Mac goes Intel; software makers must update again

If you're thinking about buying a Mac with an Intel processor, there are a few things you should know first.

That new computer you're buying for its blazing speed isn't going to give you peak performance if your software isn't compatible with the Intel processor.

Apple has once again changed the rules, leaving software developers scrambling to develop compatible programs.

I know many of you are thinking you won't have problems since you upgraded your software to be OSX compatible.

But that OSX software is compatible with the PowerPC Macs, not the Intel Macs.

If you buy a new Intel Mac, it's going to open your current OSX software in an emulator called Rosetta.

Rosetta is a translation process that runs PowerPC binary on an Intel-based Macintosh computer. Translated applications will never run as fast as they run as a native binary.

Many software programs have been updated to a Universal version, which runs natively on both the PowerPC and Intel Macs.

Most programs are going to run slower in Rosetta than on a comparable PowerPC Mac – and the only way to gain the speed is to update the application.

computernotes
from the road

by WILMA MELOT

The Classic environment (Mac OS9) no longer exists on Intel-based Macs; there is no Apple-supported way to run Classic programs.

If you need to run OS9 programs it's going to require the use of a third party emulator. There are currently two emulators available – SheepShaver and Basilisk II. As of today, SheepShaver seems to be the best.

Since Apple isn't helping with OS9 applications, we're really going underground. However, reports I've read said the OS9 emulators work well, although slowly.

As I said earlier, software manufacturers are trying to catch up with the latest

technology. Neither Adobe nor Quark have released upgrades, but Microsoft does have an upgrade for Office Suite.

Buying an Intel Mac also means you're going to have to install an Intel-supported version of OSX. At present, there are two versions of OSX 10.4.5 – one for PowerPC Macs and the other for Intel Macs. For example, the 10.4.5 version number on my Power Mac G5 is 8H14; on my Intel iMac, it's 8G1454. If you're running OSX 10.4.4, there are separate PowerPC and Intel updaters for each platform.

It's not all bad news. The good news is that you can now put in two drives – or partition your main drive into two drives – and use one to run Windows XPsp2 PRO or Home in an Apple software program called "Boot Camp."

Once all the bugs are worked out, you'll be able to run postal reports on the same machine that runs your layout software.

Emulation software has even been developed to run your Mac on the Unix operating system.

That's a lot to think about, but if you're planning on buying a PowerPC Mac, you better hurry. Apple says by this fall all Macs will ship with the Intel processor.

plugged IN
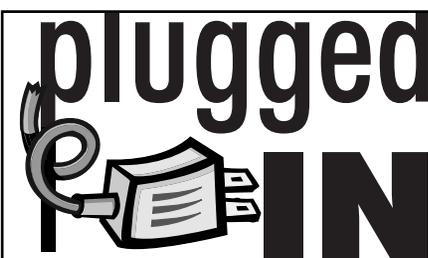
Anti Virus Software

When you run Windows on a Mac, your machine has become susceptible to all those PC viruses and you need protection.

Here's a look at some of the best anti-virus softwares for Windows in order of best review:

BitDefender 9 Standard	$30
McAfee VirusScan 2006	$40
Kaspersky Anti-Virus Personal 5.0	$40
F-Secure Anti-Virus 2006	$40
Symantec Norton AntiVirus 2006	$40
Panda Titanium 2006	$50

All anti-virus software must be kept updated to be effective. I've talked to several people lately who lost files due to some of the new viruses. Be prepared.

How to create PDF files that work well for others

In the continuing quest to develop the perfect PDF, I'm once again going to go over the steps you should follow.

There's not a day that goes by that I don't get a call asking for help with PDFs – and there are a variety of problems that can occur.

When PDFs work, everyone's happy and goes about their business; when they don't work, it's the catalyst for hair pulling and headaches.

Let's get started with routine steps such as making sure all fonts are embedded and all art files are linked.

TRACKING DOWN THE ART

To make a good, quality PDF, the artwork must be linked to the original. However, software programs can fool you into thinking the artwork is linked. Just because the artwork prints doesn't mean it's linked to the original.

Many PageMaker users have used the same piece of art for so long that they don't have any idea where the original file is stored. In fact, the original file may no longer exist, which means the artwork must be scanned.

You can quickly check to see if your artwork is linked by locating the links manager in your software program. For instance, the links manager for PageMaker is located under **FILE>LINKS MANAGER;** in Quark it's found under **UTILITIES>USAGE PICTURES;** in InDesign it's located under **WINDOWS>LINKS.**

Pagemaker marks missing artwork with **"?";** Quark says **"missing"** by the name of the art boxes and InDesign displays a yield sign with an exclamation mark in it. If you see any of those messages, update the art links.

CREATING THE PDF FILE

Although there are probably a minimum of 20 ways to create a PDF, I recommend using your layout program to create an EPS file and then using Acrobat Distiller to create the PDF file.
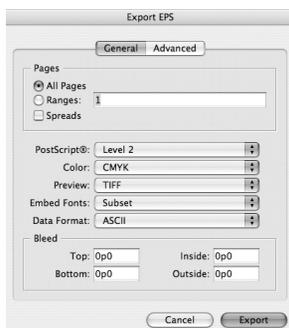
Maybe you've missed the steps I've discussed in previous columns or you're new to making PDFs so here's a refresher course:

Embed all fonts in EPS files (in Pagemaker select both TrueType and Postscript fonts).

Use the "Press" or "PDFx1a" setting in Acrobat Distiller. Check the setting by looking for the word "Settings" – generally located in a pop-up window on the screen.

Your newspaper may have a custom setting where compressions have been lowered to what works well on your press. Generally, custom settings are found under custom names, such as your newspaper's name.

Avoid all web-based settings, such as eBook, which are set at 72 dpi. Newspapers need at least 170 dpi.

If possible, build your ad to the actual size – with no margins or small margins. There is nothing more frustrating than placing an ad with big, white space all around it.

To make an ad the actual size, just set your page size in the layout program to the exact size, such as 4.25X3 inches for a 2x3 ad. If you

really want margins, use small ones. If the ad was built on a large page, look for a place in the EPS setting that allows you to produce the ad to the size of the bounding box. If you can't locate this setting, change the page setup to a smaller size.

In the first window of Distiller, uncheck the "Optimize for Fast Web View" and the "Embed Page Thumbnails" boxes.

This method of making a PDF has more steps but it's recommended as the best way to make a PDF. However, if your method is working, there's no need to change. As the old saying goes, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it."

For a no-fuss, no-muss PDF, try this. Export your file as an EPS, then create the document with Acrobat Distiller. Use the Press or PDFX1a:2001 setting with just a few changes. You can lower the compression settings from 300 to 170. This makes smaller PDF files, which are easier to e-mail.

Distiller allows you to tweak all settings, but I would read up on this before randomly changing things.
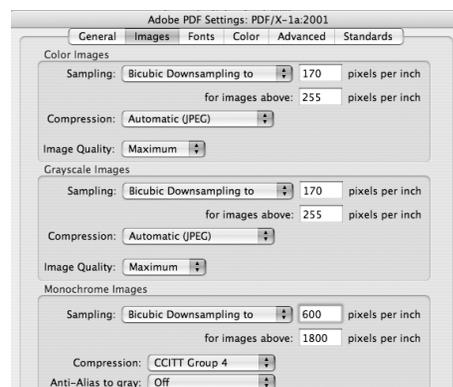
One of the biggest problems I've encountered with PDF files is caused by clip art. Let's say you place a piece of clip art from a CD directly in a file. The next time you go to use that file, the link to the artwork is lost and you keep getting PostScript errors. Just remove the clip art, and try making the EPS file again. If it was the artwork, relocate it, open it in Photoshop, save it as a Tiff and replace it on the page.

Files made with bad artwork can even cause problems in the final PDF of an entire newspaper page. No one knows how many times a piece of artwork has been re-PDFed before it arrives at your location. Every time a file is re-PDFed, it loses quality. Your best bet is to get the PDF from whoever created it.

These settings will work for either Mac or Windows. The real key is having a copy of Acrobat Distiller. Newer versions let you open art within the PDF in Photoshop or Illustrator. This gives you an opportunity to repair some problems – such as photos too dark for your press or a bad piece of EPS art imbedded in the PDF.

Photoshop and Illustrator can be linked to the full version of Acrobat under Preferences. To use the Photoshop or Illustrator editing tools in Acrobat, look under **Tools> Advanced Editing> Touch Up Object Tool**. To use, right click (or hold down the control key on a Mac) and go to Edit Object in the pop-up menu.