

CONTEMPORARY SOFTWARE



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Contemporary Software News

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New Goodies for the Macintosh

Hardware Goodies

	List	Ours
Aapps MicroTV	399.00	349.95
Abaton Interfax 24/96	595.00	515.00
Anchor Automation 9600 V.32 modem	995.00	845.00
CalComp WIZ	199.95	189.95
ComputerEyes Video Digitizer	450.00	429.95
DayStar Digital accelerators (several options)		Call
Fanny Mac QT	99.00	69.95
Iomega Bernoulli Portable	2199.00	1829.95
MacPro ADB Keyboard with Tempo II	197.00	149.95
Practical Solutions Cordless Mouse	149.95	139.95
RasterOps 208 Video Board	495.00	395.00
RasterOps 264 Video Board	Was 995.00	795.00
RasterOps 364 Video Board	1999.95	1495.00
Rodime Cobra 45 (external)	1399.00	849.95
Ruby Systems 30DX drive (external)	719.00	609.95
Ruby Systems 40DX drive (external)	925.00	725.00
Ruby Systems 40DN drive (internal)	829.00	654.95
Ruby Systems 45DX drive (external)	799.00	669.95
Ruby Systems 80DX drive (external)	1385.00	1129.95
Ruby Systems 80DN drive (internal)	1285.00	1039.95
Shiva EtherGate	2399.95	Call
Shiva Netserial 9600 V.32	1995.00	Call

Software Goodies

	List	Ours
Adobe PhotoShop	895.00	679.95
Adobe Type Set 1	99.00	75.00
Adobe Type Set 2	99.00	75.00
Ashlar Vellum	995.00	Call
Bomber	39.95	35.95
Canvas 2.1	299.95	225.95
ColorStudio	1995.00	Call
ConcertWare+MIDI 5.0	189.95	129.95
DeltaGraph	199.00	Call

DesignStudio	795.00	709.95
DOS Mounter	89.95	64.95
Fast Break	44.95	37.95
FontStudio	595.00	549.95
Grammatik Mac	89.00	67.95
GRE Preparation	49.95	39.95
Halls of Montezuma	49.95	44.95
Harmony Grid	99.00	89.95
HyperGlott language tutors	Varies	Varies
Hunt for Red October	49.95	39.95
ImageStudio 1.5	495.00	379.00
LapLink Mac III Network Pac	189.95	159.95
LetraStudio 1.5	495.00	349.00
LSAT Preparation	59.95	49.95
MacInTax Federal	99.00	89.95
MacInTax California	75.00	69.95
MacProof 3.2.1	195.00	129.95
MacWrite II 1.1	249.00	199.00
Man Hunter: New York	49.95	39.95
Man Hunter 2: San Francisco	49.95	39.95
Math Blaster Mystery	49.95	39.95
MCAT Preparation	59.95	49.95
Microphone II 3.0	295.00	249.00
Sands of Fire	49.95	44.95
SAT Preparation	49.95	39.95
Spelling Coach Professional 3.1	195.00	134.95
TOPS 3.0	299.00	249.95
Type Align	99.95	79.95
Type Styler	199.95	159.95
UltraPaint	199	159.95
Voyager 1.2	124.50	119.95

All prices subject to change. This list is incomplete; we handle several thousand items. Please call if you have any questions, or don't see what you need.

Hardware, Peripherals, Accessories News

Aapps MicroTV

With this inexpensive card you can add a 98-channel TV tuner to your Mac II, and watch live TV (or live video from a videotape or videodisc player, or camera) right on your computer's screen. It runs under MultiFinder, allowing you to watch a training video while learning a new application, or check out the news while working. A built-in frame grabber can capture any image for pasting into a Mac document.

Abaton Interfax 24/96

This hot new modem leads a dual life: it is both a 2400 baud data modem, supporting MNP Class 5 error correction and compression, and a 9600 baud Group III fax. With just one device, you can call up another computer and transfer data back and forth, or call up a fax number and transmit, as a fax, anything that can be produced on a Mac screen: text, graphics, or both.

Anchor 9600 V.32 Modem

Another hot new modem, Anchor Automation describes this as the "first V.32 modem designed especially for the consumer market." In addition to providing the usual 300/ 1200/ 2400 bps (bits per second) speeds, it also tosses in 9600 bps using the new V.32 protocol, plus a cable. All this and a 5 year warranty (twenty times longer than some companies).

CalComp WIZ

CalComp, one of the oldest computer graphics companies, specializes in big, expensive industrial strength plotters and digitizers — or at least it did until the introduction of WIZ. A cross between a mouse and a graphics pad, WIZ allows the user to perform the usual point, click, drag actions of a mouse, but add the precision drawing and tracing functions of a graphics pad, at a record-setting price.

DayStar Digital Accelerators

DayStar offers a wide range of accelerator products for the Mac II, IIx and IIcx, plus the *only* cache card designed to fit the cache slot on the new Mac IICI. DayStar also offers the System XCI backplane, designed to boost NuBus performance from the usual 10 MHz to 50 MHz. Finally, if you have Micro Channel computers (such as the IBM PS/2) that you'd like to attach to an AppleTalk network, their LT200 LocalTalk board will pave the way toward better inter-species communications.

Fanny Mac QT

Mobius, producers of the SE Silencer (a quiet replacement fan designed for early Mac SE's), has

picked up production of the Fanny Mac, a low-profile combination fan and surge suppressor for the Mac 128, 512, and Plus. If you have any of these machines, this inexpensive device can protect you from damage caused by excessive heat or power surges, the two most common "killers" of older Macs.

Iomega Bernoulli Portable 44

Iomega's new Bernoulli Portable 44 gives you all the advantages of the fast, virtually crash-proof Bernoulli design, but in a smaller case, and it runs on batteries (or AC power). Designed for the Mac Portable, it is also popular with the regular Mac crowd due to the small size and weight, especially if it has to be shared by several users.

MacPro with Tempo II

Keytronics, the industry giant of the keyboard world, has released the MacPro, a superb extended keyboard designed for the SE and Mac II series. With 105 keys to play with, plus a full 15 function keys, full numeric keypad and oversized Return key, the MacPro offers everything you could want in a keyboard — and they've even thrown in a **free** copy of Tempo II, the most powerful macro package available for the Mac.

RasterOps ColorBoard 364

Some hardware items inspire lust, and this is one of them. The ColorBoard 364 serves as a 24-bit color video board, supporting the Apple RGB monitor with beautiful, vivid color. But it *also* supports full-motion, full-color NTSC video (produced by TV's, videotape players, video cameras, laser disc players) on the Mac screen, and the images can be captured without distortion. Software to capture images, plus a desk accessory to play full-motion video (while doing something else) are included. The ColorBoard 364 has our vote as the Hardware Product Most Likely To Cause Envy.

If you have a Sun SPARCstation 1 (yes, we know it isn't a Mac), and you've been envying the Mac's beautiful 24-bit color, you'll be interested in the new RasterOps SPARC ColorBoard. It supports 1152 by 900 pixels in full 24-bit color, and also works as a Sun BW2 monochrome frame buffer while in 1-bit mode.

Shiva Netmodem 9600 V.32

Now you can bring the world of 9600 bps (bits per second) V.32 performance to your entire network. The Netmodem V.32 allows any computer on the network to communicate with the outside world at up to 9600 bps (bits per second), or dial in to your network from a remote location.

Hardware Notes, Updates and Comments

Yet More on Memory

Probably 30 to 40 percent of all the problems we've seen recently with "crashed" or misbehaving computers can be traced, at least in part, to a shortage of memory. PageMaker and Quark, for example, are only marginal performers with just one megabyte of memory. *Anything* running on a Macintosh II with one megabyte of RAM is trouble prone. Owners of DeskWriters and other printers using non-PostScript scalable type will find things work far better once extra RAM is available.

While some places still sell RAM at \$495 per megabyte, our price for 1-megabyte SIMMs was just \$95 as of Feb. 15, 1990. Installation is free on purchases of four or more.

Dust Covers

Have you ever tried to get a dust cover for something other than a Mac Plus? We have dust covers for every model of Mac, plus all Apple printers, and even some non-Apple items, such as the DeskWriter.

Free SUM II

Mass MicroSystems now bundles a copy of SUM II (Symantec Utilities for Macintosh), the top disk protection and recovery utility, with every model of their legendary Datapak removable cartridge hard disk drives. In our experience, the Datapak drives are, by far, the most reliable Syquest removables on the market, and the addition of SUM II adds an extra measure of security.

Rodime Cobra Users

Rodime Systems has released version 1.03 of their Cobra Driver Utility. Designed to make better use of the cache built in to all Cobra drives, the new driver makes the already fast Cobra drives even faster (outperforming competing drives by an average factor of 40, according to Rodime). If you've purchased a Cobra drive from **Contemporary Software** recently and don't have the new driver, bring in your driver disk for a free update, or send a stamped, addressed disk envelope mailer to Rodime's Technical Support Department.

Contemporary Software News

is published quarterly as a service to the customers, clients and friends of Contemporary Software, San Diego's original "All Macintosh" retail store. It is produced entirely in-house on Macintosh computers, and "proofed" on Speedy Gonzales, our Qume CrystalPrint Publisher PostScript printer (can you say that three times real fast?). Once completed, the electronic master is sent out for printing (on a LinoType typesetter), reproduction and mailing. In keeping with our tradition of following few traditions, this issue was laid out in DesignStudio, Letraset's hot new page layout package, with help from Microsoft Word 4.0, Preferred Publisher's Vantage, Abbot System's CanOpener, Adobe Illustrator '88 and Adobe Type Manager. Construction details are subject to change and experimentation (we've never produced two issues the same way). Each of the various trademarks, copyrights and service marks mentioned in the newsletter are the property of their respective owners. Any errors or omissions are, we hope, someone else's fault, but we'll probably blame Lawrence.

We Make House Calls!

Do you need on-site repair, hardware or software installation, data recovery, consulting help, tutoring, classes, graphic design, custom software design or — whatever? As San Diego's original "All Macintosh" store, we have years of experience to draw on, plus a thorough knowledge of the field. If you need help, give us a call.

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New, Interesting and Fun (Even Useful)

Adobe Photoshop

Color correction, photo retouching, color separation and even "photo illustration" are all possible with Photoshop. Designed to work with grayscale, 24-bit and 32-bit color files, Photoshop can import and export a huge variety of file formats, including PICT, TIFF, TARGA, and SCITEX. Paint and draw tools also allow you to create color freehand images, and even blend these images with photos.

Adobe Type Sets 1 and 2

You can now purchase sets of Adobe PostScript display fonts for far less than usual. Adobe Type Set 1 includes Hobo, Bodini Poster, Freestyle Script, VAG Rounded Bold, Linotext, Cottonwood and Trajan. Adobe Type Set 2 includes Peignot Demi, Present Script, Cooper Black, Franklin Gothic No. 2 Roman, Copperplate Gothic 31AB, Litos Bold, and Juniper. Purchased separately, these fonts cost several times as much as the type set packs.

Ashlar Vellum

While there are a large number of CAD (Computer Aided Design and Drafting) packages for the Mac, Vellum is the only one that thinks. It automatically points out the midpoints of lines, centers of circles, intersections between lines, and other details that you normally discover through tedious trial and error.

ColorStudio

Letraset's famous ImageStudio has been eclipsed — by a color version. ColorStudio allows you to retouch, separate, merge, and color correct images in 24 or 32-bit color. It supports PMS and CMYK color systems, or you can "mix" your own custom colors. An incredible masking function provides up to 256 levels of transparency and opacity, opening the door to breathtaking special effects. Virtual memory is fully supported (without purchasing extra hardware), permitting work on several images at once, or images larger than available memory. Direct input from many color scanners and frame grabbers is supported, as is input and output to a wide range of file formats.

ConcertWare+MIDI 5.0

The "budget" music classic has returned. ConcertWare was one of the first music packages to support both MIDI instruments as well as the Mac's internal sound, and allow writing, editing, playing, and printing of sheet music. This newest version comes with full support for the new MIDI interchange file format (the first package to offer such support), support for two different PostScript music fonts (one is included at no extra cost with CW+ 5.0), and an interface simple

enough for even non-musicians to understand.

DataViz MacLink Plus

The most comprehensive MS-DOS to Mac translation utility is now available in a new version to compete in the Mac/MS-DOS file transfer wars. With something like 20 million MS-DOS computers in the world today, it never hurts to be able to talk to them.

DeltaGraph

Excel users no longer have to suffer from "Wingz envy." DeltaGraph can import spreadsheet data and transform it into one of 22 different styles of charts, including seven 3D styles, with full support for color. EPS and PICT images can be incorporated into the charts as well, and drawing tools allow further embellishment.

DOS Mounter

From Dayna Communications, allows you to insert an MS-DOS 3.5" disk into SuperDrive-equipped Macs and then read and write to the disk. It even allows you to, for example, double-click on a Lotus 1-2-3 spreadsheet and automatically launch Excel or Wingz.

Flash

Flash is an AppleTalk network file transfer program, which is a description that doesn't do it justice. With Flash, any Mac on an AppleTalk network can send a file to any other Mac by just saving the file to a folder. Operating in the background, Flash will copy the file from the folder to the other machine, at a rate of roughly one megabyte per minute. There are no commands to remember, no other software is required, and only one copy of Flash is needed per network. If this wasn't enough, Flash also offers a "chat" feature for sending messages back and forth between machines.

Grammatik Mac

Grammatik, from Reference Software, works with Microsoft Word, MacWrite, MacWrite II, WriteNow, and other Mac word processors to automatically check for errors in grammar, style and usage. When an error is found, it flags it and offers suggestions on how the problem can be corrected.

Harmony Grid

Harmony Grid is hard to explain, but a blast to use. Designed as a tool for learning basic harmony theory, it allows you to experiment with different chords and modes, and see how they are built up from intervals. But it is also a musical instrument, designed so that even a novice can play effortlessly using either a MIDI instrument or the Mac's internal speaker.

HyperGlott Software

HyperGlott has expanded their language tutor and

Software Goodies for Your Macintosh

pronunciation software to cover Russian, German, French, Spanish, Japanese and Italian. These language tutors cover pronunciation (complete with digitized voices) and word usage, offering an innovative way to learn a new language or brush up on old skills.

In addition to their usual HyperCard-based language tutors, HyperGlot now offers a CD-ROM package, **Learn to Speak French**. This package contains a CD-ROM disk with 36 HyperCard lesson stacks and a CD audio disk with dialogues from four native speakers of French (two men and two women).

Letrastudio 1.5

This powerful display type package from Letraset, an "industry standard," has been updated to handle Type 1 and 3 PostScript fonts, allowing you to twist, bend, stretch and color a huge variety of typefaces. Also added is the ability to save the modified type in Adobe Illustrator and PICT format, in addition to the usual EPS (Encapsulated Postscript) format.

MacProof 3.2.1

Without leaving your document, MacProof can find spelling errors, grammatical errors, problems with punctuation, style and usage, and even analyze your sentence and paragraph style. The latest version works within all versions of Microsoft Word, MacWrite, MacWrite II, and even PageMaker (two megabytes of RAM required for PageMaker).

MacroMind Director

Director allows you to import text, sound, and graphics, and then "animate" the results. Imported graphics can include Scrapbook items, MacPaint, PICT, PICT2 (color PICT), and PICS files. Director's tools can be used to do "multi-media" presentations, desktop video productions, simulations and mockups, or education tools. MacroMind Director even includes MIDI (Musical Instrument Digital Interface) tools, allowing the Mac to directly play a musical instrument while playing a "movie." MacroMind Player is now included at no extra cost.

For those who want to take shortcuts to "insanely great" productions, MacroMind has produced an optional CD-ROM filled with clip art, clip sounds, and demonstration movies.

Sculpt 3D

Color modeling and photo-realistic rendering are no longer the domain of expensive workstations, thanks to Sculpt 3D. Supporting full 32-bit color (though it does work in 8-bit mode), Sculpt 3D allows for multiple light sources, anti-aliasing, colored light sources, Phong shading, wire-frame modeling, polygonal shading and

ray tracing. With optional packages, you can even add textures.

Spelling Coach Professional 3.1

Many programs that should have a spelling checker don't (we won't mention any names), but with Spelling Coach Professional 3.1, that is no longer a problem — you can even have it check spelling in the Finder, or within a desk accessory. In fact, you can customize Coach to automatically open in selected applications — and never open in others. The huge, expandable dictionary (complete with definitions) has been joined in this latest version by Big Thesaurus, formerly an extra-cost option.

TOPS

TOPS, by far the most popular networking program for the Mac, now comes in a new flavor: Version 3.0. In addition to full compatibility with such multi-user applications as FoxBASE+/Mac and FileMaker II, TOPS offers even more flexibility in accessing files across a network. Probably the most dramatic change, however, is a free copy of InBox, an excellent E-Mail (electronic mail) program.

TypeStyler

From Broderbund. Delayed for nearly a year and a half, TypeStyler has finally been released — and it is nice. With TypeStyler, you can stretch, twist, squeeze, bend, rotate, color and shade text, and print the results at full Postscript resolution on a Postscript printer, or in color on a color printer. TypeStyler comes with 10 "SmoothFonts" produced by Agfa Compugraphic, but also works with PostScript fonts produced by almost all major vendors.

UltraPaint

UltraPaint promises to be a revolutionary product: it is a color paint program with draw features, as well as an image enhancement tool. With this one package, you can edit a scanned photo, colorize a black and white image, or simply paint something beautiful.

Voyager 1.2

No one knows why, but Mac users tend to have a higher than average interest in astronomy and space, which may explain why Voyager is an "underground" hit. With a database of 14,000 celestial objects, Voyager allows you to explore the sky, track stars, planets, comets and asteroids, pick out constellations and galaxies, and view solar and lunar eclipses. By setting the time, date, and latitude and longitude, you can view the sky from any point on Earth — two thousand years ago, two thousand years from now, or two hours from now.

Utilities:

Programs You Can't Live Without

What is a utility, other than an organization that supplies water and power? Computer utilities are programs that perform housekeeping functions for the computer, or assist in making the computer easier or more fun to use. Here is our list of favorite utilities:

⇒ **Fastback II:** aside from its speed, Fastback II excels as a backup program due to such nice touches as the ability to freely pick and choose what files and folders should be backed up, and it offers a compression option, allowing you to cram more information on fewer disks.

⇒ **SAM (Symantec Anti-virus Utility for Macintosh):** the most complete anti-virus package available, SAM is installed on all our computers.

⇒ **SUM II (Symantec Utilities for Macintosh):** loaded with crash recovery, file recovery, backup, disk optimization, and other features, SUM is another essential installed on all our computers.

⇒ **TOPS:** there are other networking packages, but TOPS has the best mix of ease of use and flexibility. It is easy to copy files back and forth across a network, mount disks remotely, or prevent such activities. Now that **InBox**, a powerful E-mail package, is included, virtually all networking needs can be met at a low price.

⇒ **Acta Advantage:** designed as an outliner, we use Acta as an impromptu scrapbook (it can hold pictures as well as words), notepad, and utility for sorting items. Because it is a desk accessory, you can use it with virtually any program.

⇒ **Smart Alarms:** if your Mac is turned on, Smart Alarms will remind you of any appointments, bringing up a message right on the screen — even in the middle of a program. If you ignore your Mac for a few days (shame, shame), Smart Alarms will remind you of appointments you may have missed.

⇒ **CanOpener:** we use the desk accessory version every day — for examining crashed files, finding lost files, snooping at text or pictures contained in files, or collecting sound resources out of programs. We were very pleased to see that CanOpener works perfectly with 24-bit color images.

⇒ **Spelling Coach Professional 3.1:** since it can be tailored to open in specific applications, and not in others, Coach offers tremendous flexibility, plus a huge spelling dictionary and a huge thesaurus. It even works with most telecommunications programs, eliminating any excuse for misspelled messages on bulletin boards.

⇒ **DeskPaint and DeskDraw:** if you ever need to modify a picture while working in a program, you need DeskPaint and DeskDraw (bundled together as one package). DeskPaint's ability to open TIFF files makes it a necessity for those with scanners.

⇒ **DiskTop:** our most heavily used desk accessory, DiskTop allows you to perform virtually all Finder functions (copying, moving, deleting, and renaming files, creating folders, ejecting disks, launching programs, etc.), plus a few specialized actions, such as changing a file's Type and Creator signatures.

⇒ **QuickDEX:** it isn't the most complete or powerful desk accessory database, but it sure is quick and easy to use. Plus, it's cheap.

⇒ **ScriptEdit:** for anyone using HyperCard, ScriptEdit is a must: it allows you to edit any card, background, or stack with far less pain and far greater accuracy.

⇒ **SmartScrap:** significantly more useful than Apple's Scrapbook, SmartScrap provides resizable scrapbook windows, multiple scrapbooks, a table of contents, and other goodies.

⇒ **SuperGlue II:** most computers have a "print to disk" option, but the Mac does not — unless you have SuperGlue II. SuperGlue II allows you to "print" any document to the disk, and save the image as a Scrapbook file, MacPaint image, a Glue document, or as straight text.

⇒ **Vantage:** this desk accessory text editor offers such goodies as sorting of lines, display of invisible characters, powerful search and replace features, adding or stripping line feeds and control characters, converting spaces to tabs or tabs to spaces, and many other options. If you use a modem or write programs, Vantage is probably the best text editor available.

⇒ **Adobe Type Manager:** in addition to providing smooth on-screen fonts and beautiful oversized characters on bit-mapped printers, ATM allows you to use the same fonts for both laser printing and ImageWriter printing.

⇒ **Capture:** our favorite screen-dump utility, Capture can "capture" any black and white or color screen to disk, without hassles or elaborate setup.

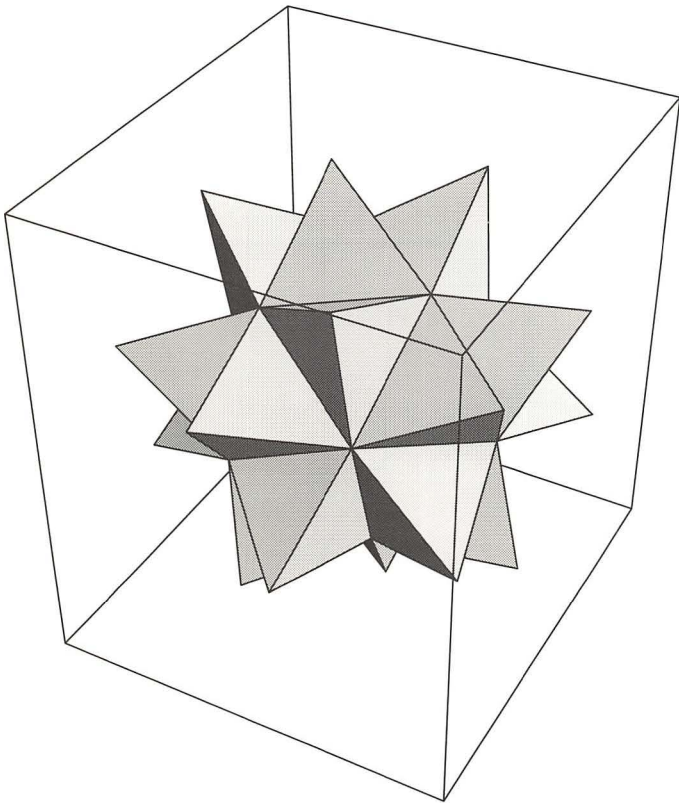
⇒ **OnCue:** if you'd like to open up your programs without first plowing through endless numbers of folders, or switch from one program to another without returning to the Finder, you need OnCue. Resting in a corner of the menu bar, OnCue gives you instant access to all your favorite programs.

A New Star:

And Then There Was DesignStudio

Described as a cross between PageMaker and Quark XPress, DesignStudio is the latest page layout package from Letraset, one of the largest typographic firms in the world. In addition to all the usual tricks, DesignStudio offers free rotation of text and graphics, tinting and coloring of text, an almost infinite variety of fills and rules (you can design your own arrowheads for use on rules), user-definable hyphenation, kerning, and tracking, style sheets, 24-bit color (and Pantone color), and other goodies. DesignStudio, despite its relative youth, was used to produce Apple's 1989 Annual Report.

If this wasn't enough, an optional annex, DesignScript, adds a powerful macro language to automatically create, import and format all elements of a page. And the Letraset Studio Line CD offers DesignStudio, ImageStudio, ColorStudio, FontStudio and LetraStudio on one CD-ROM disk.



Stellated Icosahedron, produced in **Mathematica 1.2.1**, then saved as an Encapsulated PostScript file. Mathematica is described by its publisher as "A system for doing mathematics by computer." The original image is in color, but economic considerations forced us to make do with black and white.

DesignStudio
DesignStudio
DesignStudio
DesignStudio
DesignStudio

¿Sprechen vous Español?

One of the more common questions we are asked is: "Can I get, like, ya know, a [fill in the blank] dictionary for that rad [fill in the blank] program?" Our traditional answer is: "ah, er, we aren't aware of any that translate Valspeak." [Actually, we've probably had only a few conversations phrased in quite these terms.]

Apparently, many other people have been looking for dictionaries, too. If you want a dictionary for programs that don't offer their own, try **Thunder II**. If you want a legal or medical dictionary, plus a huge English dictionary (complete with definitions), plus a big thesaurus, look at **Spelling Coach Professional**. Both work fine with Microsoft Word, MacWrite, PageMaker, or almost anything else you have — as long as you are looking for American English. [Sorry. No ValSpeak.]

And now, long-suffering Microsoft Word users can get British English, Dutch, French, German, Italian, Spanish and Swedish dictionaries, too, thanks to an arrangement between Microsoft and Editor's Choice Software, a Seattle mail-order house. The dictionaries work only with Microsoft Word 4.0, and all seven are shipped in a kit for \$75 plus \$5.50 for shipping. To place an order, call Editor's Choice Software at (800) 641-1116.

Claris has announced they will offer foreign language dictionaries for **MacWrite II**, but these are not yet available. When released, the dictionaries will work not only with MacWrite II, but with all Claris products.

Oh, yes, in answer to the question posed in the title, the only proper answer to the question, "¿Sprechen vous Español?" is, of course, "Nyet."

Introducing Ruby Systems: How We Select Hard Disk Drives

Selecting a hard disk should be an emotional decision, and the emotion should be *fear*. While computers are often sold without hard disk drives, the realities of modern digital life all but require a hard disk for the computer to be useful. Finding a *good* hard disk should be a major consideration in any system purchase or system expansion, but for most users, the hard disk they have is simply the one the dealer had available, or the cheapest one advertised.

Our selection process has a different motivation: paranoia. Since a hard disk holds all your valuable programs, and even more valuable data, you should select a hard disk the way you select a bank. The guy down on the corner in the rumpled overcoat might offer you high interest rates, but wouldn't you rather pick someone who had a vault?

In the Mac field, only three companies manufacture and market their own hard disk drives: Western Digital, Iomega, and Rodime. We carry all three. We've generally avoided drive "manufacturers" who purchase raw mechanisms from someone else and then repackage them in their own case — until our introduction to Ruby Systems.

Ruby's StarDrives consistently win top honors in competitive magazine reviews. Compared head to

head with the field, StarDrives have the best access times, read and write times, and throughput times.

All of which is nice, but these statistics played only a small role in our decision to carry the StarDrives. We were looking for security.

Among other things, Ruby drives have strong, well-designed cases. We are more impressed, however, with what is inside the case: a nice, big power supply. Rather than squeak by with the absolute minimum, Ruby builds in a power supply with excess capacity. As one of their top engineers pointed out, a drive at startup can draw several times as much power as it does during normal operation, and this extra draw kills many drives. Ruby's big power supply avoids the problem entirely.

They also have some of the best drive software available, complete with real partitioning and password protection, written by the renown Nuvo Labs. In fact, the President of Nuvo Labs is on the board of Ruby Systems.

Probably the most famous, and certainly one of the busiest, Macintosh bulletin boards in Southern California has used Ruby drives for more than a year, operating 24-hours a day, every day, with not even a hiccup. This is a testament to durability.

