Macintosh
vs Windows 95

#3 Powerful Programs

Summary

Software developers are creating great new programs they couldn't create before, and supercharging their existing ones, using the extra power of the PowerPC™ chips in Apple's new Power Macintosh® computers. From scientific modeling with programs like Mathematica, to multimedia tools such as Strata's StudioPro, to games like F/A-18 Hornet 2.0 from Graphic Simulations Corp. and Marathon by Bungie Software, developers are creating exciting new programs that are available only on the Apple® Macintosh,® or perform better in their Macintosh versions.

This is part of a series of short reports on the contrasts between a Macintosh computer and a PC with Windows 95. To see previous entries in the series, visit us on the Internet at http://www.apple.com/whymac/

The Macintosh Advantage

There's a myth in the computer industry that no software is being developed for the Macintosh platform. The reality is very different. Sales of applications for the Macintosh platform actually grew faster than PC application sales in 1994. There are more than 6,000 Macintosh-compatible programs on the market today, and more than 500 of those are Macintosh-only.* Many more run on both Macintosh and Windows but do special things on the Macintosh that they don't on the PC. For a few quick examples, let's look at the areas of scientific computing, multimedia, and home entertainment.

Scientific computing. Mathematica is one of the premier programs for solving complex mathematical equations and graphing the results in 3D. It's used heavily by engineers, scientists, financial analysts, educators, and students, and is available in versions that run on a PC with Windows, Macintosh, and many different brands of workstations. Mathematica uses a lot of computing power, and its users actively benchmark it on different computer systems and share their results on the Internet. In the results Apple has seen, Power Macintosh computers generally produced results comparable to computer workstations costing thousands of dollars more, and in most cases Power Macintosh computers were significantly faster than Pentium computers running at the same clock speed. In some tests, 66-MHz Power Macintosh computers even finished faster than 90-MHz Pentium systems.

Multimedia. The power of Power Macintosh makes it possible to bring workstation-style graphics and multimedia capabilities to the personal computer for the first time. Just as desktop publishing evolved down from a workstation-level task to something anyone could do, Apple expects advanced multimedia and 3D graphics to become commonplace because they can help anyone communicate more effectively.

There are more than 150 multimedia and graphics programs that run exclusively on the Macintosh platform. One good example is Strata Inc.'s StudioPro, a very powerful 2D and 3D drawing and animation program. Its features include raytracing, anti-aliasing, morphing, and Hollywood-style special effects. For more information on StudioPro, see the Internet address below.

Home Entertainment. Many people assume that to play the best games, you have to get a PC. There definitely are a large number of games for the PC, and that's one of the reasons Apple now offers DOS/Windows compatibility features for selected models of Macintosh Performa® home computers. But the other part of the story is that more than 70 great home entertainment titles run only on the Macintosh platform, including some exciting new games that take special advantage of the power of Power Macintosh. Two examples are F/A-18 Hornet 2.0 by Graphic Simulations Corp. and Marathon by Bungie Software.

Marathon is a 3D action game set in a spaceship that has been attacked by alien creatures. It takes advantage of the Power Macintosh to create high-resolution graphics, realistic stereo sounds, and more realistic physical modeling, all with very high performance. And because of the built-in networking of the Macintosh, it's incredibly easy for multiple players to join the same game.

F/A-18 Hornet 2.0 is a Macintosh-only flight simulator that includes recorded radio messages from the ground and air. Several users can play over a network, and at the recent MacWorld show in Boston, the company showed off a new module depicting conflict in Korea.

What It Means For Users

The power of a Power Macintosh means a lot more than the ability to run fast gaussian blurs in Photoshop. Having more power lets software developers create and explore new things they couldn't have tried before, and makes existing programs run faster and better. That's true for everyone from game players to scientists to teachers to graphic artists.

Questions or Comments?

You can send e-mail to the Macintosh Platform Marketing team at competition@applelink.apple.com

To get more information on the products mentioned in this document, visit these Internet addresses:

—Macintosh flight simulation page
(Includes reviews, information, and links to Web sites on most major Macintosh platform flight simulators, several of which are Macintosh-only)
http://www.xmission.com/~morrison/MFS/home.html

—F/A-18 Hornet 2.0 information
http://graphsim.com/graphsim/ourprods.html
http://www.computek.net/graphsim/hornet2.0.html

—Marathon
(Includes Marathon information and links to other Marathon sites)
http://general.amug.org/~marathon/cantina

—Strata Inc. home page
(Information on the company's products)
http://www.strata3d.com

—Wolfram Research home page
(Extensive information on Mathematica)
http://www.wri.com

*Macintosh application sales according to Software Publishers Association. Macintosh application installed base according to Computer Select. Macintosh-only applications according to Catalano Consulting.