
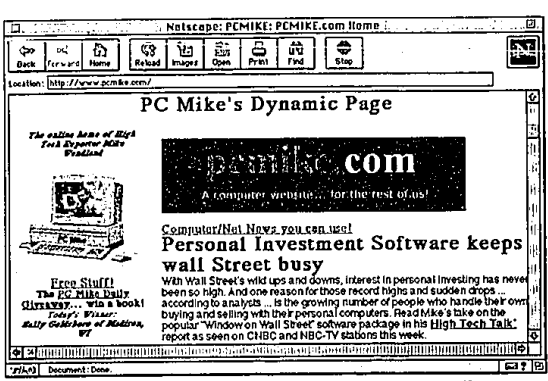


Windows 98 more snooze than news

PC TALK

MIKE WENDLAND
 I promised I wouldn't tell. I want to, mind you, but I promised. That's the requirement of all beta testers. I had to sign a non-disclosure agreement, meaning that I had to keep quiet about the details of the software.
 But it's hard. I really want to tell you what I think about Windows 98, the much anticipated update to the now three-year-old upgrade of Microsoft's original Windows operating system. I've been using the new version since last fall.
 I've gone through several builds and improvements and now the final pre-release "candidate" as it's called.
 I did the same thing with Windows 95 three years ago and, without being specific, I can tell you that Windows 98... ain't no Windows 95.
 When Windows 95 came out, there were people standing in line at computer stores at midnight on release day. The release made all the network TV news show, page one of most newspapers and truly was a huge evolutionary improvement of the old Windows 3.1 system.
 But, from my experience, this new upgrade... Windows 98... is more snooze than news.
 I'm not giving away any huge secrets here. I promised Microsoft that I wouldn't. I won't talk about the numerous changes and adjustments and tweaks to the Windows 95 system you're used to. I won't reveal the exact desktop changes and the degree to which Microsoft has integrated its Internet Explorer web browser into the Win98 system.
 But I will say... it's no big deal. Yeah, it does seem to load some things faster, manage files easier and seamlessly connect to the Internet.
 But nice as those improvements may be, I can't imagine anyone standing in line at midnight to get this upgrade. It's just not that revolutionary.
 In fact, many of the features being bundled with Win98 are already being offered up free, in bits and pieces and software "patches" from the Microsoft Web site (www.microsoft.com).
 Microsoft's upgrade to its popular Outlook personal information manager is available for free downloading right now, for example, and its e-mail, calendar and scheduling elements are all aspects that Win98 will prominently feature. Same with the latest version of Internet Explorer 4.1.


 The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying "PC Mike's Dynamic Page". The page has a header with navigation buttons (Back, Forward, Home, Reload, Images, Open, Print, Find, Stop) and a location bar showing "http://www.pcmike.com/". The main content area features a large "pcmike.com" logo and text: "A computer website... for the rest of us!". Below this, it says "Computer/Net News you can use!" and "Personal Investment Software keeps wall Street busy". There's a section titled "Free Stuff!" with links to "The PC World", "Slideshow", "Win 95", "Today's Windows", and "Daily Dose of Windows". At the bottom, it says "PCMike: You can check out Wendland's Web site at www.pcmike.com."

Get it and you've got a lot of Win98. The computer press has already hinted at Win98's other big changes. You can run multiple monitors, for example, from the same computer. And its improved "plug 'n' play" ability to recognize and configure peripheral devices like scanners and digital cameras and DVD-drives through a device called a Universal Serial Bus (USB) is convenient.
 But unlike I did three years ago with Win95, I don't recommend that you rush to the store and upgrade to Win98 this time. If you're happy with Win95 and have no immediate need to run multiple monitors, save the \$80 or so that Microsoft is going to ask for the upgrade. Right now, it's just not that big of a deal.
 Besides, though I must say the beta versions I've been testing on a laptop and desktop have performed flawlessly with no crashes or glitches, it's not the same for Microsoft CEO Bill Gates.
 Two weeks ago, Gates took the stage at the big spring Comdex computer show in Chicago to demonstrate Win98 to the media. After telling how great the upgrade was, Gates went to hook up a scanner to the USB connection.
 Windows 98 crashed.
 "I guess we still have a couple of bugs to work out," said a chagrined Gates.
 Original release date of June 25 is now not so firm. Now Microsoft will only say look for Win 98 sometime in "mid summer."
 Now, while I can't tell you the details of my beta testing experiments, there is a lot of material out there about Windows 98. Here are some Web sites you may want to check out.
 ■ The official Microsoft Windows 98 Site (<http://www.microsoft.com/windows/win98/default.asp>) - Here's the official word on the product from Gates and Company.
 ■ The Windows Spy (<http://www.windowspy.com/magazine/mar1998/apb8/apb8.htm>) - Don't expect anything other than glowing reviews here. It's another Microsoft site that tries to build the "buzz" about Win98. But it's a fun scroll down the page.
 ■ Windows Magazine (<http://www.winmag.com/win98/>) - These guys squealed. Not only do they walk you through all the features as they review the whole system but they also give you screen shots as well.
 ■ Windows 98 Now! (<http://www.lineline.com/personal/lanlyer/win98.html>) - Remember me? I told you how you can get most of the newest Win98 features already, by downloading the individual patches and upgrades? Well, this guy has put them all together in a collection of links. Go get 'em.
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with the production of investment income (other than interest).
 Therefore, using a margin account should be considered to acquire investments rather than investing cash and borrowing to acquire consumer goods. It should be remembered that interest paid on funds used to acquire or carry municipal bonds is not deductible.
Business expenses
 Home Office Expense: The cost of maintaining an office in your home is available as a deduction only if the home office is used exclusively on a regular basis as the principal place of any business operated by you or as a place to meet with patients, clients, or customers of the business.
 If you are an employee, the use of a home office must be for the convenience of your employer.
Income shifting
 Since the decline in tax rates under the 1986 Tax Reform Act, there is less reason to postpone income to lower tax liability. Still, some tax payments can be postponed by delaying some investments or other earnings. For instance, delaying income can save you on taxes if the future income is expected to fall into a lower tax bracket.
Expense shifting
 The reverse strategy works with respect to expenses. Since expenses reduce taxable income, accelerating deductions during the year may prove to be an attractive strategy.
 Prepayment of charitable contributions and professional dues and realization of losses by selling property are examples of expense shifting.

Kelly from page B5

an unbeatable team."
 Hire Quality was established in 1994 to help corporations hire and retain the men and women departing from the American Armed Forces for the private sector.
 Hire Quality works with some of the world's leading companies and offers a wide range of positions for all ranks. The service is free to veterans and their families.

Kelly Services, a Fortune 500 company, provides more than 800,000 employees annually in office services, accounting, engineering, information technology, legal, scientific, marketing, light industrial and home care. Kelly owns and operates more than 1,600 offices in 16 countries. Sales in 1997 exceeded \$3.85 billion.

Milestones from page B5


Mike Plette has been named president and general manager of WorkPlace Integrators in Bingham Farms. He will handle day-to-day operations. He was previously a sales representative for 3M.

Ron Rosalik of Beverly Hills has been appointed marketing manager of the central area for Siemens Business Communication Systems. He will be responsible for leading marketing efforts in 21 central states. He was previously a branch applications manager for the Great Lakes region of Siemens, which he joined in 1997.
Bill Viviano, of Grosse Pointe, has been elected chairman of the board of directors of the Associated Food Dealers of Michigan. He is the owner of House of Prime inside Papp John's Supermarket in Rochester Hills.

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