Product Review

Dave Version 4.0

Reviewed by Richard Wiener

Normally the software that I review is directly related to some object-oriented language, object modeling or OO framework. Not so this time. The relationship of this product to OOP is more indirect but very important to me and perhaps other Macintosh users.

Like many developers, my OO development work (mainly in Java these days) is done on a variety of platforms. For me the two principal platforms that I use are Mac Jaguar OS X, v 10.2 and Windows 2000. The obvious challenge is getting my Mac Powerbook, PowerMac and several PC's to talk to each other and share files and printers.
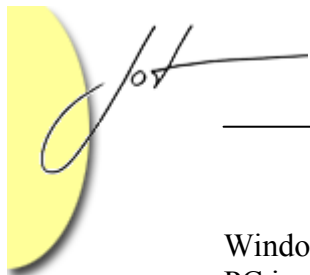
Thursby Software (www.thursby.com) has recently upgraded their highly respected "Dave" Mac-PC connectivity tool to Version 4.0. Dave 4.0 touts the following support for allowing files and printers to be transferred and shared in a Mac-PC network: NT Domain Login, MS standard browsing, MS NTFS file format, Windows Shortcut.lnk files, distributed file systems, one click mounting of multiple shared files, automatic workgroup detection, AppleShare files stored on a PC, services for Macintosh, allows for window's network password changes, supports Jaguar's Classic environment.

Although it is possible to network a PC to a Macintosh and have the Macintosh visible in the PC's Window's Explorer, the setup requirements are complex and rely on utilizing low-level protocols available in each operating system. After recently upgrading OS X to version Jaguar 10.2, my older Dave 3.1.1 which does not support Mac's latest operating system stopped working. It took me a half a day to figure out how to utilize the low-level protocols of each operating system to get my PC's to see the Mac's connected to the network. After receiving the recently released Dave 4.0, it took about 2 minutes to use the setup program to achieve total connectivity between the two Macintosh machines and the PC network.

On the Macintosh, connectivity is achieved by using the "Go/Connect to Server …" menu item in the Finder. All the computer names in the Mac-PC network are displayed. After double-clicking the name of the computer that you wish to share files with, you are prompted to select the volumes that you wish to mount (if the computer you have selected is a PC). After making this selection, an icon of the volume appears on the Macintosh desktop. This volume can be treated like a locally available hard disk. Once the connection is established between the Mac and PC, the connection is reciprocal. In the

Window's Explorer "Network Neighborhood", the Mac that has just been connected to a PC is visible.

Dave 4.0 has made it easy for me to do my Java development work on either of my Macs or one of my PC's without concern about physically porting the software across platforms. I highly recommend Dave 4.0 to anyone who has Mac-PC connectivity needs. For me, Dave 4.0 is not only desirable to have, it is essential.