hAng ON!

The Monthly Newsletter of the Houston Area NeXT Users Group

Volume 1, Issue 3 November, 1991 Nearly Free

Guy Kawasaki

Coming February 4th

hAng ON! is more than just a newsletter. We'd like to announce that Guy Kawasaki will be hAng's guest speaker at our February meeting. Our enterprising editor, Steve Sarich, corralled Guy at Seybold and convinced him to pay hAng a visit.

Guy is the former director of software product management at Apple, and the author of two books; “The Macintosh Way”, and “Selling the Dream”. Guy also writes for NeXTWorld and MacUser magazines. For those of you who were in a coma during the eighties, Guy was a moving force behind Apple's early evangelical approach to sales, marketing, and software development. We haven't fixed a date yet, but if you want to meet one of the people who created the personal computer industry, don't make any plans for February.

If you don't have Guy's new book yet, you might want to wait until February. hAng will have discounted copies available at the meeting at a price of $20. And of course, you'll get a chance to have him autograph it for you. We've invited the approximately 1,000 members of HAAUG (Houston Area Apple Users Group) to attend this special event which should triple the size of our usual meeting.

President's Column

John Glover

The theme for this month is membership!

Our November meeting will be the kick-off for a membership drive aimed at doubling the number of people at our monthly meetings by the time of the group's second birthday in March. We do have a loyal core of NeXT users who come to every meeting, but why should we be the only ones having all the fun?

So what are the plans for this big drive? Here are some of the irresistible attractions:

- Social and lab hour 6-7 PM before the meetings! Pizza and soft drinks at cheap prices. You can have a light dinner, talk with other NeXTies, and go to the lab to try out the latest software. It's in the first floor commons area of the “old” Engineering building.

- NeXT T-shirts as door prizes! That's right - drop a card in the box and see if you are the proud new owner of a stylish NeXT T-shirt or some other NeXT goodie.

- Public domain software! At this meeting we will demonstrate lots of excellent public domain programs, objects, and development examples. All is available to hAng members from the hAng Software Library.

- Membership roster! We will begin compiling a membership roster so that you can easily contact other NeXT users who might be able to help you out. We will be discussing the details of this proposal this month.

- Big name speakers! No, I don't mean me at the November meeting, but we do have some well known speakers lined up for future meetings, and we will tell you about them at the next meeting!

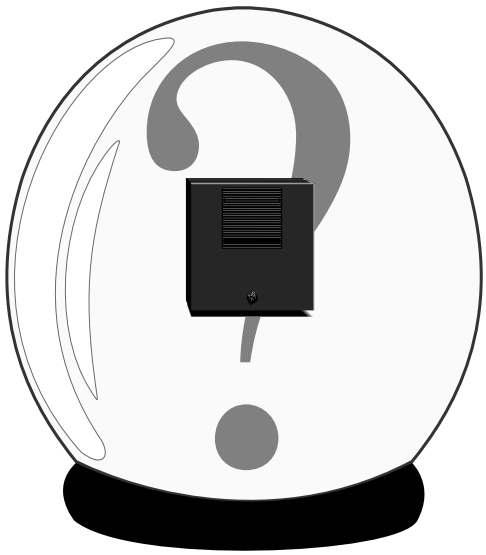
- Information! That's the main reason for a user group, and we have lots of it. Reports from the Seybold and EDUCOM conferences and information about some exciting events coming up soon.

And, of course, there are the continuing advantages of hAng membership, such as the hAng ON! newsletter, e-mail of up-to-date NeXT info, video projection at all meetings, and the general camaraderie of the other hAng members.

Inside This Issue...

Guy Kawasaki Coming February 4th 1
Presidents Column 1
The All Seeing, the All Knowing, the Amazing Schlepkin! 2
Pink Watch! 2
Announcements 2
Apple’s New Commercials 3
Upcoming Shows 3
SEYBOLD ‘91 3
EDUCOM Report 3
Hard Drives 3
Help Wanted (hAng On! Needs You!) 4
Who Dunnit? 4

The All Seeing The All Knowing The Amazing **Schlepkin!**



The Schlep had the pleasure of previewing Virtuoso (code named Stealth) at Seybold, and it's hot! This was a pre-alpha version, and Meaghan Hogan, Altsys Marketing Director, tells us that it will be at least December before we see a shipping version. From what we've seen, Illustrator will have some serious competition.

Media Logic may be in trouble. Top Draw 2.0, despite their ads and announcements that the product is shipping, displayed an alpha version at Seybold, and it still isn't available. On the bright side the alpha looked very good, and hopefully will be shipping soon. Artisan, however, was a total no-show.

The Schlep hears that there are four different RISC machines up with four different chip combinations.

A spy called the Schlep excited to see AutoCad up and running on a NeXT at Berkley.

Contrary to the rumor going around, Dave Laduke was never the Imperial Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan.

Best quote of the Month:

Steve Jobs took a lot of flack over his "invention" of the term "professional workstation". John Sculley, not to be outdone, describes Apple's new Quadra as "enterprise level computing". Quadra product manager, Frank Casanova, was quick to point out that they were not "marketing the machines as high-performance workstations". While the Schlep thinks that this is a wise choice, I *am* wondering what enterprise level computing really *is* and how much Mr. Sculley paid the PR people for that turkey.

Yes, you heard it here first. You WILL see NeXTStep running on another platform, but you'll have to wait till next month before I can tell you which one. I can tell you that it's not the new Quadra.

Well, although the Schlep knew about the Apple/IBM agreements long ago, he did not feel there was anything worth mentioning. But humor always has a place in the Schlep's dark heart, and even he cannot avoid a deep belly laugh at the thought of Apple and IBM producing the operating system for "the rest of us."

"The Schlep"

Rumor has it that Taligent's multipersonality nightmare was originally named Cybil, and that the first "personality" available will allow Quadra owners to run the 70 percent of the Mac's software that it currently can't.

Pink Watch!

We're all excited and amused about the prospect of Apple and IBM's new relationship producing something that we'll be able to use two, maybe three years from now. Apple and IBM have promised to keep us all up to date with their weekly "excitement" notices. To keep our readers informed about all the latest developments, hAng ON! will feature a new monthly column called Pink Watch!

The new Apple/IBM firm will start with Apple's object-oriented Pink OS which will be called Taligent. Taligent's OS will feature multiple, independent "personalities" - as one Apple representative put it - allowing it to run on Mac, DOS, OS/2, and Unix platforms. Of course, each of these personalities must be purchased separately. Who will sell, or for that matter buy, Pink is something Apple and IBM hope to have worked out sometime in 1993 or 1994.

Announcements

Cube Technologies, a local NeXT development firm and home of hAng ON!'s publishing offices, has changed its name to Talus Corporation. "We were never thrilled with the name CubeTech", said Steve Sarich, Talus CEO, "We changed the name to reflect the evolving nature of our development efforts." At the suggestion of NeXT Computer, the company will be divided into two divisions, Talus Communications and Talus Imaging. Talus reports sales of its recently released Rio film recorder have been tremendous and announcements of two new Talus products will be made in the next 30 days.

Morris Information Systems, a Houston based consulting firm, has become a NeXT Valued Added Reseller (VAR). Morris is currently working on a deal with the world petrochemical conglomerate Aramco. Aramco is apparently interested in replacing many of its Macs with NeXTs. We think that's a pretty good idea. In addition, Morris has extended financial support to hAng ON! This kind of support means that you'll be enjoying future issues without having to pay for them.

Apple's New Commercials

For those of you who haven't seen Apple's new mining and automotive commercials, count yourself lucky. The Quadra commercials, although setting new standards of computer cinematography, are a little unreal. Somehow, the concept of coal miners and high performance automobile buyers finding truth and happiness in the "next generation of computer tools" with these new Macs is a bit unconvincing especially since some of these commercials remind us of the anti-IBM ads of the mid-80s. Next year Apple will probably start using Charlie Chaplin as its spokesman.

NeXT is supposedly moving towards a new series of television ads to appear in the spring. One commercial has Arnold Schwarzeneggar shooting up a room full of Macs and PCs, uttering "asta la vista, baby" and turning away with a big NeXT logo on the back of his leather jacket. JUST KIDDING.

Upcoming Shows

Nexpo - November 6th and 7th - Vancouver & Victoria British Columbia

Fed Expo - December 4th and 5th - Reston, Virginia

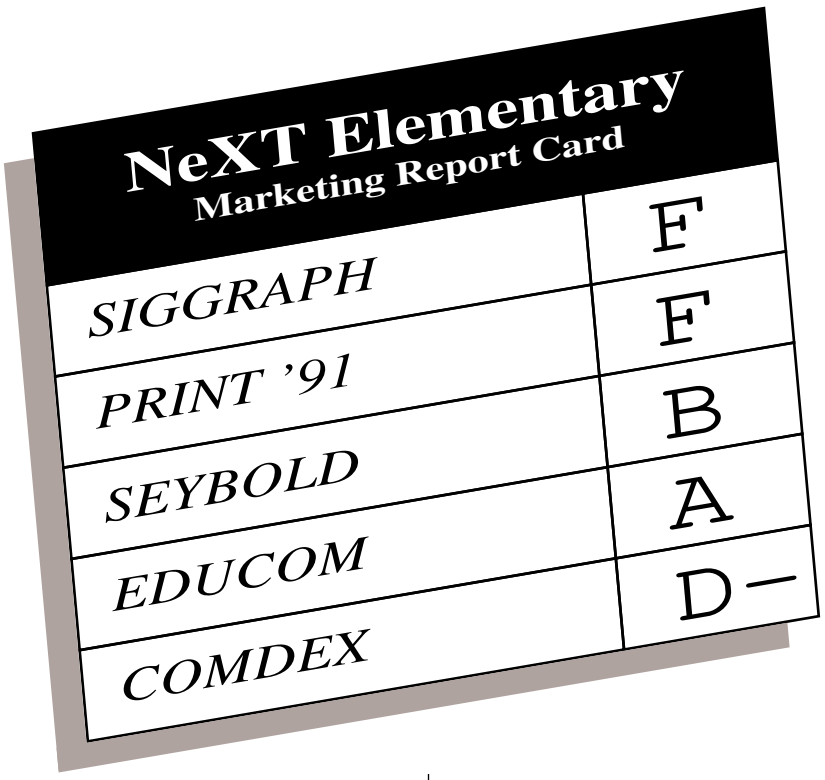
Nextworld Expo - January 22nd through the 24th at the San Francisco Civic Auditorium

SEYBOLD '91

by Steve Sarich

We all waited anxiously for the new announcements by NeXT at Seybold. The only "big" news was the announcement that selected Canon copier dealers will, at some unspecified point, be selling NeXT computers. Canon showed NeXT computers in their booth at Seybold, but they were conspicuously absent from the Canon booth at Comdex. We questioned several of the Canon employees that were manning the Comdex booth, and they were not even aware of their new relationship with NeXT. Some were not aware of what a NeXT computer is.

While we'd all be happy to see more NeXT dealers, hopefully this will not turn into another Businessland fiasco. No training program for the Canon dealers was announced, and we have to look somewhat skeptically at the prospect of copier salesman selling Unix workstations, but hey, we've been wrong before.



My personal favorite in the "soon to be released" category was Virtuoso (formerly code named "Stealth") from Altsys. This program should give Illustrator a serious run for its money. The version shown was pre-alpha, but Meaghan Hogan, Altsys Marketing Manager, tells us that we should be able to show hAng members a beta version very soon.

EDUCOM Report

by John Glover

The EDUCOM '91 conference in San Diego was a big success from NeXT's standpoint! NeXT's booth was one of the largest there with a dozen machines demonstrating all the capabilities of the NeXT computer. No fewer than eleven college faculty participated in the booth, all demonstrating how they have found the NeXT to be essential to their work. No other vendor could claim anywhere near that faculty representation. Two of hAng's own members, John Glover and Mike Mezzino, were among the eleven. I guess that made hAng the number one user group there!

Three of the awards in the EDUCOM educational software competition went to programs on a NeXT. As some of us ramp up our development efforts, we can expect more awards for NeXT-based software in the future.

While we were there, we had some excellent discussions with NeXT, providing feedback from the user community and suggestions on things we would like to see them do. It was clear that they were quite attentive and eager to hear our input.

Of course the conference was also an excellent place to pick up rumors of all sorts. But no need for that here. We'll pass them on to you at the November hAng meeting.

Hard Drives

by Steve Hurwitz

Most NeXT users have already figured out that you don't buy your mass storage devices at NeXT's inflated prices. Since users are experimenting with a variety of drives, both internal and external, hAng On! will feature a monthly column to answer your drive questions.

The following is a frequently asked question. Please feel free to share this information with anyone.

In comp.sys.next.misc article <1991Oct6.185910.1497@nugget.rmNUG.ORG> a user asked for information regarding the Seagate 1.2 GB drive for use with a NeXT computer.

The Seagate 1.2 GB drive has been around for a while and has proven itself to

be reliable. Although the expected life is only 150,000 hours compared to the Fujistu at 200,000 hours, the drive still lasts many years. With Tecor, Seagate drives have a five year warranty and a policy that if the drive goes down anytime during the warranty period, you may opt for an expedited two day replacement policy for $35 payable at the time of the disaster.

The Seagate, as well as most other drives, handles bad sectors automatically and has spare sectors. As a rule, Seagates not supply the print-out of bad sectors, so I can't with total authority give you an exact proportion of bad sectors to good.

Setting up the drive on the NeXT and installing the NeXTStep operating system on the drive is dead easy. Just boot from an optical, internal, or external drive, and perform a Build Disk. The process takes less than an hour, and the reliability is excellent.

Most people report the speed to be about the same whether they are using an internal or external hard drive, but a slight increase in speed results if a swap disk is used.

The 3.5" internal is a quantum leap (no pun intended) quieter than a 5.25" drive. The 200 MB, however, has been reported to whine. The internal 400 MB Seagate is by far the quietest drive, but it too has been reported to be a whiner.

On the large 5.25" enclosure, a special Japanese made 3" fan insures cooling and quiet. On the 1/2" height enclosures, a smaller fan is used which is even quieter. The Tecor enclosure, originally manufactured by Pacific Micro, is really modern and totally matches the NeXT. It has two power supplies and holds two drives. It also will work automatically anywhere in the world.

It has come to my attention that some companies have been advertising factory warranties. Be very careful. Some unethical companies buy drives from OEMs (with the original factory warranties expired) at reduced prices and cut a deal with the factory to extend the warranty to themselves. If they go out of business, so does the warranty. This is **not** the real factory warranty. Check with your drive vendor for true factory warranties. At Tecor we supply original factory warranties at no extra charge.

Steve Hurwitz is the president of Tecor, a super bargain hard drive distributor. If you have drive questions you can call Steve at 408-458-3197 or write us here at hAng On!

Help Wanted

(hAng ON! Needs You!)

We'd like to have all of you involved in hAng ON! We don't care if you're in Houston or out in B.F.E. It may be (too) obvious to you that we need some good humor. We could also use some people with other talents too, namely:

1) Cartoonists (please submit in EPS format)

2) Writers with experience in various fields

3) A multi-media reporter

4) A reporter to cover the medical field

5) Experienced beta testers

6) Experienced NeXT users/developers looking for work!

7) Businesses looking for experienced "NeXTies".

8) Third party developers who would like to give us inside "stoosh", just get the word out on what they're working on, or would just like to keep in contact with other developers.

9) Experienced volunteers to answer technical questions that are WAY too difficult for our editor.•

Who Dunnit?

Editor: Steve Sarich
(talus!steve@uu.psi.com)

Assistant Editor: Steve Nasypany

Resident Psychic: The Schlepkin
(talus!schlepkin@uu.psi.com)

Layout, Design & Making the whole thing work: Mike Barthelemy
(talus!mike@uu.psi.com)

Help, Help and more Help: Debbie Guy

hAng ON! is produced on a NeXTstation Color and a NeXTstation using FrameMaker, Edit, Mail, WordPerfect and Adobe Illustrator.•