The Mac OS X Tiger™ Book

Andy Ihnatko

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Preface

And now, we come to Tiger, aka Mac OS X 10.4. If you're a student of film or a fan of film or maybe an assistant-managership at Blockbuster was the best you could do for a summer gig, you're gripping this book with tense fingers. If you had any fingernails left, they'd be puncturing the lovely metallic cover, straight through to the dedication page.

Plenty of flicks have broken past the "sequels always suck" maxim. *The Godfather, Part II* featured Pacino at the top of his game, and possibly the best (and certainly the most violent) male-male kiss in film history. The first *Star Trek* movie was a rejected TV pilot script in which the crew of the Enterprise dressed like intergalactic dental hygienists. But the second! All we need to say is *Khannnnnnnnn!!!* at a histrionic, eyeball-shaking outburst, and the DVD is as good as bought. As for *The Empire Strikes Back,* never has an ending that was so completely depressing been so completely satisfying.

Still, there's *Godfather: Part III.* Which will provoke a deep sigh that dislodges barely-suppressed memories of the Ewoks in *Return Of The Jedi.* And then you start thinking *Jaguar . . . Panther . . .* (ulp) . . . *Tiger!*

So if your mouth has suddenly gone very, very dry right now, well, your endocrine system can be forgiven.

But there's no need to worry. Steve Jobs isn't the head of a movie studio (apart from Pixar). He's the head of Apple, and with Tiger, Mac OS X truly becomes spectacular. Apple had a stiff challenge ahead of them: to throw out everything that was old, stable, functional, and familiar about the Macintosh operating system and start again from scratch. 10.0 and 10.1 were basic, just something that Apple could release as a starting point. The fact that they didn't bother to come up with a catchy name for it suggests that it probably wasn't meant to be a staple of your daily workflow. There were Marx brothers named Ted and Larry; you've never heard of them and you were never meant to.

With 10.2, it was time to start calling the new OS "Jaguar." It was the first version of X that was up to the challenge of being your one-and-only operating system. With Panther, Apple refined everything that had come before. They polished the Finder, made the networking features easier to manage, and installed dozens of little tweaks that enhanced fit and function.

The Compulsory portion of this particular competition has been completed: Mac OS X has been the best, most powerful, the easiest OS on the planet for a while now. But with Tiger, X enters a thrilling new phase: Apple starts working to collect Freestyle points. X always had great search features, but its new Spotlight technology infests every nook and cranny of the Mac experience with the ability to find

anything, on any basis, at your slightest whim. X has always given you the opportunity to automate tasks with AppleScript, but now Automator lets you streamline processes by just clicking and dragging boxes together, without having to write a single line of instructions.

Even the new iChat wants in on the action. Multiple panes of live, lifelike video of friends, family, and even mortal enemies are arranged around a virtual meetspace, each one rotated, lit, and reflected like they're the Phantom Zone panels that imprisoned General Zod in *Superman II.*

> **Note**
>
> Please don't allow the preceding paragraph to remind you of *Superman III,* in which Richard Pryor — after a three-week instructional course in computing — builds a supercomputer that takes over the world, causing plenty of wacky hijinx to ensue. Remember: Tiger breaks the mold of Third Sequels. There's really nothing to worry about. I promise. I'm a little sorry that I even brought it up.

So it's exciting. We're no longer satisfied with the concept of actually managing to get our computers to print something. We're all a-twitter: surely a company that fills our screen with a layer of vaguely-gelatinous tools for looking up our next appointment and a webcam image from Beijing is only *this far away* from giving us one of those flying cars that folds up into a suitcase, like in "The Jetsons."

WHY THIS BOOK DEMANDED TO BE WRITTEN

Ah, well. Let's get on with the business of this book, namely, to make sure that you actually buy it instead of continuing to browse it here in the bookstore.

And hey, I'm not going to make you feel guilty for having stood here in the aisle for so long. Here in the Tiger edition of the book, we've added pages while dropping the price, provoking a startlingly good value for the money (particularly when you factor in the fact that Chapters 9 through 13, when torn from the book and tiled on the floor, form a centimeter-resolution map that pinpoints the exact location of an immense pirate hoard which has remained undisturbed near the Massachusetts coastline for nearly four centuries. Swear to God. As your friend and author, I only hope and pray that someone else hasn't gotten to it before you, in which case it'd really be impossible for you or your attorneys to prove that the above claim is a fraud).

Still, you have to be careful with your money. Why don't you buy yourself a coffee and a sticky bun and move to one of those overstuffed club chairs down by the Biography section? You're the backbone of the American publishing industry: you *deserve* to be pampered!

Comfy? Good. You probably want to know what I had in mind when I put this book together. This book is geared towards five different groups of people:

1. **Folks who are old hands at the Macintosh, but new to Tiger.** Some of you might be coming in from even *earlier* incarnations of the Mac OS. Hey, man: I been there. Actually, I *are* there, because while at this writing I've been using Tiger for nearly three months now, Tiger's official release is still a long ways away, and thus I can't simply rush to the bookstore and start scamming information off the shelves like *some* users I could mention.

   That was uncalled for. My apologies. Lack of sleep, you see. Won't happen again.

2. **Folks who are Macintosh *users*, but who don't feel as though they're really getting the most out of their Macs.** I have friends who've been Mac users for ten years, and yet when I told them that they could open their PowerBooks and download their email from my hotel suite without any difficulty because I was "sharing" my Internet connection through my own Mac's wireless networking card, it was as though I'd told them that all Macs manufactured after 2002 could produce moist, delicious, fresh Toll House Cookies by installing a piece of software and keeping an oven mitt next to the DVD slot. And I'm still amazed that there are folks who've never automated their Mac with AppleScript!

   Not to worry. Buy this book and I'll help spackle some of the gaps in your Macintosh education.

3. **Family members and personal friends, who have seen the sort of car I drive and who are therefore eager to pep up my royalty checks.** Good for you; I'm way too proud to accept charity, but still, I'm eager to get another step closer to that Mini Cooper I've had my eye on.

4. **New Mac users.** Folks who have heard of and seen Macs, and who've occasionally been blinded by the purple aura of peace, happiness, and productivity that each and every Macintosh user gives off, and who have finally declared that they're ready to be happy. Welcome, welcome, welcome. As Brother Cadfael often says in his series of murder mysteries, he might have come late to the order of monks, but he came when called. And I'm glad you're here.

5. **New Mac users who are used to the Windows way of doing things.** I been *there,* too. The Mac has been my primary OS for (good Lord) nearly twenty years, now, and I didn't even *start* using Windows on a daily basis until Windows XP came along. So much of my struggle to Deal With It was a simple case of dealing with things that weren't necessarily inferior to the Mac way of doing things. . . but instead, were simply Different. I mean, honestly: I turn the computer *off* by pushing a button marked "Start"? Can that *really* be right?

So for you, dear Microsoft expatriate, I have included an entire chapter that details the bare fundamentals of the Macintosh user interface.

Okay. That's nearly all of you. If you're not a Windows user or a neophyte Mac user or a Mac user with years of experience, or one of my relatives, you're probably qualified to write one of these books instead of buying one, so I'd be foolish to try to go after your consumer dollars. As for the rest of you: gimme gimme gimme.

Thus, I'm pretty confident that you'll like what you see. But if you decide to postpone your purchase for another day, throw me a bone and smudge up the pages with frosting and sticky glaze from that cinnamon roll you're eating. It'll convince future browsers that this book is worth thumbing through from start to finish, perhaps even suggesting that you had read some stuff that caused you to howl with laughter. It'll also make the bookseller feel funny about returning the book unsold, which can only help to boost the book's numbers.

Some of you have already purchased this title, and what can I say to *you* except

GOD BLESS YOU, BOOK PURCHASER!

I mean, honestly. Other authors forget what a miserable experience it is to have to wake up every morning at 6 A.M. and put on a name badge and a paper hat. But not me; I'm grateful for every book I sell and for every day that ends without me reeking of frying medium and pity.

Actually, I feel as though I ought to give you a little something to show my appreciation. How about this: when you're making scrambled eggs, keep testing the skillet by flicking water onto it from your fingertips. The temperature is perfect when the water immediately boils away. Then pour in the eggs and let them sit. Resist the urge to keep stirring them around; letting them sit is the difference between moist, fluffy clouds of eggs and dried, rubbery squibs of hate. Don't start moving the mixture around until it starts getting a little dry at the very edges. Then slowly scrape the bottom of the pan — you're turning the eggs over more than stirring them up — and prevent overcooking by occasionally removing the pan from the heat from time to time. When the surface goes from glossy to moist, the eggs are ready to plate and serve.

This will be one of the ten best pieces of advice you'll ever get in your life. Love often dies with the first forkful of hard, bland scrambled eggs, and if you can master the above procedure you'll be well on your way to attracting and keeping your perfect mate. Why have you never seen this advice on the Oprah show? Because Oprah doesn't love you as much as I love you.

Oh, and it occurs to me that many of you might have paid full price for the book. Extra thanks to you. Don't get the tops of your ears pierced because that's cartilage and it'll hurt like bloody hell. On the whole that information is probably even more valuable than the egg thing.

THE USER INTERFACE OF THIS BOOK

So, how get you started? First, let's introduce you to the unique structure of the book that you hold in your hands. There are a couple of book elements that you need to know about.

Sidebars

You'll notice these sidebars scattered here and there throughout the pages of the book. Sidebars are where I take the opportunity to digress. I share information that might enhance your understanding of the topic at hand, that adds new perspective, or that I Just Plain Find Interesting.

A BOOK YOU SHOULD BUY AFTER BUYING THIS ONE

Actually, I got the idea from Martin Gardner's *The Annotated Alice*, in which the complete text of Lewis Carroll's classic is accompanied by sidebars that explain just exactly what the guy was talking about. You know, on the off-chance that you're not aware that mercurous nitrate was a key chemical used in the manufacture of felt, and that as a result, hatmakers often suffered from mercury poisoning and exhibited psychotic behavior.

The book's still in print and led to a whole line of "annotated" classics. Definitely worth a look.

Ideally, the effect of these footnotes will be like the "commentary track" you'd find on a good DVD of a great movie. Possibly it's like having some idiot in the audience yelling at the screen while you're trying to enjoy *Vertigo*. Hard to tell. My hopes are high, and frankly you might as well just grin and bear it because there really isn't much you can do about it at this point.

Though I suppose you could just put this book back on the shelf and spend the dough on Roger Ebert's Movie Yearbook instead. Hmm. That honestly never occurred to me. Well, okay, the man has a Pulitzer and everything, but did he ever teach you how to network two computers via Firewire? Just don't do anything rash; that's all I ask.

Notes

And then there are those comments that I inserted because I'm undisciplined and uncontrollable — and I need to comment on the discussion at hand. Right now. With sidebars, there's sort of an implied warranty. If you read the sidebar, you'll probably learn something useful but not essential. But notes are mostly here because I have a hard time controlling my impulses. All I can promise is that each note certainly seemed like a good idea at the time, and my heart was in the right place, absolutely.

> **Note**
> See, as a writer, the most difficult part of the job is figuring out just how much Coke you need to drink before sitting down at the keyboard, and how often to redose over the course of the day. Some people need the assistance of university medical facilities and complex nuclear imaging devices to monitor the seratonin levels of their brains. All I have to do is read back the stuff I've written over the past hour or so. I'm on an HMO so it's a real time and money saver.

BOOK ORGANIZATION

The book's chopped up into three major sections:

Part I: Using Tiger

The bulk of it's dedicated to the nuts-and-bolts details of installing and using Tiger. This book is ecumenical, embracing geeks of all skill levels. If you already know what the yellow button in a window's title bar does, feel free to skip around until you find something that provokes that not unpleasant sensation of mild confusion.

Part II: The Technical Bits

There are areas that few users of Mac OS X seem to bother with, such as Unix and AppleScript. That's because you really don't have to. Unix is the OS that lurks underneath Tiger's slick façade, and AppleScript is a resource for automating your Mac's functions and writing your own software.

"Unix?" "Writing your own software?" From way over here (in Boston, several months in the past) I can hear some of you getting up, misshelving this book somewhere convenient, and then stalking off to the Cartoons and Humor section to see if there's a new Garfield anthology. Well, that's why these chapters were quarantined. But you really ought to read about this stuff. There's a difference between a User and a Power User, and it's the difference between knowing Unix and AppleScript . . . and only having heard of those things. It's also often the difference between leaving the office at 4:30 and still being stuck working when Letterman's starting his monologue.

Part III: Bonus Material

"The Professor and Mary-Ann" of the book. Here are items that are interesting and informative but don't necessarily fit in with the other two sections. Think of these as the bonus materials that come on a decent DVD.

Acknowledgments

Body and soul were held together shakily, but successfully, during the production of this book, thanks in no small part to the indulgence and efforts of a whole bunch of people.

First on your ballots, first in our hearts: to them that raised me.

My pals John Welch and Rich Siegel are the sort of geeks whom geeks get in touch with for answers and advice, and this geek is grateful that they never thought to block me from their iChat buddy lists.

When you're writing about a secret pre-release operating system, you can't just Google for technical information and practical background. Lots of people at Apple filled that breach bravely and generously. My particular thanks go to Mike Shebanek; if I'd asked him just a few more questions, I'd probably have had to install a big red Bat-Phone in his office.

My agent, Carole McClendon, diligently and skillfully handled all the business stuff, which left me free to focus on the role of Sensitive Artiste.

And let's not leave out my editors, Mike Roney and Tim Borek. Good editors make you want to write better; bad ones make you want to move to a line of work that centers around figuring out if a basket of french fries is done or not. Suffice to say that I'm at the end of this project and I'm not wearing a hair net and a name badge.

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