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## **Have Mac, Will Do Windows**

**Rather than part with your Mac, teach it to do Windows**

**By Scott Bury**

You don't have to give up your Mac, your investment in Mac software, or your Mac experience just because your boss or your most important clients insist that you accommodate their devotion to the Windows operating system. There are several ways to perform your duties in Windows without giving up your most productive tool. If you're lucky, all you'll have to do is use cross-platform applications or file-translation software. If you're not so

lucky, you'll have to use Windows-only software, such as Microsoft Access or Computer Associates' ACCPAC. In that case, your best option is to emulate Windows on your Mac.

Since installing Windows on a Mac is not a matter to be treated lightly, let us help you decide whether it's best to use software or hardware to emulate Windows on your Mac. We also offer some tips on using Windows emulation (both hardware and software) that could save you a lot of hassle.

### **See Windows through Software**

At about \$200 or less, software emulation is the least-expensive way to go, but for some people it's not worth the savings. It can be irritatingly slow – there's a noticeable typing lag, and commands require at least a second to take effect. So we recommend it to those who only occasionally have to run a Windows application. It's not ideal for everyday use.

At press time, there were two programs to choose from: SoftWindows, from Insignia Solutions, and Virtual PC, from Connectix (go to the Macworld online site at

www.macworld.com to see reviews of both these products in the Macworld and MacUser archives). Both programs recreate the Windows environment within your Macintosh. You can run any Windows software, as long as you have the RAM, a PowerPC-based Mac, and enough hard disk space.

### **SoftWindows**

If software emulation seems like a good fit for you, go ahead – buy it, and install it. But before you go too far, here are a few tricks to help you avoid some problems we ran into with SoftWindows.

#### · Optimize Your Hard Disk.

Do this before installing any software or hardware emulation product. They require a big chunk of space on your hard disk (at least 250MB).

#### · Install the Software Correctly.

Don't try what we first did: We installed SoftWindows 3.1 and then upgraded it with the real Windows 95. While this can be done, it takes an awfully long time and the result is a very slow operating system – about one third as fast as what you get if you do it the right way. The right way to do it is to install SoftWindows 95 directly.

. Give It Lots of Memory.

A good amount of RAM to dedicate to SoftWindows is 24MB. It's best to use real RAM, since SoftWindows doesn't work with RAM Doublor and sometimes won't even work with Apple's Virtual Memory.

. Speed Up Launches.

Use SoftWindows' TurboStart option to reduce launch time. It saves your current settings when you quit so that the next launch takes less than a minute. To make TurboStart work, select Shut Down from the Start button menu in Windows – don't select Quit from the File menu in the Mac environment.

. *Make More Room for Windows.*

SoftWindows comes with Hard Disk Expander, software that makes it easy to increase the amount of hard-disk space you allocate to SoftWindows. To use it, you must quit SoftWindows and then double-click on Hard Disk Expander.

. *Thaw a Frozen Pointer.*

If you can't move the Windows pointer with your mouse, then use the Mac's pointer to select the Setup menu and Emulate PC Mouse. Use Command-R for the right mouse button.

. *Avoid Floppy Jams.*

Make sure you don't have a floppy disk in the drive when you launch SoftWindows, or you'll have to eject it with a paper clip. CDs don't seem to have the same problem.

. *Connect to the Internet the Easy Way.*

If you want to use SoftWindows to connect to the Internet, keep in mind that peripheral devices, such as your modem, connect through the Mac OS. You can opt to set up the

modem and Internet connection through the Windows control panel under the Settings menu. However, it's much easier to use the SoftWindows Setup menu to route your Windows browser and e-mail connection through the Mac's PPP and TCP/IP utilities. This method is slow, but it's seamless and reliable.

### **Virtual PC**

Using Virtual PC is similar to using SoftWindows, but there are enough differences that we've included some tips to help you take advantage of this software specifically.

#### . *Run More Software.*

Virtual PC doesn't seem to have the problem with Virtual Memory (VM) that SoftWindows does. That means you can use VM to increase your memory enough to run RAM-hungry Mac programs and RAM-hungry Windows programs at the same time. Be warned, however, that using VM may slow you down.

#### . *Speed Up Windows.*

Don't try to run two memory-hungry Windows programs at the same time through Virtual PC. Even if you have lots of real RAM, running them simultaneously is likely to make processing painfully slow.

· *Get Modem Help.*

Unlike SoftWindows, Virtual PC controls your modem directly rather than filter commands through your Mac. This means you have to set up the modem through a Windows control panel. Unfortunately, you won't get much help from the manual. Rather than get frustrated trying to figure out Windows modem settings, call your Internet Service Provider's technical support for help.

**Throw Hardware at It**

Software emulation is functional but slow. If you need to work frequently in Windows, you're better off spending the extra money for a Windows-emulation card (which goes into an expansion slot in your Mac). At press time, there were three PCI expansion cards that put a

Windows computer into your Macintosh: Apple's PC Compatibility Card (\$1,049), OrangeMicro's OrangePC Coprocessor (starting at around \$700, depending on what's installed on the card), and Radius's Detente card (Radius has a range of cards that start at \$700).

The main advantage to using hardware emulation is that it gives you a real PC. It's a lot faster, and you'll have fewer problems installing new applications and utilities.

The main disadvantage of the hardware approach is that you can buy a midlevel Pentium PC for about the price of some of the cards. It's up to you to decide whether the convenience of having two machines in one is important or if you'd rather make space for a second computer.

If you decide to install a PC-emulation card, these tips on using the cards could make your life easier.

*. Buy More Windows Real Estate.*

Once you allocate hard-disk space to Windows, using the software that comes with the emulator cards, you are unable to increase that space. (Unlike SoftWindows, the cards don't come with Hard Disk Expander software.) Instead, you can create another file to serve as a D: drive or second hard disk.

. Switch Quickly.

The handy keyboard shortcut for switching between Windows and Mac environments is Command-Return. You can use it if you have the Apple or Radius cards. However, with the Orange Micro card, you must launch the OrangePC application in the Mac environment and then use Command-D to get to Windows.

. Find Missing Files.

It's easy to share files between the Mac OS and Windows, but it's possible that some files might seem to disappear. If you're not able to open a shared file from within an application,

try dragging the file from Drive F: (the drive that receives shared files) to Drive D:. That may make it magically appear.

. End a Freeze.

If you get stalled for more than a couple of minutes while you're shutting down Windows, you can hit Command-Return to get to the Mac environment and then choose Shut Down PC from the PC Setup control panel. It won't shut down Windows properly, but it may be your only option.

. Identify Problem Programs.

If you're using the Apple card and have a Windows application that simply refuses to launch, it could be that the application won't work with this particular card. For instance, we couldn't get Microsoft Internet Explorer to work. If you have the same problem, check the application's manual to see if it requires 32-bit memory addressing. If so, the Apple card can't support it because the card has only a 16-bit bus. (Apple promises an upgrade soon.)

*. Speed Up Printing.*

If you have the Orange Micro card, you can speed up printing: Use its LPT1 connector to connect directly to a printer, and select LPT1 from the Windows Printers folder.

**A Tip about Tips**

Our tips are mainly aimed at helping you use whichever emulation product you choose, but we hope they'll also help you decide what to buy. They may make it clearer what specific snags you'll run into when using either type of emulation product.

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Scott Bury is a writer and editor based near Toronto, Canada, who finds it much easier to install Windows on a Mac than to hang wallpaper in his house.

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Resources

Apple Computer

Cupertino, CA

800/538-9696 or 408/996-1010

[www.apple.com](http://www.apple.com)

Connectix  
San Mateo, CA  
800/950-5880 or 415/571-5100  
[www.connectix.com](http://www.connectix.com)

Insignia Solutions  
Santa Clara, CA  
800/848-7677 or 408/327-6000  
[www.insignia.com](http://www.insignia.com)

Orange Micro  
Anaheim, CA  
714/779-2772  
[www.orangemicro.com](http://www.orangemicro.com)

Radius  
Sunnyvale, CA  
800/572-3487 or 408/541-6100  
[www.radius.com](http://www.radius.com)

**Scott Bury: Make your Web graphics Take Off**

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