Reviews

MacPublications Review

Exciting as it is to be using a rapidly unfolding technology—or thinking about it—keeping up can become an onerous chore.

To help ACE members who use Macintosh computers but don't want to subscribe to *everything*, here's a run-down on several Mac publications. Chances are a check with your state's magazine association will turn up others of regional interest. And new ones seem to crop up each week, so your favorite might not be included. Apple Computer found the list a good one; their only addition, *Personal Publishing*, was reviewed in ACE Quarterly, Vol. 60, No. 4.

I subscribed to *MacWORLD* when I bought my Macintosh in 1984, but tired of the Mac "rah-rah" feeling and switched to *A+*. The *MacUser* came along with a very service-oriented magazine and I switched to it. *A+* has since dropped its Macintosh coverage. ("Mac" precedes the name of nearly everything in the Macintosh world.)

So long as I keep getting *MacWEEK* free, I'll let the other subscriptions expire and just buy issues of the other magazines when I'm ready to make a "MacBuy." *MacWEEK* keeps me up-to-date with a quick scan. There's not much how-to there. So when I'm close to buying, I pick up *MacWORLD* for new hardware and *MacUser* for software. And, I do admire *MACazine* for printing Cauzin program strips—cheap shareware if you have a strip reader.

Others key on programming or business interests: *MacTutor* (The Macintosh Programming Journal, $30/12 issues, P.O. Box 400, Placentia CA 92670 or call 714/630-3730), *MacNews/Business Journal* (also tutorial, $55 for 12 issues, P.O. Box 7068, Gainesville FL 32605, or call 209/333-0700), and *Macintosh Business Letter* ($395, launched in January 1988, no ads, call 415/322-0600.)

For a complete data base of current MacPubs, write Heizer Software, 1941 Oak Park Blvd. Suite 30, Pleasant Hill CA 94523 or call 415/943-7667. They include over 100 publications and update monthly. The data base costs $20 and comes formatted for Excel, Works, and HyperCard.

***MacUser*: The Macintosh Resource, published by Ziff Davis, Foster City, CA. Subscribe through mailing center: P.O. Box 52461, Boulder CO 80321-2461, $19.97 for 12 issues.**

I like their monthly table of major software. It tells what version is current so I don't have to keep track. Shorter reviews in

the "Quick Click" section, a regular feature, tell enough for me unless I own the software. However, the programs reviewed are not listed in "Contents."

A standing "Minifinders" section, complete with mouse ratings, costs, and the date of *MacUser's* last large review is a handy reference. It is classified by major user topic.

Features regularly cover graphics, telecommunications, some programming, and product surveys, and, occasionally, entertainment and music generation. As a sample, the January 1988 issue contained major articles on QuickKeys, hypertext "Guide," two expert systems, doing PostScript special effects, and using Hyper-Card. *MacUser* articles are so complete that one friend uses them as stand-in software manuals.

"Help Folder" gives tips from Mac experts; while "tip Sheet" gives short helpful items from readers.

MacUser is more software oriented than *MacWORLD*. It is a little jazzier than the other publications, which is sometimes refreshing and sometimes annoying.

Format: 8 x 11, perfect bound. Binding lists major contents for easy reference. About 300 pages. Has handy reader reply card.

MACazine, Solutions for All of Us, published in Austin, TX. Subscription service at PO Box 6815, Syracuse NY 13217, $21 for 12 issues.

MACazine offers a business report every month, plus about 10 columns, an art contest and about a dozen features listed on the contents page. For November 1987, it compared accounting software, from MacMoney to Insights.

This issue lived up to its "for the rest of us" intention by including an article (for those of us limping along with ImageWriters) on formatting documents so they won't change when we print them at one of the many laser printer services available at copy shops now. Chances are you can buy a Laser-Writer through your university for under $3,000, but an Im-ageWriter is still a good option while you wait for something better or cheaper. So the article on formatting lets you wait more comfortably while somebody else keeps up with the cost of technology and maintenance. A "Desktop Publishing Tutorial" discussed templates and techniques for Ready,Set,Go! *(no spaces)* and PageMaker. An article on HyperCard's predecessor Project Xanadu explored what hypertext will bring.

The neatest review of the month has to be of Word Tools, a text editor, which "though fast, does not smoke." Also included were reviews of MacCalc, DesktopExpress, Ogre and Guild of Thieves (games), the ProWriter (a dot matrix with 240x144 dots per inch!), Xerox's Nutmeg full page display and Juggler for

managing desk accessories in MultiFinder.

Format 8.5 x 11. Saddle stitched. About 100 pages. Has a handy reader reply card.

MacWORLD, The Macintosh Magazine, published in San Francisco. Subscription center at P.O. Box 51666, Boulder CO 80321-1666 or call (800) 525-5461, $24 for 12 issues.

MacWORLD's late-breaking news section attempts to answer the challenge of new weekly Macintosh tabloids.

MacWORLD seems more hardware oriented than *MacUser* in its major features. For example, its December 1987 issue offered features on color monitors, on the problems and promise of Macs at engineering workstations, "The Disk Shopper's Guide to Storage," and two software survey articles.

On the other hand, one regular department surveys new products, and five were how-tos on PostScript, SuperPaint, Excel, system tools, and HyperCard.

The November issue listed current updates and a buyers guide on 1,000 hardware and software products nicely tabulated for comparison.

These are saved for years by the "MacNuts" I know who spend lots of time with their Macs and really want to push the technology to the limits.

Format 9 x 11, harder to file. Bookstyle binding lists major contents for easy reference. About 300 pages. Has a handy ready reply card.

MacWEEK, The Workstation Weekly, published in San Francisco. Circulation department at 5211 S. Washington Ave., Titusville FL 32780 or call 305/269-2687, $75 for 50 issues.

This is a *USA Today* of the "MacPubs," complete with a "Zoom In" graphic in the bottom left corner and flashes of four color virtually everywhere. On the cover, "Inside" lists major features and on page 3 a contents section gives a more complete listing under these categories "News," "Business Watch," "Features," "Opinion," and "Products."

December 1's lead story was "GCC slashes printer prices: PLP (personal laser printers) to get modular expansion options." Other front page items were Adobe signing Japanese printing firms, T/Maker turning line art into PostScript, and the Farallon sound importer. Another major piece in the 15-page news section (minus 6 pages of ads) compared Guide 2.0—which produces interactive, multi-level documents—to HyperCard. The three other articles listed under "News" on the contents page were about desktop publishing: boosting Linotype graphics processing speed, PostScript clones, and a Japanese version of PageMaker.

Format 11 x 14, folds easily for filing. Saddle stitched. 52 pages.

Macintosh Today: **Weekly News & Perspectives for Integrated Computer Solutions, PCW Communications, Inc., San Francisco, CA. Free to buyers of MacIntosh computers and related products within the U.S. To subscribe, write, *Macintosh Today,* P.O. Box 5456, Pasadena, CA 91107-9896 or call 818/577-7233, 50 issues, $100 per year ($160 Canada).**

Another *USA Today, Macintosh Today's* sections cover news, "Perspectives" (editorial), "On Target" (opinion column), profile, reviews, industry, columns (Macintosh Advisor is a Q&A solving reader questions) and reader services. Its tabloid pages— including color separations—are designed and produced through desktop publishing.

"Highlights" billboards the top of page 1. Modular design and color enforce its *USA Today* look and coverage.

In the May 16, 1988, issue, "On Target" probes the Appletalk protocol structure and the possibilities of pushing it to include such mainframe connections as VAX and UNIX. "Profiles" features a New York consultant to Associated Press and other big name companies, and "Industry" reports Quark Xpress' plan to expand to better service the full offset applications of desktop publishing.

In its May 23, 1988, issue, "On Target" looks at computer-aided instruction and the need for authors; "Profile" covers the Mac's contribution to the *Day in the Life* book series, including networking and project management; and a front-page article explains Mac's new modular framework.

Coverage definitely tends toward Mac rah-rah. Format— 11 x 16. Saddle stitched. 40 pages, four color.

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