

DOUBLE-CLICK

MAY 2001



Executive Contact List

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Double Click

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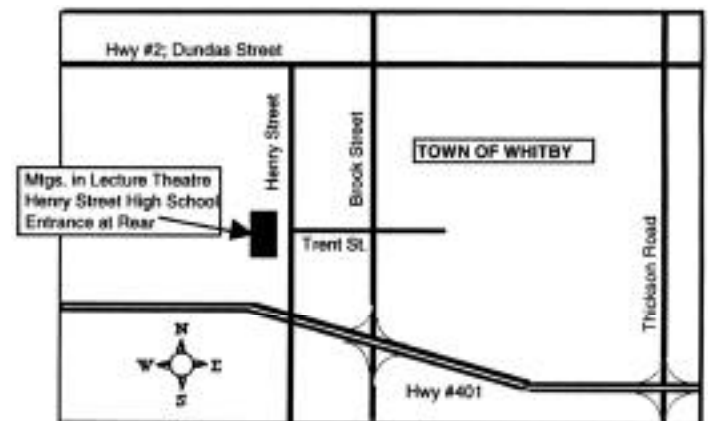
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Doug Kettle

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Sean Murphy

From the Editor

There has been a lot happening lately with the high-tech world...most of it either exciting or distressing. Everything is either getting more magical or diving right into the toilet, depending on whether you see yourself as a user or an investor. The Internet gets faster. New Macs get faster. Pentium 4 processors over will go over 2 gigahertz by the end of the year, Mac processors are already pushing towards one gigahertz. Digital takes over for still photography. Apple loses money. The logical next step from burning your own CDs at home might well be burning your own DVDs. QuickTime 5 is out and its everywhere. Amid all the changes the weather getting warmer is not going un-noticed.

Anyway, its time to leave the Mac alone and get outside for a bit. The sun is shining , the weeds are sprouting and the lawn needs to be mowed. But first take just half-a-minute and check your eMail one last time before heading out...



The May meeting will be held 7:30 P.M. on May 23rd. at the Henry Street High School in Whitby Ontario. Park behind the School and enter through the West doors.

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Making the Switch: Managing Netscape User Profiles

One of the big changes when you do finally move from your present modem-connected ISP account to your high-speed DSL or Cable account will be the way you handle eMail. Like with any other divorce or big change in your life you will find that there is a "period of transition" during which you must sever connections to your old identity...in my case < mikeshaw@idirect.com > and pick up the threads of your new identity. While it is possible to drag along all of your old bookmarks and email preferences I suggest that you not. Look upon the acquisition of a new ISP as an opportunity to shed some of your old habits and move on.

Inevitably there will be a short period during which you will have and be paying for two internet accesses...and you can't ride two horses with one behind. What you can do, however, is keep both of your ISP accounts active without any bother at all for a month while you update your information around the world with everyone that you are going to want to keep in touch with. For many of us who have long-term or financial connectivity concerns, like internet auctions, banking, money transfers, business contacts, news groups and ListServs, its important that we get ALL the eMail that is coming to us.

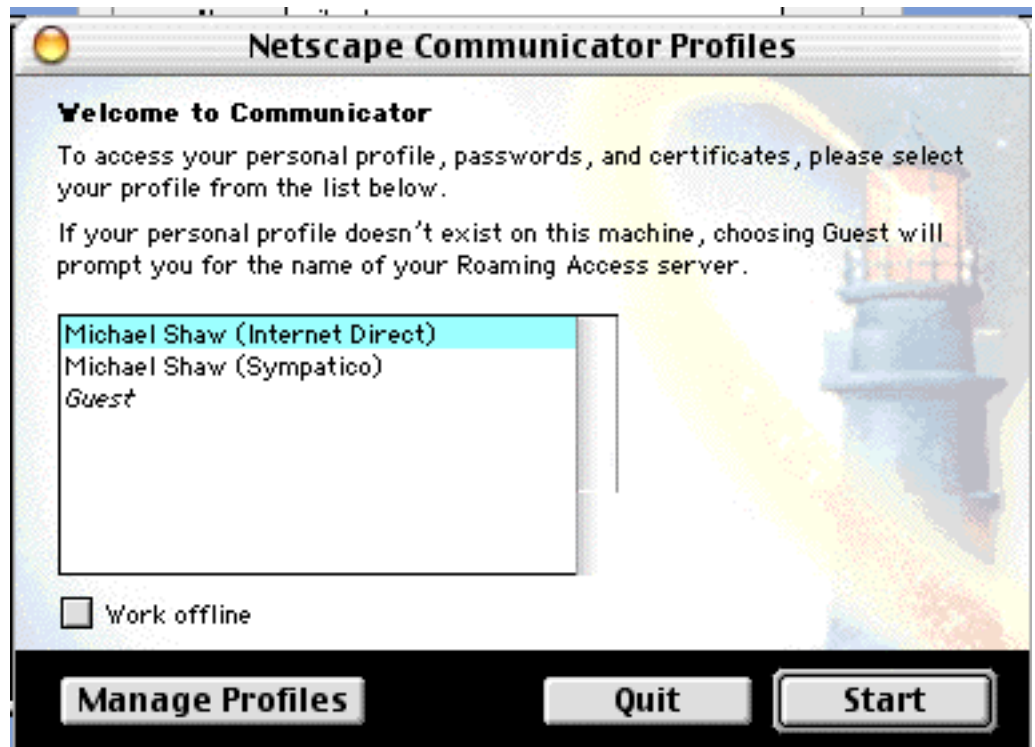
Netscape has made this all very easy to do...with the help of the brilliant Mac OS. If you dig into your Hard Drive, probably into the Internet Folder, you will find your Netscape or Communicator folder. You



User Profile Manager

will find a small application in it called the User Profile Manager. Double click on this to open and create or edit your user profiles. This application will create an alternate User Profile folder in your Netscape Preferences folder. As soon as you have more than one possible User Profile Netscape will ask you who you are each time you launch your browser. The program will launch and load normally but when it comes to loading preferences Netscape will halt the startup sequence to show the dialog box pictured below. Choosing one set of preferences over the other determines how the program will respond to such things as requests for email messages. In this way you can continue to run just ONE copy of Netscape on ONE drive or partition and have it behave as if it were two completely different programs, each with its own passwords and eMail account.

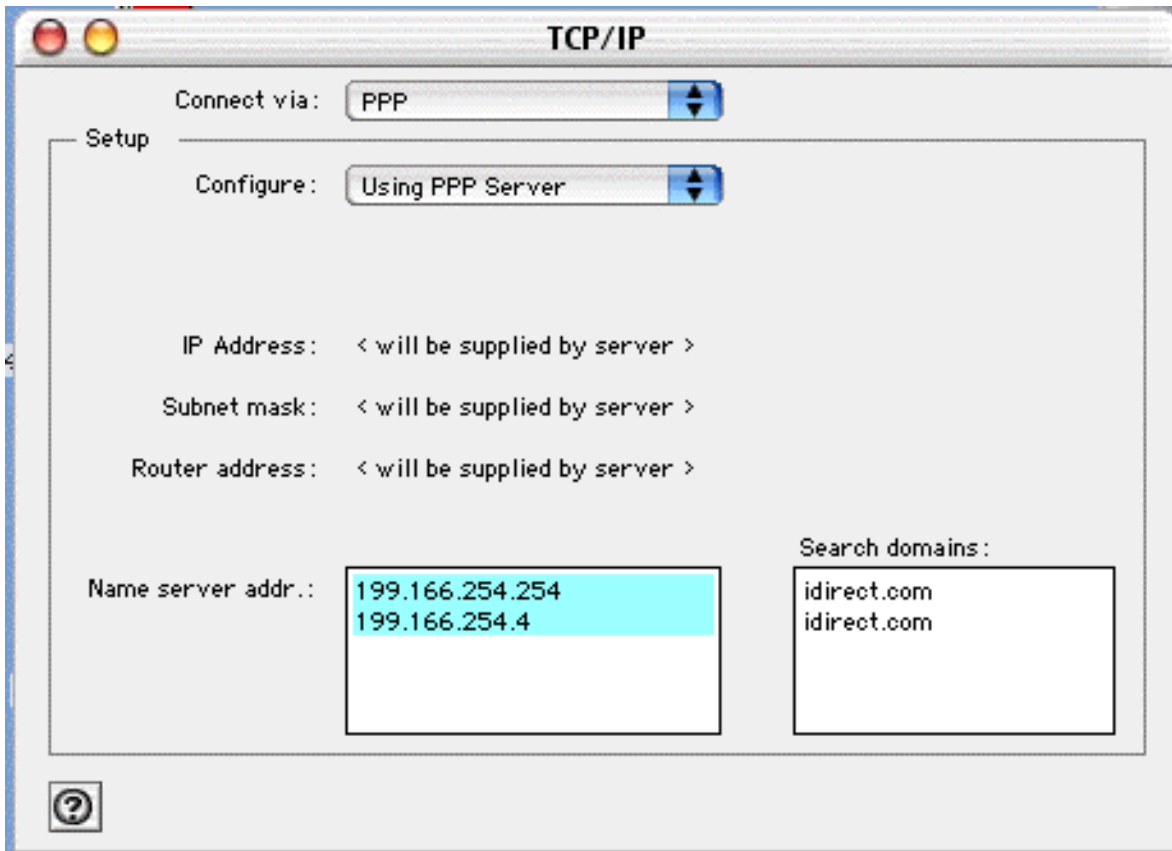
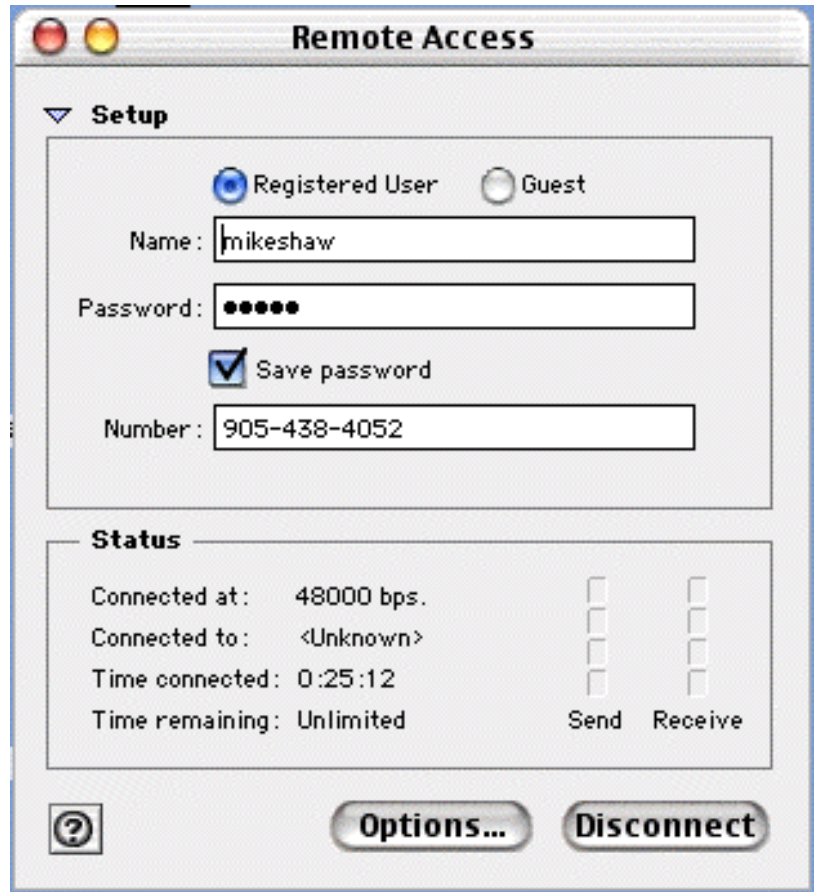
You may prefer to have your browser automatically connect when launched but I prefer to manually connect before I launch my browser. In a folder called "Comms" in the Apple Menu Items folder in the System folder I have a set of aliases for the programs and control panels that I tend to use the most for communications. Before I do

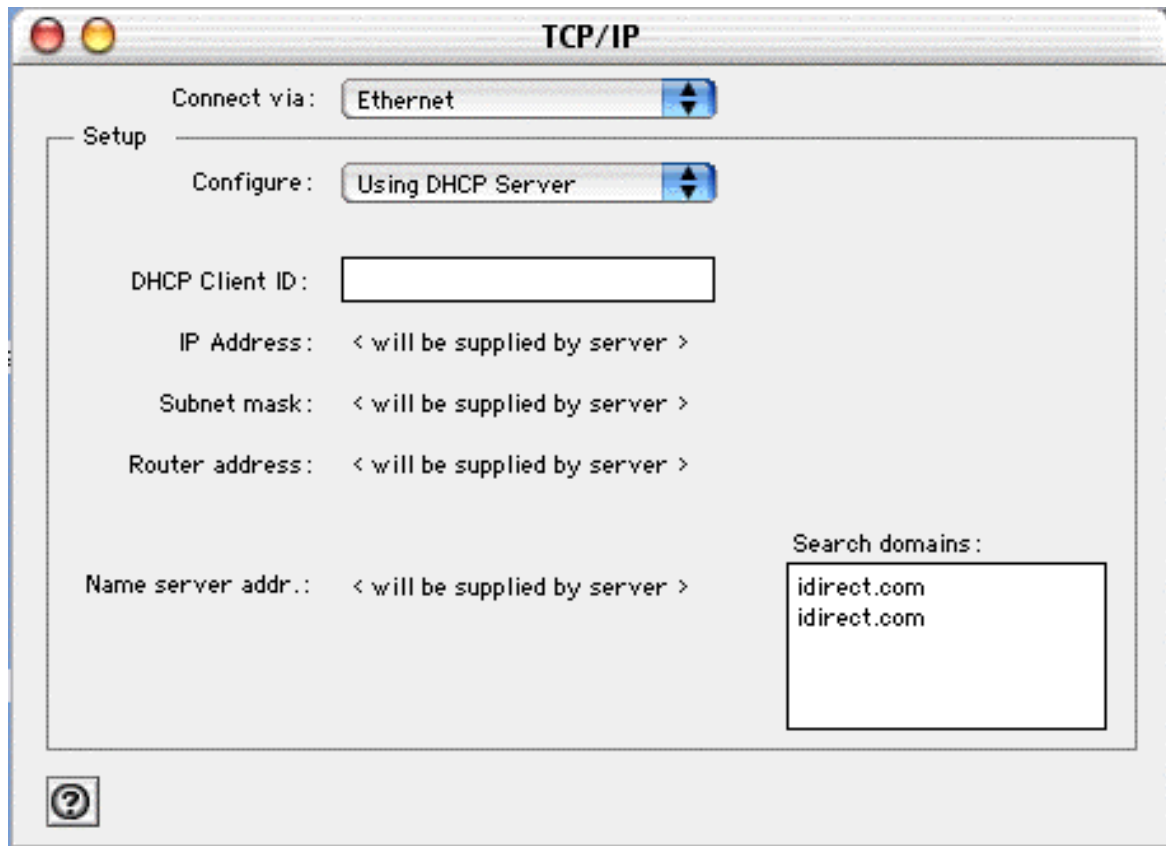


Hotline Client 1.8.3 alias
 Napster alias
 Netscape Communicator™ alias
 Remote Access alias
 Source35.
 TCP/IP

anything I open this to check how the communications are configured from the previous session:if I click on the alias for TCP/IP I may get the control panel to open looking like it does below. Obviously the last time I connected it was to my dial-up modem connection to Internet Direct. If that is the ISP I intend to use right now all I have to do is click on the alias for the Remote Access Control Panel (also in the Comms folder) and when it opens, see right, click on the connect button to have the number dialed and the connection goes through. hen the connection is completed I can launch my Netscape as described on the previous page, and select the Michael Shaw (Internet Direct) User Profile to use my browser and get my up-to-date eMail. Everything sent to me at

my old mikeshaw@idirect.com address will be there.





Of course I may not wish to connect to the old server. I may wish to connect to the new one. Lets go back to the point on the previous page where I opened up the TCP/IP Control Panel by clicking on its alias in the Comms folder, and saw all that Internet Direct stuff. If at this point I want to connect to my new account instead, and get my < michael_shaw@sympatico.ca > email, all I have to do is change the Connect Via: to Ethernet and choose to Configure Using DHCP Server, close the Control Panel saving changes, and my Mac is automatically fully reconfigured to accept a high-speed DSL signal from the Asante FR3004 DSL Router. Now when I launch my Netscape Communicator browser and get asked which profile to use, I can select the Michael Shaw (Sympatico) user profile and all of my appropriate preferences and email messages will be there. When I ask for new messages the Netscape will display the sympatico.com dialog and request my Sympatico passwords. And the eMail will be F-A-S-T !!!! Dozens of email messages can pour down the DSL connection in just a few seconds. Those dopey humourous attachments that are frankly unfunny now can be downed in a few seconds and deleted even faster.

Using the Netscape User Profile Manager in this way makes it very easy to maintain two discreet ISP and eMail identities during the period of transition. And eMail messages can be forwarded from one account to the other and answered from there to introduce your new return address. In this way what may start out looking like a major communications crisis can be broken down into a lot of little ones and easily handled as they arise.

For the information of those of you who are putting off sending your submissions to the Double Click until my eMail gets straightened out, please be advised that the new Double Click email address is now posted on Page 2 of the Double Click. The MaUsE Newsletter Office now has no less than THREE dedicated eMail addresses:

michael_shaw@sympatico.ca
mikeshaw@idirect.com
fat_idle_bastard@yahoo.ca

Articles are now being accepted for the June and July 2001 Summer issues.

My visit to Apple Canada - iDVD and DVD Studio Pro - workshop.

by Chris Greaves



Apple has introduced two excellent DVD burner programs. One free and the other \$1500 CDN. Both programs are burners for Apples new top end DVD equipped G4 Macs. They

both put on the interface or menu screens for navigating the DVD in a consumer DVD Player. Each assemblies previously finished edited video, audio, slides, photos, etc. in any QuickTime readable format. This is for FINAL assembly and burning to a consumer playable DVD.



(iDVD program only works with the hi end box at \$5400 CDN.)

Dave from Apple introduced iDVD on a 733MHz G4. This soft-

ware comes free on the G4 and only provides a basic DVD screen for DVD movies but is very powerful and simple to use. It uses DVD general spec. vers.2 at a CBR (continuous bit rate) of 8 meg. bite per sec. Apple sells consumer disks for \$15 each in packs of five, which is considerable less than the current \$60-75 per disk currently charged. Apples disks are 4.7 gig single sided and have a maximum playback of one hours worth of movies, audio or slide in any mix on the same disk.



The down side it that each DVD is - one off. Meaning that your can't take the Apple G4 burned DVD to a replicator and have 100 duplicates made. You'd have to make them one at a

time! (Part of Apples problem is that they have licensed the MPEG2 for the ROMs in the burner only rather than for each disk you burn.) (Another way around this Apple ROM license

problem is to take the burned DVD to a professional Mac replicator studio who will copy you disk to their HD and remake a unhindered DVD for commercial replication and your charges will then include the license fee for each burned disk.) Apple has done an amazing job of reduced the encoding time of a full hour movie (max time of the DVD) from several days to 2 hours! Apple it appears is two years ahead of the industry. (Maybe they can build the Apple Stores and take over the DVD ROM burning market like they did with desktop publishing! Cool!)



With the program iDVD you assemble from several sources an MPEG2 movie. It is real easy. Just drag and drop and burn. The top MENU is your title and navigation locator where you create a TV safe area and icons for your media events. A small circular icon fills in as your media is loaded. It completes the circle showing





your the balance left on the DVD to burn. Cool touch.

Next Dave introduced Adam and John owners of Master2DVD.com in Toronto. They described the older convoluted way needed to burn DVDs in the old days - six months ago. They went into Apples DVD Studio Pro on the same 733 MHz G4. Studio Pro is a controller creator for DVD menus. It can do multiply languages, CBR and VBR (variable bit rate) burning say in a 2 to 8 MB/s. For example stills can drop to 2 MB/s while movies may vary 4, 6 to 8 MB/s. You can set a max VBR to get as much on a disk as possible.



They showed the ease of creating 'rollover' states and 'select' states on the Menu selector of the consumer DVD screen. Studio Pro retails for \$1500. You really need good skills

using Photo Shop, Adobe Premier etc. having created FINAL movies or cartoons or photos before assemble in Studio Pro. The program can select individual world regions or all regions and burn a master on the Pioneer S201 Pro DVD burner - \$7,000 US or create a DLT tape. (Apple uses the prosumer Pioneer S103 burner in the G4.) A Matrox RTMac board (big bucks) or a \$500 card from wiredinc.com is available for faster burning!

The whole DVD burner package can be assembled for about \$7 grand including the G4 w/DVD burner, DVD Studio Pro and \$75 for 5 DVD disks. Cool. And using Toast DVD Burner V5.1 you can archive your project to one or several DVD disks! Oh. You can make CD ROM music CDs too.

It's the start of a brave new world of DVDs.



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N2MP3 Pro 2.0

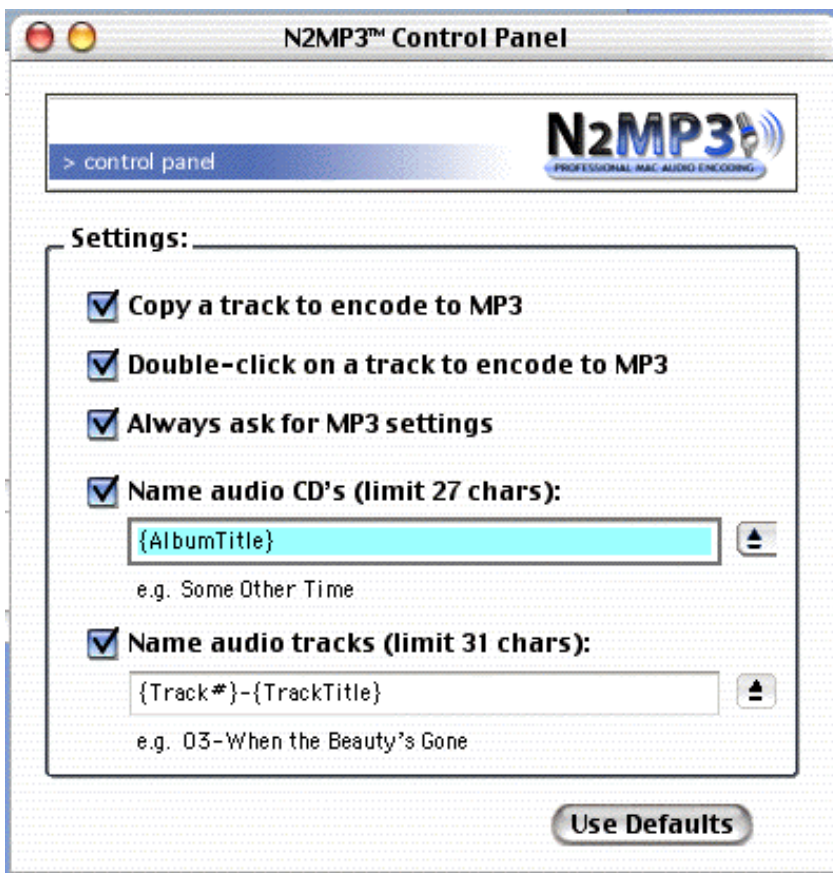
The full title of this one might well be "N2MP3: Really Neat MP3 Software." To see this program in action and read the latest news about N2MP3 download a demo of it from Proteron at <www.proteron.com>.

N2MP3 Pro is a software digital audio encoder.

Until now, the complexity of MP3 software has prohibited many people from encoding their own MP3 files. Encoding an MP3 file required using at least three or four different audio programs, one to rip the CD ("ripping"), one to convert the file format, another program to do the encoding, and yet another program to label it. N2MP3 Pro does all these things at the same time. It is a complete solution for you to immediately begin putting the power of MP3 to use. N2MP3 Pro makes it easy for you to put your music collection into your Macintosh,

or to encode your own music for easy distribution over the internet.

When you open the N2MP3 Application the above window appears. From this window all major functions of the N2MP3 Pro application can be accessed. There are also menus at the top of the screen which allow you to control all functions, change your CDDB settings and account information, and alter your encoding settings.



1. Encode an entire CD. Pressing the button will start a process where you determine first where all the mp3 files will be stored, your encoding preferences, and then initiates the encoding process.

2. Encode specific track(s) This button will bring up a list of available tracks for encoding on whatever CD you currently have in your CD-ROM drive. From this list, you can select the specific tracks you wish to encode. It will then ask for you to select your encoding settings before it begins to encode.

3. Encode a WAV or AIFF file to MP3 Pressing this button calls up a dialog box which allows you to select a WAV or

AIFF formatted audio file on your hard disk or other storage media which is currently mounted on your computer. It will then ask for your encoding settings before encoding.

4. Encode an mp3 from an external audio source.

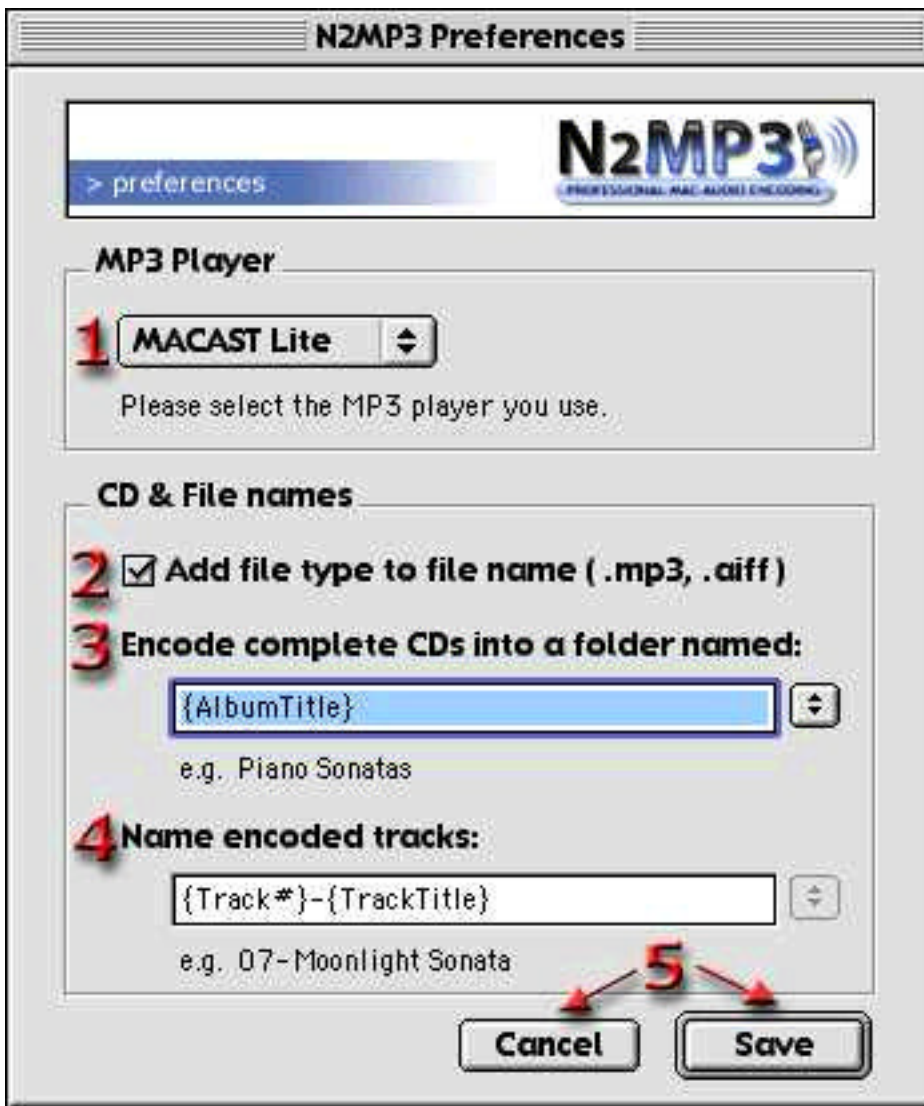
This selection (see below) allows you to record from such audio sources as a microphone, tape deck, DAT deck, record player or other external source which has been properly connected to your computer. N2MP3 Pro can take the digital information from audio compact discs or an external source (such as a microphone), and convert it into a highly-compressed format; this allows easy storage on your computer and quick play-back on your computer's speakers...which means that with this software installed on a PowerBook you can record lectures, sermons, conversations or live performances right to your hard drive to be saved as high quality MP3s.

MP3 is the shortened name for "MPEG layer 3". This file format stores audio files on a computer, in such a way that the file size is relatively small; however, the songs sound nearly perfect. MPEG is the name of a working group established under the joint direction of the International Standards

Organization /International Electrotechnical Commission (ISO/IEC), that has for its goal the creation of standards for digital video and audio-phonetic compression. More precisely, MPEG defines the syntax of audio and video format needing weak debits of data, as well as operations to be undertaken by decoders. It is customary to identify MPEG layer 3 files in DOS or Unix systems by shortening the acronym to a three letter suffix, e.g., ".mp3".

The MP3 audio format has become the standard format for music and audio over the internet for an important reason—it is smaller and it sounds better than other compressed audio file formats. It is possible to copy the entire uncompressed audio from a CD (74 minutes) onto your Macintosh; however, each compact disc would require roughly 700 megabytes of disc space. With MP3, each megabyte of an MP3 file is equal to one minute of CD-quality (44.1 kHz, 16-bit stereo) audio, or several minutes of lower quality voice-only recordings, which sound like a telephone conversation. If you were to fill a 650 MB CD-R disc with MP3 files, it could contain more than ten hours of music.





There are a variety of other reasons why MP3s are convenient. First, files on your Mac are in many ways easier to organize than the stack of CDs. For example, your Mac can automatically alphabetize your music for you in less than a second. Most MP3 players take advantage of this fact and allow you to organize playlists of your favorite music. Another advantage is portability. For instance, a zip disc can now be used as your own recording medium and it will hold almost 100 minutes of high quality music. Floppy discs are usually too small to be used for this purpose, since they hold about a minute of MP3 digitally encoded audio, though they can be used to transfer smaller samples such as sound effects. There are also many MP3 playing devices available now, including: the Diamond Rio, Nomad by Creative Labs and Yepp by Samsung. These will not skip like portable CD players do because they have no

moving parts. These devices have other advantages, such as the ability to edit, describe, and rename tracks.

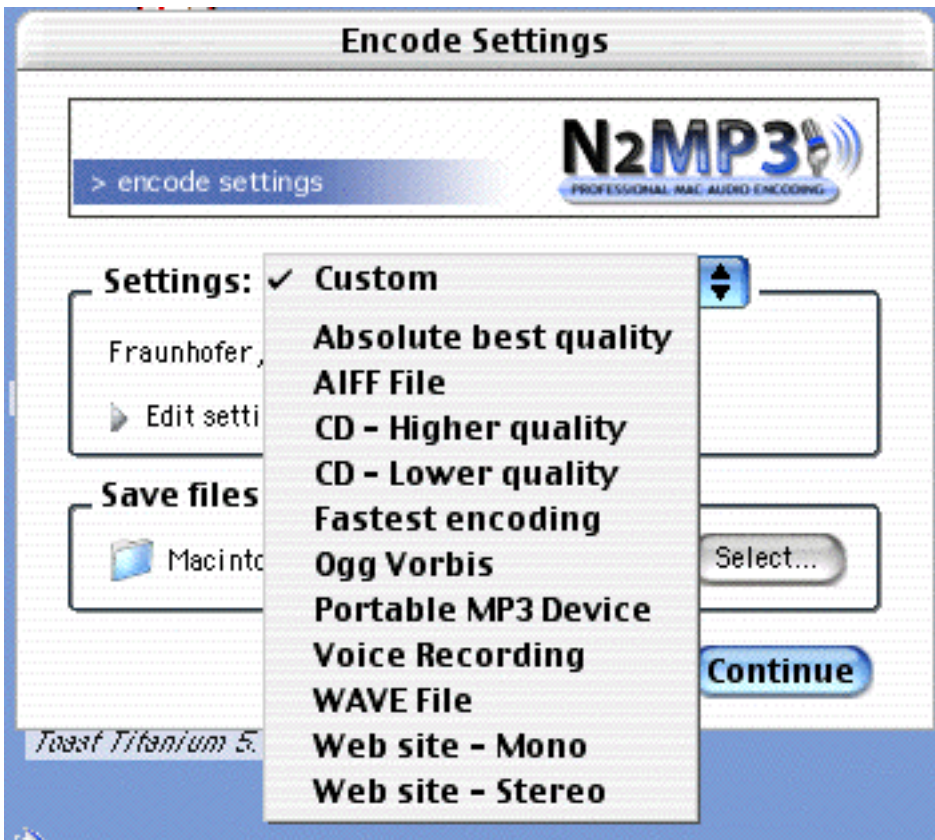
For each recording session it is necessary and sufficient to set the preferences in the window above:

- 1.** MP3 file creator and file type. This menu allows you make your MP3s easily recognizable by your mp3 player by setting the creator and file type of your mp3 files.
- 2.** PC file naming check-box. This feature is used to add the PC-style file extension names to your encoded tracks, e.g. ".mp3", ".ogg", ".aiff", etc.
- 3.** CD folder name. If the CDDB naming features are available, and you are encoding an entire CD, you can select the name of the folder they are saved to as: artist, album name, or genre.

4. File name format. If the CDDB naming features are available, then you can select the naming convention applied to your encoded files, such as: "07-Moonlight Sonata".

5. "Cancel"/"Save" buttons. Clicking the "Cancel" button will close the window without saving any changes you have made. Click on "Save" to save any changes you have made.

The big differences between this program and all the other MP3 players and translators are the price and the performance. Funny how the two go together. For most of us the capabilities of the FREE programs like iTunes, Toast and SoundJam are totally adequate to our needs, but for the few of us who really need the highest quality MP3 encoding possible on a Macintosh there is



N2MP3 from Proteron. Professionals, artists and recording technicians will find this program invaluable. The rest of us will find it wonderfully easy to use but a bit pricey. The price is a not too modest \$95.00 Canadian (\$60.00 U.S.). What this program has to justify the cost that the others lack is a full set of five compressor / decompressors, also known as "codecs" for short, that each provide a unique way for the music to be coded and written to your hard drive as a audio document. If you need the features this program provides then the price is actually very reasonable.

The five codecs are:

1. Fraunhofer : very slow but extreme high fidelity. This is the original ISO-MPEG Audio Layer-3 compressor algorithm that all of the rest are based on. Other encoders optimize this codec with their own code to accelerate its performance.

2. LAME : This is a codec that only works in conjunction with the above compression algorithm. It is a license-free, open source project with the

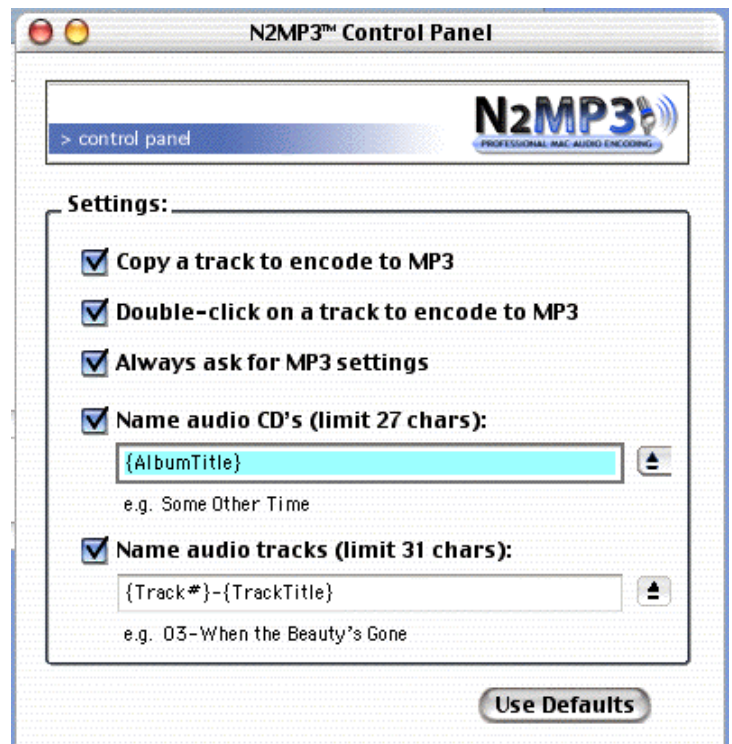
goal of using incremental improvements in psychoacoustics, noise shaping, and MP3 speed as the basis of a patent-free audio compression codec.

3. MPegger : You may be more familiar with this compressor / decompressor by its previous name, Mpecker.

4. MP2 Encoder : Compared to MP3 the MPEG Layer-2 format has a better sound quality at higher bit rates.

5. Ogg Vorbis : This is an alternative encoder to MP3, one that's open-source and royalty-free. This format only works with Audion2 and Unsanitary Echo software.

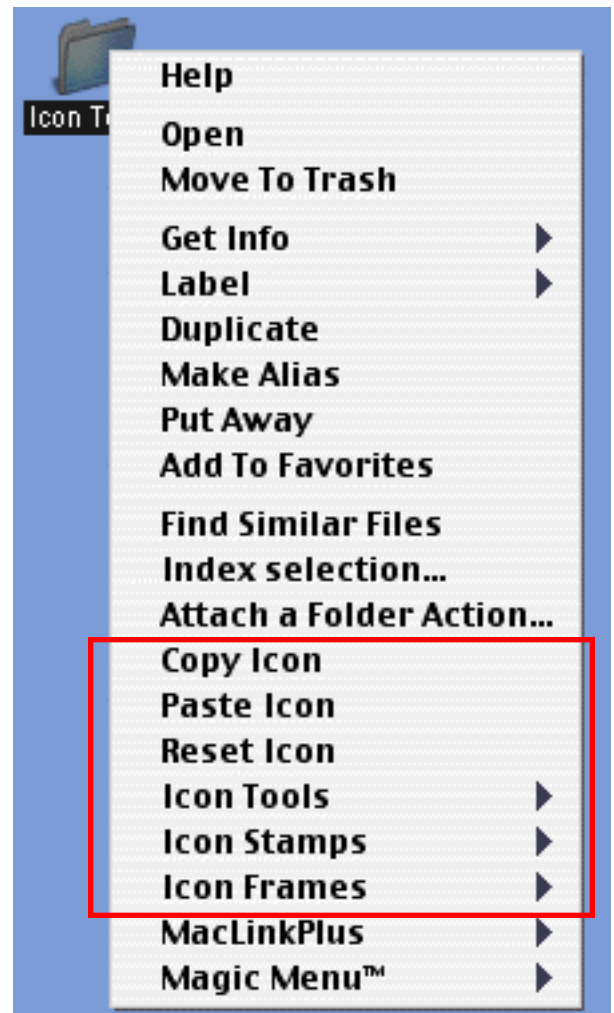
The N2MP3 Pro program comes with an excellent online manual which can be viewed as a .PDF or HTML file. The boxed version also contained sample files and demos of products from other companies.



Icon Tools 1.6

Icon Tools 1.6 is the latest version of a wonderful shareware Contextual Menu Manager plug-in that allows you to create, modify, customize, rotate, invert and mark your Icons. A search on the internet for Icon Tools 1.6 will take you right to it.

For users of System 8 and above, the Contextual Menu Manager is a control-click menu of actions that can be customized to save time, mouse movement and keyboard strokes. I have to admit that I had not used the Contextual Menu very much until I began this review of Icon Tools for the Double Click , and I find it is a very powerful tool available to all Mac users that should not be overlooked. The way to launch the Icon Tools after you install it is to hold down the Control key while you single-click any icon on your Desktop. A Contextual Menu like the one to the right will appear. As you can see from the available choices you can use the Contextual Menu to create folders, change desktop settings, make aliases, move items to the trash and many other repetitive chores. There are a number of helpful plug-ins available (like Icon Tools!) that you can use to customize your Contextual Menu Manager.



Version 1.6 of the Icon Tools package has been redesigned to take advantage of the new 32-bit icons available with the release of System 8.5. Preview icons now look much better, and you can now apply transparent or translucent icon stamps.

Icon Tools comes as a package complete with its own installer. Simply download and launch the installer and restart and you're ready to customize. To use Icon Tools, control-click on any icon and a menu of Icon Tools will be displayed. You can then choose the method of changing the Icon. As you can see in the examples on the left, you can take the wonderful blank folder icon and frame it, add a small "stamp" to it to indicate that it's our favorite reading material, or go crazy and mark it with eyes, smiles, stars and trademark stamps. You can do this or any combination of dozens of different things to every icon in your Mac. Icon Tools can alter your folder, application, document and drive icons. Besides the stamps that you can place on your icons there are effects you can apply with colours and



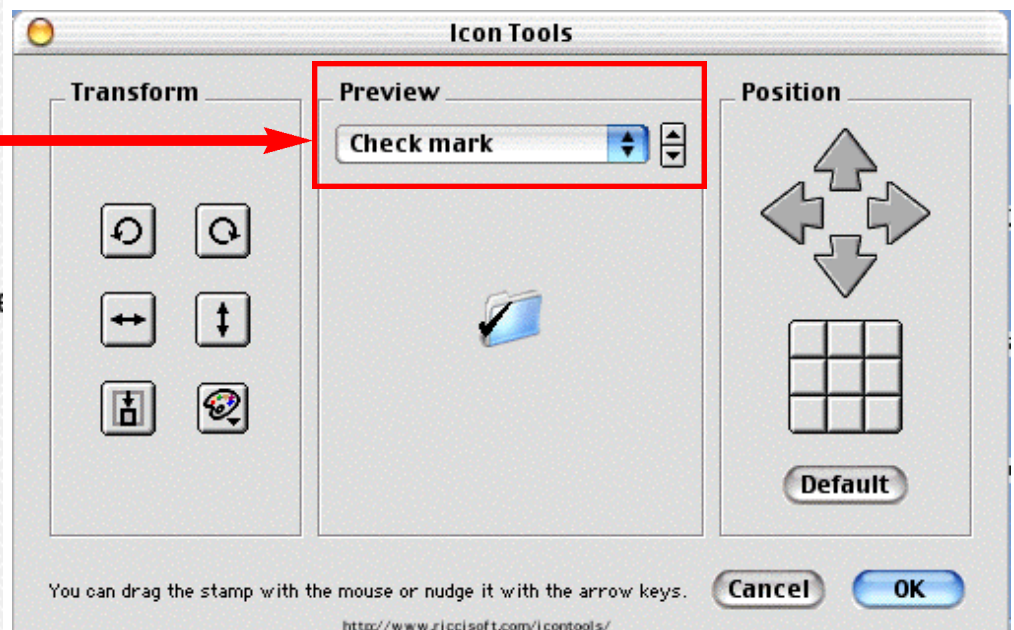
Access Denied
Alias
Apple
Arrow - Blue
Arrow - East
Arrow - Green
Arrow - Red
Balloon
Book - Large
Book - Small
Bracketize
Buggy
Burning
CD 1
CD 2
CD 3
Check mark
Clock
Cube
Disabled 1
Disabled 2
DVD
Earth
Envelope 1
Envelope 2
Exclamation - Black
Exclamation - Gray
Eyes - Big
Eyes - Small
Film Strip
Flash - Large
Flash - Medium
Frame - Wood
Frame - Work in Progress
Glasses - cool - blue
Glasses - cool - gray
Glasses - cool - green
Glasses - cool - red
Glasses - round
Glasses - small
Glasses - square

frames. It's so easy to use you might find yourself getting carried away! The smaller stamps can be moved to any position on the icon with a handy palette (below) that appears when you select any stamp to use. The pallet allows you to preview all of the stamps, a few of which are listed here at left, and by using the Transform and Position controls you can change the colour, orientation and position of the stamp on your icon.

Another handy use for Icon Tools is creating individual preview icons for pictures, sounds, movies, and desktop patterns. On the right are two examples of what can be done with a desktop pattern clipping and a regular text document. You can create preview icons for desktop patterns to easily see what the pattern looks like, and customize text icons to indicate subject, importance, under construction, or whatever you need to more easily be able to spot important documents or folders. Icon Tools also allows you to put many smaller icons on your desktop using the "minimize" command. That way aliases of all your favorite applications could be put on the desktop without using too much room.



There is no way for me to list all of the possible features and uses for Icon Tools in this small review, so my recommendation is to grab a copy of Icon Tools and try it out for yourself! The entire user guide is just one page with clear explanations. It is easy to use and won't get you in any trouble, unless you overdo it and render some of your icons totally unrecognizable! In that case, there's always a "reset icon" command to restore sanity. Icon Tools will appeal to anyone who wants their Mac to have that "custom" look. It can also actually speed up your work by making it easier to locate files and folders. Grab a copy and try it out. You'll be amazed at the range of possibilities.



April Meeting



The April MaUse Meeting was a lot of fun. Our own Jim Foster covered the topic of hand-held computers and showed us his own Palm V and Newton to show the evolution of the device. Among other neat things that he showed us were the palm V fold-away keyboard, sync cradle, modem, and the accessories and attachments that turn the Palm V into a digital camera. He described the uses and limitations of the device and explained its evolution and the useful features that will make the personal organizer a necessity for busy people everywhere.



The second part of the Meeting involved a discussion of future topics then the SWAP MEET that Chris Greaves organized. I'd like to thank everyone who helped make the swap a big success. Boxes of drives, power cables, mice, SCSI cables, modems, connectors, LocalTalk connectors, brackets, T-shirts, books, dongles, magazines, CDs, software, SCSI terminators, printer cables, power supplies, gew-gaws, thingymajigs, whatchamacallits, and whatsits. Prices were reasonable and a lot of people who came empty-handed left with a memento of the occasion. Mac OS X T-shirts were the raffle prizes. Congratulations to the winners.

