

ream rises to the top, even in the world of Macintosh. In order to remain up-to-date with the current facts and opinions regarding this "Brave New World," I follow a few online mailing lists, called listservs. Unlike MacSense, these publications are text-only, and can therefore be transmitted entirely via email. Many of the electronic periodicals are also accessible on the World Wide Web and local user group bulletin boards.

It is easy to skim a newsletter, either directly as email, or at another time, once the text has been saved to my hard drive. Much of the information is often related to new products, with the current emphasis leaning heavily toward the latest and greatest Internet services and goodies. Occasionally a real gem interrupts my rapid reading, and I cheerfully come to a grinding halt to investigate.

Terry Wilson <TerryW6@aol.com> is an irregular contributor to Mac*Chat, (<http://www.cts.com/macchat/>) which is published by Tony Lindsey. Terry's articles are unique, combining thorough information with a lucid, lively style. She aims high, presenting complicated topics in a way that increases my knowledge and makes me enjoy the learning process.

I needed clarification several months ago, because I didn't fully understand the instructions in one of Terry's mini-tutorials in Mac*Chat. She patiently walked me through the process, step-by-step. Her ability to teach, via email, is exemplary.

Here are three of my personal favorites from her Terryfic Tips:

Obscure AOL mail feature:

Forgot to check the Return Receipt box on AOL mail you sent? No problem. When you are

logged on, select Check Mail You've Sent under the Mail menu and click the Status button. This will tell you if and when it was read (If the mail hasn't been read, you can also Unsend it here.).

Better safe than sorry:

If you're sending a file to someone else on disk, if you have the room, make a duplicate (command-D) of the file right there on the disk in case there's a problem with the dreaded "the file XYZ could not be copied..." disk error. (This type of disk error tends to turn up when a floppy is being read with a different disk drive, possibly due to minute differences in drive speed.). If you want to hide the extra file so nobody gets confused, trash it, but don't empty the trash. Then if there's a problem, just tell them to open the trash and retrieve the file.

Anti-aliasing in Photoshop:

Anti-aliasing smooths diagonal edges by changing the lighter pixels along a black-and-white (or contrasting) edge to one or more averaged values. From a distance, your eye sees a smooth edge, whereas without it, you will see stair stepping. Zoom in to see it. (You can't anti-alias on black-and-white bitmapped documents, though, because anti-aliasing requires intermediate tones.).

et's meet Terry, and find out a bit more about her.

[What is your career, and how do you use the Mac in it?](#)

Terry: I'm a graphic artist. Before the Mac was available, I was a board artist, which means printing and graphics businesses paid me to set up camera-ready materials. I was required to do technical drawing, paste up, design work, and sometimes, honest-to-goodness illustration.

[How did the Mac change your working methods?](#)

When I got into the Mac, naturally I became my own typesetter, so I was self-contained. I, therefore, could be totally self-employed, like a million other desktop publishers (DTP) these days. However, unlike too many of them, I have traditional pre-Mac skills.

[How has your Mac expertise evolved over the years?](#)

Mostly through using the Mac in my own DTP business. I encounter a variety of different jobs and have to figure out ways to accomplish them. I'm reluctant to ask someone else to do anything for me, so I do it myself. This is not to say I don't get involved with other users. Quite the opposite. I love the user group thing.

[In what way?](#)

Well, I'm the editor of PMUG Dialog, the monthly newsletter of Princeton Macintosh Users Group. (The Terryfic Tips included here all originated in PMUG Dialog.) It's a labor of love, plus it puts me in touch with some of the premier writers on the subject of the mighty Macintosh. Also, being the newsletter editor has expanded my range of friends beyond the wonderful people of PMUG, to include Mac users worldwide.

Here is a sample of one of my favorite TTs:

Resolution Solutions

Now that the 600 dpi laser printer is becoming standard, many people are pondering their options at the scanner: If my printer can print at 600, then I should scan at 600, right?

Yes, maybe, if you're scanning a black-and-white piece of art (line art), like a logo. Each dot is either black or white, and if you can scan as high as your printer, then theoretically, your printer will map out the image exactly as the scanner saw it. Make sure you scan on the line art setting, not gray scale.

But the answer is a big fat NO for photographs and art with shades of gray. Besides creating huge files and taking an eternity to print (if the printer doesn't choke first), such fine resolution is unnecessary. Laser printers print with solid toner, not shades of gray (but you knew that). In order to mimic shades of gray, it has to print variable-sized dots which look like shades of gray at arm's length.

Halftone dots lay on a fixed staggered grid. The shade of an area depends as much on the size of the dot as the amount of white space surrounding the dot. We talk about this dot pattern as a halftone screen with so many lines per inch (lpi).

[Let's take a step backward, Terry. Can you give us your personal definition of graphic artist, from your own perspective? Is it more of a design person or more of a creative person?](#)

Graphic artist to me is a catch-all term for someone who can do everything necessary to prepare materials for publishing, whether it's for print, multimedia, screen-based, or nowadays, the World Wide Web. While a lot of the stuff I do involves design by necessity, I don't call myself a designer.

[How does your definition fit into your own professional and volunteer work?](#)

I'll tackle just about anything, and it seems every job adds something new to my arsenal, sometimes things not even expected from an artist. For instance, volunteer work, like publishing the PMUG Dialog, has honed my editing skills. This rubs off onto my professional work, so my typesetting clients get their grammar fixed.

[What is your training and what is your background?](#)

I have a degree in studio art from the University of California at Irvine. I also learned lots of practical stuff working in the technical illustration business.

[What brought you to this challenging line of work \(DTP\)?](#)

I was led by one circumstance after another (as opposed to having a target and trying to hit it). Have you ever reflected on your life and backed up to a single isolated incident that

innocently set off a whole chain of events? Opportunities arise and you accept them, over and over, discovering new niches, all the while picking up skills, until you have a career that works.

Which equipment is essential, and which stuff really helps but is optional?

Equipment? The best you can afford! For graphics, 24-bit color is essential, although a huge-size monitor is not. A 600 dpi printer is essential these days if you use laser output for final camera ready, and a color scanner is nice to have. You have to have a fax machine and you must have some kind of big capacity removable drive.

What about software?

There is one application I always recommend to people doing what I do. And that's miniWRITER as a substitute for a big word processor. Yes, it's an old \$12 DA (desk accessory) from David Dunham. It's a simple, low-RAM-overhead text editor with very few choices, but the features you get are really useful, like a word count, and a smarten/stupefy-quotes control. Teamed with Thunder, an interactive spell checker, it's the perfect text entry program. I also use it to open text for proofing or reading. Other than that, I use the standard issue Quark/Photoshop/Illustrator triad.

Are you totally self employed? Is this a full-time business? How do you get your customers?

I've been totally self employed for seven years now. All my work comes from referrals, and I still have my first two clients, which originated through my user group. I have never advertised, but have a nice business card to hand out. I find that the three-color business card with original logo on nice stock impresses people and shows them I'm real. So if nothing else, invest in a good, professional business card.

Is self employment in DTP a realistic livelihood?

Mac graphics is a realistic livelihood if you're willing to take a few extra steps. The first is to proof your work. Nothing makes a client crazier than getting a first proof riddled with errors. A spell checker just isn't enough. The second is to be willing to do uninteresting and boring work. These are the jobs that will keep you independent, and these clients are usually easy to work with and easy to please. Third, learn to type if you are a slow typist. I learned to type seven years ago; anyone can be proficient.

Do you have any personal comments for people who may be considering becoming involved in desktop publishing?

It kills me when people chide their kids for wanting to be artists. "But you can't make a living as an artist!," they moan. Hey, look around. There's art everywhere! Virtually anything visual that's wo/man made was touched by some type of artist somewhere along the line. More and more of that art and typesetting is now done on the Mac by DTPers.

Do you have any suggestions to improve user group publications?

Good design and spot art are important for a MUG newsletter. There's not always room for major art, but even a small piece brightens things up and fills small gaps. There are lots of good original MUG writers out there, but if the newsletter is junky looking, it's hard to take the content seriously, just like any other publication.

Can I expect to see you next time I drop into a PMUG meeting?

I'll be there, John, but I doubt if PMUG has enough drawing power to get you to drop in from Tucson!

Thanks a million, Terry, from all of us who continue to be helped by your Terryfic Tips.

You're very welcome, and, by the way, here's one for you, John, living in the lightning capital of the world:

Safe saving in bad weather:

If a sudden thunderstorm rolls into your neighborhood, wind up what you are doing, Save As, shut down, and unplug your power strip. Note the added safety measure of a Save As rather than a Save. This way, if the power goes out while you are actually saving, your save-in-progress will be toast, but the original file will still be safely resident on your hard disk; all you will have lost is the work since your final Save As.

ohn Nemerovski's monthly column explores the trends, psychology, and emerging culture of the "digital renaissance" and how we are all adapting to this "Brave New World." You can write to John at johnemer@aztec.asu.edu.