

ell, you would think that the big story this month is, "It's working." Last month, we ran a Segments piece entitled, "Get a Mac." As our regular ATPM readers know, I've been recommending this as Apple's ad campaign for about four or five months now.

I remember that fateful day when someone walked up to me at work and asked, "What's the quickest way to get Windoze '95™ installed?" At that time, the fine folks at Ray-O-Hac, which was then Huge, were conducting what they called a pilot program. Our site manager liked to joke, "We've got more pilots than the Air Force!" These things happen when you work at the highest-rated desktop support site, to which I make a modest contribution every month.

To make a long story short, my response was, "Get a Mac." Laughter all around. When we got serious, I pointed them to our ATPM website. They liked what they saw. If you haven't been, you should visit it at <<http://www.atpm.com>>. I'll wait.

Back already? Good. Last month, I mentioned that Apple forgot to run an ad during the Super Bowl. I thought it was because they wanted to save money and put the finishing touches on the Snail ad. A classic, IMNERHO, which stands for, "In My Not Even Remotely Humble Opinion." Anyway, if you haven't seen it, you must. A snail sliming its way across the screen, with a Pentium II chip on it's back. Richard Dreyfuss is still supplying the narrative, telling us that the latest benchmarks clock the PPC750 chip at almost twice the speed of a Pentium II. Someone's even gone so far as to create Snail Inside stickers. I suggest we all get a sheet or two of these and start plastering them on every PC-afflicted machine we find.

However, this is not the big story either. No, the big story this month has to be Bill Gates. Not his recent troubles with the Justice Department, which will follow him for the foreseeable future. I'm talking about the pie in the face he recently received in Belgium. Or should I say pies. The recent Compaq-Digital merger may have had enough cash reserve to finance such an intricate plot. Personally, I think they should use the money to bribe one of the DOJ judges.

Now, I'm not saying I advocate this type of behavior. Most of the perpetrators have been arrested. I just have to examine the events that lead to someone getting a pie in the face.

Some say it was the work of a lone pie thrower by the name of Noel Godin, who targets the

wealthy and famous. Not too many people know that I'm famous, so I should be safe for now.

Let me offer an alternate conspiracy theory or two, not to be confused with the Mel Gibson movie of the same name. I knew I could get a Hollywood reference in here somehow.

The real "perps" have been caught, except one. No one is naming names. They haven't rolled over on their co-conspirator yet. There were four pies, which takes care of the lone pieman theory.

A bunch of people got together one day, and decided that Bill Gates needed a pie in the face. They put the plan in motion. Six months ago, they handed out propaganda fliers, in an effort to preserve Mac clones. They were partially successful. The Power Computing deal went through, as long as we're on that subject. Apple now owns a database and a marketing arm.

I digress. Embedded in the fliers was a secret message. Those that responded were promoted to Phase II. Find a grassy knoll and a book repository. These Mac users realized that they had their work cut out for them. After all, they hadn't yet experienced the snail commercial.

Checking Mr. Gates itinerary, they discovered he'd be in Belgium around the middle of February. They initiated Phase III. I know what you're saying, there wasn't a book repository or a grassy knoll involved. That's what made the plan even more devious! Mr. Bill wouldn't know what hit him until he tasted the pie.

Using Claris Draw, a map was made and trajectories calculated. Pies from all directions, all at once. The guy still at large broke with this strategy, a decision for which he should be applauded. A quick hit and run, and before Mr. Bill knew it, the first pie was successfully thrown.

It doesn't end there. Two more guys emerged from the building and got him again, just as he had almost finished wiping the first pie off his face. Bill was not happy. A video of the whole incident is available at <<http://www.xs4all.nl/~ranx/gates/>>.

Someone overheard him saying, "I should have bought a Macintosh." That's right. Bill says he should have bought a Mac. Well, it's not too late for even the PC-afflicted. Don't wait for the technology to get to where you want it, because you'll never buy anything. There will always be something better six months down the road. This is one case where I recommend you play the point and not the line, or the position and not the player. I should take my own advice here. My reasoning will be forthcoming next month. I've already alluded to it several times in the past.

The next time you walk into your local PC-afflicted computer store, be careful. You may get a pie in the face from one of the Mac faithful.

72 and sunny in El Segundo.

e Ya next month.

Disclaimer: Mike will accept praise, flames, and job leads at: <[mshields@atpm.com](mailto:mshields@atpm.com)>. e wants to stay in the LA area and would prefer some sort of Mac job in the

entertainment industry.