

his column is open for anyone who would like to share their story about their first Macintosh. Like a first car, first date, first bike or first time in love, Mac users never forget their first Mac. We would love to hear your story, and to share it with other Mac users. Send in your stories to Tim Robertson, Publisher, My Mac Magazine at <publisher@mymac.com>

•By Barbara Bell <barbara@mymac.com>•

My first Mac experience took place on a little Mac Classic back in the very late 80s. It was a small box with a teeny, tiny, black and white screen containing these funny little icons I'd never seen before. Up until then I had been on a Wang terminal. Wang was the leading industry in my town, Lowell, Massachusetts. Everybody used them. It would have been sacrilege not to. I had taken a class in DOS programming so I could understand the darn thing a little better and it even made a bit of sense. You can imagine my shock, surprise, and yes, frustration when I saw how completely different and foreign the Mac was!

My job was to create a little 2 x 3 booklet, complete with graphics. At that time I was a secretary and had done nothing more challenging than typing reports and

creating a few bar charts. I was excited about putting together a booklet and determined not to fail. But what's up with this computer???

The Mac was so new to our organization that we only had one. It was used for those few, "high-end" graphic jobs. There was a special cubicle it sat in, ready to be used by anyone. So, suddenly, there I sat. No training manuals, no user manuals, no training videos. Somehow, I figured it out. It's not so hard! Sure, I had to learn what "Cut and Paste" meant (don't ask what the equivalent on the Wang was—my memory isn't that good) but once I figured those out, everything else made sense. I even learned to work the mouse. Awesome!

My love was born. It was secret, it was quiet, and I didn't know then what to do with it. A couple of years later, I received a Mac II and became the Mac person in-house. That meant slides, mostly, but also handouts, reports, and some graphics. My expertise grew. So did my love for this nifty computer. I began to wonder how I ever found my way in that stupid DOS machine!

That little project done on a computer I had never seen before helped me to Think Different. I changed my career plans. I read everything I could to become proficient on the Mac and in desktop publishing. I graduated from reports and slides to datasheets, brochures, whitepapers, convention graphics. When a professional, freelance graphic designer called me a graphic designer (even though she was being kind!) I received the final push into my career direction: Marketing Communications. Being on a Mac meant I could do anything, be anything. Nothing could hold me back except myself.

And now, though I'm on a PC again at work, I have my iMac at home. It nourishes me, it frees me, it focuses me. How can a little machine do all that? By being different. By allowing me to be different. It makes me think "outside the box," to use a corporate euphemism. As long as there are Macs, there are those of us who can march to our own drum, not tied down by uniformity. Its ease of use allows me to express what I feel needs expressing. It allows me to use what little creative talent I have and makes it better. Besides, the darn thing is cute!

So I say: LONG LIVE THE MAC!

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