# LIFE WITH OS X

## As Told by an Accidental Webmaster

- Overview
- OS X Hits & Misses
- 5 Cool  Apps
- 5 Useful  Utils
- 10 Add-Ons
- 10 Help Me! Tips
- 10 Useful Hints
- General Q & A

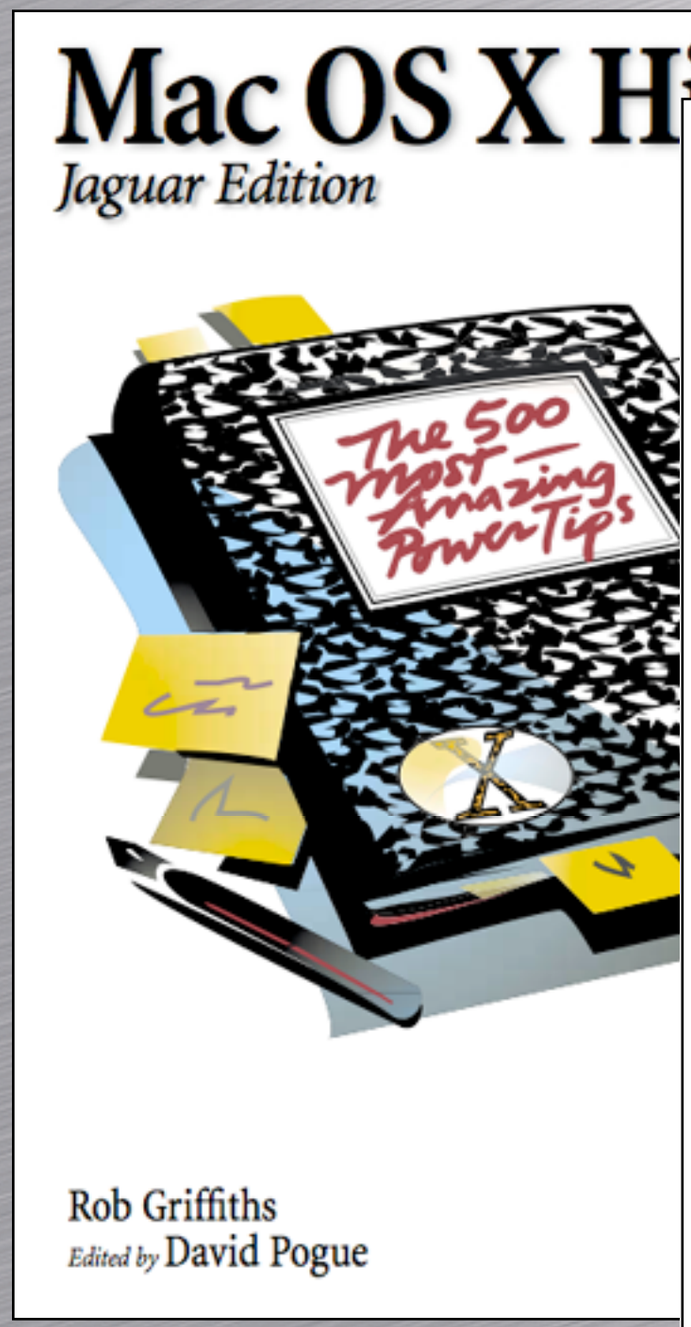
Macworld San Francisco - January 2005

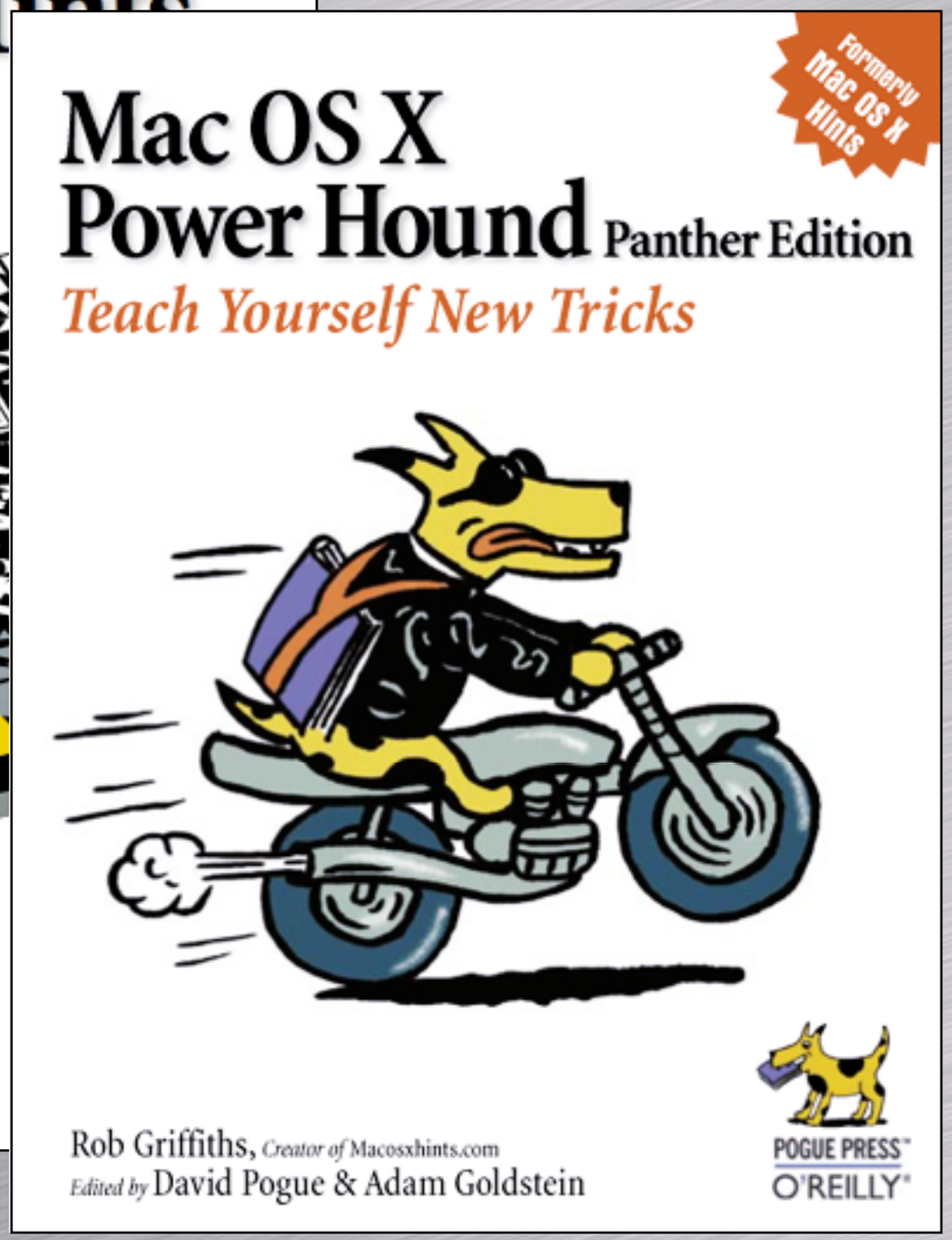
# OVERVIEW

# MY HISTORY

- Long time Apple/Mac user
- As of Fall 2000...
  - Zero Unix experience
  - Minimal web authoring experience
  - Pre OS X 'Power User'
- First OS X usage: Public Beta
- Non-technical education
- Non-technical day job
- From all of that to this...

# ACCIDENTAL AUTHOR



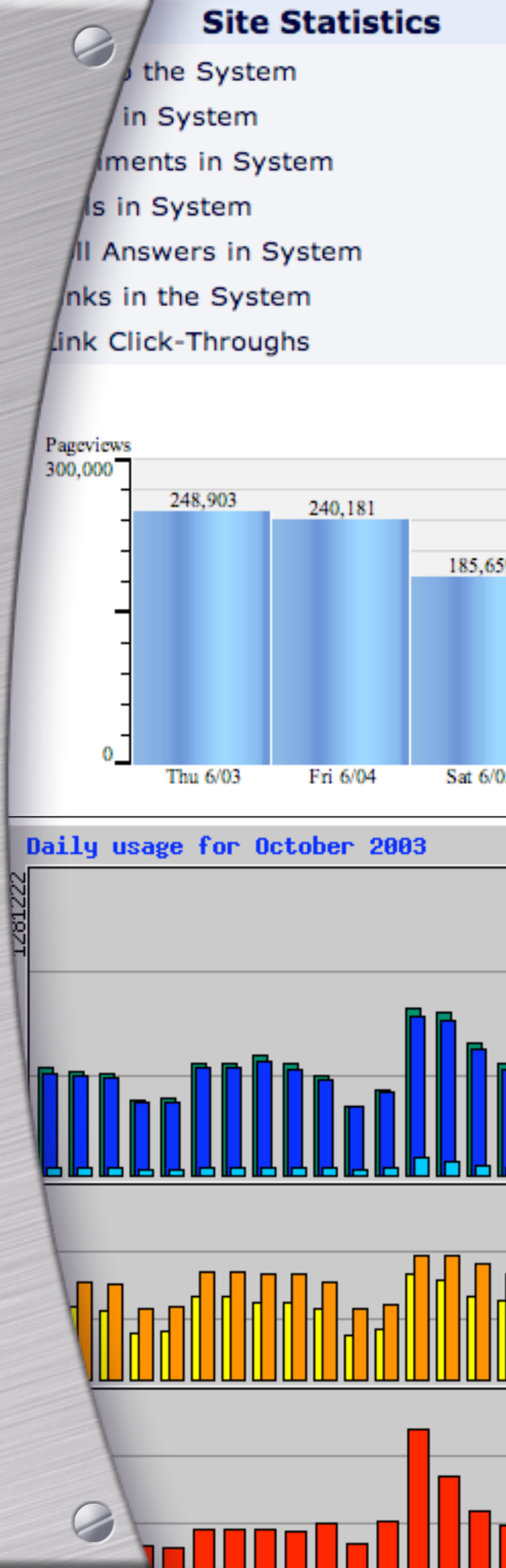



# SITE HISTORY

- Local FileMaker database
- Web-accessible database
- The public website
  - Launched November 4, 2000
  - 97 hints published in 2000
  - 6,500-ish hints as of today
- All work done locally on OS X first

# SITE INFO

- Powered by Unix software
  - Geeklog runs the main site
  - vBulletin runs the forum site
  - phpMyAdmin for database work
- 270,000+ daily page views
- 70,000,000+ database queries in 4 years
- Nearly 50,000 registered users



# FIVE KEY OS X 'HITS'

# 5 OS X 'HITS'

## #1

# Multi-Tasking

**Walk and chew gum at the same time...**

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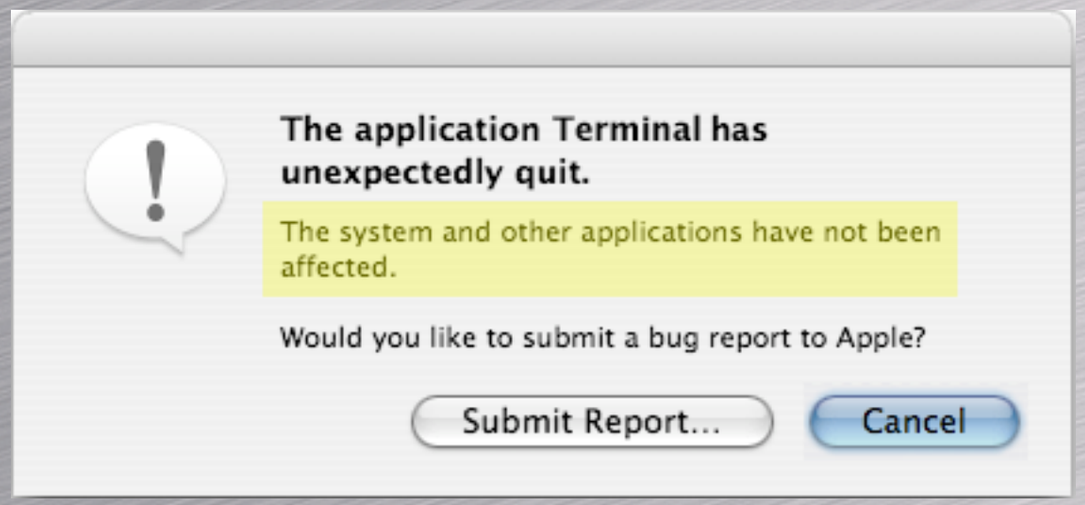
# 5 OS X 'HITS'

## #2

# Protected Memory

**System no longer fall down go boom!**




Mac OS X

# 5 OS X 'HITS'

## #3

## Exposé

**Open window management made easy**

# 5 OS X 'HITS'

## #4

# Integrated PDF Support

**Save anything, anytime, anywhere ... perfectly!**

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# 5 OS X 'HITS'

## #5

## Unix at the Core

**Open source software, painless Unix learning, etc.**

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# FIVE KEY OS X 'MISSES'

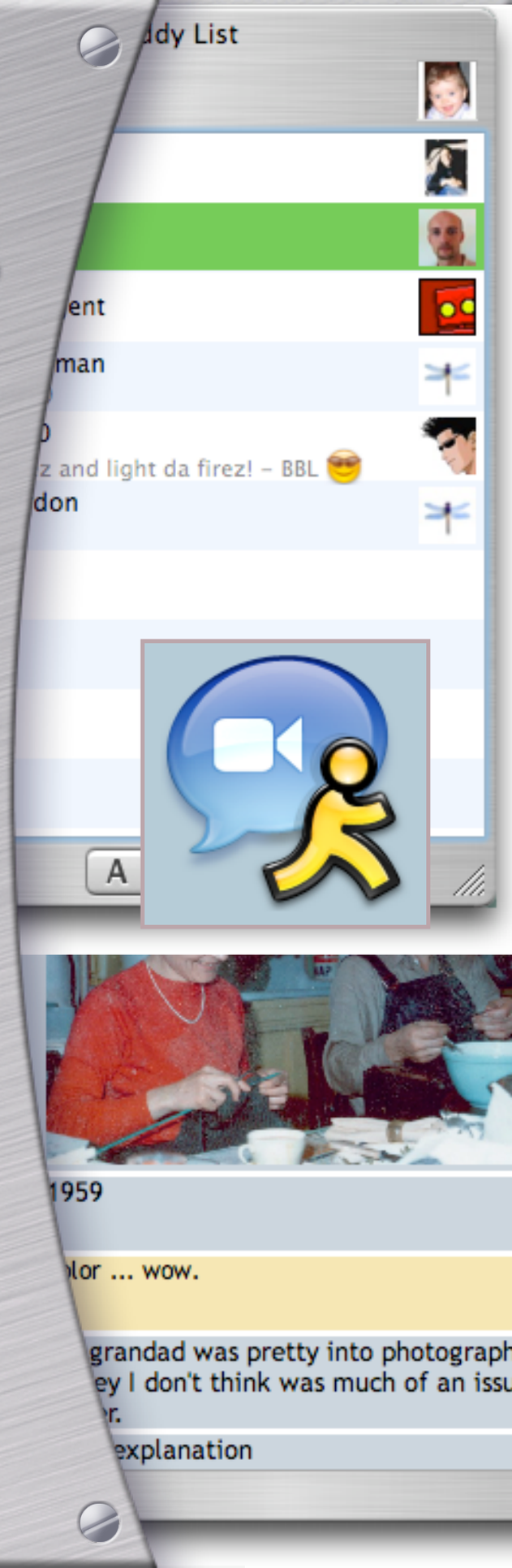
# NOT SO COOL...

- Spinning Rainbows in the Finder
- Messed-up Permissions
- Carbon vs. Cocoa Inconsistency
- Apps that break outside of /Applications
- No way to reverse system updates

# 5 COOL  APPS

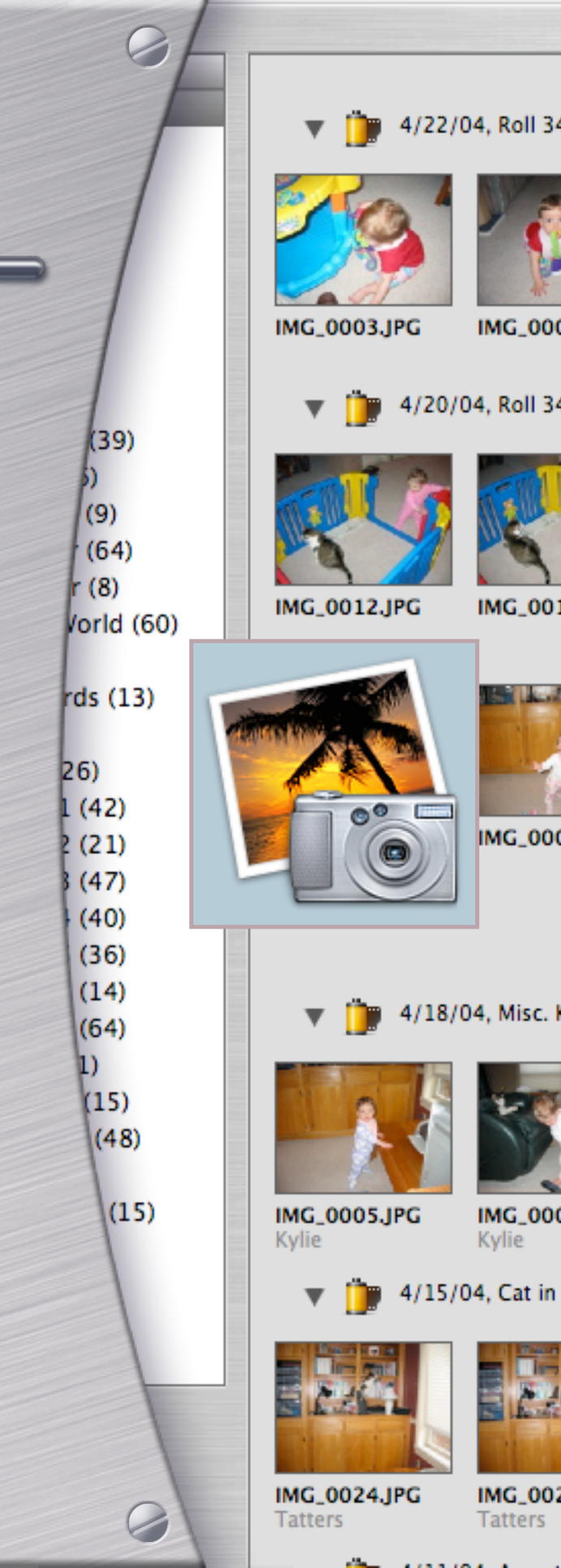
# 5 COOL  APPS

- **iChat A/V**
  - Video and audio chat revolution
    - So simple, anyone can use it
    - Grandma sees our daughter daily
  - Realtime answers to questions
    - macosxhints book
    - Macworld articles



# 5 COOL  APPS

- **iPhoto**
  - Simplifies the complex
  - The end of the shoebox
  - Turns anyone into a publisher
  - Encourages more photo taking



# 5 COOL  APPS

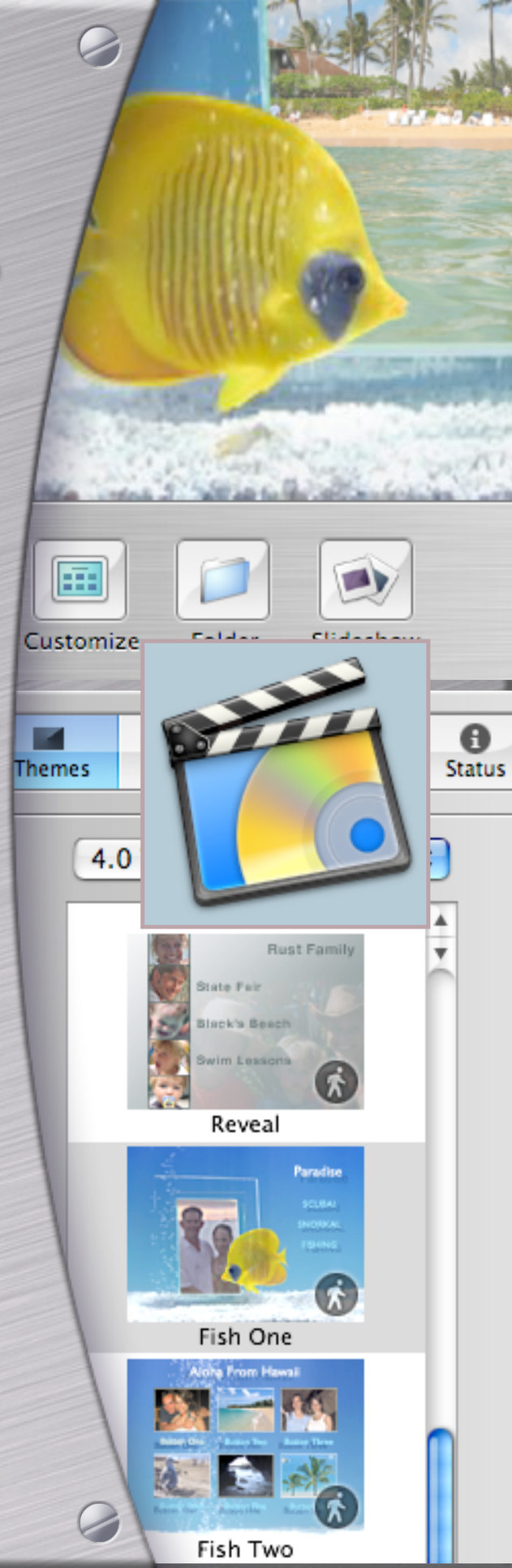
- **iTunes**
  - Simplifies the complex
  - The end of the CD?
  - Makes music more accessible
  - Music Store leads in usability
  - Seamless integration with iPod, other iApps

# 5 COOL  APPS

- **iMovie**
  - Still the leader in ease-of-use
  - From tape to final movie in minutes
  - Simple yet relatively powerful

# 5 COOL  APPS

- iDVD
  - Still the leader in ease-of-use
  - From tape to final movie in minutes
  - Simple yet relatively powerful

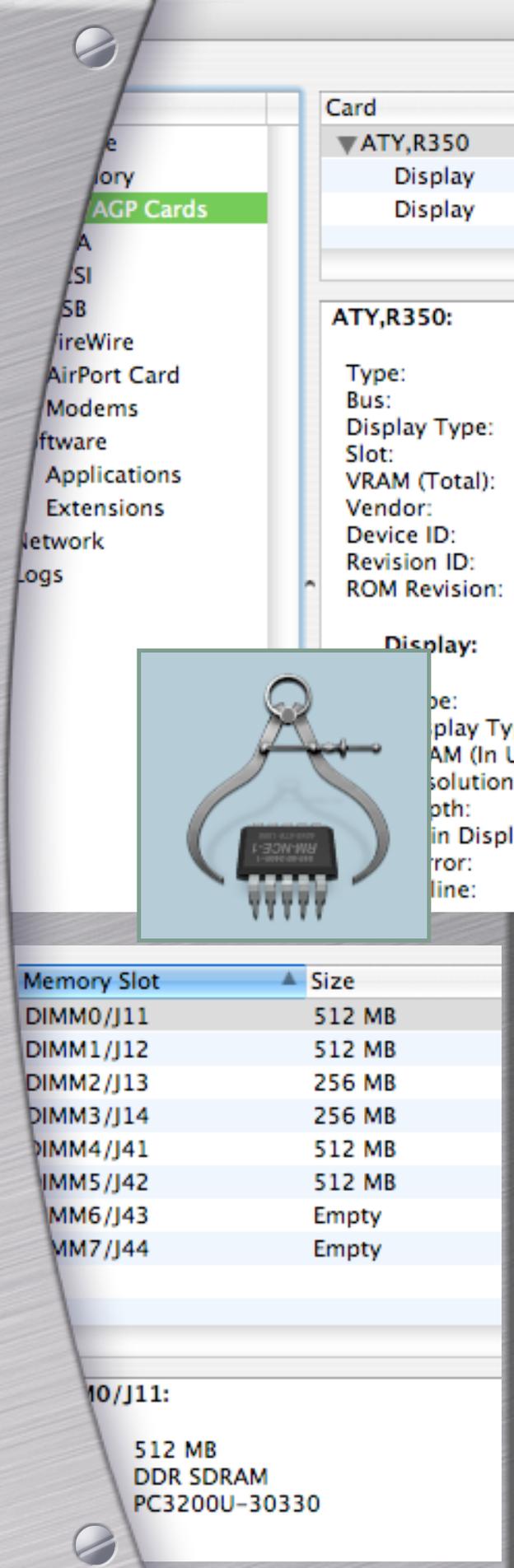


# FIVE USEFUL

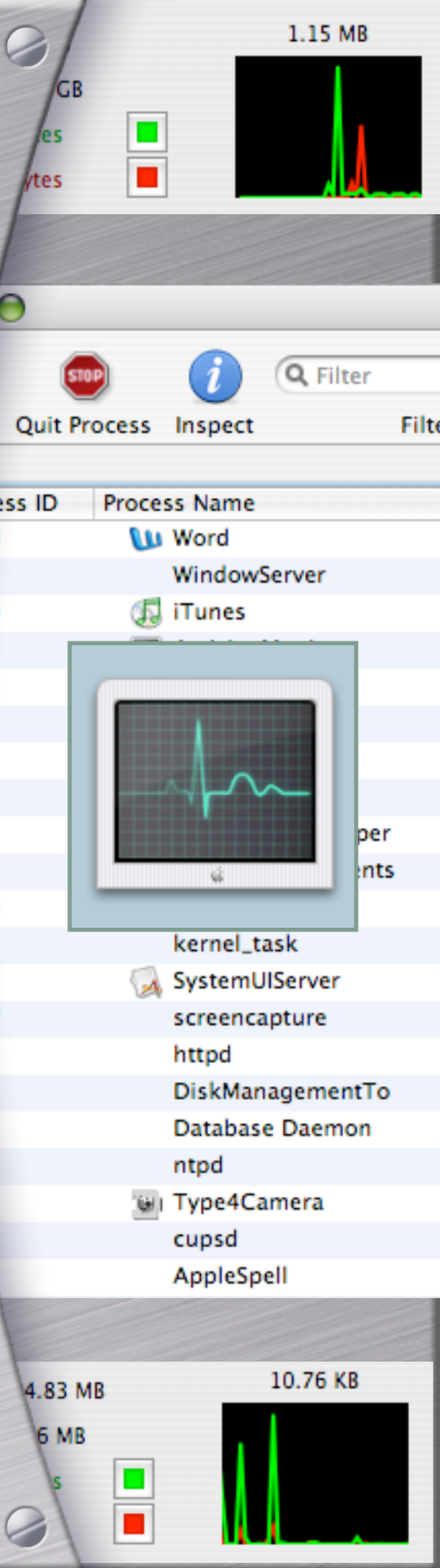
# UTILS

# 5 USEFUL  UTILS

- **System Profiler**
  - Know your system
  - Verify vendor/driver info
  - View installed apps and frameworks
  - Key troubleshooting tool



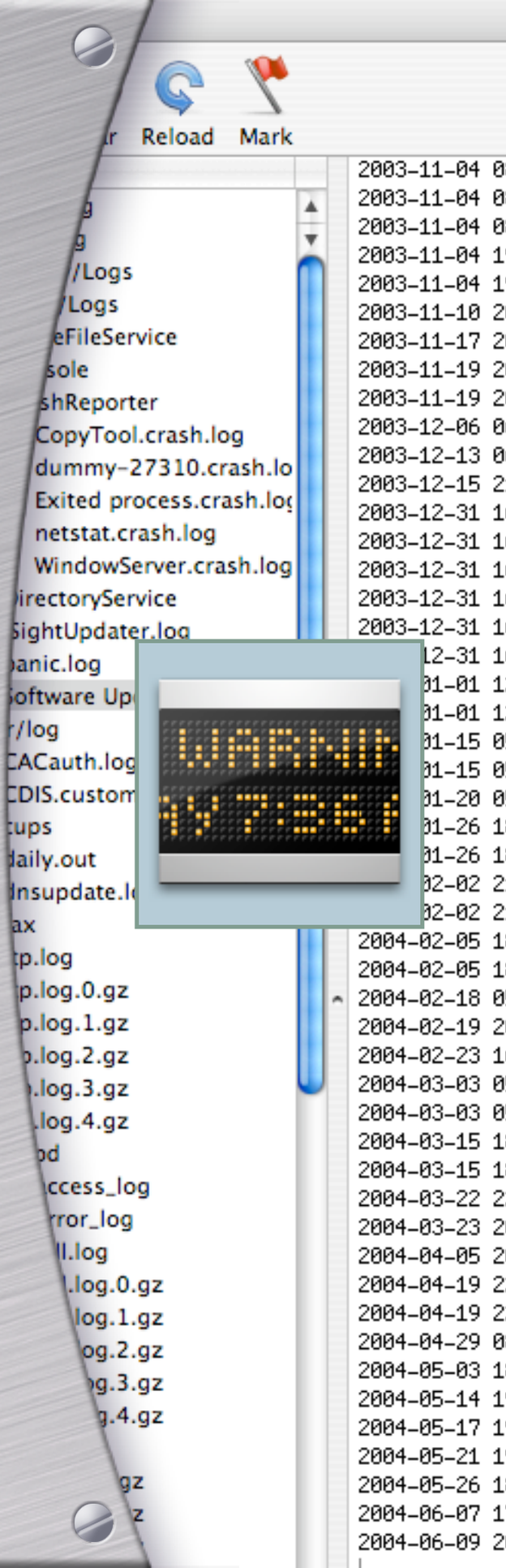
# 5 USEFUL  UTILS




- **Activity Monitor**
- Performance monitoring tool
- Check system resource utilization
- Key troubleshooting tool

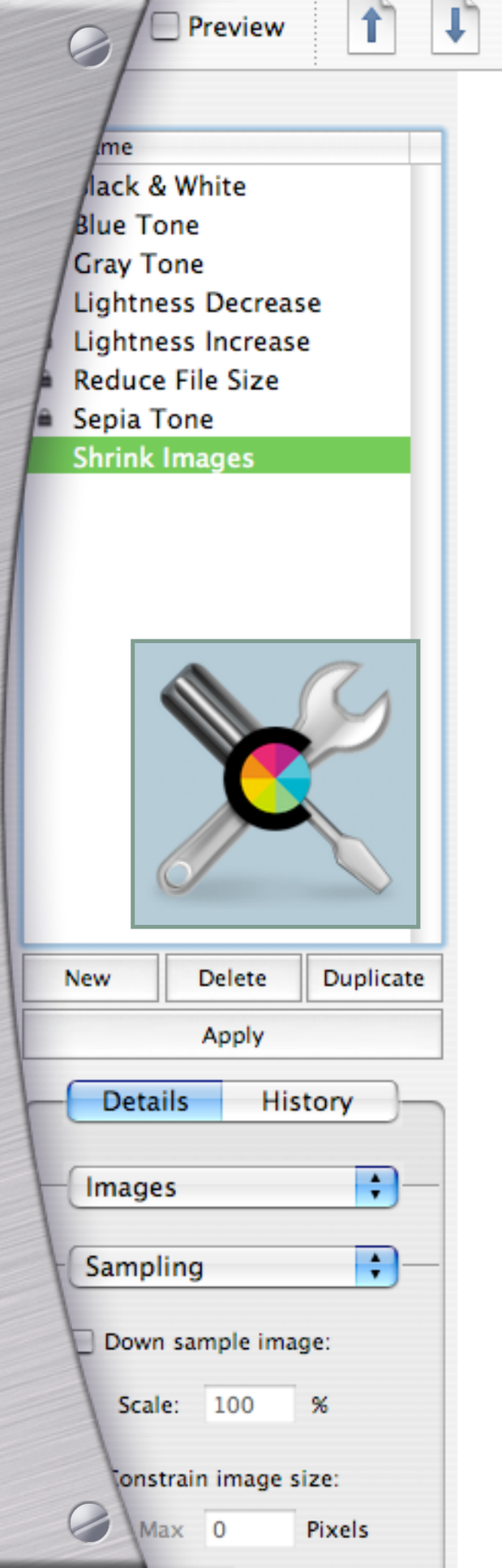
# 5 USEFUL  UTILS

- **Console**
  - See crash-related logs
  - Insight into system performance
  - Examine web and FTP logs
  - View a log of system updates
  - Key troubleshooting tool



# 5 USEFUL  UTILS

- **ColorSync Utility**
  - Apply color filters to PDFs
  - Convert PDFs to sepia tones
  - Modify lightness/darkness of PDFs
  - Compress images to reduce PDF sizes
    - 35MB -> 8MB
    - 5.6MB -> 2.4MB



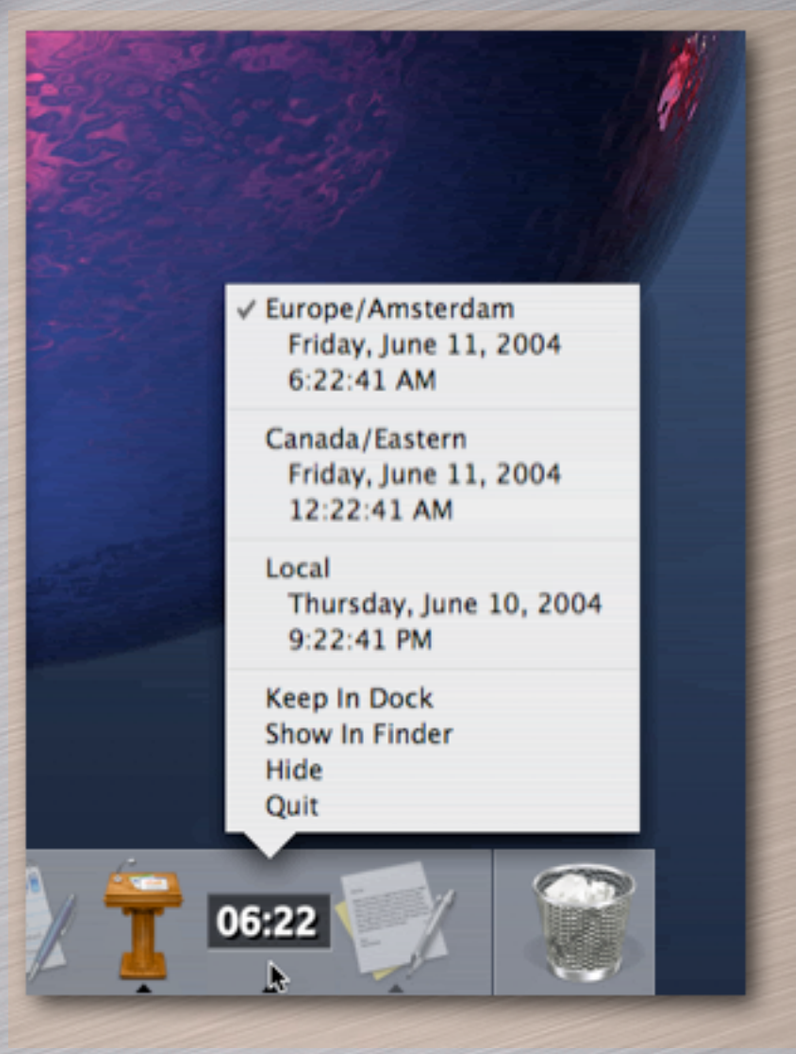
# 5 USEFUL  UTILS

- **Terminal**
  - Access hidden preferences
  - Install and use free Unix software
  - Do some things faster than via GUI
  - Key troubleshooting tool
  - Last-chance locked machine recovery

# 10 ADD-ONS

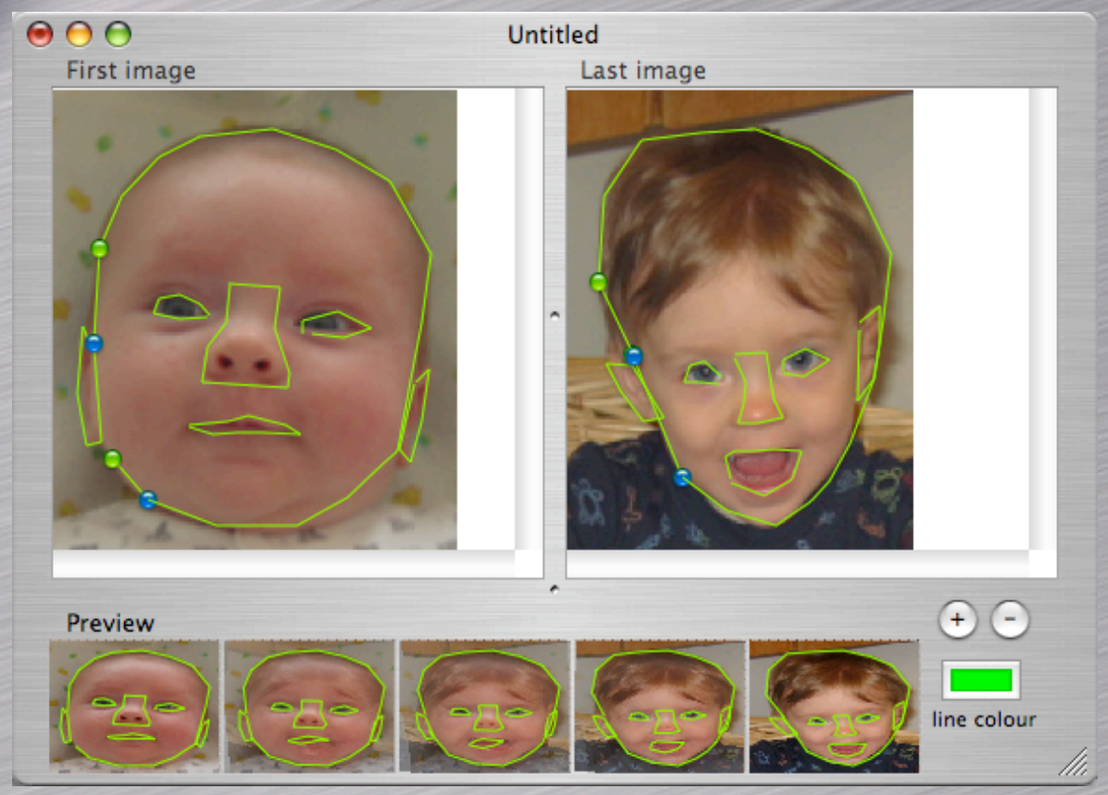
# 10 KEY ADD-ONS

- OtherTime
  www.pixture.com/macosx.php
  - Have friends in many places?
  - Global time with a click in the dock
  - No more accidental late-night video chats!



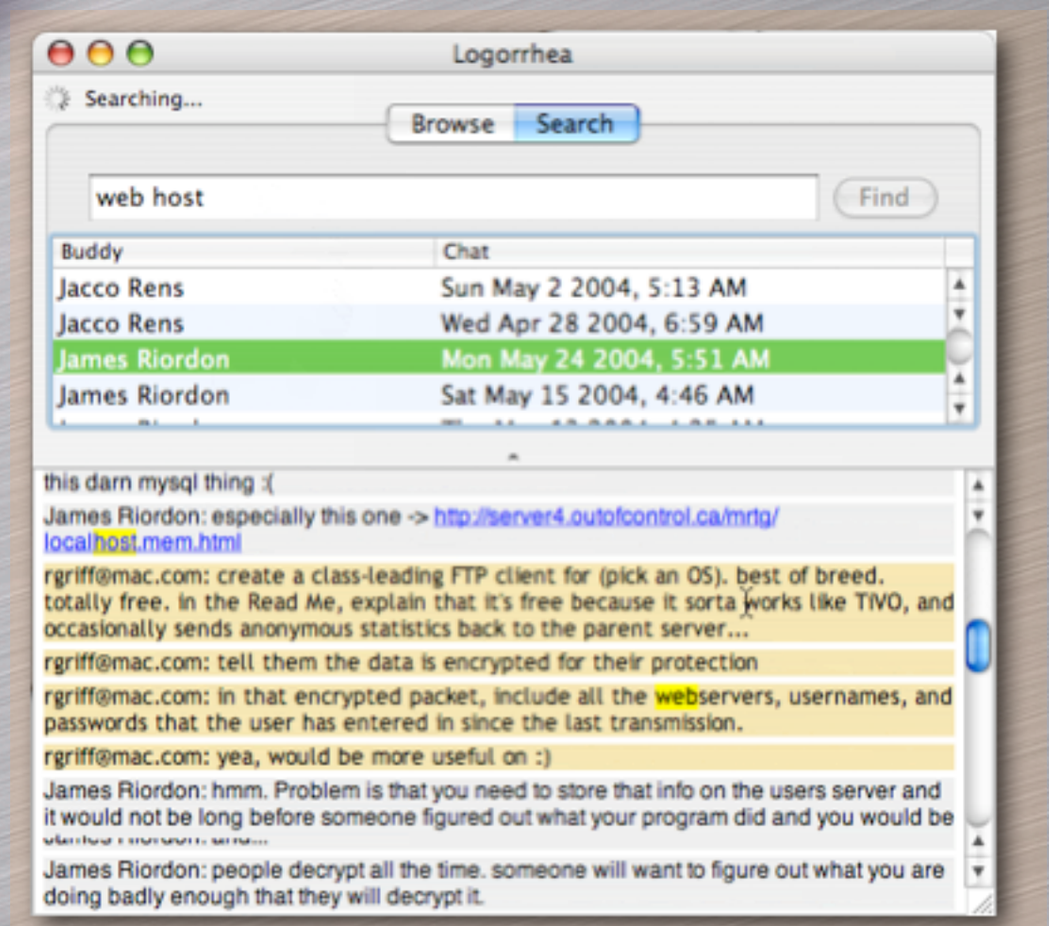
# 10 KEY ADD-ONS

- MorphX
  www.norrkross.com/software/morphx/MorphX.php
  - Fun with images
  - Watch your child grow
  - Turn a dog into a cat
  - Save a movie when you're done!



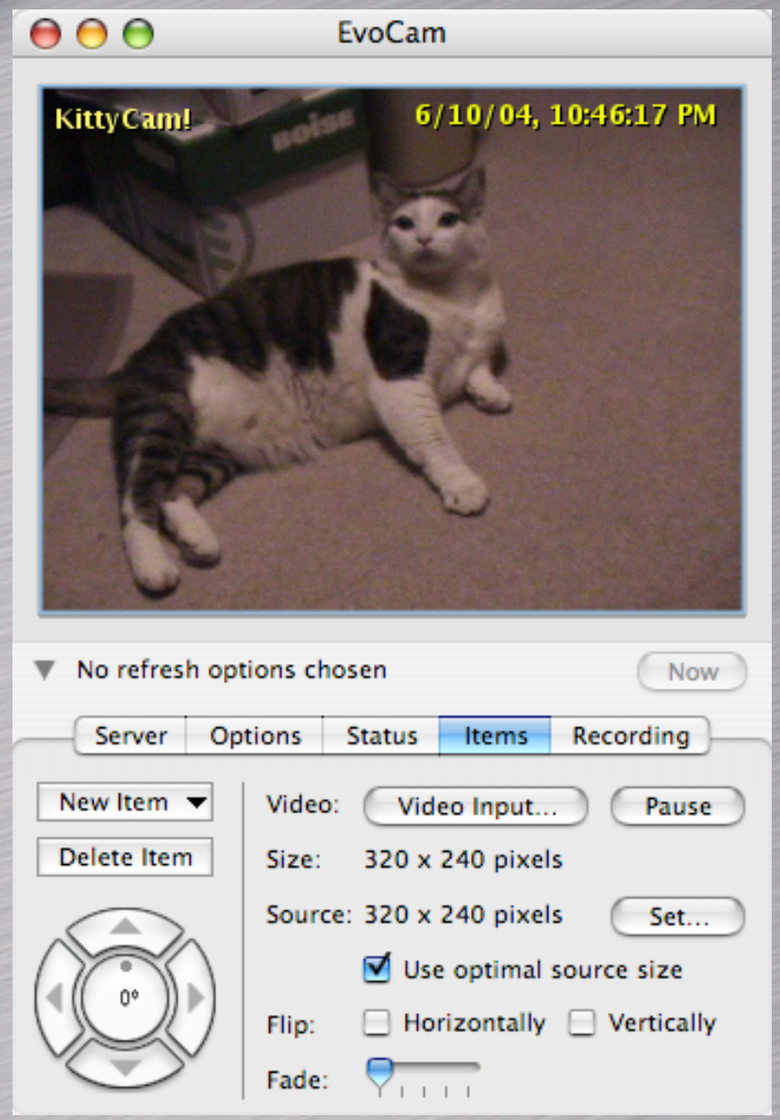
# 10 KEY ADD-ONS

- Logorrhea
  www.spiny.com/logorrhea
  - Bad name, good program
  - Manage chat logs easily
  - Recall a key word, find the chat
  - Turns megabytes of data into usable information



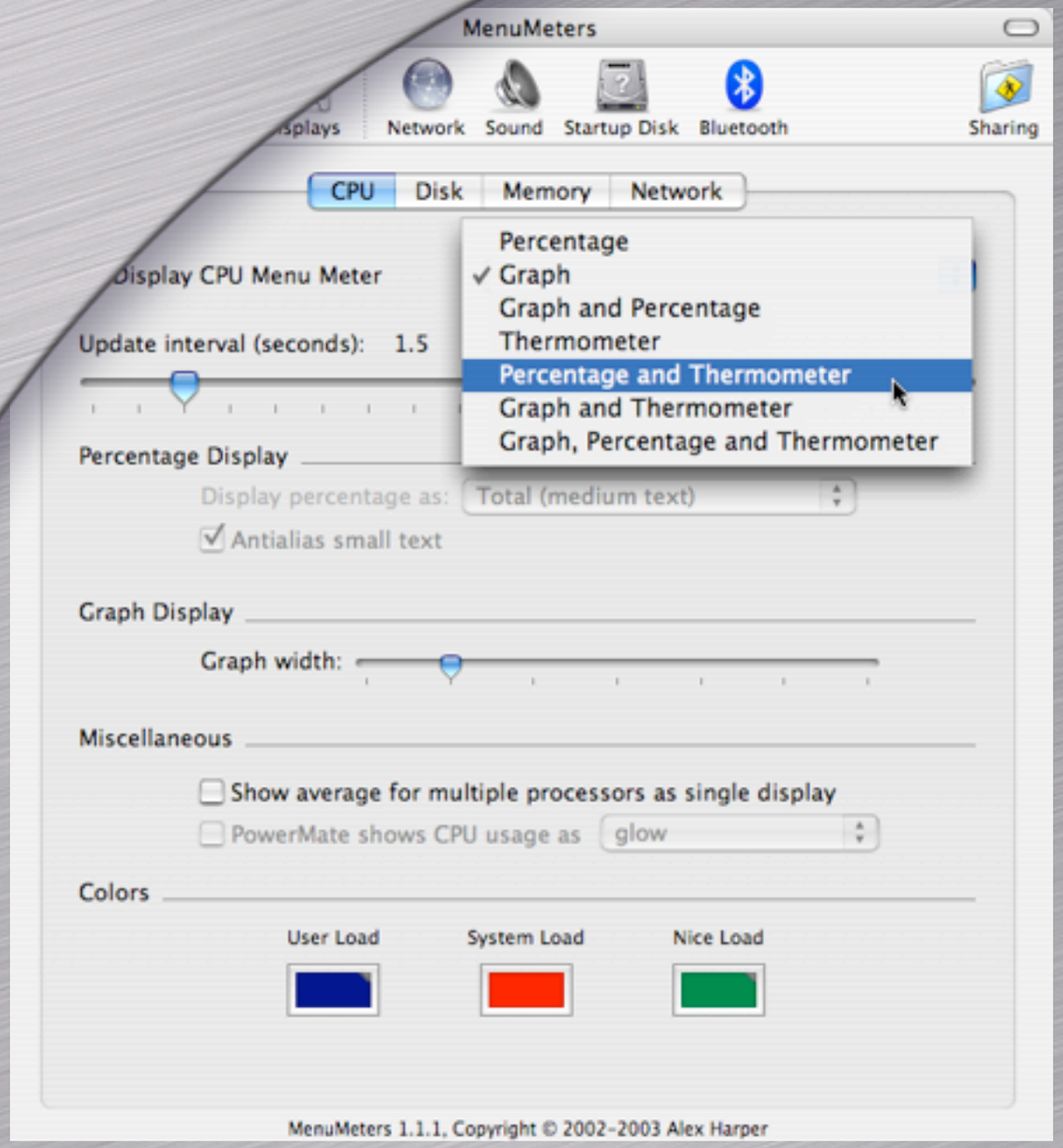
# 10 KEY ADD-ONS

- EvoCam
  www.evological.com/evocam
  - Simple to use webcam application
  - Built-in web server
  - Capture timelapse movies, stills, live video
  - Add graphical overlays



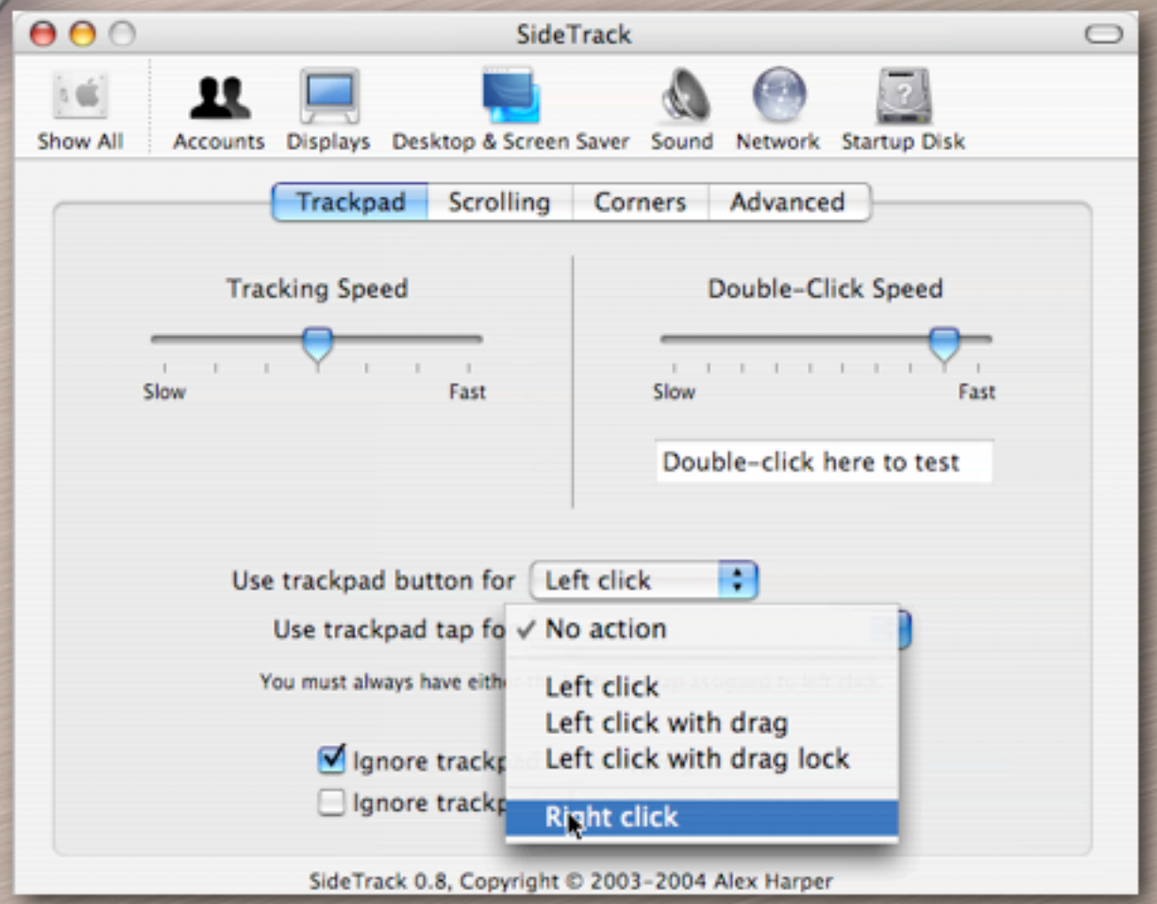
# 10 KEY ADD-ONS

- MenuMeters
  www.ragingmenace.com/software/menumeters
  - Menubar-based system tool
  - Track CPU, disk, RAM and network activity
  - Very customizable



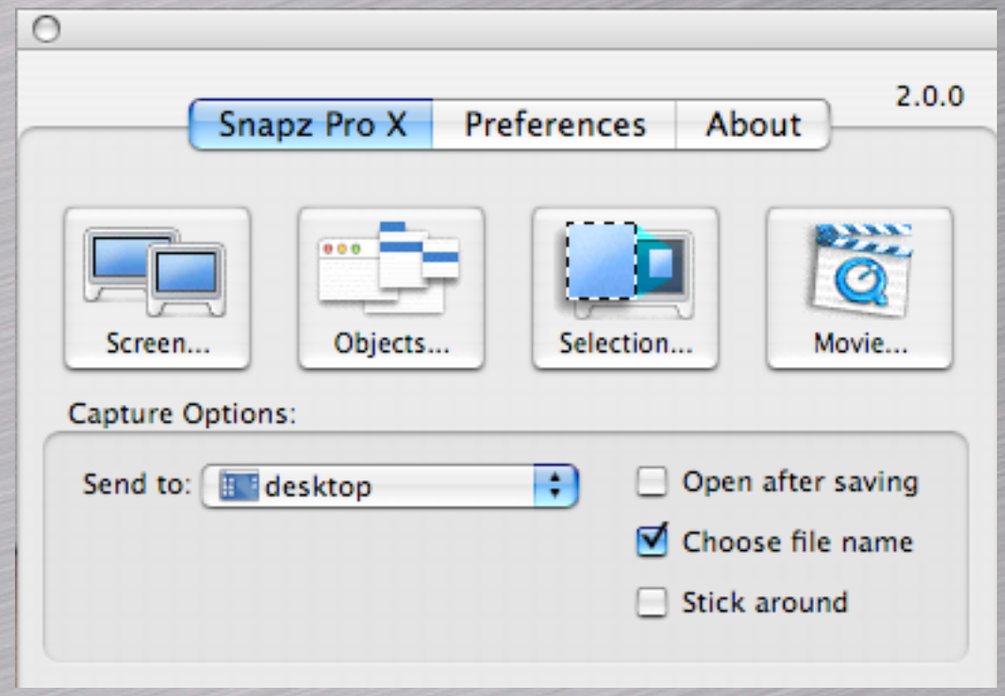
# 10 KEY ADD-ONS

- SideTrack
  www.ragingmenace.com/software/sidetrack/
  - For laptop users only
  - Create a scrolling trackpad
  - Emulate multi-button mice
  - Control scrolling and trackpad speed



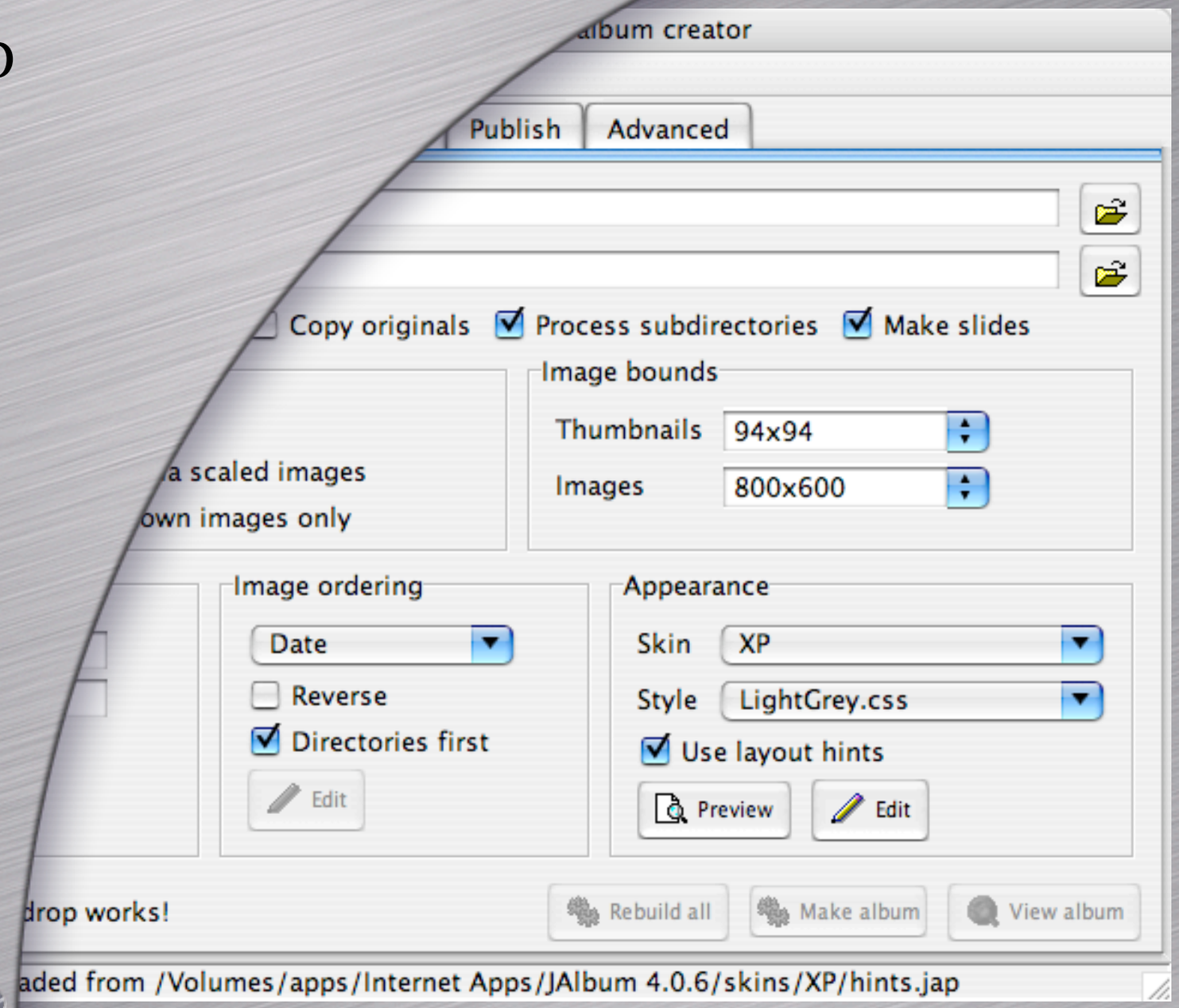
# 10 KEY ADD-ONS

- SnapzPro X
  www.ambrosiasw.com/utilities/snapzprox
  - Capture creens, objects, selections
  - Full-screen movie captures
  - Add drop-shadows, change color mode, and watermarks
  - Save images in most any format



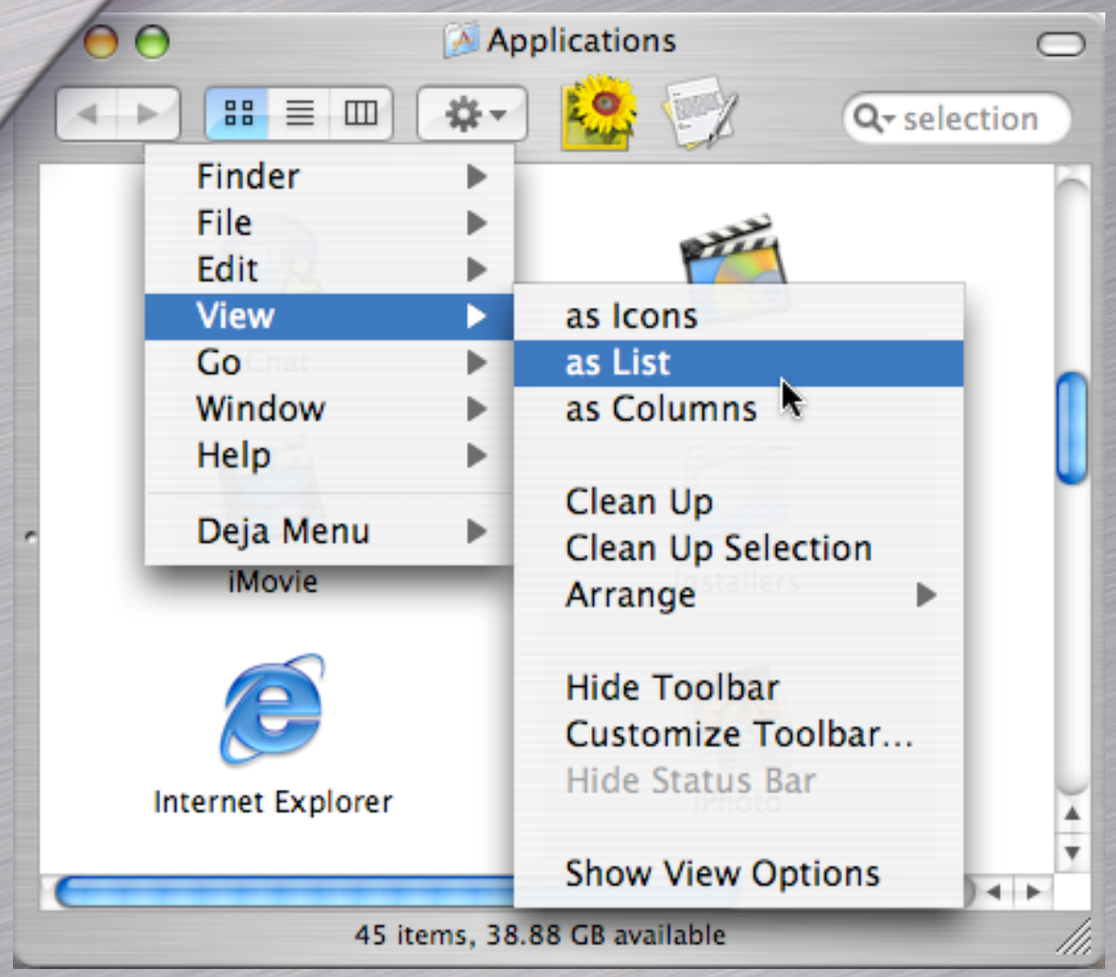
# 10 KEY ADD-ONS

- jAlbum
  www.jalbum.net
  - Very powerful web album creator
  - Many pre-defined layouts
  - Create custom layouts via CSS
  - Automatic upload via FTP



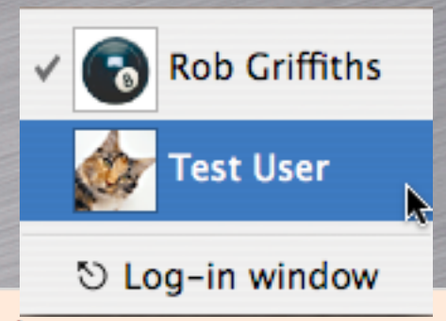
# 10 KEY ADD-ONS

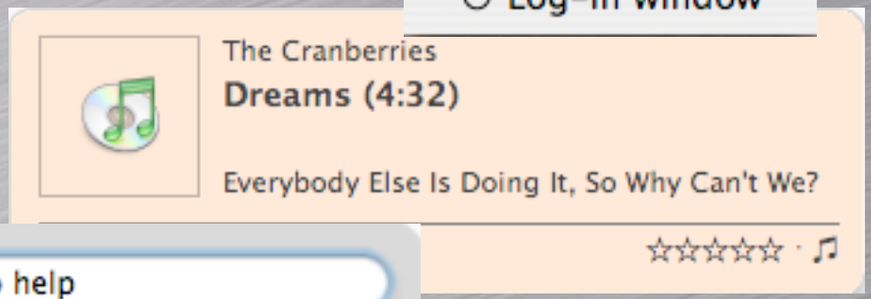
- dejaMenu
  homepage.mac.com/khsu/DejaMenu/DejaMenu.html
  - Hot key activated application menus
  - Great with two monitors
  - Assign the hot key to a spare mouse button for super fast access!

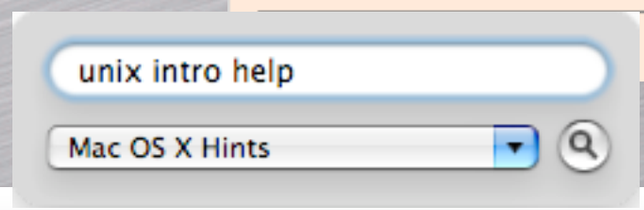


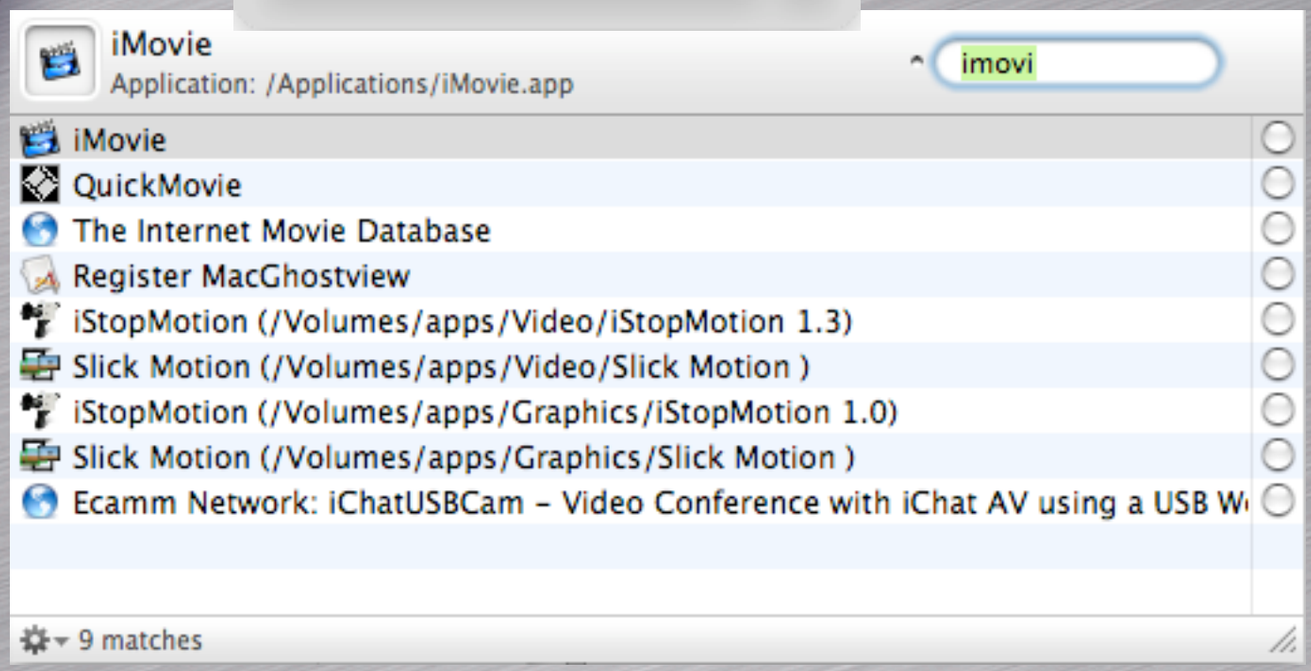
# 10 KEY ADD-ONS

- Butler
  www.petermaurer.de
  - The Ultimate Power Tool
  - ‘Type it’ launcher
  - Customized pop-up menus
  - Fast user switching shortcuts
  - Multi-clipboards
  - iTunes Controller



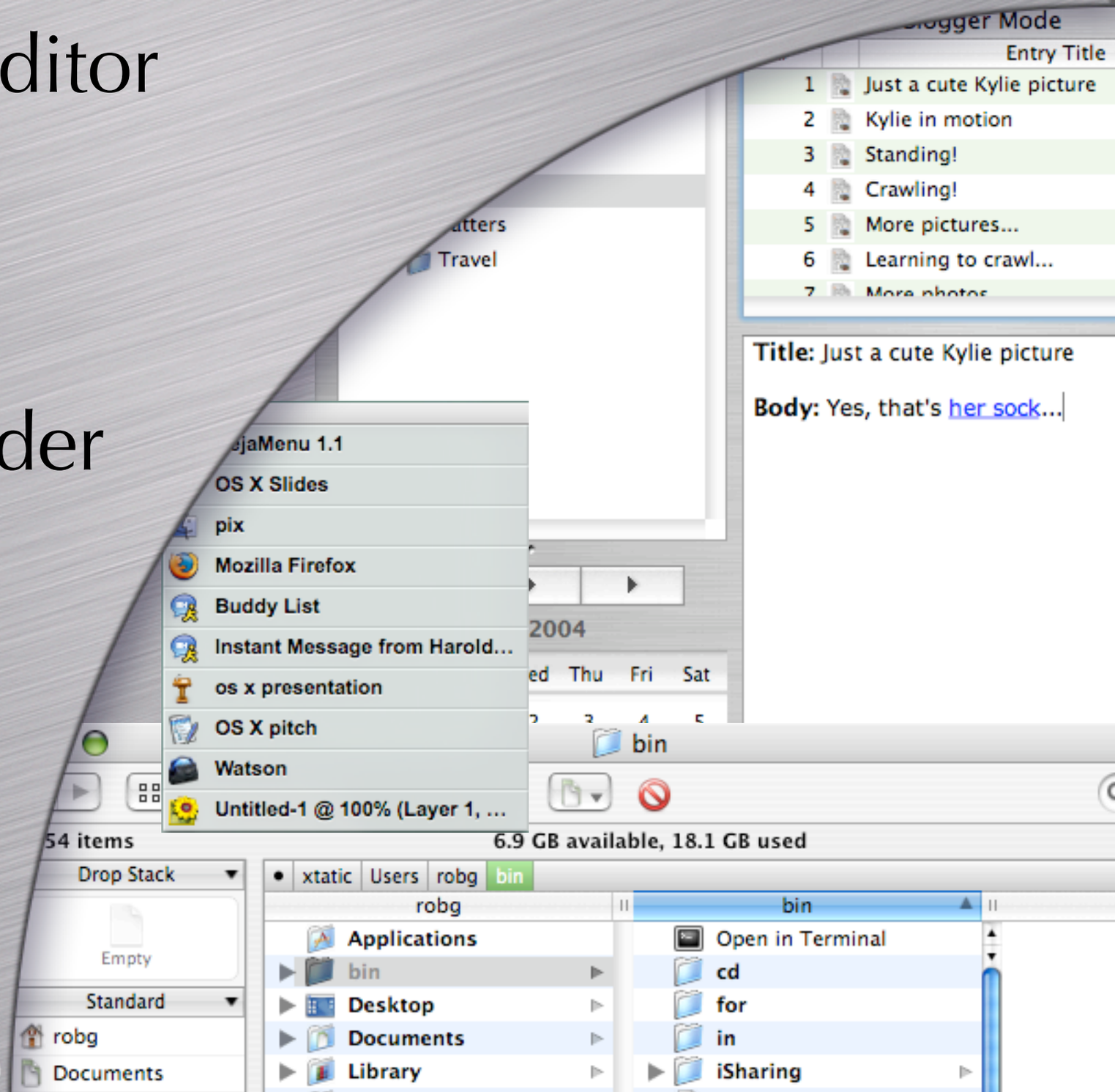



# 10+ COOL ADD-ONS

- **jEdit** - Java text editor
- **iBlog** - Weblogs made easy
- **Path Finder** - Finder replacement
- **DragThing** - Launcher app
- Lots out there...



# 10 HELP ME! TIPS

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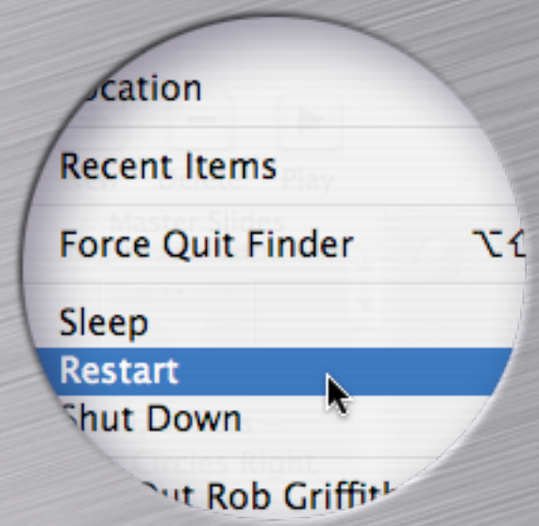


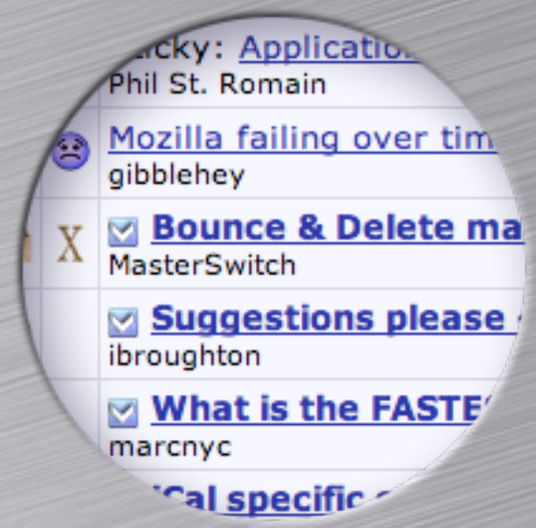

## #1: Restart!

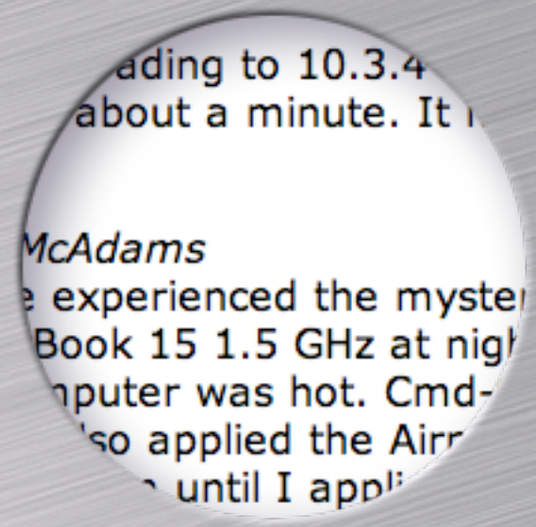
- Don't just logout and login
- Clears many caches
- Restarts all system services
- Hold Shift to disable login items
- The easiest thing to try...

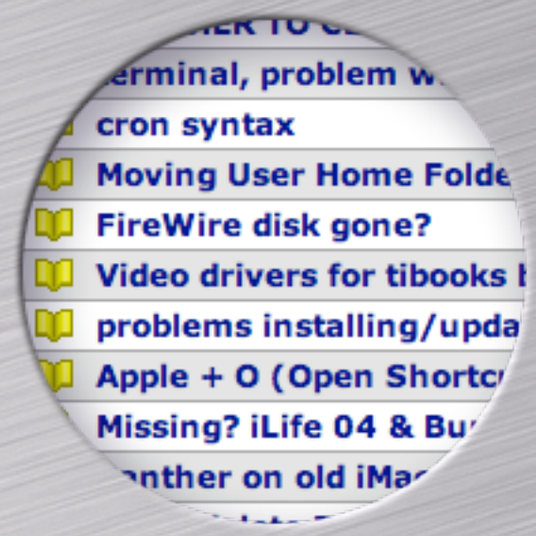
# 10 HELP ME! TIPS

## #2: Research

- forums.macosxhints.com
  - forums.macosxhints.com/showthread.php?t=13846
- www.macosxhints.com
  - www.macosxhints.com/article.php?story=20040112054739 37
- www.macintouch.com
  - Reader Reports
- www.macfixitforums.com
- kbase.info.apple.com



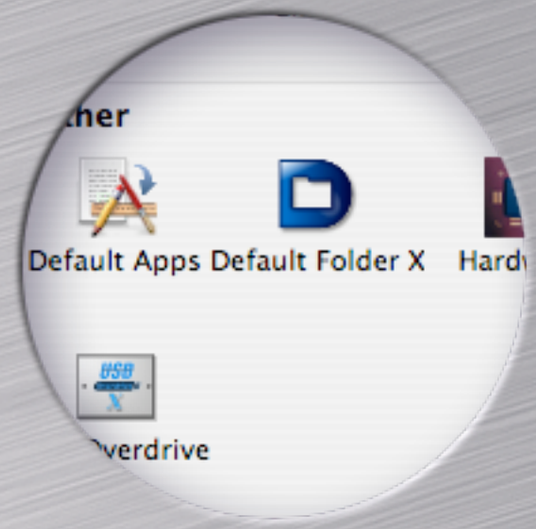



# 10 HELP ME! TIPS

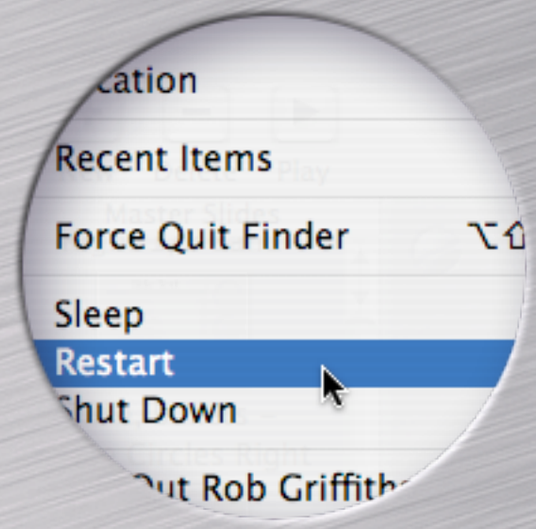
## #3: Check boot disk drive space

- Low space can cause problems
- Free up drive space on boot volume




## #4: Disable added pref panes

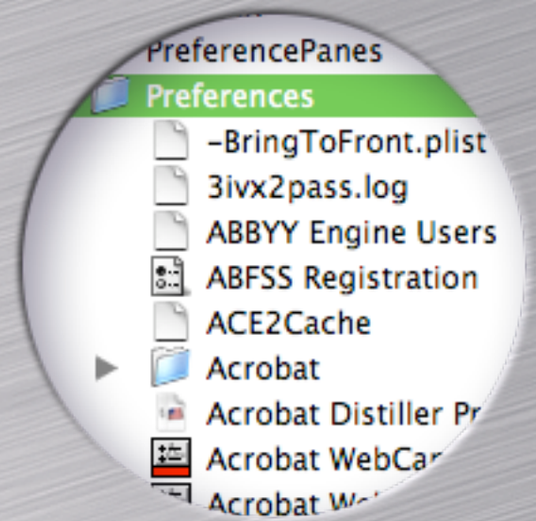
- Unsanity's APE, tablet drivers, etc.
- Restart after removing panes

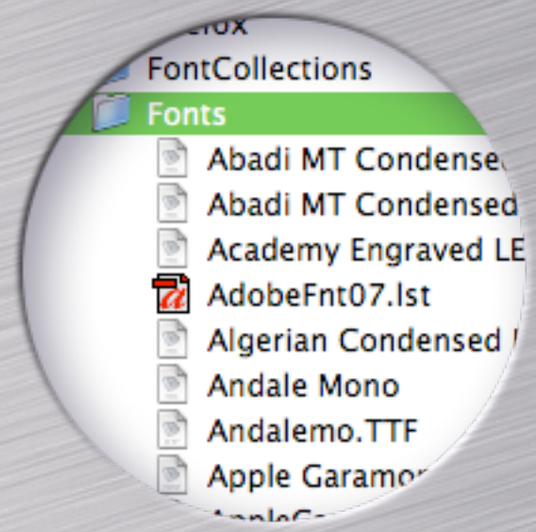


# 10 HELP ME! TIPS

## #5: Create a New User

- Login as new user
- Leave new user setup ‘fresh’
- Isolates problem as system-level or user-level
- User-level issues are nearly always preference- or font-related
  - Fonts: /Library and ~/Library



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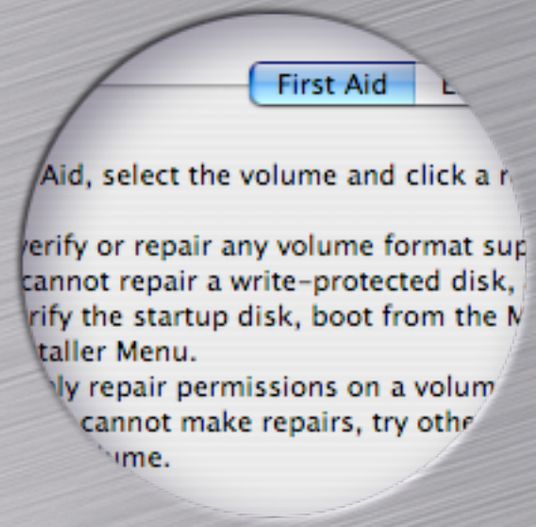
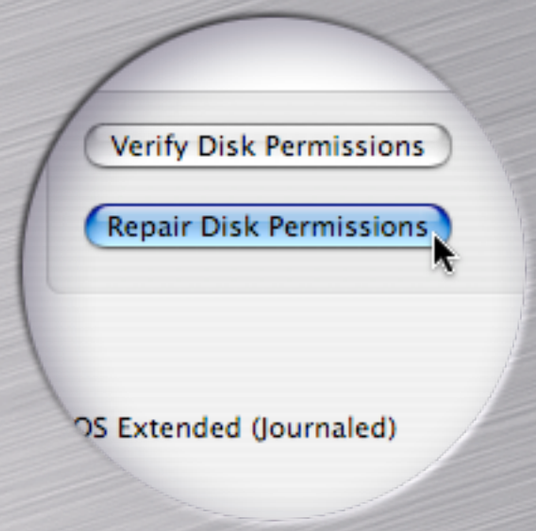
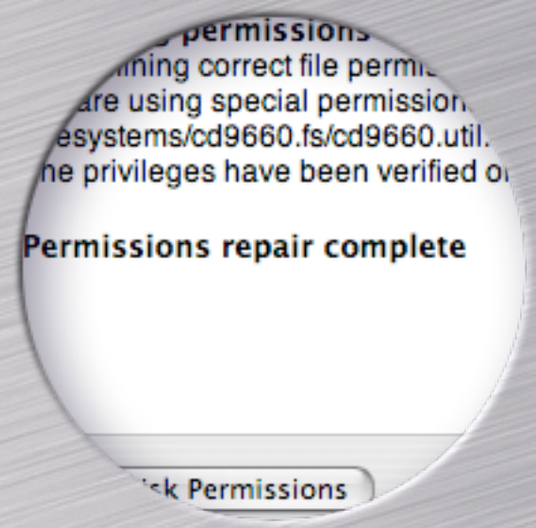



## #6: Repair Permissions

- Incorrect permissions can cause subtle problems
- Certain installers can break permissions
- Good idea to run after any major software installation

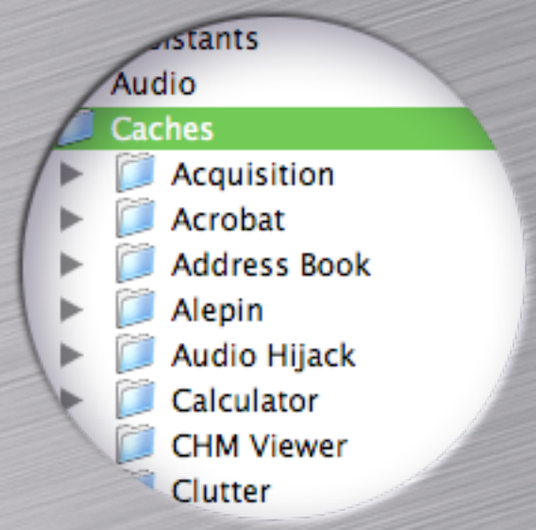


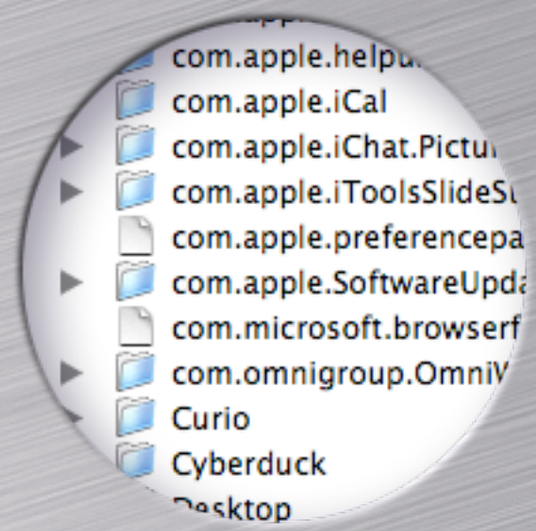



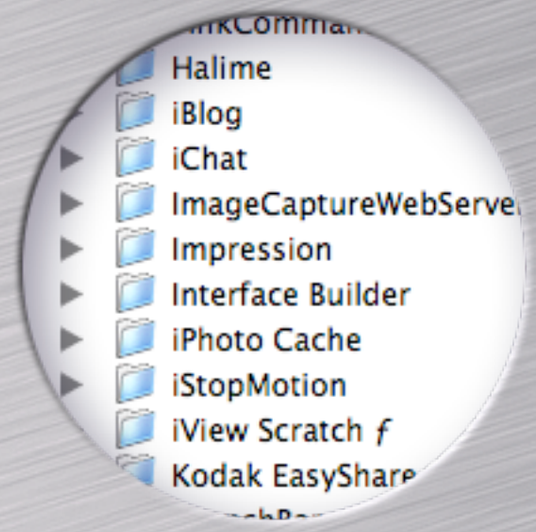
# 10 HELP ME! TIPS

## #7: Clear Caches and Restart

- OS X caches data in multiple places
- Empty via third-party cleaner:
  - Cocktail
    - www.macosxcocktail.com
  - Panther Cache Cleaner
    - www.northernsoftworks.com/pantherchecleaner.html



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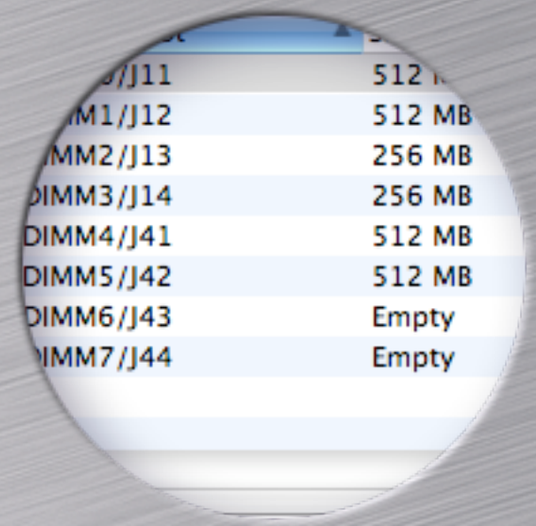
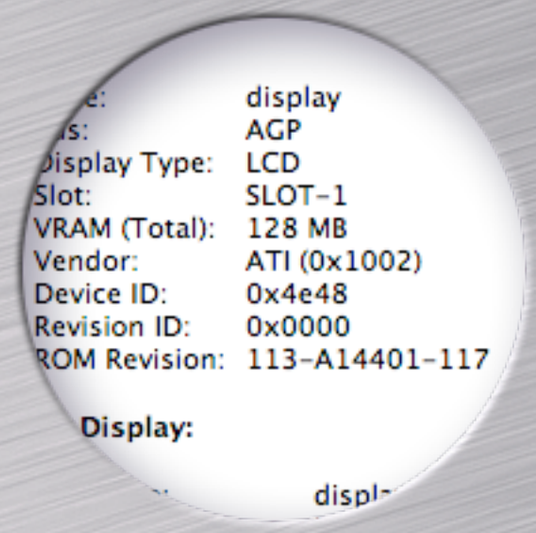



## #8: Remove and Test Hardware

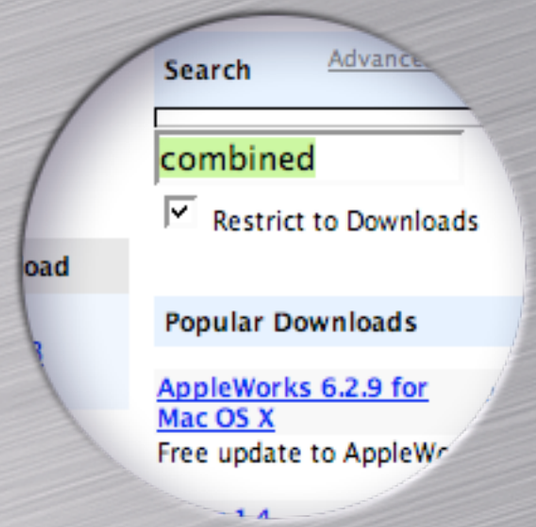
- RAM that works in OS 9 may cause trouble in OS X
- USB hubs, tablets, third-party mice
- Reboot with machine, keyboard, mouse only
- Use Apple Hardware Test program
  - On Install/Restore CD/DVD



# 10 HELP ME! TIPS

## #9: Reinstall latest OS X update

- Use ‘Combined Updater’ from Apple
- www.apple.com/support/downloads
  - Search on ‘combined’



# 10 HELP ME! TIPS

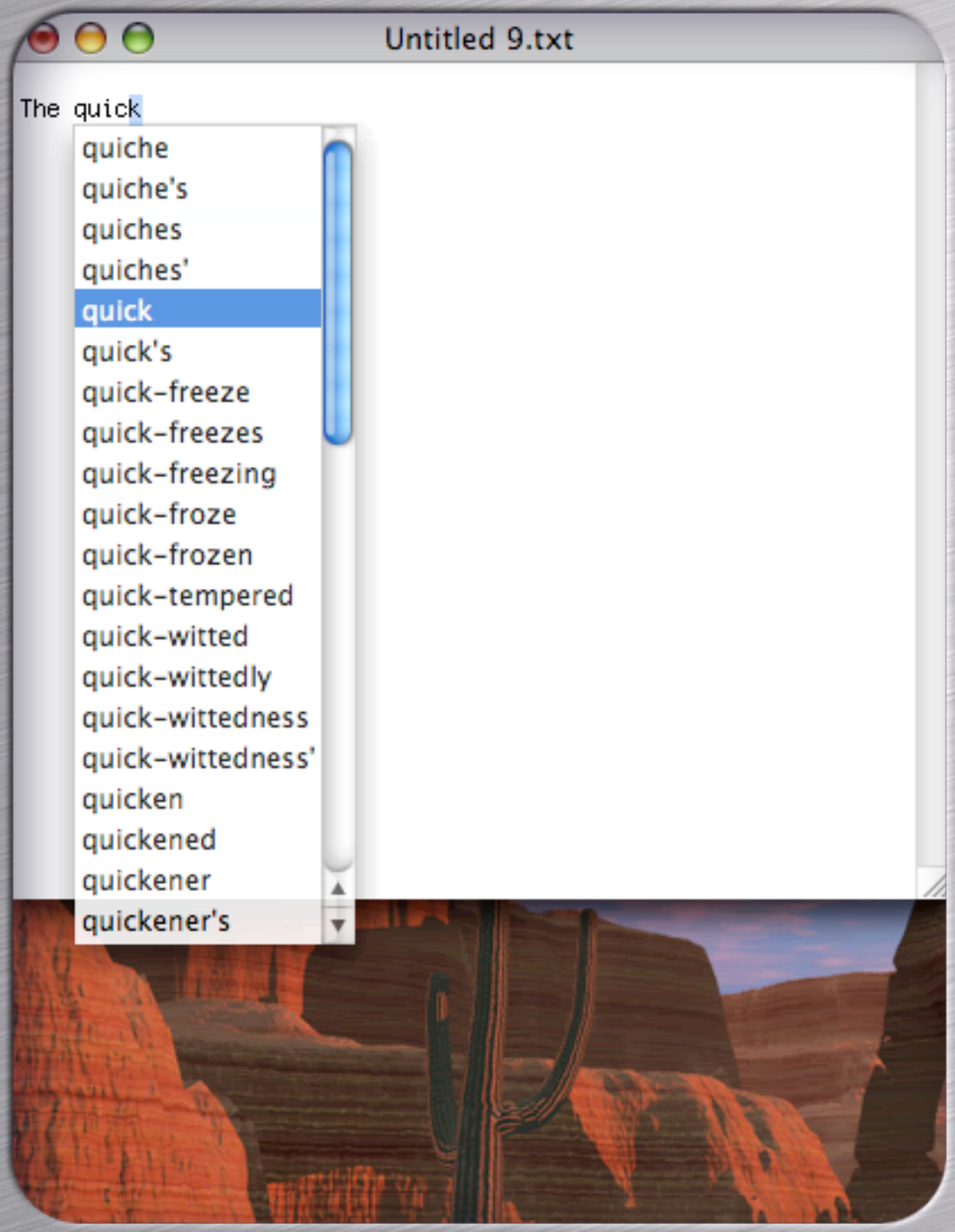
## #10: Reinstall OS X

- Select Archive and Install
- Select retain user info
  - Do **not** copy over old preferences!
- Migrate old to new very carefully
  - One app at a time...

**You do have a good backup, right??**

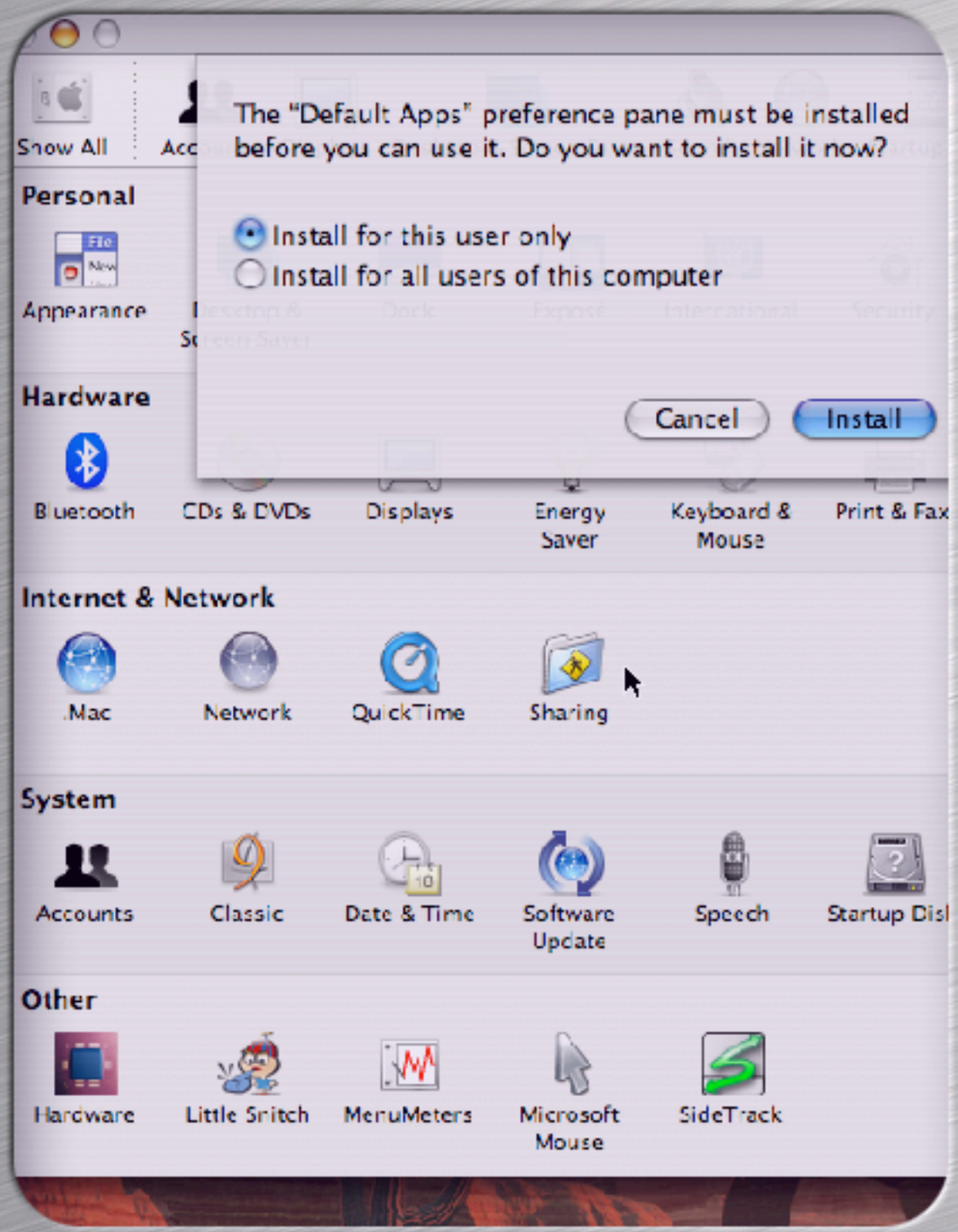
# 10 USEFUL HINTS

# WORD COMPLETION



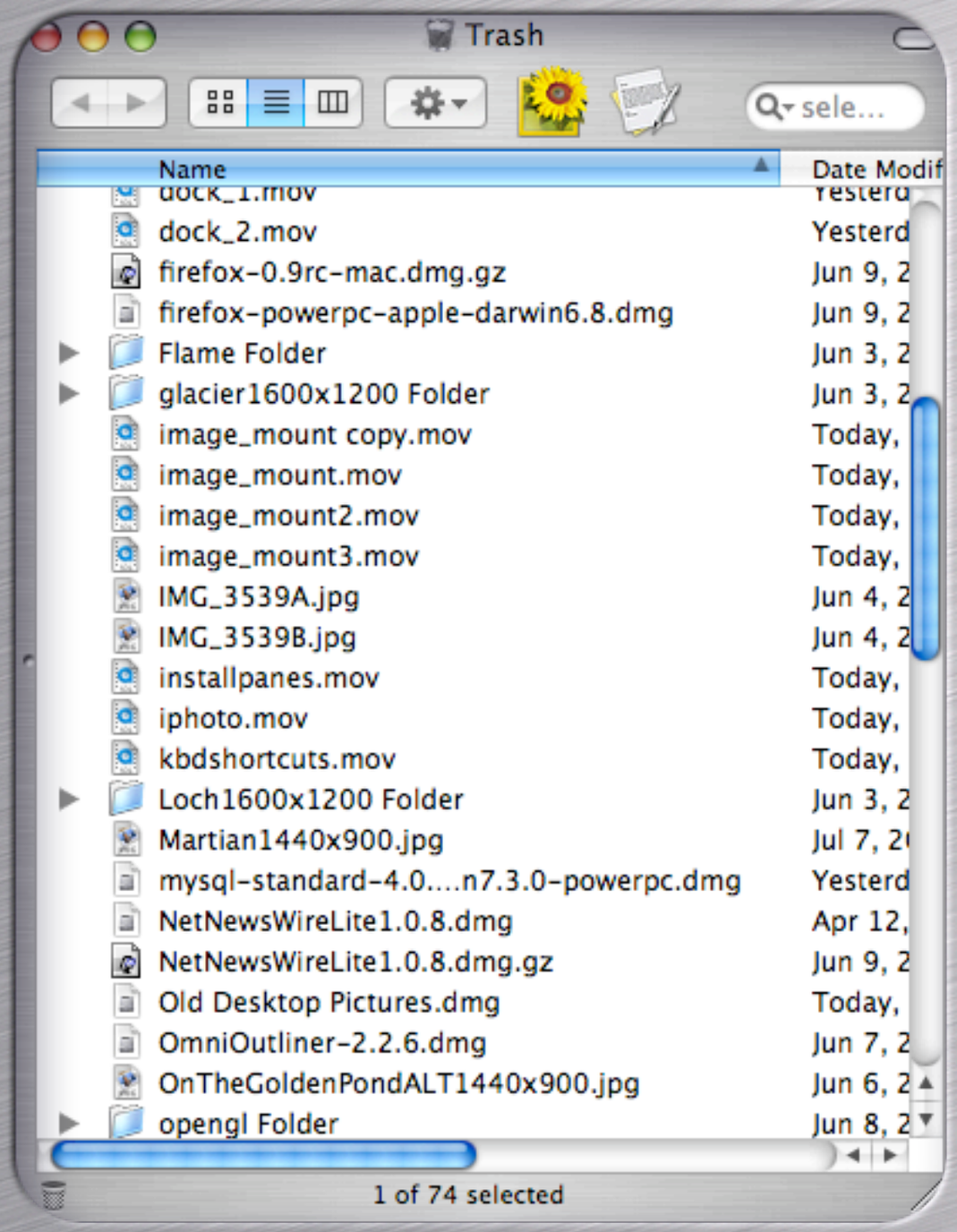

- Hit Option-Escape after typing a bit of a word
- Only works in Cocoa apps such as TextEdit, Mail, OmniWeb...

# PREF PANE INSTALLS



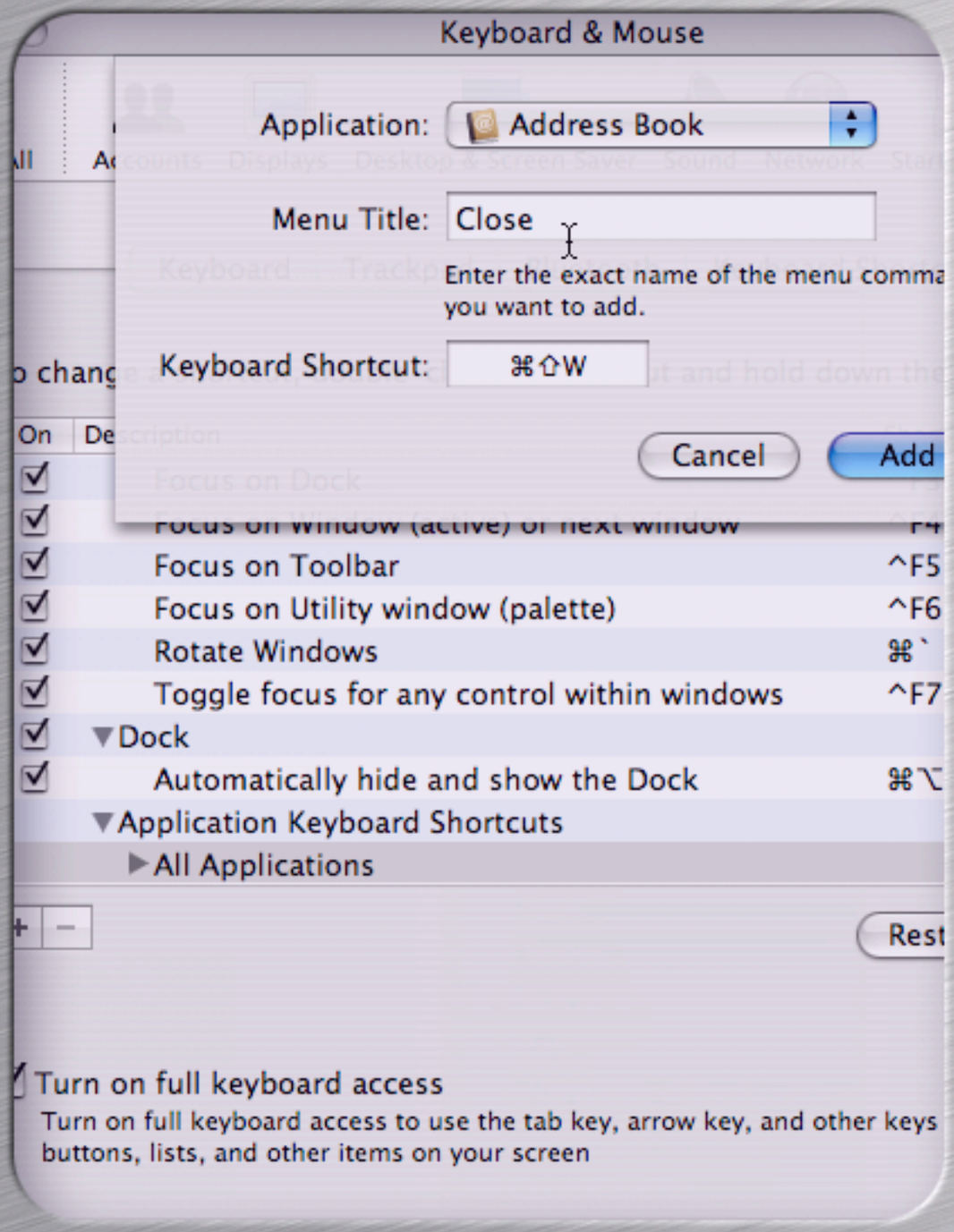

- Double-click to add
- Control-click to remove
- Works for most simple preference panels

# OPEN FROM TRASH




- Finder says “no way!”
- Typical solution:
  - Drag to Finder, open, verify, re-trash
- Better solution:
  - Open with Dock

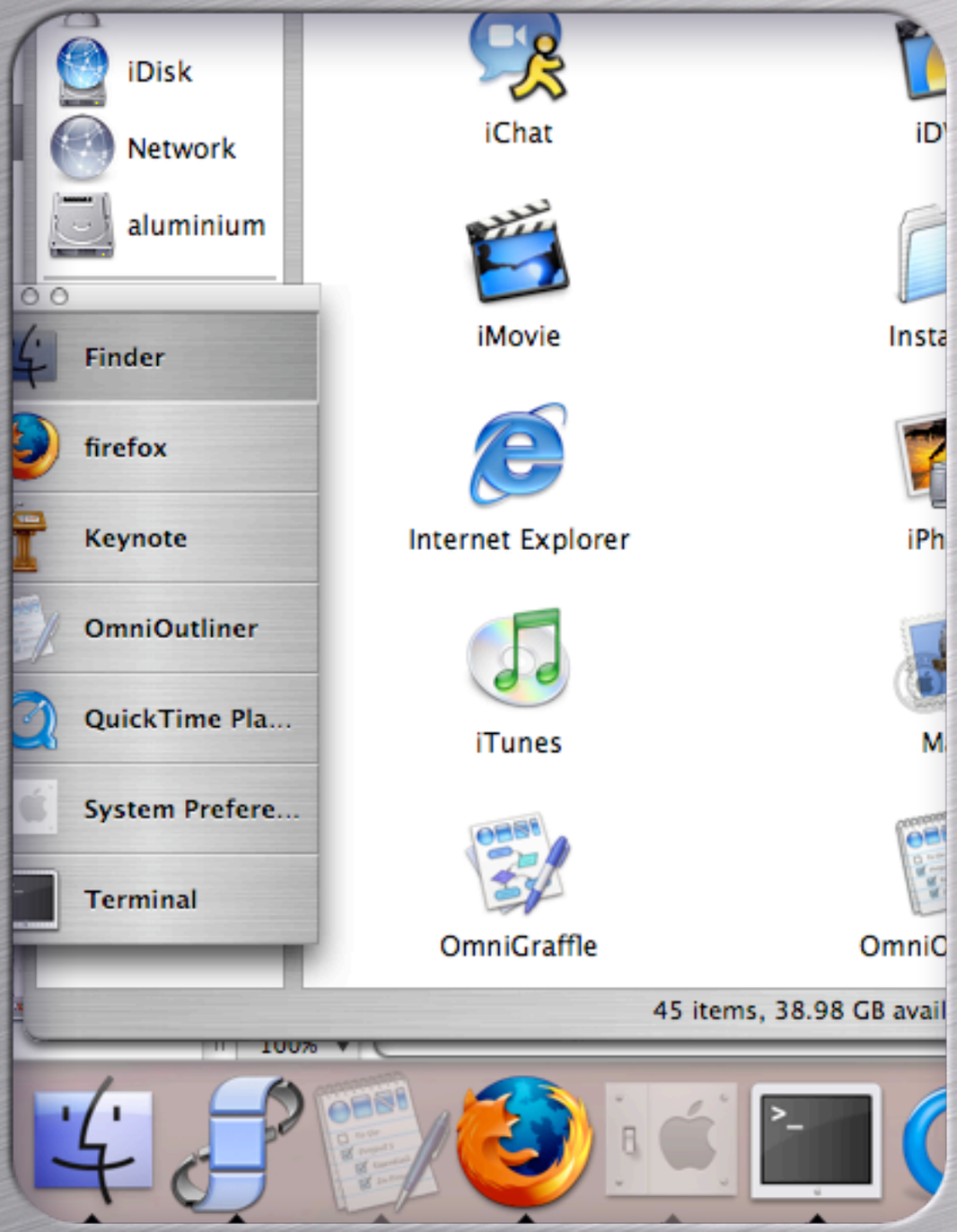
# REMAP SHORTCUTS




- Prevent Accidental Window Closures
- Change the Close Window command
- Useful for web browsers, chat windows, etc.
- Also can be used on Quit, New, etc.

# SHOW HIDDEN APPS

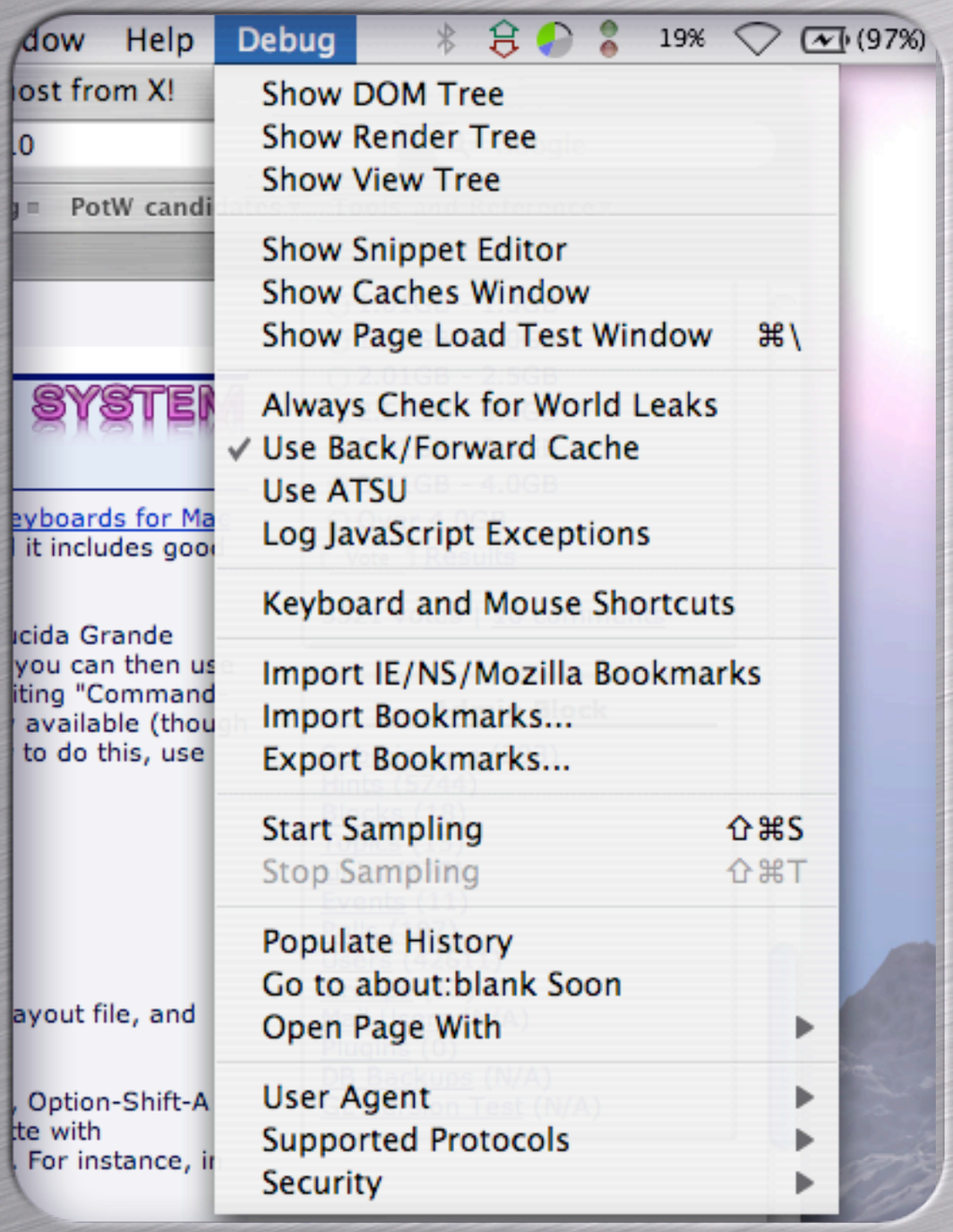
```
Terminal: defaults write com.apple.dock showhidden -bool true
```




- Differentiate Hidden Applications
- Use the dock to check an application's visibility
- Prevent accidental window overload

# SAFARI DEBUG MENU

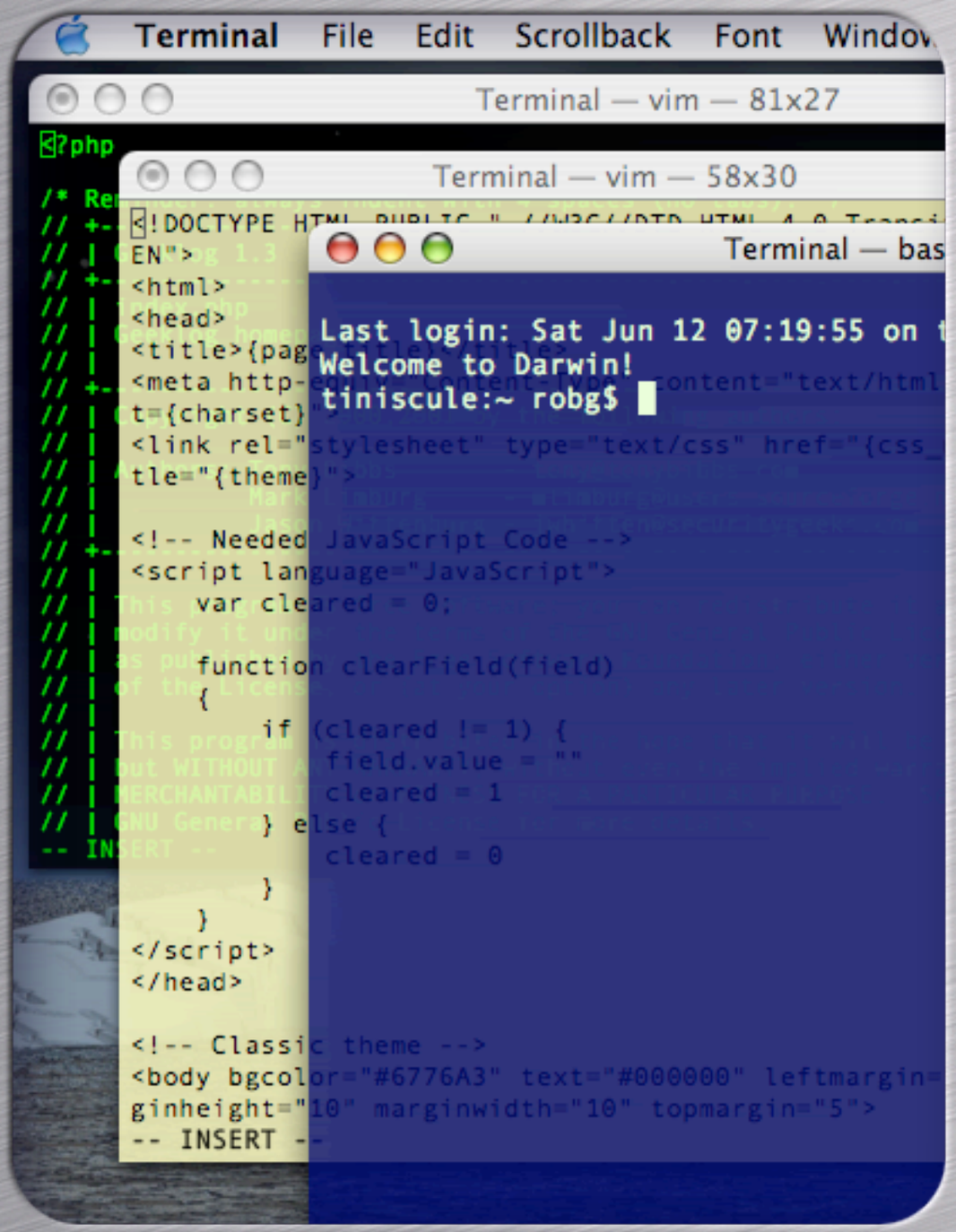
```
Terminal: defaults write com.apple.Safari IncludeDebugMenu 1
```




- Import and export bookmarks
- See all keyboard shortcuts
- Make sites think you're running IE for Windows
- Features for web developers

# TERMINAL FOCUS

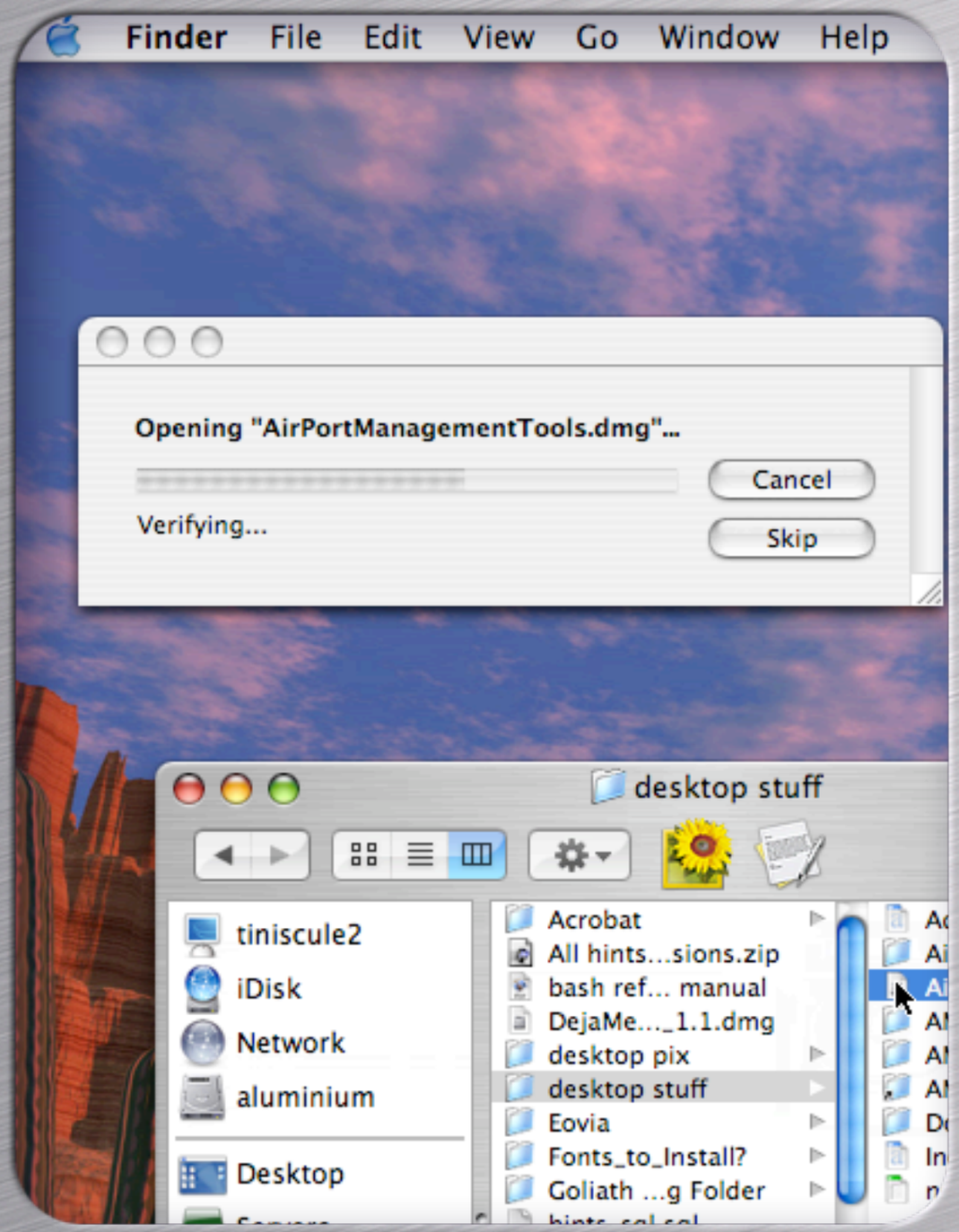
`Terminal: defaults write com.apple.Terminal FocusFollowsMouse -string YES`




- Useful on big screens with many terminal windows
- Takes some getting used to
- Linux converts love it!

# SKIP CHECKSUMS

`Terminal: defaults write com.apple.frameworks.diskimages skip-verify true`




- Checksums are important
  - Validates image data
- Checksums are slow on larger images
- Use at your own risk...

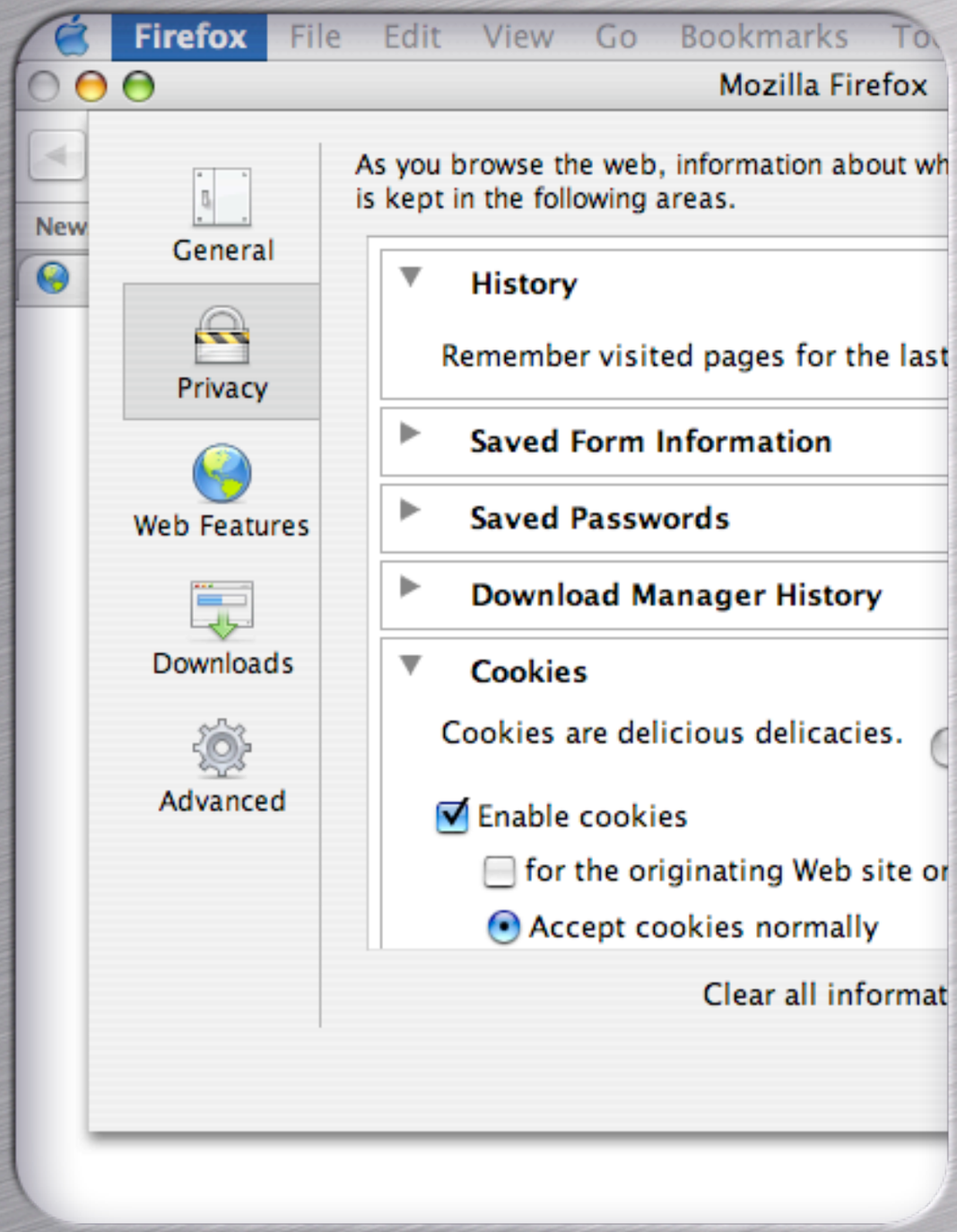
# DOCK AT SCREEN TOP

```
Terminal: defaults write com.apple.dock orientation -string top
```

- Great for full-screen apps like Keynote
- No side effects
- Still there if you need it -- Cmd-Opt-D

# SHEET ANIMATION

```
Terminal: defaults write  NSGlobalDomain NSWindowResizeTime .001
```




- Sheets are ‘attached’ dialog boxes
- Sheets roll down and up
- Lovely but time-consuming animations

# QUESTIONS & ANSWERS