Snak - The Best Mac IRC Client

Users Guide and Manual for Snak version 2.0b3

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Introduction

Snak is a program that will let you participate in discussions in Internet Relay Chat (IRC) channels. IRC is a service that uses the Internet to connect a large number of computers - called IRC servers all over the world.

Individual people use a client program like Snak on their Mac and connect to a nearby server in order to join one or more of the thousands of channels that are available. A channel is like a meeting place, usually dedicated to a particular subject.

Anything that is typed into the channel will be sent to the IRC server. The server then echoes it to the other servers which in turn relay it to the other members of the channel. This means that you can have a real-time conversation with people from all over the world.

IRC supports both public and private messages, so you can also have private conversations with your friends and family.

There are many IRC servers, but they are not all connected to each other. They are organized into different networks, the largest of which are EFNet and Undernet. All servers on a given IRC network exchange messages but do not bridge to other networks. Some networks are regional like OZnet (Australia) and BrasNet (Brasil). All the servers on the same network carry the same channels.

Snak will let you connect to multiple servers at the same time and the servers do not have to be on the same network. Therefore you can participate in channels on multiple networks if you so desire.

At any given time the largest of the IRC networks may have as many as 20.000 participants and almost anyone can find a channel that talks about a topic that is of interest to that particular person. It is estimated that at any given time more than 60.000 people are using IRC.

The primary function of an IRC client is to display the messages that the other participants in the channel sends, and allow you to send your own messages into the channel for the other members to see.   However, a client like Snak does much more and that is the topic of this manual.

If you are new to IRC, you probably want to read the list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) that is available from the locations listed at the end of this chapter.

Please see the chapter "Registration" for information on how to register.

About the program
Snak is a new and exciting IRC client program for the Macintosh. Some of its features are:

• Connection setup and open channels can be saved to a setup file that can be clicked to restore the session automatically
• Files can be sent with DCC by dropping them on the Userlist
• Built-in address book allows you to keep track of the snippets of information you find as to talk to other people via IRC
• Guardian feature can help parents and teachers control what channels their children and students can visit
• Settings like background color and font can be selected individually for each channel.
• Connection records can specify multiple servers, which allows the program to try each server until it finds one that will connect
• Integrated notify list makes it easy to track when your friends are connected to IRC
• Aliases and scripting help eliminate much tedious typing and provides powerful features
• Tool and Contextual menus are fully configurable
• Extensive compatibility with the ircII scripting language.
• "Find" and "Find Again" functions to search in the channel listing and channel text
• Multiple connections and multiple channels per connection
• Intuitive Drag and Drop operations in many situations
• Automatic and Manual logging functions
• Command-clicking URLs to open them is supported

If you find bugs in the program it is important that you report them to me at "kents@snak.com" so that I may fix them.

If you like the program be sure to tell others about it.

You can always find the newest version of Snak on my web page at "http://www.snak.com" which has a mirror at "http://www.kagi.com/kent/" and I can be reached via email at "kents@snak.com"

On the Internet, you can find numerous documents relating to IRC. Here are a number of links to get you started:

http://www.lib.ox.ac.uk/internet/news/faq/archive/irc-faq.htm
http://www.kei.com/irc/IRCprimer1.1.txt
http://http2.brunel.ac.uk:8080/~cs93jtl/IRC.html
http://ftp.acsu.buffalo.edu/irc/WWW/ircdocs.html