

Using Chatter

Connecting to other Chatter users.

1) Select the network zone by using the Zone popup menu. This menu will be disabled and say 'None' if you are on a network with no zones.

2) Select a Chatter user to connect to by selecting from the Users popup menu. If there are no Chatter users in the network zone you have selected, the Users menu will display found: 0 and will be disabled. Otherwise it will display the number of Chatter users that were found in that zone and the menu will be active. Once you select a user, the Connect button will become active and the found: menu selection will gray out.

3) To look for more users in the current zone, press the Search button. This makes Chatter update its list of zones and its list of users in the current zone. Use this if you can't find a user you believe should be on the network. If they do not appear after a few presses, that user is probably not on the network.

4) Once you have selected a user to talk to, press the Connect button. The mouse cursor will change, and the Connection Status (see below) will be Opening. When you have an open connection the Zone and Users menus will gray out with the name and zone of the Chatter user you connected to, the mouse cursor will be an arrow again, the Connection Status will be Open, and a message will be displayed in the top text box that says: "Connection established with <username> in zone <zone name> at <time>". The Search button will now say Disconnect, and the Send, Hold and Idle buttons will be active.

5) You can now send messages by typing text in the lower text box. When you press the Send button or the return key, everything you've typed since the last time you sent a message will be sent. When the Send button pops back up, then all data has been sent. Unless you are sending large amounts of text, you shouldn't notice any delay while data is being sent.

The other user's messages will appear in the top box.

6) The Idle button will tell you the amount of time the other user's Macintosh has been idle. This is particularly handy if the person you are connected to hasn't sent anything in a while. By examining the idle time you can determine if they've been called away, or if they're just typing a lengthy reply. If the idle time has been longer than 3 minutes, it replies with "Over 3 minutes".

If you hold down the Option key, Idle becomes Query. In addition to the idle

time, Option-clicking on the Query button will give you the remote computer's owner and machine names, the name they are using for Chatter (see the Options Menu for how to set this), and the time it took for the reply to your request. The latter is reported in seconds and 60ths of seconds, since replies will come back pretty quickly unless the network is slow or the remote Macintosh is really busy.

7) If someone interrupts you while you are typing, you can use the Hold button to send a preset message to the other user.

8) To terminate the connection, press the Disconnect button. The Query and Send buttons will become inactive, Disconnect will become Search, and the Zone and User pop up menus will become active after Chatter is done searching for any new users in the current zone. You will also receive the message "Connection closed at <time> --End of Line--" in the top text box.

Connection information:

This section details information about the state of your Chatter connection. In the lower left corner of the window, the following text is printed: Connection Status: Closed. The Closed will change to Opening and then Open when you connect to another user.

If the Show All Connection Info checkbox in the General Preferences dialog box is checked, you will see the following:

Connection Status. This is appended by one of the following:

Open. A two way connection has been established and data can be sent.

Closed. Nobody has been connected to, and there is no point in sending data.

Opening. Chatter is in the process of connecting to another user.

Closing. Chatter is in the process of disconnecting from another user.

Local Socket. The network socket number that this Chatter connection is using on this Macintosh.

Remote Socket: Net, node, socket.

Net. The numerical value of the Appletalk zone
your other party is in.

Node. The numerical value of the remote user's
Macintosh network identity.

Socket. The network socket that Chatter has
connected to on the remote Macintosh.

Features:

•New Window (Command- N, or New Window under the options menu) produces another Chatter window with it's own independent connection. You can carry on conversations with up to 4 people by creating new Chatter windows and connecting to different users.

•Cut and paste are supported. Text can be cut or copied out of either text box, but can only be pasted into the lower text box, as there is no point in being able to paste text into the other user's messages.

•The opening of a connection can be canceled by pressing command-period.

• If you want to search all zones for Chatter users, hold down the option key and press Search, which will now be Search All. Names of zones and Chatter users found in those zones will appear in the top text box. To cancel the search, press and hold the command and period keys until you see a dialog box that says "Action cancelled by user ".

•If you want to see all AppleTalk entities in the currently selected zone, command-click the Search button and a list will appear. It will list up to 400 entities. If anybody has more than that, let me know and I can increase it in the next release.

•If, for some reason, you want to see all AppleTalk entities everywhere on your network, hold down command and option and press the Search button. Note that this might exceed the amount of text that Chatter will hold in a window (16K) , so the beginning of it may not be around by the time you reach the end. This feature isn't particularly useful, but was easy to sneak in, and I think is kinda cool.

•You can send icons to the person you are conversing with by selecting them from the icon popup menu in the lower right hand corner. To select an icon file that is different from the one currently being used, use Use Icon File... under the File menu. For more information on icon files, see the Icons help topic.

Warning ! Do not terminate Chatter except by using the Quit command. Most users won't have a reason to terminate it any other way. But if you, say, shoot it down with MacsBug, it won't be able to remove itself from the network interface gracefully, as it does when Quit is used . Thus the operating system will think Chatter is still active and will write any data for Chatter to a random location in memory with the usual detrimental results. If you do shoot down Chatter, save everything and restart.