

Need Voice Recognition NOW Scotty!

By Mark Simmons

The more I think about it the more I want it, Voice Recognition. I love it that my mac reads my email, even this article so I can hear how it comes over. I know there are products out there that purport to do it but I have not read a thing about it really working. And why not, “Starfleet” has it (oh no you’ve found out I’m a Trekie) and God knows I want it, so what’s the delay?

What if Apple had it as a working part of the OS? Do you think it would sell extra Macs? I had an half hearted version on the 6400 as standard, it ‘recognised’ the stuff in the Apple Menu. Theoretically it worked something like “computer, launch Claris” or “computer, what’s the time” but it only kinda worked if I used an awful Californian accent and then 90% of the time that’s all I got, the Mac telling me the time when all I wanted was Claris on screen. Exciting when it did work, but I spent hours trying to make it usable and the RAM it needed made it financially worthless, better used on Photoshop. But despite all that I see the twinkle of jealousy in my PC using friends when they see how well my Mac works, what I can do on it and how easy it is, but they’re too tied-up just trying to get their market leading OS to stay up long enough to achieve something. What’s that about??? And can they really be friends if they use a PC?


I can see it in my mind now, walking into the studio and stroking the power key on followed momentarily by the welcome chime (tip, get stereo speakers so when the Mac starts-up and the wife is still asleep upstairs you can really irritate her, another good one is to very loudly fill the kettle whilst treading on the dog). Once the Mac is fully awake I ask “computer, collect email and then log off” I then go off to make the second most wonderful thing ever, my first cup of coffee. When I get back to the screen “computer, read new email messages only”. And so it can go on, “computer, dial the bureau”, “computer, play audio CD”, “computer, take a letter”. Will computer love replace sexual love? The wife hopes it will.

ut the real fun starts when the Mac is connected to the rest of the building, “computer, call my secretary”, “computer, make coffee”, “computer, turn each room light on and off at random”, “computer, lock all doors”, “computer, record the radio”, “computer, arrange it so Gates goes camping, in his very own oxygen tent”. Bill that is not McFadden. I know . . . yawn, another ‘Trek’ reference. Double yawn though and apologies for another anti Bill reference in the media. I don’t really wish him any harm, however I do wish that the anti-Microsoft ‘mouths’ out there spent their energy fighting his strangle-hold rather than wasting potentially their last breath bad mouthing him (I am of course excluded ‘cos I only do it for fun).

guess what I hope is that Voice Recognition will make my computer using life easier, I think especially on the Net. Imagine instructing the Mac to “find and download the latest version of RealPlayer, install it and call me when it’s done” I could surf the net and watch TV at the same time or, if I was really really pushed, get a real life too.

he oh so humble opinions expressed here are my own and not brain washed into me by the Mickysofts’ of the world, I got this narrow minded on my own and with the help of my father while I was growing-up. If you want a portion, and I have time, eMail me at mark@1984.co.uk

Adios until next time, if there is a next time!

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