ver the last 11 issues 1984 has reviewed the various releases and updates of TechTool and Norton.

So this issue instead of getting our team to tell you what they think I thought it would be good to ask the users of the software and readers of 1984 what they think of the disk aid tools they use when it's on the fan and your desperately trying to start up your Mac at 4am in the morning.

TechTool

I use both Norton Utils 4.0.1 (at work: helpdesk for a local newspaper, we have about 50 macs) and TechTool Pro 2.1.1r2 (at home: I have a G3/333). TechTool Pro is my choice utility for maintaining a healthy hard drive.

If I had one wish it would be that TT would be able to maintain RAID systems, since I plan to buy a second disk and make a striped RAID.
Gerard Zandvliet - g.zandvliet@uitg-zwn.nl

y main wish for TechTool's Pro is to add some speed to its operation. The other item is for TOP to rebuild directories in the same way as Disk Warrior. However 2.1.1 is wonderful and definitely fixes things that no other utility seems to even notice. I am the sole support for over 250 Macs worldwide and I am grateful for TTP's existence in my 'Bag of Tricks'.
Jeffery Beach
Mac IS&T Electronics for Imaging Inc

I have been using Tech Tool Pro for quite a while now and I am pleased with it. I actually removed Norton Utilities for Mac over it.

One of the things I wish Tech Tool would do is speed up the disk optimization process. It takes forever to complete a de-fragmentation and optimization of the entire hard drive. It may work a little faster by using it with extensions off, but it is still very slow compared to Norton. Also, this option can only be used by choosing the "Expert" mode of Tech Tool and I think some users may be a little intimidated by the awesome look of that screen. The optimization, that is automatically done in the standard mode, only de-fragments the files on the system and there is no option to do the whole drive without going to the "Expert" mode.

Tech Tool also seems to have a problem with the "Finder" file, at least on my machine. It finds errors every time I run it and "fixes" the same files each time. I find this strange, but it causes no problems. This may just be peculiar to my machine, a PPC 8600/300, but I don't know as I haven't asked around.

Other than that I am pleased with Tech Tool Pro's performance to date and I am looking forward to another update to it. Programs can always be improved on!
Mark C. Boyce - marcus@bigplanet.com

 used Norton Utilities in the past, but when HFS+ came out, Tech Tool Pro was the first disk utility to be HFS+ compatible......... I didn't want to wait almost a year before Norton Utilities was HFS+ compatible.

In my experience, Tech Tool Pro is just as user friendly as Norton, provides more detailed (and easier to access/read) information, runs more useful tests and has more useful features.   I love it, but if I could add something to Tech Tool Pro, it would be:

** Implement the Disk & File Optimization routines so they are faster, more logical, and more efficient.   Currently, you can't optimize the disk without optimizing files first, but if your disk is fragmented you can't optimize all your files because there isn't enough contiguous free space on the disk.   It's like the chicken or the egg question......   I had to buy a 9 Gig external drive to move my data to, just so I could optimize the files on my internal hard disk -- either that or erase the whole drive and start over.   Norton's implementation of file & disk optimization is much more useful, although TT Pro's method is safer.

Tech Tool Pro is a great program and a lifesaver for data/drive rescue, and it certainly comes in handy for troubleshooting.
Stephen J. Magyari - sjmagy@macconnect.com

I'd like you to add this:
In all the years I've used Macs, I'd never lost any data until I used TechTool.   I lost two drives full of data and can no longer say that I've never seen a Mac hard drive damaged

beyond repair.
David F. Bills

. I would like to see TOP be able to repair damaged System and Finder files. I realize that this is probably ridiculous, but it would be nice.

2. It usually takes two consecutive repairs for TOP to fix the bundle bits on my printer files. It would be good if it would do it in one.

3. I would like to see the Optimization part of TOP enlarged so I could see more detail.

4. Otherwise, I think it's great. Use it more than NDD.
Craig N. deFreese

Tech Tool Pro wish list :
1.   I would like to see somewhere that would allow a user to see the amount of RAM, VRAM, and other hardware types.   This would be similar to Apple System Profiler but would do more.   I would like to be able to see the type of hard drive (IDE vs. SCSI) and those type of things.   This information is helpful when you have a problem.

2.   I would also like to see an icon flashing in the menu bar when a device is in use. This was included in the old MacTools program, called MacTools Drivelight).   It is helpful to see an icon flashing when a device is in use like the hard drive, printer, modem or an external drive.   (The old MacTools drive light does not work on ATA drives).   This helps you to know that your system is working as opposed to hanging or crashed.
-Richard Huyck

Norton
I think it worthwhile to communicate with you. I beta tested Norton 4.0, and believe at 4.01 Norton seems better then Tech Tool Pro; at least it rarely causes any problems, while Tech Tool Pro was unstable until 2.1.1 with MacOS 8.5.x.
-Allan

ech Tool is a great tool but still seems to lack the ease of Norton. With Norton I can load the program and fix my hard drive -- QUICKLY -- in one click.   Tech Tool Pro simply needs a speedier fix.   Furthermore, though 2.1.1 has improved interface, it can still be made more intuitive.   All the great graphics in the world won't make it work better or solve a crisis.

Gary Penn - gpenn@phillips.com

 have created a beautiful "Mac Repair" disk. It is a zip disk that can boot just about any Mac with a zip drive attached. On it, I have almost every repair application available, except Disk warrior. Right now my feeling is that none of the current apps works as well as NDD 3.x used to work on system 7.x. I have run into problems that none of the apps solve, even though they all seem to do a lot of fixing. I like the interface on MacMedic, it is clean, but also leaves a lot to be desired. I prefer the Norton interface for it's usability and feedback, but the TechTool interface gives the most power user control.

MacMedic does not work if the disk is not already mounted, it has very poor ability to mount drives, which is bad b/c I encounter many situation where I cannot mount a drive, and need to in order to fix it. If I had to choose, I would choose NDD first and TechTool's second and MacMedic last, personal preferences of course.
-Joe

As a network administrator and technical person for a small non-profit   (Institute for Research on Learning (IRL)), I look for tools that are quick and relative easy to use in my day to day operations. TechTool fills that need. I do use the NDD 4.0.1, but I waited for sometime before using it. Symantec just took too much time in developing the upgrade. It looks like
that TechTool is gaining ground to NDD in many respects. At one time the best tool around before being bought was   MacTools (really a great tool) and of course we all know that Symantec bought that then killed it off. I only hope that Symantec does not do the same to TechTool. I think in time TechTool will be better than NDD. They have made many strides and the interface is much better than Symantec.
-Garry

 use Norton 4.01 and Disk First Aid 8.5.1 occasionally without incident, although frankly I haven't had a disk problem in months.

But I'm prepared if I do! Perhaps it's the "umbrella effect" of my new tape drive: Now that I am protected against data loss by regular and complete backups, I'm guaranteed immunity from any hard drive problems, just as bringing an umbrella somehow prevents it from raining. :-) Without having any problems to fix, I don't feel confident commenting on any of the products' efficacy. For years, I relied on Norton and will probably continue to use it first, although for a while, Tech Tool Pro was the only utility that could repair HFS+ drives.
-Tony Green

I still don't understand whose fixes are right-- Tech Tool or Norton (3.5.2, on regular HFS only). I regularly use an 8100 with OS 8.1 & HFS, and a PB 3400 with OS 8.1 & HFS+. I use TT Pro on the PB because I have to, and I have been becoming increasingly comfortable with it, but I still use Norton first on the 8100, and it still flags problems with bundle bits and so forth that, when it corrects them, causes TT Pro to find the opposite problem and "fix" them back to what they were.
Fritz Mills - fritz@mcs.net

Conclusion
At the end of the day disk aid/repair software is quite a personal choice. I use Norton as I find TechTool has nothing really to offer me rather that some fancy testing and graphics. But hay that's only MY opinion.

I was lucky enough recently to have a Beta copy of Total Recall's MacMedic v1.1 and it is a huge improvement on its unstable and buggy predecessor.

f MacMedic promises to grow as I have been told with support from users and technicians, it might spur more software houses to kick start recover/disk aid tools for the Mac platform, hell we need it!

Remember it is always nice to keep a copy of good old Disk First Aid by Apple - just in case.
🔥Darren