Macaholics UNANIMOUS

The Official Newsletter of the Upper Keys Macintosh Users Group — Apple User Group — April 2009 Volume 17 Issue 05

My Top 10 Notes About TopXNotes

by Sue Beal

In March we welcomed back James Lee, President of Tropical Software, Inc., makers of TopXNotes. Known as the #1 Mac user group presenter in the Southeastern U.S., Jim is always good at "info-taining" our group, and we were pleased to see him again.

What is TopXNotes?

TopXNotes is a notepad-style personal organizer made specifically to run on Macintoshes under OS X. Inexpensive, unobtrusive and just plain handy, this little gem is right at your fingertips when you need it.

Why TopXNotes?

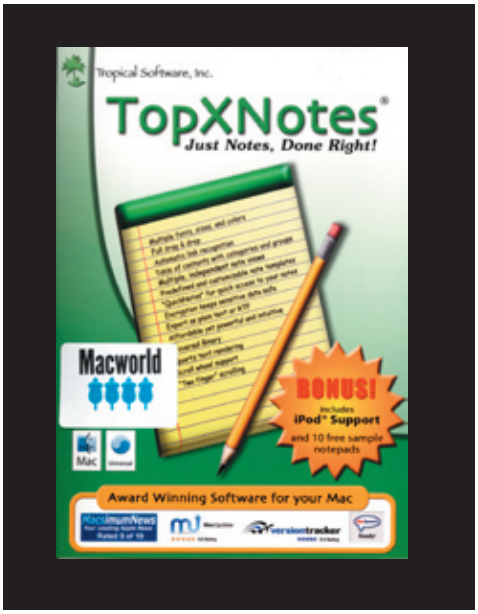
OK I admit it — I'm an organization junkie. I enjoy the benefits of knowing where I can quickly put my fingers on whatever I need. While my home is neat and organized, I found I had little files of "stuff" stashed all over my computer. I'd made the leap to get things off of Post-It notes and into the Mac, but files were everywhere, in different folders, in several programs —Databases, Excel, Word— I even had nested folders within folders, using notes to myself as the file names!

TopXNotes gives me one place to put everything - securely and neatly. It's flexible enough to allow the user to do things their own way - it doesn't dictate how I choose to organize things, it just gives me a handy framework to get the job done. And that's why I love this little utility!

Top X Surprises

Jim announced that TopXNotes is now available in 34 Apple stores! You can also download it from the Apple online store, or from the website, **tropic4.com**. Tropical Software offers a free trial version on their website, and you can also sign up for an e-newsletter, *Notes on Notes*, to help you get the most out of it.

TopXNotes recently received a four (out of five) mouse rating from Macworld Magazine, and has received very positive reviews in major online and print publications.



Create, View, Access and Organize

These are the 4 things you can do with your notes with TopXNotes.

Basic Notes

You can customize the look of your notes, and add emphasis where needed, using all the Apple fonts, and an array of colors - color for the text and/or color behind it, and even "emphasis color" which is like using a highlighter. You can use bold, italic, condensed, expanded and shadowed type, and you can align the text right, left or center.

NoteOrganizer

The NoteOrganizer is an overview of your notes, allowing you to group them (sort of like folders in the Finder's list view.) You can drag and drop them to reorganize your thoughts. You can categorize them, and assign colors and icons to help you better recognize the ones you use more often.

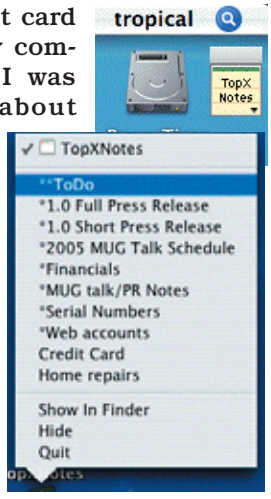
There are tabs in the NoteOrganizer, so you can sort them by Groups, Notes, Category, Date Created or Date Modified.

MultiView

You can click a button and create a MultiView window. You see the organizer on the left and one or more notes to the right of it. When you click in the body of a note, all the controls in the window jump under/over that note and apply to it; it is the active one.

At this point, Jim used the example of shopping on the web. This is the use I will be adding to my personal repertoire, it will be so much better than what I have been doing.

Jim had two lists, which he showed side by side in MultiView. One had websites with the username and password for each, and the other had credit card numbers and other info. He could pick the website, go to it (live linked URLs!), copy and paste the password, then, when checking out, also copy and paste in the credit card number! I have never stored my credit card numbers on my computer because I was too paranoid about security. But since they would be safely encrypted and password protected, I can do this and save so much time! Great tip, Jim!



QuickNotes

QuickNotes is both a category and a system — when you assign that category, the note shows in a special tiny TopX icon called Quick-Notes. The

continued on page two

April 9, 7pm, KL Library

Adobe Illustrator:
What's so Great About Vector Art?

Sue Beal will use her 22 years of Adobe Illustrator experience to highlight the differences between vector and bitmap (like Photoshop) images, and will show the advantages of vector art as well as some cool things that can be done with it. For those of you who were hoping for Final Cut Express-- I am sorry, but our originally scheduled speaker was not available.

continued from page one

QuickNotes icon is a global floating window which is always on top of other windows on your screen. Clicking on the QuickNotes icon drops down the QuickNotes note access menu containing your "Top 10 Notes"— always available for rapid and easy access.

More Cool Features

- Drag & Drop Notes: you can drag them out of TopXNotes to the desktop and they will show up there as an RTF (Rich Text Format) files.

- Export Notes: Save any note where you want it, in RTF or TXT format.

- Export a Group: They export in TopXNotes format, which is handy for exchanging notes with friends who also have the package.

- Drag & Drop between notes by dragging and dropping between note views.

New Features, New Versions

The newest release of TopXNotes is 1.4. The newest features include:

- Spell Checking
- Insert Date/Time
- Note Info now contains number of lines and characters
- Keyboard shortcuts added

The latest release includes all of the above features plus 10 sample notepads to get users started.

For those of you who are still running Classic, there is a Classic version still available on the Tropic4 website.

TopXNotes for iPod

Classic iPod support is now built into the package, which includes the ability to download select notes and groups of notes into your Classic or video iPod. For those of us who don't have a GPS in the car, you could have directions stored in the iPod for navigating... how cool is that?

And... this just in... an iPhone and iPod Touch application is on the way!

Security

Originally, the package came with one encryption password. The password was used as a key to scramble the data (which, without encryption, was stored as a simple, unsecure RTF file).

Now you have a choice of protecting all of your data with one password, or only protecting the notes you consider sensitive.

You can set a different password for every note if you wish, but this is not recommended, because if you forget the password... well, you know!

Nuts and Bolts

All of the TopXNotes data is stored in one data file, which can be encrypted, and you can set up regular, automatic backups, so your data is always safe and secure. After using the software for over three years, I can also say that it is extremely stable and I have never had a problem with it.

My Top Ten TopXNotes Features

This package has a lot of nice things built in... here is a list of my Top Ten:

1. Backup file settings - save as many copies as you want, pulled at an interval you set.

2. Not only can it recognize URLs when you type or paste them in, but it can set them up as friendly links. What this means is, instead of "https://secure.tropic4.com/WebStore/index.php?" you can have the blue underlined link say "Jim's Website" and click on that, hiding the messy URL.

3. Global Find and Replace editing capability with case matching.

4. Free updates on the website, and Jim Lee himself will help you if you need it!

5. Help is built in and easy to access. There is no printed manual to store.

6. QuickNotes' tiny pop-up window is optional, you can turn it off in preferences. (I like it off!)

7. Widen the Organizer window and you see more info about your notes - date created/modified, for example. You can sort by these, which can sometimes help you spot things when you can't remember what you named them (yes, it happens to all of us, not just you!).

8. Predefined and customizable notes templates get you started easily.

9. Functions can be accessed through the menus or by using toolbar buttons.

10. You can print your notes easily if the need arises. One note or all of them.

Thanks, Jim, for another informative evening and a great product! MU

ABOUT JAMES LEE

James Lee is the founder, lead developer, and owner of Tropical Software. James started his software career with Apple Computer and has over 9 years experience in the Macintosh software industry. Prior to working in the Macintosh software development business, he had extensive experience developing and managing the development of geophysical and digital signal processing software.

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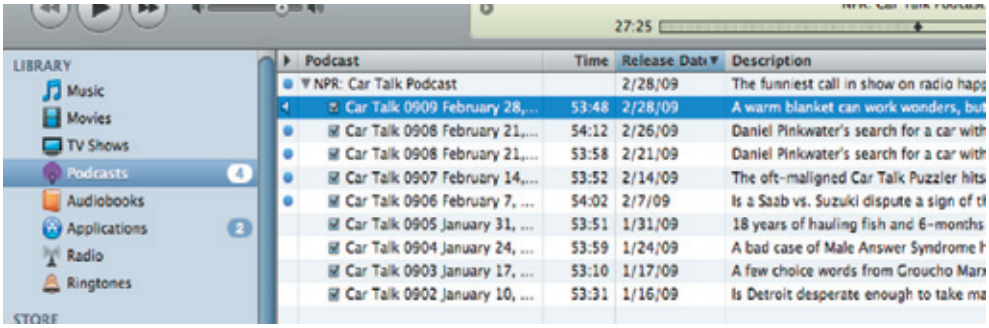

How to sign up for a Podcast... or... how to get Car Talk on demand!

by Sue Beal

Someone asked me how you do this, so I figured there are others who might not know... I love Car Talk on NPR, but I never have the opportunity to listen to the radio. Here's how I never miss a show:

- Open iTunes and then go to the iTunes store
- Click "Podcasts"
- Type "Car Talk" in the search field
- Of the 2 top ones that come up - one is just the call of the week, and the other one is the whole show.
- Click on the Subscribe button.

Then check your iTunes every week or so (under Podcasts) and you'll see a new episode every week. (Click the triangle beside Car Talk to see the individual epidsodes.)

If you don't listen for 4 weeks it will stop downloading them and you'll have to resubscribe. MU

Adobe Reader 9.1

by Rich Boyer

Several 'Geek-Level 9' members of an Arizona Mac user group strongly recommend, that folks using Adobe's free Acrobat Reader, upgrade to version 9.1

Apparently the older version has some web/security issues.

I'm usually way behind on this stuff, but "in the unlikely event" you're 'behinder' than me . . . here's where you can get it:

http://www.versiontracker.com/dyn/moreinfo/macosx/107 MU

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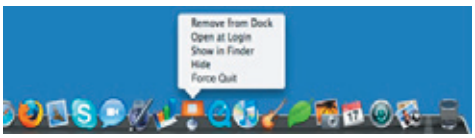
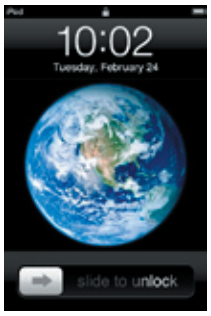
Remember Bail?

submitted by Eugene Hasiak

If you've ever launched a program by accident, and waited 2 minutes for it to load before you could quit, you, too must miss that old OS9 "Bail" application that let you quit in the first 3 seconds. Now with a single click from the dock you can fix that... especially if it's one of those programs that takes a while to launch. You'll love this tip. Just immediately hit Control-Option and click its Dock icon, then choose Force Quit from the contextual menu. The program will quit right away! MU



Take a photo of your screen with iPod Touch or iPhone



by Karen Strobel

Here's how: If you hold the round button at the bottom (home button?) and the sleep/power button at the top, it will take a photo of your screen.

It stores it with your photos on your phone or Touch. MU

Need Windows on Your Mac?

by Allen Kalka - President of the Mount Dora Macintosh Users Group

There is an alternative program called Crossover **(http://www.codeweavers.com/products/)**. It is based on the WINE project, does not require a copy of Windows to function and is essentially a semi-version of Windows 2000.

I mainly use it for several online poker programs (that do not have Mac versions) and the Guitar series from PG Music. So far, I have not found anything major it cannot run. There is a list of compatible products on the site.

It only runs on Intel-based Macs and costs $39.95 for the Standard version and $69.95 for the Professional version (both downloadable). MU

Cathy cartoon thanks to John Cooper.

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Thanks from Leda

Leda Dunmire wrote: please pass on my thanks to everyone who emailed Parallels/Windows on Mac help. I haven't been able to get back to all the helpful respondents yet but I really appreciate all the advice! MU

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is the official newsletter of the

Upper Keys Mac Users Group

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