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PDF Maker the highlight in new FileMaker

Early adopters of FileMaker Pro 8 are finding the new PDF Maker feature to be a winning aspect of the application.

FileMaker Pro 8, the newest version of the most awarded desktop database, has already received some very positive feedback from people in the print media management community. FileMaker Pro 8 features many new ways to work faster, share and manage information of all types, and be more productive.

In particular, the new PDF Maker in FileMaker Pro 8 has sparked some praiseworthy comments. Featuring the Adobe PDF library licensed via Datalogics, this allows users to convert attractive graphic-rich reports of their data into PDFs, which can be quickly emailed for sharing with non-FileMaker users. The new Excel Maker works the same effortless way. FileMaker Pro 8 users can save data as a Microsoft Excel file, and just as painlessly include it as an attachment ready to send via email.

According to Russell Wilkinson at Alastair Sawday Publishing, publishers of the well known guide book series: "Getting to know FileMaker Pro 8 is a bit

like getting into a new car - you open it, start it up, then try pressing all the buttons and looking in the compartments to see what they're for. Some are subtle new luxuries (like spell checking, scroll wheels and the pop-up calendar), while others, like built-in tab controls, PDF creation and the new calculation functions, are major extras that will make the journey a whole lot more comfortable and efficient."

Continues Wilkinson: "The PDF Maker in particular is a great innovation. The potential uses for it are many and varied - especially in conjunction with the improved e-mail functionality. It will transform the way we do some of our work and save us lots and lots of paper, which, both from a cost and an environmental point of view, is very pleasing indeed."

The New Tab Control functionality also drew praise from Wilkinson: "This functionality is profoundly useful too. It will make a big difference to our data display capabilities, allowing us to have multiple views without needing multiple layouts and will bring about even greater data

accessibility. We'll be able to build a single layout with multiple tabs instead of creating multiple layouts, each with its own hand-crafted tab. Updating will be reduced from a long series of transfers to a simple copy-and-paste routine - it'll be like holding a dozen layouts in the clipboard."

Other new features have also caught Wilkinson's eye: "The new Visual Spell Checker will keep us on track with our spelling - that's quite important for a publisher. It's another universally helpful feature. Calendar Pop-ups are another neat extra that will make our scheduling and other date-based interfaces more approachable - you just point and pick your date rather than typing in all those numbers and slashes... Finally, Mouse-Wheel Support lets us scroll through records or fields using a mouse-wheel. It may not sound like a big deal, but it's a feature I'm delighted to see and it will make a great difference to the whole FileMaker experience."

• www.filemaker.co.uk



FileMaker Pro 8 Advanced released

FileMaker has also announced the release of FileMaker Pro 8 Advanced. This is intended to meet the needs of the growing number of professional developers and advanced database creators in the print media management sector. FileMaker Pro 8 Advanced includes all the features of FileMaker Pro 8, plus breakthrough development and customisation tools. With the ability to customize menus and add custom Tooltips, as well as robust troubleshooting and database analysis tools, developers and advanced FileMaker users alike can efficiently build more powerful, more customised databases, says FileMaker.

According to Tony Speakman, general manager for FileMaker International Northern Europe: "We renamed FileMaker Developer to FileMaker Pro Advanced because we found that growing numbers of our users in print media management were building advanced solutions but did not consider themselves traditional developers. With FileMaker Pro 8 Advanced we deliver the tools needed to customise and manage powerful databases, while retaining the ease of use that has made FileMaker a market leader in print media management."