Desk Accessory

• *PURPOSE:*

TattleTale provides very complete information about your computer and its system related software. The information can be viewed on screen by category, printed, written to a standard text file in standard or a special Bug Report format, or output in database readable format.   As such, it also provides a record of your system configuration that can be used for reporting problems to software and hardware manufacturers, to compare configurations across multiple computers, or to simply learn about your machine.   Information categories covered are: the CPU, Volumes + Drives, Monitors, Nubus Devices, SCSI Devices, ADB Devices, Serial Ports, General System Attributes, Startup Environment, System Files (System, Finder, INITS, CDEVs, RDEVs etc.), DAs, Fonts, Drivers, Open Files, Processes, Applications, and Traps.   In addition, it enables you to Mount Volumes and Close Files that were left open.   The information provided varies greatly among these categories and is best understood simply by going to the dialog window and browsing through the above categories.

NOTE: The Traps information can be valuable for programmers who need to determine if a particular combination of system software and hardware implements a certain Trap.

• *SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS:*

TattleTale is compatible with the Mac+ and newer machines and requires System 4.2 or higher.   It is also compatible with System 7 and takes advantage of some of its enhanced system information features as well as balloon help.   Note that there is a marked difference between the information available under system 4.2 compared to the 6.X systems and higher.

TattleTale is available in two versions.   This document describes the Desk Accessory version.   As now configured, this version operates without any problem under all known configurations.   There is, however, an Application version of TattleTale available for those who prefer applications or who experience problems with the DA version.

TattleTale.Traps expects to be found in the System Folder, but you can rename it or put it anywhere you want.   However, you must describe this change for TattleTale as described under Trap Related Features below.

• *GENERAL OPERATION:*

TattleTale consists primarily of a menu and a modeless dialog window.   When you initially run it,   the dialog window is visible and the first category of information is already displayed in a scrolling list. Subsequent categories are selected from the Pop-up Menu above the list.   Categories which are not available for a given computer and system software combination (e.g. Nubus on a Mac+ or Processes under Uni-Finder in System 6.X or lower) are dimmed and cannot be selected.   The Close   button closes the window but leaves TattleTale active.   Get System Info in the Main Menu will re-open the window.   You can Quit completely from the Main Menu or by using the Close Box in the TattleTale window title bar.   Definitions related to each report are available by pressing the Definitions button in the main dialog.

Printing is also controlled from the Main Menu.   From here you access Page Setup and two printing

choices.   You may print the list which is currently displayed (Print Current) or you may select Reports, which prints the reports which you select.

Selecting Reports invokes a dialog box.   To print a selection of reports in screen format, select the reports which you want to print, select the "Print Std Reports" button, and select "OK".

Reports also provides the capability of writing the reports to a Standard Text File or a Tab-delimited Text File.   Selecting "Write Std Reports to Text File" simply combines and directs chosen reports in screen format to one standard text file for subsequent editing.

Similar to this is the "Write Bug Report to Text File" option.   Associated with this option is the "Basic Bug Reports" button which chooses the standard reports that would be helpful to the person to whom you are reporting a bug.   Other reports can be added to the selection as conditions warrant. Another button, "Bug Explanation..." accesses a dialog which allows you to describe the problem with the program and also allows you to save and load the specific text which you have created for future reference.   A third related button, "Bug Reported By", allows you to specify standard information related to you, the reporting individual. Your personal information remains permanent across invocations to TattleTale.

"Write to Tab-Delimited Text File" is used for creating a database readable file.   The default format is a Field Name line followed by a line of associated Data, all separated by tabs and ending in a carriage return.   All lines are preceded by two additional columns: 1) the name of the report from which the data originated, and   2) the Chooser name of the reporting computer.   In the case of reports which include multiple items which are the same (e.g. Drives, Fonts, DAs, etc.), there is a Header line and a Data line for each member of the group.   Where there is preliminary information for a group (e.g. in the Serial Ports report), the name of the preliminary report has a "-H" appended to it so that you know what set of fields will be following.   You may eliminate Field Name lines completely by checking the "Data Only" box and you may eliminate data interpretations (items enclosed in parentheses) by checking "Remove (Data Interpretations)".   Also note that the Screen, Printed, and normal Text File reports include only those items of data which are appropriate in a given situation as opposed to the tab-delimited Text File reports which include all possible fields for consistency in reading the data into a database.   It is suggested that you experiment with the generated Tab-delimited Text File before designing any reports which might use this data.

The Specify Volume menu item applies only to the Applications reports available from the Pop-up menu.   Specify Volume allows you to restrict the volumes for which the applications will be reported.

There are times when   you will want to refresh the information in your window.   Obvious refreshes happen automatically, but you can do it manually simply by re-selecting the menu item from the Pop-up Menu.

Help, consisting of this text, is available from the TattleTale menu.

• TRAP RELATED FEATURES:

TattleTale provides information regarding Traps in three different formats.   Traps UnAvailable lists those "official" Apple Traps (as listed in the MPW Traps.p file) that are not available on your particular

combination of computer and system software according to A-Trap Number and Name. Traps Available (Named) lists all those "official" A-Traps which are available on your computer   according to A-Trap Number, Name, and Address. Traps Available (UnNamed) list all other Traps which, through testing each Trap, are shown to be "active" - that is, they do not have the _Unimplemented Trap address assigned to them.   As can be seen from this list, there are many implemented "unofficial Traps". The primary reason for this is that many of them are used by internal routines which Apple reserves the right to change in the future or they represent routines which can be accessed through more than one Trap designation.   This is particularly true of Traps in the $A000-$A1FF range.   You can use the actual listed addresses for comparison purposes.   In reference to this, note that Apple written documentation describing Trap designations differs from those in the MPW Traps.p file.Also note that you can tell which traps have been patched by comparing the ROM Base address found in the CPU Related listing. If the address is lower than ROM Base, it has been patched.   However, due to differences in the way environments are handled between System 6, Multifinder, and System 7,   and depending upon which heap contains TattleTale, you need to be careful in terms of how you interpret this information.

To allow for changes in the Trap list over time, Commands to manipulate this file are located under the Main Menu .   The "official" Traps are included with TattleTale as TattleTale.Traps.   If you simply wish to change the name or location of TattleTale.Traps, rename it and/or put it where you want, and then select Change Database File and you will be prompted to find the file.   The new name and/or location will be used until you decide to change it.

In regard to changing the contents of the file, they are originally derived from MPW's Traps.p file which TattleTale converts into it's own database format.   If you want to see the format of the original file, Database to Text File will prompt you to convert the database file to a text file which you can then view and/or modify on any text editor.   If you wish to merge a modified Traps text file with the database, select Merge Text File.   This will incorporate any additions included in the file and ignore any duplications.   If you have direct access to an up-to-date Traps list, you can use New Database File to completely regenerate the database.

NOTE:

Once again,   this version of TattleTale comes with new icons.   John Thatcher of AOL disliked the other ones enough that he came up with some new ones.   I agree with him, they are a big improvement!   If you are running System 7 and the finder does not automatically update the icons for you, TattleTale can do it for you.   As you start up TattleTale, simply hold down the "<option> d" key combination until a dialog comes up which asks if you wish update the desktop database.   If you hear a "beep" during updating, the updating was not performed for various possible reasons.   In this event, your desktop database will be left in its original state and the program will continue.   If updated, the new icons will appear after a subsequent machine restart.   This method avoids having to rebuild your desktop (which is very time consuming on a large disk) just to update icons.

On another subject, I am considering removing the ability to write reports to a tab-delimited text file due to the considerable size that it adds to the program.   If no one is using this feature, it makes no sense to pay extra to download it. (Not to say that I won't add other features to take its place!) If anyone depends on the tab file capability, please let me know.

Also, if you have a machine with a PDS slot and the Nubus/PDS menu item is not available to you, please let me know your Machine type and ID# (first item in the CPU Related report).   This will help me with updates as I am having a hard time getting new machine IDs from Apple.

○ NOTICE:

This software is FreeWare to the extent that I do not expect any direct remuneration.   However, there are many worthwhile non-profit organizations that really need your help, whether in the form of time or money.   I ask that, if you find TattleTale of use, to please give to an organization of your own choosing in an amount greater than you might normally.   If you use TattleTale frequently over a long period of time, please consider giving more than once.

The program and the TattleTale name are copyrighted and credits and all documentation must be kept with the program.   No modifications of any kind, other than the use of included dialog boxes, may be made to TattleTale.   TattleTale may be freely distributed at no charge to the user except media costs or normal downloading charges.   Any inclusion on media greater in capacity than 1.4 MB must be approved in advance.   TattleTale is distributed with no warranties, implied or expressed.

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- *A special thanks also to Onset Computer Corporation which has granted permission for the use of their "TattleTale" Trademark.*

Please send questions, comments, suggestions, problems, etc. to:

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