



# Pocket Computing Magazine



Mini-Laptops Newton Psion Windows CE

The magazine for those who are serious about portability

June 1998

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Want To see more on your Platform Choice?  
[Click Here](#)



# Publishers Page

Well, here we are already in our second issue. I had hoped to be able to get a lot more done interface wise for this issue but there wasn't enough time to do as much as I had hoped.

This magazine is and must be a cooperative effort. A labor of love by those of us who are enamored with small footprint devices.

That said, I must ask for your help in this noble cause. If we all do our small part, the result will be as Lt. Worf would say, "Glorious". What I mean here is that all of us have software and hardware, so when you buy something new and have used it for a bit, why not take 30 minutes to do a review. To make this even easier, I have created a web form that will guide you through the process, asking for some of the basic stuff we all want to know.



**Press here to go there!**

Please, do it. Readers world wide will appreciate your effort.



But wait, what about those of you who write software. There is a way for you to get your message out too!

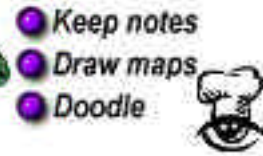
I have a somewhat different form for you that asks the basic questions everyone wants answered. Fill it out, wait a month or so, and voila! An Info-View in an upcoming issue. Free advertising!



**Press here to go to The Info-View Page**

Of course, if you work for a company, you cannot do a "review" of your own or a competitors product. Let's be fair!

Thanks a lot for your help and support!



Easy Newton note keeping lets you quickly jot down reminders, to-do lists and directions, draw maps, or just doodle. With Sticky Newts running, you can instantly access your notes, create new ones, show and hide notes, or even print, fax or email them by simply tapping on your screen.

\* Floats above other applications, giving you constant access to your most-needed information.

\* Set alarms to bring up individual notes and wake up your Newton.

\* Drag and drop text and graphics from other Newton applications to create new notes.

\* Drag notes to different locations on the screen and easily re-size them.

\* Hide or show all notes with a single tap.

\* Individually tile notes. \* Auto-start Sticky Newts when the Newton is reset.

\* Access built-in graphical help for quick reference.

Visit the Concept Kitchen website to download a demo of Sticky Newts at  
<http://www.conceptkitchen.com>

# HITACHI

## VisionBook Traveller or Prius 120 Review

Review by Gerald Fox (geraldfox@aol.com)

PCM Rating:4.5



As I mentioned briefly in my commentary (The Back Page ) I have recently purchased my first Windows Computer. The VisionBook Traveller is essentially the same unit as the Flora (Prius 120) I bought. Why the name change? Florea probably sound too wimpy in the US and VisionBook Traveller is too hard to pronounce for Japanese consumers.

This is a very compact unit in the mini-Laptop category. It is 235mm wide, 173mm deep and a mere 32mm in height. Very compact indeed! It sports a 133mhz Pentium II processor with 24mb of Ram and a 1GB hard disk. It comes with a floppy drive (external) and a power adapter.

When you consider that all this comes in such a small package and that it all weighs about two pounds, it is quite a reasonable unit. The screen is not as good as on some other mini laptops but it is bigger in size. The Libretto 100 has a stellar screen but it is a fair bit smaller. on 640 x 480, the screen can display millions of colors and setting it to 800 x 600 ( I'd suggest this ) allows for thousands of colors. At 256 colors the screen looks somewhat washed out. At thousands of colors, it is quite serviceable. I set it at 800 x 600 because it just gives me that extra bit of space. On the notebook you can scroll around the screen which can show 640 x 480 at a time by moving your mouse. Sort of a virtual desktop and very useful. Also one of those Windows things that are not available on the Mac.

The catalog states that the unit will run an hour and a half on batteries which is in my experience a bit overstated but not dramatically so. I usually use it with the external power cord anyway as the thing just runs faster in that mode. The Hitachi people have supplied the mother of all dongly things with the Flora. It is a nice compact thing but has a very very long cord. Thus connecting to a power supply is no problem.

The only real limitation in my opinion is the keyboard. It is vastly better than that of the Libretto though. Still, if you are a serious touch typist, you may want to try one out first to see how you feel about it. I am a 5 finger typist (maybe 25-30 wpm) and can type at my normal speed on this machine. It took a few days to acclimate myself to it though. So, Your mileage may vary just a bit.

Having used it now for a month, I will say that it has found a place in my heart. It is a perfect size, powerful enough to run Photoshop, has a nice screen and is light weight. I find myself using it more than my desktop these days even.

Pros: Light, fairly fast, compact

Cons: slightly small keyboard, Fair screen

Bottom Line: I am happy with it and if you are not a touch typist and crave a small footprint device, you probably will be too.

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### Features and stats at a glance!

- \* Small 9.2x6.8x1.3" form factor
- \* Incredibly light (2.75 lbs with two batteries)
- \* 8.4" TFT page-width display
- \* Full-size notebook functionality
- \* Intel Pentium 133 MHz with MMX TM [Download the PDF file]
- External Video up to 1024x768

\*-Full Windows 95 -

\$1999

- \* Memory 24MB EDO DRAM, expandable to 40MB
- \* Cache Level1 32KB
- \* Disk Storage 1.0GB capacity hard disk drive; 3.5" external floppy disk drive
- \* Displays 8.4-inch active-matrix TFT LCD with 640x480 resolution, 256K colors; external CRT up to 1024x768, 256K colors [Image]
- \* Video RAM 1MB EDO DRAM
- \* System Bios RIOS 256KB Flash ROM

Interfaces Serial, parallel, monitor, PS/2 mouse, line-out, IrDA 1.1 compliant

PCMCIA Slot Three Type II or one Type II plus one Type III PC card slots; card bus support

Pointing Device Panasonic, PANASTICK2

Audio 16-bit stereo sound; SoundBlaster Pro 3.01 compatibility; internal microphone and two speakers

Keyboard 85 keys with Microsoft Windows 95 keys

Battery Dual battery capability; lithium ion

Power AC adapter; 240V AC input, 15V/2.3A output; 35 watt/hour output

Size and Weight Height: 1.3" (33 mm)

Width: 9.2" (234 mm)

Depth: 6.8" (173 mm)

Weight: 2.75 lbs with two batteries

# smARTwriter for Microsoft Windows CE Review

by: Tom Clarke (Tom@burroak.on.ca)  
My URL: <http://www.burroak.on.ca>



Advanced Recognition Technologies Inc.

I'm a Newton user who is converting to the Windows CE platform. I acquired a Velo 500, and immediately missed the HWR available on the Newton 2000 platform. I looked to smARTwriter to fill the void.

smARTwriter was easy to install. The install process loads five modules: 1) QuickTrainer, 2) smARTwriter 3) smARTscribble (Full Version only), 4) Ink Pad (Full Version only), and 5) smARTwriter Help.



Quick Trainer is a "5" minute tutorial that prompts you through a set of letter writing screens using both upper and lower case printed letters. Note that smARTwriter does not support cursive writing,

only single printed characters.

I went through the Quick Trainer tutorial a total five times to ensure that the system could read my printing. About every 10th letter, a 'lightening bolt' line about two inches long would shoot out from the letter I was making . This caused the letter I was creating to be mis-translated by the system.

A library of letter images is supplied with the the system. As you use the Quick Trainer module, new images are stored. By the time I had gone through Quick trainer five times, the library had grown from 450 images supplied with the application, to over 700 images. Images not needed may be deleted.

You may also create and store unique gestures which will either enter a defined set of characters (for example, a "smiling face" symbol will enter "Sincerely," a basic edit command such as delete, or non-English characters.


The smARTwriter module does the actual handwriting recognition. It is activated by tapping on an icon (either an arrow, for pointing mode, or a pencil, for writing mode) at the right end of the task bar.


When I attempted to use smARTwriter in Pocket Excel, I found that the only place I could write was on the right side of the cell entry window, which is too small for proper recognition. Attempting to write anywhere else activated the cell I happened to start writing on, even though the 'pencil' icon was showing. The end result was that I could not usefully use smARTwriter when in Pocket Excel.

Using it in Pocket Word, on the other hand, worked fine.


## Handwriting and Voice Recognition


I wanted to test the recognition software for speed and accuracy. Following are the results of the tests. The information in parentheses at the end of each line indicates how I entered the information, and how long it took me. Please note that I am a 'touch' typist, that two finger typing (as I am doing in writing this review while in a hotel room in Chicago) is very new to me (weeks), and that my normal handwriting is printed caps.

 caps.


 Now is the time for all good people to come to the aid of their county. (2 finger typing - 26 ")


Now is the time for all good people to come to the aid of their country. (2 finger

 typing - 26 ")

 Now is the time for .?11 good people to come to the a:d uf their coontry. (smARTwriter - 41")

Now is the time for all good peop4-: to come to--he a.Y0-tHeir countru8 .

 (smARTwriter - 39")

 NOW IS TIIZ TIME FOR ALL GOOD PEOPLE TO cOMF- TO THE A17, o.: THEIR cOUNTRY. (smARTwriter - all caps - 36")

NOW IS THF. TIME FOR ALL GOOD PEOPLF. TO COMF. TO T11-E AID OF THEIR

 {OUNTRy. (smARTwriter - all caps - 38")

Now is the tine tor all good DeoPle tO come to ke a.cd 0-their COUnry. (smARTwriter - 52" I really took my time to create the letters carefully)

smARTwriter gives you the ability to edit any mis-recognized words. For example, if I double tap on the word "tine" in the sentence above to highlight it, then someplace else on the screen, write the 'edit' gesture (the shorthand version of 'delete'), a window pops up from which I can pick the correct word.

When I do this for "tine", I get the following 6 options: "tind", "tire", "tinw", "zine", "ttne" and "fine". Since "time" is not one of the options, I must re-write the word. And for "DeoPle" in the same paragraph, I get "DeoPle", "DeoPIR", "ReoPle". "DeuPle",

"beoPle" and "DeoRle".

smARTscribble is a separate program which enables you to make and save sketches, along with any text. These saved files then can be treated as any other document, including pasting all or part of the document in other documents.

Ink Pad is also a separate application which enables you to create documents directly without having to first start Pocket Word or the equivalent application. Ink Pad has full editing capabilities of the entered text. It is also a "pen-aware" application, meaning that you do not have to toggle between the pencil and the arrow icon; the application makes the change depending on where the pen touches on the screen.

Overall, the complete package addresses all of the hand writing recognition needs of the Windows CE user.

Actual recognition was less accurate than I expected. My sense was that I had to be very careful in the forming of letters in order for recognition to occur at acceptable levels for me (see samples above).

The correction screen does not seem to take advantage of the built in dictionary, and thus produces results which were useless to me (see examples above).

It was also frustrating for it to not work effectively in Pocket Excel, the one place where using the keyboard is awkward, and hand writing recognition would be very helpful.

Bottom line: I was disappointed. Either I have to significantly improve the quality and consistency of my hand writing, or the recognition software must step up to the task. I believe that software should be working for me, not vice versa.

Platform:	Windows CE HPC (tested on Velo 500)
Made by:	Advanced Recognition Technologies, Inc.
Company URL:	<a href="http://www.artcomp.com">http://www.artcomp.com</a>
Company e-mail:	<a href="mailto:sales@artcomp.com">sales@artcomp.com</a>
Cost	\$69.95 (US) for the Full Version as of April 28, 1998, at <a href="http://www.artcomp.com">http://www.artcomp.com</a>
Type:	Commercial
Rating:	2.5





# SwitchHack Review

by: Nick Reyes (nick.reyes@jpl.nasa.gov)

Shareware Utility

US \$5.00

(<http://www.deskfree.com>)

Like most Operating systems there are always those little things it does, or doesn't do, that if you had designed it you would do differently. The Palm OS is no different. One of those features is the ability to switch back to the last application used. Enter SwitchHack to the rescue.

SwitchHack is a Hackmaster extension and consumes only 4k of precious Palm memory. It has two basic functions. First, it enables you switch back to the last application you used. This is done by pressing on the application icon and dragging down to the writing area. SwitchHack ignores the application launcher and third party replacements, so you can still toggle applications without being thrown back to the launcher.

SwitchHack's second feature is a launch menu of the last ten applications used. This is accessed pressing on the menu icon and dragging up to the application icon. From this menu you can click on the name of the application and it will be launched. This results in an increase in productivity and ease of use. It is one of the few Palm application I can say that I use several times every day.

SwitchHack is a must have for any serious Palm user. It is one of my two must have Hackmaster extensions (more on the other in future issues).

SwitchHack is shareware and is authored by the brilliant folks at Deskfree Computing (<http://www.deskfree.com>). For a mere registration fee of \$5 it is a must have utility on your Palm. Check it out!

(Nick Reyes is a programmer at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena,

CA where he is slowly working toward his Masters in Applied Computer Science and Technology and occasionally finds time to be a husband and father.)

Nick Reyes

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New Business Solutions | "I don't know. But some people |  
Human Resources | without brains do an awful lot |  
BPR Team Leader | of talking, don't they?" |  
(818)393-3124 | -The Scarecrow (1939) |

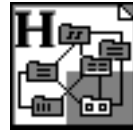
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Solo Dei Gloria

"There's no point in being grown up if you can't be childish sometimes."  
-Dr. Who



# HyperPoc Info-View



Shareware



Hypermedia authoring system



Contact and downloading

<http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/lichtbild>



Platform:

PSION S3, S3a, S3c, Siena, ACORN PocketBook I and II

Disk space requirements: 72-150k

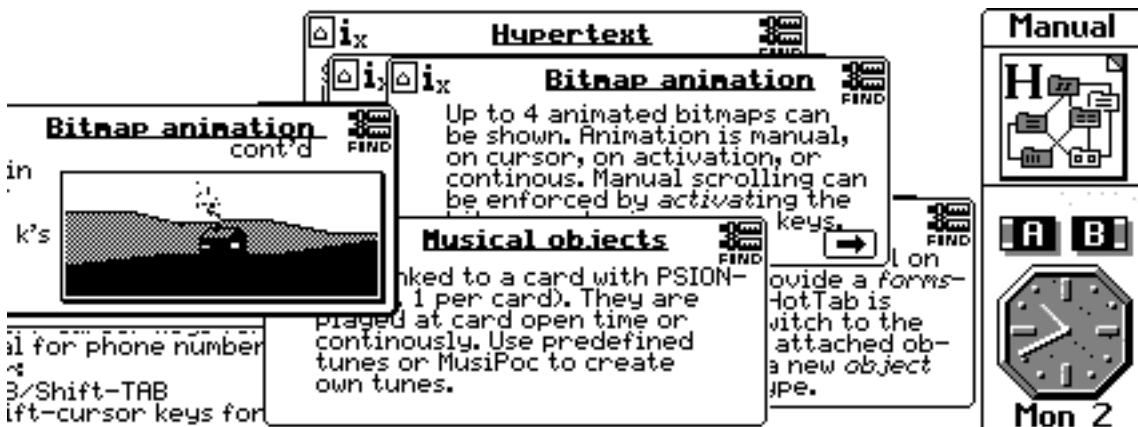
HyperPoc LITE            US\$34.95

HyperPoc PROF            US\$49.95

## Description

HyperPoc is a card oriented **hypertext** system, which resembles the popular Maintosh HyperCard application, but runs on PSION palmtops.

Cards are organised in stacks. Cards can be **hotlinked** to other cards within the same stack and across stacks. The card size is variable. Cards and backgrounds can contain a variety of **objects**, such as: application, icons & bitmaps (animated), card link, alarm clock, stopwatch, explainer, hotTab, keyword, music, phone number, polyline, rectangle, or formatted text.



It is possible to **launch** programs and applications from cards, tone **dialling** is supported. Cards can contain stop watches and **alarm** clocks. Graphical objects can even be **animated** (similar to animated GIF on web pages), there is an **OPL**-interface for custom programming, and there are export and print functions. HyperPoc comes with over 30 icons and 20 musical tunes.

HyperPoc PROF in addition allows to **import** text and word files, to **bring** text from other applications, supports the grey colour, has **preplay** and **preview** functions for graphics and sound.

HyperPoc PROF can be used for project documentation in connection with ProPoc PROF and includes a **royalty free** runtime licence.

HyperPoc comes with a **setup utility**, which allows to select the language (*English/German*) and options.



# Catamount software

## NewtNotes 1.0 Info-View

NewtNotes is a bibliography program for the Newton. NewtNotes was designed based upon EndNote by Niles & Associates.

NewtNotes allows you to carry around references and to add new references while away from your desktop. Most of you will still use EndNote and a word processor on the desktop to create your final papers.

1:48 Wed 5/13 ◆ All References

◆ Reference Type **Journal Article**

Record Number **21**

Author  
◆ **D.N. Bearce**

Year  
◆ **1988**

Title  
◆ **New paleontologic evidence constraining the age and paleotectonic setting of the Tallades Slate Belt, southern Appalachians**

Secondary Title  
◆ **Geological Society Of America Bulletin**

Volume  
◆ **100**

i A New +Show +Sort [Window] [Mail] [Close]

### Features

- \* Uploads to EndNote using WildCat.

NNSync.pkg is the Newton package that talks to WildCat on the desktop.

- \* Flexible data entry and viewing

- \* Powerful Customized Filter

- \* Find supported

- \* Some keyboard support

## Features on the Drawing board

\* Ability to copy a reference from NewtNotes to the clipboard

\* Ability to create citation formats on the Newton

## Desktop Connectivity

To upload and download data collected in NewtNotes you need WildCat for Macintosh or WildCat for Windows.

◆ Author	◆ Year	◆ Title
D. Blake	1988	A 1st fossil member of the
T.V. Billoski	1988	A stochastic model of the
M.P. Beckmann; C.	1988	Comparison of biological
S. Bartschwinkler	1988	Cycle of earthquake-induced
T.V. Billoski	1987	Debate over nemesis theory grows
T.V. Billoski	1992	Introduction to Paleontology
D.N. Bearce	1988	New paleontologic evidence
Billy Joel,	1984	Piano Man
M. Bensalah; M.	1988	Relation between emersion phase
D. F. Belknap	1988	Sea-level changes
G. Bessiere; S.	1988	The lower Palaeozoic in the

ab cd ef gh ij kl mn op qr st uv wx yz

11 items

i A New +Show +Sort [ ] [ ] [X]

## Price

Pay for NewtNotes online with a credit card at our secure webpage

\* NewtNotes - \$80.00

\* NewtNotes (discounted for starving college students) - \$40

<http://www.catamount.com>

Send comments to: [newtnotes@catamount.com](mailto:newtnotes@catamount.com)



# PicPoc Info- View



**Shareware**



**Paint program**



**Contact and downloading**

<http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/lichtbild>



**Platform:**

PSION S3a, S3c, ACORN PocketBook II

Disk space requirements: 50-100k

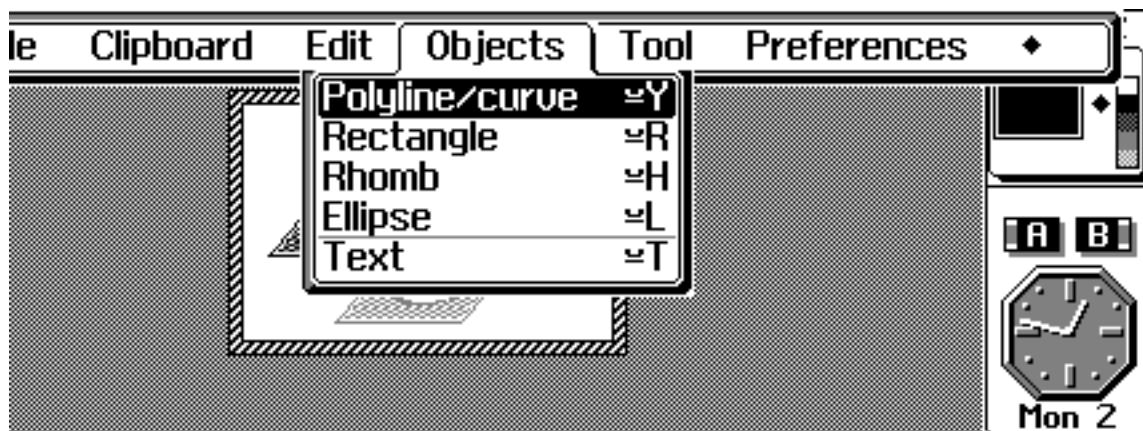


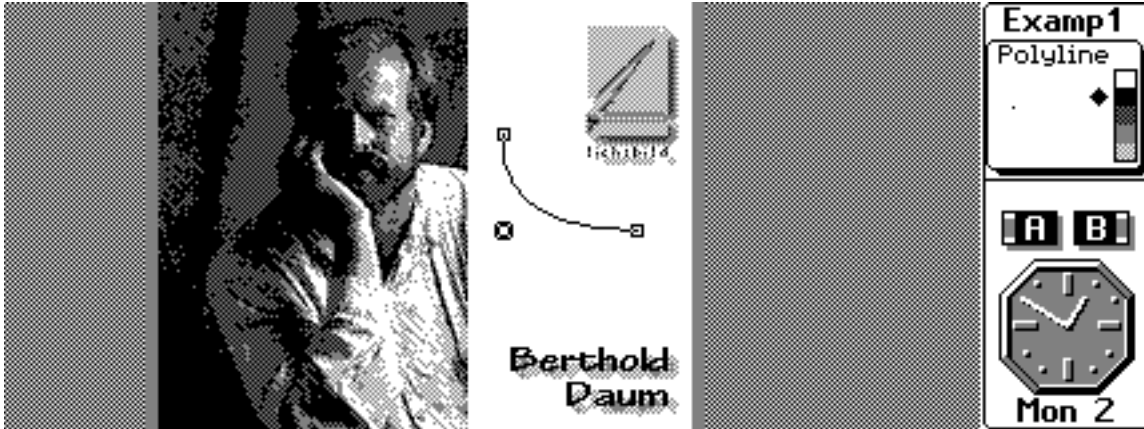
**Cost:**

PicPoc US\$34.95

## Description

PicPoc is a **paint program** specialised for PSION palmtop computers. It can process **bitmaps** up to 256,000 pixels and supports three native **colours** (black, white, grey) plus two dithered colours (light grey, dark grey). It has all the classical tools expected from a paint program, like **Pen**, **Eraser**, **Spray**, **Fill**, **Rectangle**, **Ellipse**, **Bezier**.





PicPoc comes with a wide range of brush **shapes** and **patterns**. User defined brushes and patterns are possible, too. There is a **magnifier** with two zoom levels, and a **navigator** for easy navigation in large bitmaps.

PicPoc has **plug-in filter** technology with many predefined filters, such as **Rotate, Enlarge, Skew, Drop shadow**. User defined filters can be created with the **filter foundry** or can be written in OPL. PicPoc imports and exports **PIC, BMP, GIF, and PCX**. Import of greyscale and colour pictures is supported with 3 selectable dither options. Images can be **printed** on most of the popular printers.

A **setup utility** allows to select the language (*English/German*) and options at installation.





## Pocket On-Schedule v2 Info View

**Category: Commercial**

**Purpose: Contact Manager**

**URL: [www.odysseyinc.com](http://www.odysseyinc.com)**



### Platform & Requirements:

For the Handheld PC - Windows CE 1.0 or 2.0, complete installation requires 500KB to 700KB depending on configuration. Serial port or IR connection to desktop PC required for synchronization.

For the Desktop PC - 486/33DX or higher processor; 3.5" drive, 8MB RAM, 2MB of available hard disk space for installation, Windows 95 or Windows NT Workstation or higher with the H/PC Explorer installed. Cost: \$89.95 (Pocket On-Schedule v2 only), \$159.95 (Pocket On-Schedule and On-Schedule for Windows 95/NT bundled)



**Description:** Pocket On-Schedule version 2 for Windows CE, is an intuitive, multi-featured Contact Manager for mobile professionals. It provides all the technological oomph you need to efficiently manage Contact History, multiple Phone Books, Calendars, To-Do Lists -- Anytime, Anywhere -- allowing you to have the power and flexibility of Desktop Windows based software in the palm of your hand. Pocket On-Schedule enables you to achieve an exciting new level of computing and instant contact information access and synchronization.

Odyssey Computing provides a Complete Solution for Mobile Users, adding another dimension to their vital portable computing needs. Pocket On-Schedule offers robust features including unlimited phone books, dialing support, Internet access, direct e-mail, automatic logging of phone calls/e-mails/faxes/to-do's/call backs, direct integration with Pocket Word, contact information templates, customizable layouts, progressive search, and versatile synchronization preferences. Some of the new features and enhancements include:

\* Multiple Calendar views: daily, weekly (1 to 7 days), monthly, 6 to 8 months; a Journal view to display all activities for all contacts; and a To-Do List view. All views allow you to

organize and manage time efficiently.

- \* Contact History, Bi-directional Linking, Ad-hoc Links keep the information current and provide easy access to all related contact activities.

- \* Filters and Global Search allow you to manipulate your invaluable information.

- \* Write/Fax Personalized Letters, Scheduling of call backs, to-do's, and activities, Broadcast E-mail/Faxing provide you with the desktop's productivity.

Fully compatible with its On-Schedule 97 desktop companion, Pocket On-Schedule automatically and bi-directionally synchronizes multiple phone books, appointments, tasks, and contact history. Pocket On-Schedule directly synchronizes with Microsoft Schedule+ and Outlook 97. It also seamlessly integrates with IntelliSyncô, Desktop To Goô, and Harmony 97 allowing full desktop synchronization with Act!, GoldMine, Ecco Pro, Lotus Organizer, and others.

# Password Store Info-View

*Stand Alone, Inc.*



<http://www.standalone.com>

Price: \$15

Platform: Palm OS

Password Store keeps all your passwords in one secure place on your PalmOS for easy access.

**Password (1 of 4)** ▼ Unfiled

**Description/Location**  
Bank Card  
.....  
.....

**User Name/UserID**  
John Ball  
.....

**Password**  
987654  
.....

Done Details

Tap on any of the descriptions to bring up a screen with its password.

**Passwords (4)** ▼ All

Bank Card	John Ball
Credit Card	John Ball
email	jball@standa
Phone Card	Stand Alone

New

You can also password protect Password Store, to keep all of your important codes safe.

Add a note to a Password Store entry to store additional information.

**Enter Password**

You must enter your password in order to gain access to Password Store:

.....

OK



# TimePak 1.0 Info-View



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Shareware \$5.00

Clock enhancement



**Company URL:** <http://www.dusers.drexel.edu/~stjohn/newton.html>



**Platform:**

All Newton OS devices



**Description**

Clock-enhancement software for all Newtons

TimePak adds a talking clock and large digital or analog clock to the MessagePad. (It looks great in landscape on a MP2100!)

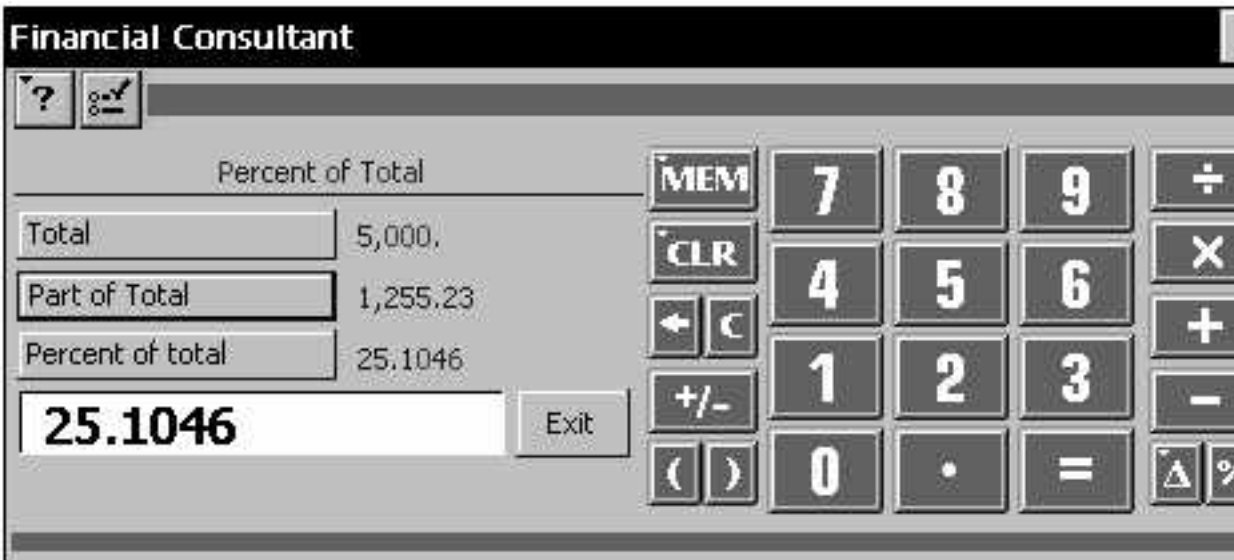
The clock works on startup, or on other events. You can configure it to work just the way you want it to. It'll even announce your upcoming meetings and uncompleted to-do items if you ask it to.

Currently English, Vietnamese, and Polish language files are available, but more are on their way! Check it out: the demo is free, and the software is only \$5 to register.

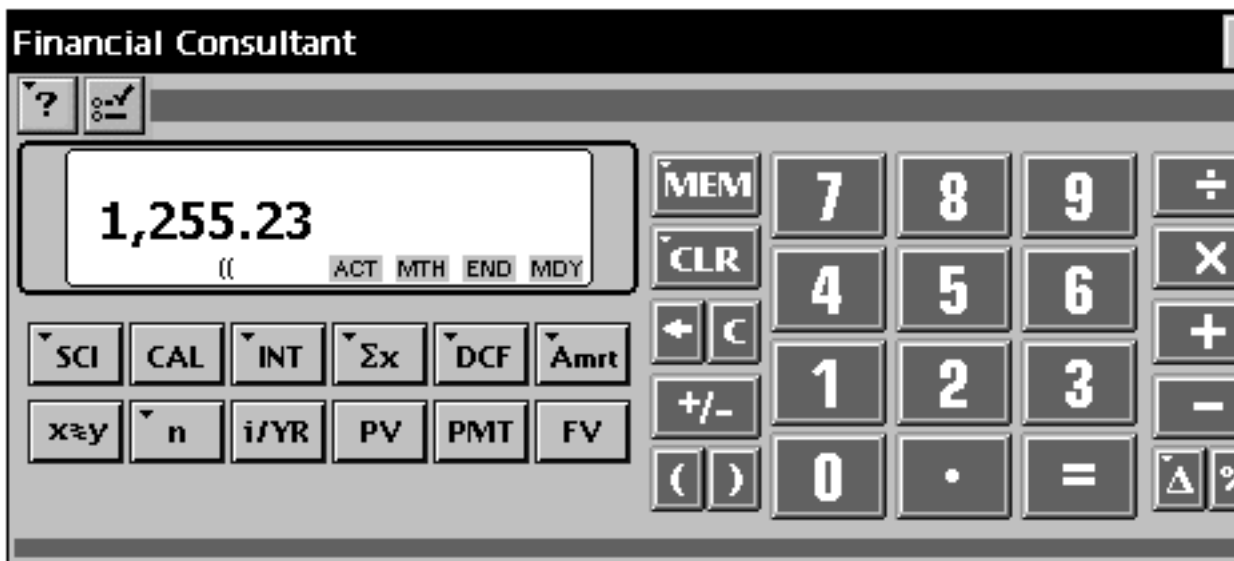
# Financial Consultant 2.0 Info-View

**LandWare**  
*Software for Terra Firma*

Platform: Palm, CE, Newton



Designed specifically for real estate, retailing and business professionals who need to use their Windows CE based HPC's to make fundamental financial decisions quickly and accurately.



Version 2.0 represents a total ground up redesign of the popular Financial Consultant product which has resulted in a business tool that is unparalleled in its ease of use, power and flexibility. We paid very close attention to both existing users requests and the best features of a range of different HP and TI financial calculators to produce the second generation Financial Consultant.

SOLVER FORMS represent one of the most exciting new features allowing you to perform a range of different calculations with point and tap ease. Solver forms allow you to enter the known variables and using a single tap to solve for the unknown quantity. No longer do you have to remember obscure keystrokes.

Listed below is an overview of just some of the new and exciting features that continue to make the Financial Consultant the premier financial problem solver for PalmPC devices.

### Features at a glance

Flexible Input logic ? Choose between 4 input logic options that mimic HP19BII, HP12C and TI BA operation. Parenthesis are also provided to further control expression evaluation.

Time and Money Calculations- Quickly solve any number of Savings, Loans, Mortgages and Lease problems using the time and money functions.

Amortization Schedule

Pmt#	INTEREST	PRINCIPAL
1	-750.00	-39.92
2	-749.60	-40.32
3	-749.20	-40.72
4	-748.79	-41.13

BALANCE: 74,919.76

Exit

Amortization- Generate on-screen amortization schedules and using a single tap calculate loan balances, interest and principle portions.

Effective and Nominal interest rate conversions - Quickly convert

between nominal and effective interest rates using periodic or continuous compounding.

Flexible compounding options- The Financial Consultant can be

configured to calculate Canadian mortgage repayments or any other situation where compounding periods differ from the payment periods.

Date calculations- Calculate future or past dates and the number of days between dates using [Image] the choice of two different date formats using the tap of the stylus.

Date Calculations

---

First Date	1.011998
Second Date	5.011998
Days between dates	120.

**5.011998** Exit

Investment analysis- Evaluate your investment opportunities involving multiple cash flows with the Net present value (NPV), internal rate of return (IRR), Net Future Value (NFV), Net Uniform Series (NUS) and TOTAL functions. The cash flow editor provides a facile mechanism for entering and reviewing entries.

Retail-style percentage calculations- The calculator supports 14 different percentage calculations including markups, ratios, discounts, differences, cost prices and margins.

Markup (% of Cost)

---

Cost Price	752.
Sell Price	950.
Markup	26.33

**26.33** Exit

Popup function menus ? The use of popup menus provides single tap access to over 90 functions whilst still maintaining an uncluttered interface.

Flexible Display Formats ? let you display results the way you want to see them.

Display Mode

Engineering

Scientific

Floating

Fixed

5 ▼ dp

# Newton Rising



This month Danial Berube is taking some time off for his honeymoon!

## Congratulations David!

He also mentions that he may just check his email while inside the Grand Canyon.

### How Romantic!

Future subjects may include:

A write-up on this and how much attention my Newton may have attracted.

A Discussion and interview with those who are trying to make the audio interconnect cable a reality.

Hopefully do a check-up with NDA's effort to liscense/buy the Newton with Enfour.

-N---E---W---T---O---N---I---S---R---I---S---I---N---G-

"The first trilogy seems like an intimate little story compared to what I'm working on now."

-George Lucas, 1995

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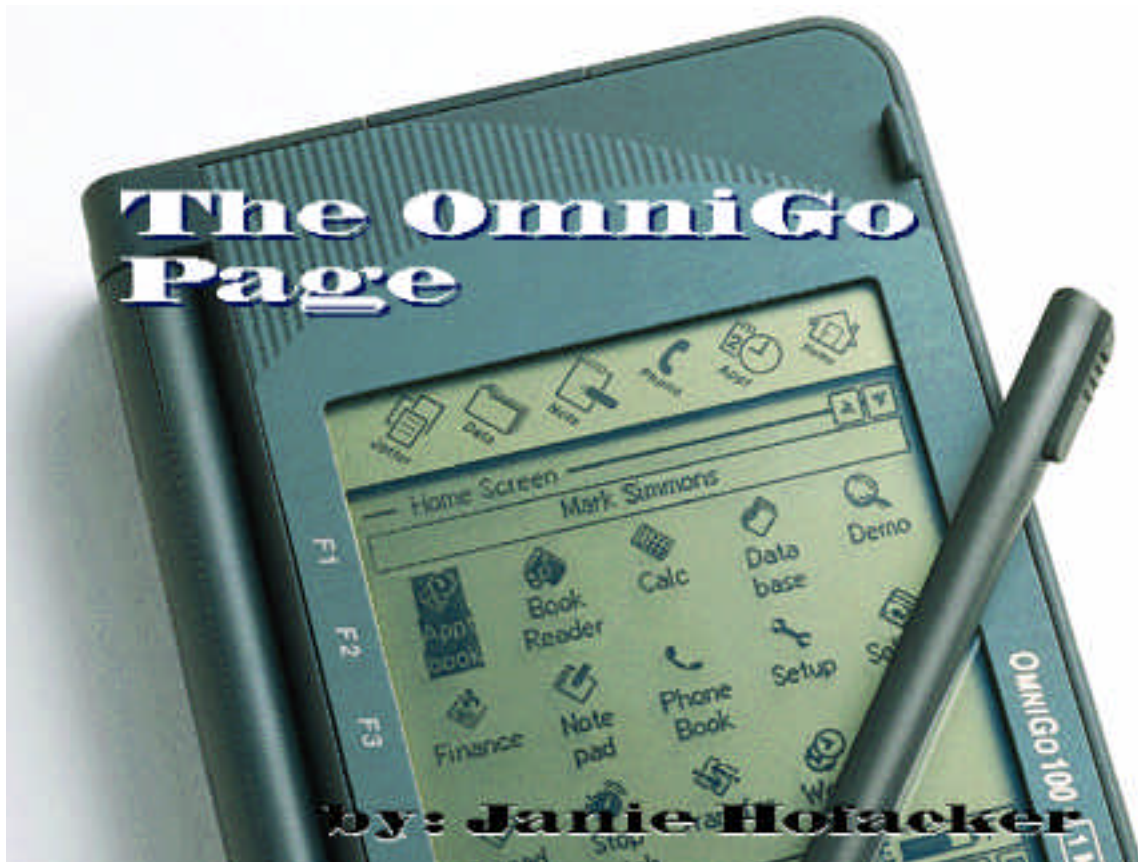


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"We use Macs because we are training our children for the  
technologies of TOMORROW."

-N---E---W---T---O---N---I---S---R---I---S---I---N---G-



## The Ogo Is Alive and Well

by: Janie Hofacker (Hofackerjk@msx.upmc.edu)

I recently purchased an Omnigo100 Organizer a few months ago. I was using it to replace a Sharp YO-370 128K organizer that I had been using to organize phone number and memos and complete calculations and conversions. I am a health care professional and spend much of my time moving about the hospital seeing patients. I needed something handy to organize important pieces of information and then be able to make them available to me during the day when I was away from the desk. I liked my Sharp Organizer but had no way to back my files on the PC. The serial connecting cable cost about \$90 and that was more than I paid for the organizer. In the past, I had problems with having my organizers fall out of the pocket of my lab coat anytime I leaned over to pick anything up off the floor. One time, one of my organizers (a Royal) slipped out my pocket into the commode. After I had retrieved the waterlogged piece of electronics and let it dry out, it no longer worked. Naturally, I lost all-important pieces of information.

A friend of mine was selling their Omnigo and asked me if I was interested in buying. I had been thinking about buying a Palm Pilot, but felt it was similar to my Sharp organizer, except newer, had more memory and could be linked to my PC. I figured I would wait until my organizer was no longer working or I dropped in the toilet again before I'd buy a Palm Pilot.

At least that way, I could justify the paying the price for a Palm Pilot if my Sharp was out of commission. My friend suggested I take the Omnigo home over the weekend and play with and see if it was something that I could use in my work. By Saturday afternoon, I had really gotten a good look at the Omnigo and what it could do. Needless to say, I decided to buy it. The price was right and I thought it would be great to be able to back up my files on the PC since it came with a connectivity cable and software. This was the primary reason, I decided to buy it. After I bought it and began to work with it, I came to realize this organizer behaved much like a mini Laptop. Of course, my only experience with a laptop was with a former 386 that I had bought in 1992. With the Omnigo, I could write notes, memos, develop databases, perform spreadsheet functions, as well as organize phone numbers, schedule appointments, and perform scientific calculations.

After purchasing the Omnigo, I have found a lot of information on the Internet about it. I had only been exposed to the world of DOS and Windows. I was not familiar with a Geo operating system. This organizer will do things that other organizers or Palmtops can't do. For example, can you open your palmtop and fold the lid back 360 degrees

so that the top and bottom covers touch each other. This enables it to be held with one hand while leaving the other hand free to write or do other tasks. And, with a touch of a button or your pen on hard screen icon, the screen presentation can be changed from landscape to a portrait position do allow you to better see the screen regardless of how you are holding the case. This is great for when I go the store. I open the organizer, fold back the lid and change the screen to portrait and have my shopping list that I had written out earlier accessible. I can make check marks right on the screen to as I pick out my groceries.

Initially, I thought the Graffiti handwriting system was difficult to learn, but with some time, I was able to master it quickly. The built in "help" screens on the organizer help me to recall information when I have questions or problems. I like the "Jotter" function. I can jot down notes quickly using the pen right on the screen. This is like having a digital "post it note," that can't get stuck on the wrong things. Do you have problems organizing all those post it notes on your desktop? The "Jotter" helps to remedy this problem.

I have Pocket Quicken installed on the Omnigo. Now, I find this to be a bonus, as I am not very diligent about entering and reconciling activity in my checkbook. The use of Pocket Quicken on my Omnigo has helped me to do a better job at managing my finances. I keep my organizer with me and just enter the transactions in to Pocket Quicken and then connect to my PC and transfer the transactions to Quicken.

Being that this is a Geo operating system, there are Geo developers who have developed quite a few programs for the Omnigo. As a result, I found many shareware programs available for downloading on the Internet that allowed me to tailor the Omnigo to fit my needs. I like the spreadsheet function in the Omnigo. I utilize spreadsheets in my work quite often. I use the spreadsheet to develop a "Patient Tracking Information" that has a lot of data that is helpful to me during the day. I ran into a physician completing his Fellowship who used to use the Omnigo 100 and switched to a HP 200LX. He said he needed more space, he was not aware that he could have used a SRAM or Flash card in the Omnigo to help with his space problems. He said he missed the pen interfacing abilities and versatility of the Omnigo. He said, having to use only the keyboard for the different functions was

cumbersome. He also missed ability of the lid rotation on the Omnigo.

As you can see, I found the Omnigo 100 both useful at home and work. I could go on pages and pages telling you what this organizer is capable of doing. As a result of owning the Omnigo, I have been introduced to the world of PDA(s) and Palmtops. I think the Omnigo is a really great tool that helps me to do my work and make things more organized at home. I still don't understand why HP stopped making it. I have to say the people using the Omnigo 100 have been very helpful in sharing information about it. Although the organizer is no longer available commercially, other than second hand sales, there is a tremendous amount of support for the organizer. There are many Internet sites that provide accessories and shareware programs. In addition, there is an "Ogo" mailing list that is informative. The Omnigo 100 I my opinon is still alive and well

# Our Lives & our PDAs

Thursday, 23 April 1998  
23:13pm GMT: +08:00



I am writing this on a PalmPilot Professional using SuperPad & the Fitaly Keyboard hack as I take the train home from work. First, let observe a minute of silence for the Newton. Nope, I do not own a Newton. The closest I ever got to one was when my brother showed me his Newton MP2100. Yeah it was cool; cool OS, cool interface, everything about it was slick. However, the price was out of my reach & the Newton was too big to fit into my daily usage bag. (Not to mention the looks I will get from using this geeky device) Therefore, my brother uses his Newton in his daily life, while I use my good old PalmPilot Professional in mine. Our family has a close relationship with mobile computing. My mum has a Traveller, my dad a Libretto 100, my brother a Newton MP2100 & me, a PalmPilot Professional. We seldom get together but that is beside the point. Anyway, one fine day, my brother called me & he said, "You know, Apple discontinued the Newton line." My first reaction was "Huh?" The Newton has become so much of my brother's life that now that he seems rather lost after hearing the news. Later surfing the net, I downloaded the May issue (#1) of Pocket Computing Magazine. Reading the Newton article, 'Testimony'. I could deeply feel the author's feelings about his PDA. While Apple's decision to discontinue the Newton *may* have been 'sound' business decision, it doesn't cover the fact that Newton users all over the world cried foul over this untimely death of a product *while* it's still making money out of it.

I admit I am a hardcore user of the PalmPilot. It has accompanied me on countless trip to exotic destination all over the world. It has in essence become part of me. Wherever I go, it goes. The death of the Newton should have caused me great joy. It's one less competitor for the Palm was there are going to have their hands full with muscle man Microsoft entering the market. But no, it has instead caused me to look & these machines called PDAs in detail. When my brother showed me his Newton, I was impressed with all the neat things it could do but in his face I told him, "It's just a bulky calculator" In reality, I was jealous of the cool features of his machine. While the PalmPilot's form factor & it's simplicity was some of the important reasons why I bought a PalmPilot, I wouldn't mind more memory, better handwriting ability instead of being restricted to the graffiti area & a better screen. Perhaps the newer models of the PalmPilot will fulfil my

wishlist.

*(From an article on ZDNet)*

**Also, on the handheld front, Le Chat hears that 3Com is readying two new, smaller Palm systems. One, code-named Razor, is about half the thickness of the existing Palm III and includes a lithium-ion battery that recharges through the cradle. The device, which uses the same Motorola Dragonball processor and black-on-green screen as previous Palm, is expected in November. A second version, code-named Bali, has a color display and is expected before the end of the year, tipsters' report.**



***Apple, the company whose motto is "Think Different" has probably just killed the most creative product in the whole company.***

There are currently 10 people in my company who uses PDAs. Five of them are PalmPilots & the rest are WindowsCE machines in widely different favours. While we Piloteers talk about the latest applications, the WindowsCE people talk about batteries & the rest of my colleagues look on as if we are crazy. Before I had my PalmPilot, I would probably have been in the other camp of people who thinks that these people are crazy. But now I have cease to care about them & embrace the geeky side of corporate life. This is not the geek culture led by Bill G, it is the PDA culture.

# The Back Page

by: Gerald Fox (geraldfox@aol.com)



## That OS Thing you do...

This month, I would like to address an issue that is near and dear to us all. The subject of operating systems. In fact, as you read on you will no doubt notice the distinct odor of crow being eaten.

Two months ago, I felt compelled to forsake my much beloved Macintosh operating system and do something that I had thought unthinkable. That is, buy a Windows based laptop. The reasons for this are many, but the main ones are size and power. I wanted both of these and thus had no real choice in the Mac world. To be more clear, I desired something in the “very” portable range or a “mini-laptop”. Apple makes fine laptops but they are not in my estimation really “take everywhere” items. I might use the term “luggable” instead of portable. So, I went out and bought a Hitachi Flora which is nearly identical to the VisionBook Traveller. It is very small, has a nice screen and is fast. Well, this is not a review so let me cut to the chase. ([see the review elsewhere Ed.](#))

I rather like Windows (the smell of crow..remember?) and must apologise for all the “Win-Doze” cracks I have made over the years. Now to be sure, the Mac OS is in my opinion the more elegant and easy to use system but Windows has it’s flashes of brilliance as well and is undeserving of the anti microsoft ravings of Mac enthusiasts. To be even more blunt. I will admit that there are several features that I wish the Mac could manage and cannot.

True, The file system is less elegant. No question. Once you get past it though, other nice things await. I must wonder about the lack of the install/uninstall control panel on the Mac. This is a nice feature and would save us the hassle of several hundred superfluous preference files and system extentions that we no longer use. I also appreciate the virtual memory scheme on Windows. Frankly it just seems to work

better than on the Mac. Other plusses for Microsoft? The ability to delete a file or folder from within a file open dialog box is very useful, the ability to delete things via the right button contextual menus and so on.

So, the point of all this is to put to rest in my mind at least, the techno snobbery that I must admit I have participated in. Whichever platform you choose, be it Mac, Windows, CE, Psion, GEOS, Newton, or whatever, there are bound to be good points and bad points. The litmus test of an OS is whether people buy it or not. If people had to use UNIX on their PCs, there would be a lot less personal computer users out there. The fact that Microsoft has succeeded points out their success in making something people find usable.

I have seen the light.

Whoever you are, whatever you are using. You are OK. After all, this magazine represents a microcosm of platforms and ways of problem solving.  
So, until next month...

Greetings from Japan and keep on computing.



# INTERVIEW WITH APORTIS

*Pocket Computing* caught up with Frank Colin, Media Specialist at Aportis Technologies Corp. Software for wearables and carryables. We asked him some questions I'm sure we all want to know...

**BROWM: Regarding AportisDoc Professional, why was it delayed?**

Frank: We are quite sorry that our Professional versions have slipped later than we would have liked. Aportis is a small firm that is working on two major product releases and we want them to both be acceptable on the first release. Additionally, it is a daunting task to deliver three platforms (Windows, Macintosh, and PalmPilot) in one box and to have them all be bug-free.

Our first product, BrainForest, ran into some unforeseen delays with our (mistaken) commitment to the Java programming language. After losing 4 months (and thus delaying BOTH products), we abandoned the Java version and have been developing our software in native code for both Macintosh and Windows.

The problem with Java was two-fold:

- an incompetent group of developers
- no support for 68k Macs

We hope to go back and revisit Java development in the near future, but we have to get the products out first.

Also, Florent Pillet, our lead developer (but who had nothing to do with the mistaken Java development) was in a serious motorcycle accident a few weeks ago. He's OK, but this is also delaying us, too.

We are doing our best to get everything on track here and we ask for your patience in awaiting the release of our Professional products.

BrainForest Professional is scheduled for release before the end of June, with AportisDoc Professional shortly thereafter.

**BROWN: I'm sorry to hear that. Is there a confirmed date for the release of AportisDoc Professional?**

Frank: It is scheduled to be released in late June or early July.

**BROWN: I believe Aportis has heard of TealDoc! What do you think of it competing in this formerly exclusive market niche?**

Frank: We were not bothered by TealPoint's decision to publish a shareware AportisDoc format reader. The format is open and they were welcome to sell a competing product. Other folks had previously released their own versions of Doc, but had not charged for them.

**BROWN: Since we're on the subject of TealDoc!, TealPoint had implemented in TealDoc! "Tags" that were not supported by AportisDoc. What do Aportis think of this?**

Frank: First, some background. We teamed up with Rick Bram, the author of the original Doc last November. With the phenomenal success of Doc, he had determined that he could no longer spend the time necessary to give his customers the quality service they were entitled to. He felt that Aportis would be able to provide that level of service.

We feel our mission has many sides:

- 1) Providing a high quality product to our users.
  - We changed AportisDoc so we could pass the complete set of Palm Computing 2.0 and 3.0 platform compatibility tests as defined and approved by 3Com and conducted by an independent testing lab, Quality Partners. Unlike any other Doc-reader, AportisDoc Mobile Edition has official Platinum status as a PalmPilot-compatible product.
  - We have exposed more users to the product's benefits by offering a freeware AportisDoc Reader. From the start, we wanted to make AportisDoc available to every handheld user. Our Reader application allows any users to access thousands of documents, without paying a penny.
  - Provide comprehensive, detailed documentation to both

AportisDoc Mobile Edition and AportisDoc Reader. As a commercial software vendor, we provide a professionally written manual for all of our products (more than a simple document describing the highlights). Documentation for both products may be downloaded at no charge.

- 2) Providing superior services to our users.
  - Immediately after we began working with Rick Bram, we surprised his users by offering them free upgrades to any AportisDoc products we release for the next 5 years. We're still getting thank you messages for that gesture of commitment.
  - We offer free telephone support to registered users. In addition to the speedy email support, we have knowledgeable people answering our phones who can troubleshoot a problem. There's nothing better than getting a friendly voice on the other end of the phone.
  - Extending the format to respond to user requests, which we will do in the forthcoming AportisDoc Professional Edition.
- 3) Evangelize and promote the use of the AportisDoc format any way we can. This includes encouraging content and web site providers to adopt the use of the format (as an alternative publishing medium), and demonstrating to businesses that the format provides an easy to implement system for distributing documents company-wide. The results of our efforts will be seen over the next few months, with forthcoming announcements by many major, and minor, content providers. See our web site for some of the latest announcements.

Initially, we were not bothered by Teal's deciding to publish a shareware AportisDoc format reader. The format is open and they were welcome to sell a competing product. However, without any overtures or consultation with us, they now choose to publish a product that makes use of their own, proprietary, graphics program. We feel this is not the way to go.

AportisDoc Professional will include many of the features that users have seen in the Doc+ product (such as editing) and more.

I hope you excuse my verbosity here, but I wanted to explain all aspects of this situation.

**BROWN:** It's all right. Next, if Aportis do not support the "Tags" from TealPoint, do you think the Doc format is going to be split into 2 camps with one side supporting the TealDoc!'s format & the other side supporting AportisDoc's format?

Frank: As I mentioned, I believe Teal's decision to turn an open format into a proprietary one is not healthy, and they made their decision without so much as a consultation call or email to us. TealPoint's format is now incompatible with Doc, Doc+, JDoc, Doc Reader, AportisDoc Reader and AportisDoc Mobile Edition. As we extend and expand the (open) AportisDoc format in the future, these incompatibilities will unfortunately continue.

**BROWN:** Users had complained that Aportis does not care about the customer after he/she pays the required amount of money. Is that true?

Frank: Not in the least. We respond to most emails within 24 hours and phone calls within the same business day. We have also seen some complaints in newsgroups, but these seem to be from people who are waiting for the release of the Professional. We have discussed the feature set of the product with many users and do our best to communicate with them.

**BROWN:** Shouldn't Aportis concentrate on getting AportisDoc Professional out on time instead of doing deals with content providers?

Frank: We aren't 'doing deals' with content providers. We can only encourage them to use the AportisDoc format. There is no money involved for us, or from us to them. All their materials can also be read using any Doc reader. Evangelizing the format is good for all PalmPilot users, because it increases the amount of materials available in AportisDoc format.

Our development team is concentrating on our products. Some of

us are not coders, and we work on administration, writing manuals, answering support questions, and doing marketing - tasks that must be performed at any professional software business.

**BROWN:** Thank you very much for your time.

Frank: You're welcome.

## **Copyright Stuff**

**Everything you see here is copyrighted.**

**You may read this magazine, make copies of it (as long as you don't change it) and give it to your friends. You may include it on CD collections if you like.**

**Hey! I'm easy!**

**You really should:**

**Ask though before printing any part of this magazine in advertising or in commercial endeavors.**

**Thanks a lot!**

**Gerald Fox**

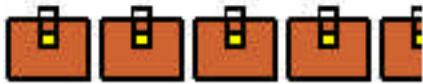
**geraldfox@aol.com**

## What those suitcases mean.....

### An explanation of the rating scale.



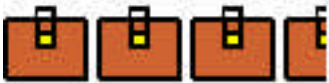
A Clear Winner. This is software or hardware that is as near perfect as is possible.



A superior product. The item with this label is clearly a product that most users will want.



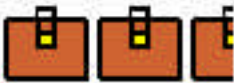
Full featured and well designed. This is a product that will not dissappoint!



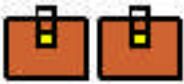
This is still a decent product but is lacking in some way.



The reviewer seems to feel that there are serious flaws or missing features in this product. It may still be usable but there may also be better items available.



The reviewer was not impressed with this product. Either the overall design was not well implemented or it was unstable or unusable in some way. You should think carefully before buying this product and carefully consider the alternatives.



This is clearly a “do not want” item. Avoid it!



Using this may pose a threat to your system or it is so badly designed as to be worthless. Don't buy it unless you enjoy wasting your money!