

DOUBLE CLICK

A Monthly Publication of Macintosh Users East (MaUse)



Next Meeting
March 24th

March 1999

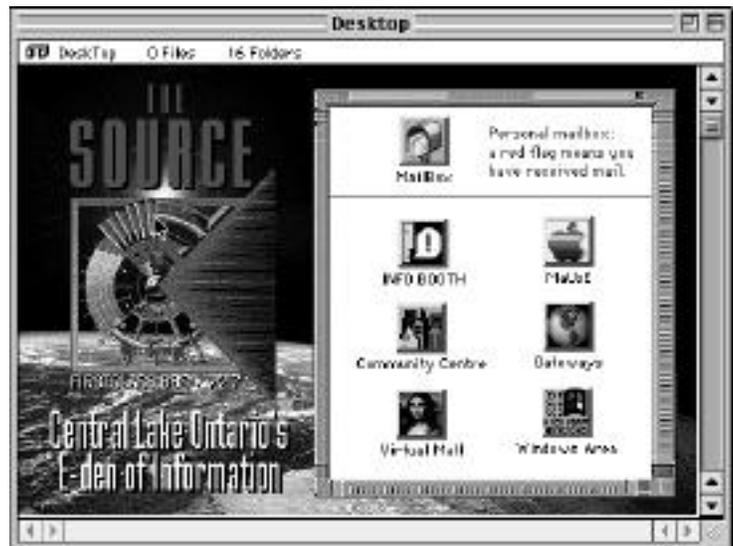
This month's meeting presenter is Mr. Roy Shultz of Galleon Software. Mr. Schultz will demonstrate Galleon's eMerge, an application which streamlines the emailing process. He will also be pleased to provide information to interested members about MacTicker, a specialized Internet browser that lets you view stock market information provided by websites around the world.

In This Issue eBay Auctions & The Source on the Web

Meeting Location



Meeting Starts at 7:30 P.M.
Go to the Rear Entrance and
Follow the Signs
Admission is Free



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From the Editor

There's been a change of Editor at the Double Click, with Neil Oates passing over the running of the newsletter to me in order to have more time for his increasingly busy life.

I will have to rely upon your tolerance for a while until I get more familiar with the mechanical side of getting this paper to press and I ask all Club members to be patient for the while that it takes me to get my feet under me.

I promise to deliver at least two of the three critical elements of publishing : correct spelling and proper grammar. The third element, interesting content, will be iffy for a while unless you guys and dolls in the Club let me know what you want in the Double Click. If you don't do this you will be stuck with my idea of what is interesting in the Mac world, and I may as well warn you now that I am firmly ensconced in the trailing edge of Macintosh technology. My old 33 Mhz Quadra 950 and older 40 Mhz Mac IIfx are my Macs of choice, and there isn't a G3 to be seen about the place.

Feel free to contact me either on the Source BBS or via email at mikeshaw@idirect.com if you have comments, requests or ideas to share. This first issue will be.....what it will be. The first pancake is always a lump.

Michael Shaw
New DC Editor

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eBay Auctions

Chris Greaves has asked for a description of the eBay Auction to be included in this issue of Double Click. Some of us in the Club visit the eBay site regularly looking for bargains while others, young Chris included, may be only vaguely aware of its existence and have confused ideas of how it works.

For this month's offering you will not need any software programs except your Internet browser and one of the Apple's connectivity software programs, (like Open Transport, MacTCP, or Remote Access)...and an account with an Internet Service Provider, or ISP.

If you are already connected to the Internet then you are ready to visit one of the most valuable resource sites for just about everything that can be bought or sold privately on the Web. Although there may be lots of commercial concerns represented at eBay, the bulk of the transactions are between ordinary net citizens, or "netizens", like us.

Let's log on to the eBay site and see what's happening.....

Connect to the Internet via your ISP and launch your browser....Explorer or Netscape. Open the eBay home page, located at...<www.ebay.com>...and look for something that interests you among the list of possible linked auction topics. There are 12 General categories to search through...just pick one. Antiques, Books, Computers, Jewelry, Photography & Electronics, and Toys are some of the General areas. A single click on COMPUTERS will take you to a page of Computer related Auctions...sixteen Hardware topics with names like CPUs, Drives, Macintosh, Monitors, Modems, and Systems... and ten Software categories as well.

Select Macintosh from the Hardware list and you will be taken to the listing of all Macintosh Hardware Items currently up for auction.....23 pages of them.....which is just too much.

Luckily there is a Search box which will allow you to browse all the auctions in Hardware, Macintosh,

and there is also a choice of how you wish to view the auctions. Both of these devices really help a lot.

The way the choice thing works is really neat, with five possible choices for each category....you can view the default, which is all the "Current" auctions in the category, or "New", which are just the most recent items placed on auction, or "Ending Today", a list of auctions whose time limit expires within the next 24 hours, or "Going, Going, Gone", a list of items whose auction finishes within the next 3 hours. You can even look at "Complete" auctions, to see what you just missed, or find out how much something sold for in an auction whose time limit has expired. Each of these possibilities has a separate URL. Directly above this set of five viewing choices is the Search box, and directly below it begins the chronological list of items with the soonest expiring at the top.

The Search box is another way to weed out the auctions in any category that don't interest you and locate the ones that do. Type in "Iifx" if this is what you are interested in, and check the box Hardware, Macintosh, and you will be given a list of only the auction items in the Hardware, Macintosh listings with Iifx in the description of the item. Complete Iifx systems, Iifx CPUs, Iifx memory, Iifx motherboards, Iifx whatever....

Type in Laserwriter and only the auctions with Laserwriters and parts for them will appear, listed chronologically by expiry time.

When you do see an item listed in the chronology which interests you, click on it. There will be lots of information given besides just the name of an item and its description ...there will be the time left in the auction, the name of the owner and where you can send email to if you want more information about the item offered, the highest amount bid so far and name of the highest bidder, how many bids have been received for the item, where the item is, and how many identical items are up for bid.

Often there is a picture of the item, if that information is useful and available. there will also be a selectable "Send this auction to a friend" button in case you know somebody else who might be interested in the item. Click on this and you will be prompted for your friend's email

address and a description of the item and its current price will be emailed from eBay to his or her email address automatically. (This is a terrific feature when you want to establish the actual market value of something you have or when someone has just offered you a second-hand piece of equipment for a fair price of \$250.00 and you have just found it knocked down for \$21.50 after 11 bids.)

There will be an invitation to register with eBay in order to get bidding privileges. This is no big deal: you register by giving them your email address and picking a code name that you will use to verify your identity when you place a bid.

After the owner's name and the highest bidder's there will always be a number in brackets....which is useful and very important information. Click on the number in brackets after anybody's name and you will be shown a performance review of all the previous experiences other people have had with him. For regular customers these numbers can be in the hundreds for sellers, or may be very few for the buyers. After every transaction the buyer and the seller are both encouraged to place a Comment on the other person's page, to tell the bidding public how the transaction went. For example, after my name there is the number (7). If you click on this number you will be taken to a Comments page at eBay that will tell you the total number of auctions that I have been successful in with a Comment from each of the sellers. It will list Positive and Negative comments. All of mine are Positive....like, "He paid quickly" and "Good customer" and " Good transaction. Prompt payment received", and other things like that. Equally important are the comments after the sellers' names. If the merchandise you are bidding for is offered by a seller with 185 auctions showing in history and his Comments page lists 185 satisfied customers, then you may feel very secure about mailing off a Money Order to a complete stranger upon the promise that the goods will be shipped when the money arrives.

Unless otherwise advertised, all money numbers quoted are in American dollars and the successful bidder pays the shipping or postage. This can become a factor when larger items are involved, but my own experience is that I have received CDs and up to 8 ram SIMMs from American locations for the price of mere First Class

Priority Postage, well under \$3.00. I recently received a box with a manual and three CDs inside a box about the size of a Kellogs Corn Flakes box and was charged \$3.50 American by the sender. Since the Manual & three CD set only cost \$12.51, I can absorb the shipping fee easily.

Shipping costs for CPUs, printers and monitors may be high enough to be prohibitive, unless the item is a real bargain.

Dutch auctions for larger numbers of identical items are common. If somebody has a crate of modems and is auctioning off, let's say, 25 of them, the rules are kind of wierd. The lowest bid applies to the first 25 bidders. If the first guy bids \$10.00 and the next fifteen or twenty people bid from \$11.00 up to \$45.00 or \$50.00, the cost of the item to each bidder is the same...\$10.00. Of course, if more than 25 bids are received, or if somebody wants ten or fifteen of the modems then only the higher bids are successful and the cost starts to rise.

The amounts bid for each auction are updated momentarily and there is a running countdown in days, hours, and minutes to the expiry of each item so it's best to bid later than sooner so as not to drive the prices up. Its probably best to lurk about a bit, even after you register to bid, just to observe a few auctions before you jump in.

Some of the prices are absurdly low, even after the exchange rate and postage are calculated, but be careful with shipping costs. A SE/30 or a Mac IICx CPU with 16 Megs of ram and a 350 Meg Hard Drive for only \$34.00 might sound too good to be true, but shipping via UPS from San Diego will up your cost considerably. Customs charges may apply on larger items, especially if they are new merchandise.

On the other hand, it is still very possible to find bargains even when shipping costs are added in. For example, my most recent eBay Auction acquisition was on Dec. 9 1998, when I received a switch-box, (to allow connection of more than one Macintosh to the same printer), and a straight-through Imagewriter printer cable to go with it. It was delivered by a Canada Postal Courier. The auction price of the switch box was \$7.95 and the cable was \$4.95. The Seller in the auction, M C Pricebreakers, in Chula Vista, California, asked for

\$4.05 for shipping & handling....for a total cost to me of \$16.90. Strangely enough, it was sent to me via U.S. Priority Post.....at a cost to M C Pricebreakers of \$16.50. Since shipping & handling was included in the Money Order I sent them, they paid for the postage.

Everything described here will become crystal clear and obvious once you have visited <www.ebay.com> and looked around the eBay site

on your own. There are millions of items in thousands of categories waiting for your inspection, and you can Bookmark any page you visit, even the "Ending Today", or the "Going, Going, Gone" URL and come back to find it updated regularly.

If you can access the Internet then you already have the necessary software to visit <www.ebay.com> and see which online auctions may interest you.

"The Source" BBS Now Accessible via Internet!!!

This month's edition of Double-Click features lots of news about the MaUsE BBS (Bulletin Board System) known as "The Source". In addition to being mailed out to all current MaUsE Members, we're also sending a complimentary copy out to prior members of MaUsE as well as all of our Public Users on The Source.

The BIG news this month is that The Source can now be accessed directly via the internet.

This means that you now have TWO ways to logon to the BBS. You can continue to dial in directly to one of our two modem lines, OR you can logon to The Source any time you are connected to your Internet Service Provider.

The Source has existed for several years as a traditional dial-up BBS. Users have their Mac or Windows PC dial directly into it and, using the free FirstClass Client software, have access to a wide range of online services.

Now that you can also access The Source via the internet, there are a number of benefits.

1) First of all, there are only two modems attached to our direct dial-in lines. This means that the BBS could in the past support a maximum of only two callers at a time. The third and subsequent callers

would get a busy signal and have to try again later. By making the BBS accessible via the Internet, we in effect have greatly increased the number of callers who can be online simultaneously. This means there will be far fewer busy signals for those callers who continue to use the direct dial-in method, and it also facilitates making greater use of the "online chat" feature of the FirstClass software because you can have real time electronic chats with more people at one time;

2) If you happen to live in an area that is a long distance call to the BBS, but you already have internet service, you now have a way to reach the BBS without incurring any long distance charges;

3) For those folks who have a high speed internet connection, such as a 56K connection or a cable modem connection, you will probably find that the BBS is faster than it was through the dial-up method. This will make file transfers, as well as simple things such as opening message lists, happen much faster than before; and

4) Generally speaking, people with internet service have previously had to Quit out of their internet application before launching FirstClass Client and dialing up the BBS, and they have had to do the opposite in order to switch from the BBS back to their internet service. Now, with the BBS accessible via the internet, you can surf the web OR access the BBS without having to hang up one service in order to call the other.

All in all, the new arrangement holds benefits for both people who will use the internet connection method as well as those of you who will continue to

call in directly. It's even a win-win situation for the club because we will be able to accommodate more callers without having to invest in more phone lines and/or modems. That's what I call having your cake and eating it too!!

Accessing "The Source": What You Need

The grocery list of what you need in order to access The Source is pretty straightforward:

1) You need to have a Macintosh computer. Heck, we can even help you access the BBS from a Windows computer!!

2) You need a modem, either internal or an external unit, OR you need a cable modem setup as offered by the Rogers@Home service.

3) If you intend to dial in directly to the BBS, or you are going to access the BBS via a dial-up internet service provider, you need to have a phone line attached to your modem. Initially, you may elect to create this by installing a "splitter" somewhere in your regular home phone line and running a length of telephone line to the modem. While this works, many people eventually have a dedicated phone line installed in their home to use with their modem so that using the modem does not conflict with you or other family members using the regular telephone line.

4) You need a copy of the free FirstClass Client software. It's available from the club, as well as a number of online services. You should try to obtain version 3.5 or 3.5.1. Older versions of FirstClass Client (lower numbers than this, like 2.7) will not provide all of the available features, and newer versions of FirstClass Client (version numbers higher than 3.5.1) are designed to work with a different sort of FirstClass Server than we use on The Source.

5) Optionally, in order to "experience" The Source exactly as it is designed to be seen and heard, you need to have a copy of the special FirstClass Settings file for The Source.

As explained elsewhere, items #4 and #5 are freely available from MaUsE. Feel free to contact us on our message line at 905-433-0777 for more details.

Establishing Your Account on The Source

Once you have acquired all of the "grocery list" items, the first thing which people who have never used The Source need to do is to create their Account on the BBS.

Each user of The Source must have their own "account" in order that the system can create a private Mailbox for you (where you send and receive email messages to and from other users of the BBS) and so that the system can do administrative things such as knowing your access privileges and keeping track of everyone's logon time.

To establish an account on The Source, you simply dial in for the first time using NO User ID or Password. This will cause the system to acknowledge your call by presenting you with a Registration Screen, where you fill in things such as your name and full mailing address and telephone number. It is also where you select a User ID and Password that you will use for future calls.



This process is called "autoregistering", because it means that you can register a new account on the BBS without the Administrator having to set it up for you beforehand. Once you have autoregistered, the System Administrator will generally review the information you have provided within 24 hours and will upgrade your account from Autoregistered User to either Public User or MaUsE Member depending on whether or not you are a member of MaUsE.



NOTE: It is important to know that, in order to first register an account on The Source, you must use the direct dial-up method of accessing the BBS. You CANNOT autoregister on the BBS when accessing it via the Internet method.

During the registration process, you will be asked to specify a User ID and a Password. The system will then confirm these back to you in a dialog box. It is a good idea to write these down. In future, you will need to enter both your User ID and your Password BEFORE you click on the Logon button. FirstClass Client allows you to either key these in manually each time you launch FirstClass, or you can Save them right in the application. Saving your User ID and Password is a great convenience but it does mean that anyone else who has access to your computer could potentially logon to The Source using your account, so the decision as to whether or not to Save your User ID/Password right in FirstClass depends on the nature of any security concerns you may have.

Once you have established an account, you can if you like change your Password at any time. You cannot, however, change your User ID. FirstClass uses the User ID to uniquely identify your account. You can even change your name, or the way it appears on the BBS, but you cannot change your User ID except by asking the Administrator to delete your original account and allow you to set up a new account. No one except the Administrator will ever see your User ID. Other users will identify you by your first name and last name as you have entered it on the Registration Screen, so there is no point in dreaming up swell nick-names to use as your User ID. Many users just use a short abbreviation of their name as their User ID. Once you have established your account, FirstClass will then usher you into the BBS. At this time, while you are still an Autoregistered User, your account privileges will be quite limited. However, once your account has been upgraded you will be able to explore much more of the BBS. This usually takes only about 24 hours to occur.

The single biggest problem which new users of the BBS encounter when they next try to logon to the BBS is that they forget to enter their User ID and Password before clicking on the Logon button. If you dial in a second time with no User ID and Password, the system will simply think that you are another new user trying to establish a new account. If you fill in the Registration Screen a second time

and then try to use your User ID and Password at that point, the system will simply say, "Sorry, but we already have a user with that User ID. Please select another User ID." The result is that you will just end up setting up a second account. Remember: you NEED to enter your User ID and Password BEFORE clicking on the Logon button for all logons after your very first one.

Having troubles getting logged on or registering. Feel free to leave a message on the MaUsE Message Line at 905-433-0777, and we'll get back to you as quickly as we can to help.

How To Access "The Source" via the Internet

If you are a current user of The Source, and you also have access to the internet, it is extremely easy to reconfigure your FirstClass Client to connect to the BBS via the internet.

First, dial into your Internet Service Provider in the usual manner. Once connected, you do not need to launch your web browser. Instead, launch FirstClass Client in the manner you normally would if you were going to connect to the BBS, but do not click on the Logon button.

Click instead on the Setup button that appears at the lower left corner of the Logon screen.

The normal Setup window should now appear. It should look like the picture below with the "Connect via" menu set to Modem.fcp.

Click on the drop down menu beside the words "Connect via:" and select the "TCP_IP.fcp" choice.

Next, click on the field titled "Server:" and type in our IP address which is: 24.112.198.147

The Service Setup window should now look like this:

Click on the Save button, which will return you back to



the Logon screen, and just click on the Logon button to connect to The Source.

Pretty easy, eh?!?



Latest BBS Software: Do You Have It?

The Source is best enjoyed by running the correct version of the free FirstClass Client software and the most current version of our BBS Settings File. To determine if you have both of these software items, read on:

1) FirstClass Client version: To determine the version of FirstClass Client which you are running, first launch the application. There are several ways to do this, but just use whatever process you normally use when logging onto The Source. When the Logon screen appears, select "About FirstClass Client..." from just below the Apple menu icon. A small dialog box will appear which will contain the application version number.

The version you should use is 3.5.1, and the dialog box looks like this:



2) To determine if you have the most current Settings file for the BBS, go ahead and Logon. If your Desktop looks like the image below, you have the most current Settings file. If it does not, you can either download the current file from the BBS Software conference area or you can obtain it on diskette from the club:

