

# President's Letter

by Andrew Welch

## Power Computing wrapup

The letters I received regarding my last President's letter (concerning Power Computing, and my innocent hard drive's execution) were about what I expected: a pretty even mixture of sympathy, outrage, and scoldings.

Your data is just like your possessions; you are responsible for it. I fully agree with that sentiment, but I think some people missed the real point of my original letter. Here's an analogy that I think illustrates my point, and position, rather well:

You're a photographer who has just purchased a new car. While your going from job to job, you typically put your photography gear in the trunk of your car. Then a few months after you purchased the car, it spontaneously malfunctions and stops running -- a side effect of which is that you can't open your trunk to get at your cameras, film, etc.

You could hire a locksmith to attempt to pick the lock, but the mechanic on the phone says to just bring it in. You drop the car off, expressing concern over the contents of your trunk, without anyone mentioning a word of warning to you.

Then a few days later you get your car back, and everything seems to be fixed -- you can even open up the trunk again. But when you do so, you notice that all of your photography equipment is missing. Calls to the mechanic reveal that "It is standard policy to remove and throw out everything in the car, whether it was causing a problem or not. Someone should have told you."

You see, I had a very reasonable expectation that unless the hard drive was the problem, or it was damaged in shipping -- both small risks I was willing to take -- that it would be returned to me as I sent it. With all my possessions intact.

I'm sure others will continue to disagree with me, but the good news is that Power Computing seems to agree. After a respectful but rather unsuccessful conversation with with Jeff King at Power Computing (which ended in him offering me the name and phone number of Power Computing's legal representatives), I was rather peeved.

However the very next day, the first employee Power Computing ever hired gave me a ring, and apologized for the situation (he'd read about it online, presumably in my President's letter). He

was very understanding about the whole situation, and offered to make the situation right by me.

All I had been interested in all along was a token gesture from Power Computing that they were genuinely sorry for what had transpired, and more importantly, that it wouldn't happen again. There are times when just hearing "We're sorry" simply isn't enough.

I was offered what amounted to a few bucks off of the PowerTower we have on order, and assurances that something would be done to rectify their current policies. I was also assured that Power Computing's CEO read my letter.

So in the end, I'm glad to say that situation has been rectified to my satisfaction, and that Power Computing has hopefully been bettered by it as well. We still haven't received our PowerTower machine (they are apparently backordered), however I'm glad that I can keep purchasing machines from Power Computing in good conscience.

## MacUser

In an interesting conversation, I was recently informed that MacUser has a company-wide policy of not reviewing shareware products. That struck me as rather odd, since they are heavily publicizing their own online ventures.

So I sat down to think about it a bit. I can understand if certain pieces of software aren't reviewed because they may not merit it. However when you exclude an entire category of software regardless of its quality, you are really doing your readers a disservice.

What boils down to is that horrible, buggy, nasty PC-port games will be reviewed in MacUser, but our games never will be. I'd suggest to MacUser that they might want to review products based on merit, not distribution method.

Additionally, if they mentioned their online services in the review, they'd be killing two birds with one stone. Just a thought.

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Ed Note -- Andrew is up and running and back and business with his machine. He has honored this new found wisdom with a new haircut. Although it is a little hard to describe, the word "samurai" comes to mind. Stay tuned, I'm sure a picture is not too far off.

