

.01 What WILL be in AOL 2.5?!

AOL 2.5 is scheduled for a summer release, and is currently in beta testing. The most exciting feature of the new version is the ability to view graphics, including GIFs, PICTs, JPEGs, and TIFFs. You'll be able to view the graphics as they're being downloaded, or after they've been downloaded. Steve Case announced that the new software will support a new graphics format which is faster than GIF.

According to the March 28 letter from Steve Case, the new Mac and Windows versions will be sent to AOL members as soon as they're ready.

9.02 When WILL AOL for Newton be released?!

The AOL software is currently available for the Casio Zoomer PDA. AOL is reportedly developing software for Motorola's Envoy PDA (TidBITS #223/25-Apr-94). America Online hasn't officially announced a version for Newton. Sometimes representatives say there will be a Newton version. At other times they deny it. Only time will tell.

Of interest to Newton users is Ex Machina Inc.'s PocketCall. PocketCall allows Newton users to call online services that allow access via general-purpose terminal emulators. For more information, see MacWEEK (11.08.93).

SoftArc has announced FirstClass Retriever for Newton. The client can retrieve an reply to mail on a FirstClass server. For more information, call SoftArc at 1-416-299-4723.

AOL has a Personal Digital Assistant Forum with a file library, a conference room, and a message board. Use keyword "pda".

9.03 What ARE the upcoming new mail features?!

AOL recently added new features to the mail system and announced upcoming features. Use keyword "newmail" for a complete listing. Here are some of the features to be added:

Mail forwarding Mail from one screen name can be forwarded to another screen name, or to any Internet mail address.

Group mail You can assign a mailing list to a single mail address. Mail sent to that mailing address reaches everyone on the mailing list. This takes the Address Book concept one step further.

Ignore List Members will be able to block mail from a list of screen names. It's not clear if members will be able to block mail from the Internet.

9.04 What's THIS about AOL over TCP?!

AOL is beta testing the use of AOL over TCP networks. TCP is the protocol which governs the Internet. By accessing AOL via TCP, you bypass the telephone company, so you should experience greater speeds. TCP access will make AOL available to members in distant countries.

To apply for the beta testing program, use keyword "tcp". The necessary files are only available via ftp. AOL doesn't support ftp, so you'll have to get the files through another service. To take advantage of the files, you'll need to be on a hard-wired TCP network (perhaps at your office or university), or dial into an Internet access provider using SLIP or PPP. If you're not sure whether you are on TCP, SLIP, or PPP, talk to your system administrator.

Instructions for retrieving the files

1. At the ftp prompt on your system, type "ftp.aol.com" or "ftp ftp.aol.com".
2. Use "anonymous" as a name; use your AOL internet address ("screenname@aol.com") as a password.
3. Type "cd mac" to enter the Mac directory. Type "dir" to get a directory of files.
4. Type "get "readme" " (use the inner quotes, but not the outer quotes) and press the return key.
5. Type "binary" and press the return key to set the transfer to binary.
6. Type "get "TCP-for-Mac-AOL-2.1.sea" " (use the inner quotes, but not the outer quotes) and press the return key.
7. The files will be transferred to your account on the service you're using. From there, download them to your Mac. The read me file provides basic instructions on the use of the TCP files.

If you retrieve the files with Fetch, set the transfer to binary. Otherwise Fetch will download the files as text files.

When signing on via TCP, your AOL screen name and password are sent in plain text. A hacker could capture your password and access your AOL account. To be fair, AOL's isn't the only software that sends plain text passwords across the Internet. Hopefully AOL will encrypt or disguise the password in future versions.

For more information, see TidBITS #226 and 227, available for downloading on AOL. Send questions via email to "MacBeta" or "MacTest".

9.05 What HAPPENED to my FlashSessions?!

Some members discovered that their FlashSessions stopped working when they upgraded to

AOL 2.1. This is apparently due to a corrupted mail file. The fix seems to be easy:

Instructions

1. Quit AOL.
2. Look inside the Online Mail folder. You'll find a mail file with the same name as your screen name. For example, mine is called "MacFAQ". Move that file to another location.
3. Launch AOL. AOL will rebuild the mail file from scratch, and you'll be able to use FlashSessions again.

9.06 Where DID my sounds go?!

Some members who upgraded to AOL 2.1 no longer hear their AOL sounds. Apparently the problem does not occur with System 7. Only some System 6 users are affected. I don't know of a solution but I'd like to hear from anyone who does. AOL 2.5 will reportedly fix the problem.

9.07 DO I get free time when people download my files?!

There's a myth going around that goes something like this: if you upload a file, you get a free hour every time fifty people download the file. It just ain't so. I don't know how this myth got started.

9.08 What IS eWORLD?!

eWORLD is an upcoming online service from Apple, based on software licensed from America Online. eWORLD's interface will resemble America Online. Why AOL is licensing its software to a competitor I don't know.

eWORLD was expected to debut in April, but has been delayed. It is currently under beta testing. Apple will begin bundling the eWORLD software with all new Macs sometime this summer. Apple currently includes the America Online software with Performas, but that will almost certainly stop when eWORLD appears.

Apple currently operates the AppleLink online service. AppleLink targets Macintosh professionals with big wallets. By the end of 1994, AppleLink will be replaced by eWORLD, which will have a more general audience of Macintosh users.

Apple's rates for eWORLD will be somewhat higher than what AOL members pay. For a monthly fee of \$8.95, members will get two free hours of non-primetime use. Primetime is defined as 6:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. local time. Additional hours will cost \$2.95 for non-primetime, and \$4.95 for primetime. There will be no additional costs for Internet mail or for 9600 access.

The code name for eWORLD was "Aladdin." The significance of the "Aladdin" code name isn't clear. Will the service use Aladdin Systems' StuffIt technology? Will it compete with GENIE? Will it be a "whole neWORLD"?

Information from MacWEEK (10.25.93 and 01.17.94) Macworld (March 94) and MacUser

(March 94).