: DV-NTSC Standard 32kHz. Online help automatically launches your Internet browser, providing a familiar way to access help quickly. Under Contents, help topics are organized logically and mimic the flow of work you will follow from importing and editing clips to applying effects and producing final video. An Acrobat pdf file containing the User Guide is found on the program CD. With version 6.0, Premiere now has excellent device support for capturing movies with DV cameras. For example, the DV options included many popular camera models, including my exact model: Sony DCR-TRV7. This in stark contrast to the generic (and quirky) DV import in Premiere 5.1.

I like the new features in the Project window, especially the ability to right- or control- click an object and insert it in the timeline, or change its properties. The Storybook is a wonderful new feature. Like iMovie's clip shelf, it allows you to import clips and still images and arrange them in any order, then move a selected few or the whole lot to the timeline with one click (using the Automate to Timeline command). You can indicate where to place the clips and specify a default transition to apply between the clips as well as the duration of the transition. In addition, you can now edit video and transitions in a single track, similar to iMovie. Amazingly, you can also print the storybook directly to tape (i.e., import and arrange clips and still images in the Storybook, and without even placing them on the Timeline, export them to video).

Premiere has so many ways to edit video, it is downright overwhelming to new or occasional users, especially those who cut their teeth on iMovie; but once assimilated, these powerful techniques will be sorely missed by those who go back to iMovie to work on even basic projects. Simple favorites include the Extract button in the Monitor window, which makes it easy to remove mistakes. Others include the Previous Edit and Add Default Transition (command-D). And these are the first-grade edits! You will have to devote much time in order to get a grasp of Premiere's power, to say nothing of the commitment required to master Premiere. As with previous versions, you can adjust the volume and balance of audio tracks directly in the Timeline; but now you can also edit audio in real time with the new Audio Mixer.

If you had to say what about Premiere makes it so much more powerful than iMovie, it would be its ability to Superimpose and Composite video – you can add up to 97 video tracks. This allows you to create special effects by making superimposed tracks transparent. For example, you can film a speaker in front of a blue screen, key out the blue, and superimpose the speaker over background clips. You can also create split screen effects this way. Another powerful feature is animation, which lets you move, rotate or zoom a video or still image clip. In addition, Premiere now includes 25 Adobe Effects filters.

It is simple to create complex titles in iMovie. In Premiere, not so. It's easy to create basic titles, but you're limited to rolling and crawling titles; thus, iMovie users may feel ripped off. However, you can create complex backgrounds for your titles, using parts of clips or images, gradient filled text, and graphics objects. Of course, you can create titles in iMovie, save them as QuickTime movies and import them to Premiere.

Although you can preview your work on a TV monitor connected to your FireWire DV camera, without the camera connected you must use the monitor window (you can increase its size) or the Print to Video command to see a full screen preview. Unfortunately, this last option produces shoddy-looking results.

Interestingly, iMovie produces beautiful full screen previews at the click of a button. Export to tape worked flawlessly, creating beautifully rendered video with transitions for the test project, a combination slide show with titles, transitions, and video clips from DV and analog sources. I did not test export to QuickTime movie or the various Web options, but the previous version of Premiere worked well in the QuickTime movie test.

Although the requirements state that Premiere 6 supports analog capture cards, I have discovered that most of the capture cards that worked with Premiere 5.1 do not work with 6. Some third-party card manufactures may have developed new drivers for version 6.0 by now, so my advice to users with analog cards: check with your card manufacturer to ensure Premiere 6.0 drivers are available.

Premiere 6 comes with many built-in effects, both for audio and video. I was very impressed with the cross fade with audio, providing an easy and effective means to process audio tracks. Among the many video effects built into the effects control palette was one of my favorites, the motion effect. Using it was quite easy, and the results were very cool. There are also a variety of neat transition effects as well, such as spin away and page turning. The one drawback with Premiere's effects is the way it stole the processing power during rendering. In iMovie, the preview rendering occurred in the background, but with Premiere 6, the rendering always occurred in the foreground, disabling me from doing anything until it was complete. In addition, each time you delete or add a clip, Premiere automatically re-renders affected segments of the timeline, again making you wait before you can continue on to anything else.

Summary

Premiere 6.0 is a powerful, though complex, application for creating movies on a Macintosh. This impressive program is geared toward video professionals or hobbyists who are willing to make a commitment to learning how to tap its power and creative flexibility. If you're an occasional video hobbyist with relatively simple demands (you don't require compositing or advanced audio editing), you're better off sticking with iMovie since it is much simpler to learn and use, free with new systems, and still produces great results. If you're a bit more serious about your movies, are considering exploring more, or are a user of any previous version of Premiere (and either don't require analog capture card support or know that your capture card is supported by Premiere 6), then the performance and ease-of-use enhancements alone are reasons enough to upgrade to Premiere 6. Additional features such as increased DV support and new Web export options are the icing on the cake.

Pros

- Amazing depth of features
- Lots of flexibility in editing
- DV device control
- New Storyboard
- Export for Web features
- After Effects filters
- Cross-platform compatibility with Windows

Cons

- Steep learning curve to make use of all its power
- Poor quality full screen previews
- Few title options
- Does not render in the background forcing undesirable wait periods
- Requires a lot of "juice" (although Premiere will run on lower end systems, and its performance is enhanced over the previous version, you'll still want the most powerful Macintosh you can get your hands on)

Overall Rating

4 out of 5 Mice

Reviewed by Jim Melton

Introduction

Anyone with more than a passing interest in tracking your ancestral roots or recording a family history will need some software to make the process manageable. For the Macintosh, there are a few choices. There is only one that is written only for the Mac: Reunion.

Installation

The installation is straightforward, although a bit too streamlined for my taste. The installer allows you to choose which disk to install, but does not allow you to specify a folder within that disk. Of course, there is no problem moving the folder to another location afterwards. As part of the installation, several data-related folders are created (one for saved graphical charts, one for reports, and one for multi-media items). I prefer to save my data separately from my applications (actually, on a separate drive). Having complained about this, I should note that the core family file can, in fact, be stored anywhere you wish, and each report prompts for the output destination.

Using the Software

If you have an existing genealogical project, Reunion imports the ubiquitous GEDCOM format. Otherwise, Reunion will create a blank project for you if you are starting from scratch. In addition, you can import into an existing project. My father-in-law has been researching his history for many years. I was able to merge his file into my family tree fairly effortlessly. In fact, the merging capabilities of Reunion are outstanding. It makes a reasonable guess if two people are the same and allows you to explicitly state that two people are the same person.

Data is displayed in a very intuitive "family card" format. A person is displayed next to their spouse and each spouse's parents are displayed above them. The children of the marriage are displayed beneath the couple. Clicking on any field brings up a data entry form for the selected fact. Note that every data entry value can be annotated with a source reference (very important for serious researchers; the typical hobbyist tends to omit this important step). Clicking on any other person navigates to that person's family card. An amazing amount of information is maintained in this single window.

Once you've entered your family history, you will want to create some output of your work. Reunion has a number of charting options, including ancestor (traditional "family tree" view) and descendant charts. My favorite feature is the timeline chart, showing the overlap of each person's life with other relatives. Using this feature I was able to accomplish a pet project: creating a timeline of the Biblical descendants of Adam. The charting tool provides limited capabilities, including zoom out, to give perspective on large trees. Unfortunately, it does not have a zoom in feature. Some charts are too complex to be comprehended at full scale.

The real power of the program, though, is in the report generation capabilities. The types of reports created are too numerous to describe in detail. My favorites are the Family History Report and the Register Report. The Family History Report creates a bullet-list of the vital information facts for each person and adds whatever you've entered into the Notes field for each person. The Notes field includes full text formatting capabilities, so this feature allows you to capture the richness of the tapestry of your family history. This is the reason I became interested in my family's past. I wanted to know who my relatives were as people.

In addition to the variety of report formats, a variety of report media are supported. Reports can be output to your word processor, Rich Text Format (RTF), plain text, or HTML. Reunion supports popular word processors, such as MS Word, ClarisWorks, Word Perfect, and even my venerable MacWrite Pro. Unfortunately, output to MacWrite Pro did not work for me (but the last released version was 1.5 and I'm at 1.0). Output to MS Word worked flawlessly.

The best way to share your research, though, is through web pages. Reunion 7 creates a complete web site, with indices and multi-media pages. A major concern today about publishing personal information on the web due to identity theft. Reunion includes privacy filtering to limit the personal information for living people (or anyone you select). This is a key feature for web-based publishing.

There is a substantial on-line help, including a step-by-step tutorial. However, as with any well-written Macintosh program, consulting the help is rarely necessary.

Summary

Most of the companies that used to pretend to have Mac support have frozen the versions of their Mac offerings many revisions prior to their current product. Reunion is the only full-featured Mac genealogy software of which I am aware. Perhaps the reason it has no competition is that it needs none. It does everything that I can think of wanting genealogy software to do.

There are a few quirks in the user interface that can be annoying, but these are at the fringes of the features that I use on a daily basis. There is no "Preferences" menu option under the Edit menu; instead there is an Options menu with a number of items that control various features such as default word processor and web browser.

Using this program is like peeling back the layers of an onion. For the casual family historian, you will be immediately productive capturing the details (and all the nuts) of your family tree. For those with the courage to explore, or those with more demanding needs, more sophisticated features are available to increase the depth.

Pros

- Easy-to-use, intuitive family "card" format
- Rich reporting and charting capabilities
- Full multi-media support
- Output to word processors, text, and web

Cons

- Feature-laden interface can be a bit complex
- No zoom-in for charts

Rating

4 1/2 out of 5 Mice

The Mac Guild Newsletter

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