

# ASPECTS®

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## Shareware Is Dead – Long Live Shareware!

by Andy Brice

**Orvx Digital Ltd.**

Today it is relatively easy to market your software (through a web site), distribute the software (via Internet downloads) and collect payment (using an online payment provider). It wasn't so easy before the Internet existed. "Shareware" appeared in the 1980s as a way for small commercial developers to reach a large market.

"Shareware was one of the surprises of the early personal computer industry. Who would have thought that you could make a living from software paid for on the honor system? Make it publicly available, invite people to make copies of it and give them to their friends, and base your income prospects on a little notice asking people to send you a few dollars if they found the program useful."

**Michael Swaine**, Dr Dobbs, January 2000

Early shareware pioneers including Andrew Fluegelman, Jim Knopf (Button), Bob Wallace, and Marshall Magee proved the commercial viability of the shareware concept, reportedly making millions.

The Association of Shareware Professionals (ASP) was formed in 1987 to promote shareware as a business model and to further the interests of shareware developers. Today it has over a thousand members. But times have changed. It is no longer necessary to distribute software by sharing floppy disks or to pay with a check in the mail. Many consumers, fairly or not, have come to see "shareware" as short-hand for "amateurish".

Today, the Association of Shareware Professionals announced that it was renaming itself to the Association of Software Professionals, following a unanimous vote by the board. It has widespread support from the members in doing so. It also follows in the footsteps of a number of other organizations who have already dropped "shareware" from the name, including SIC (formerly 'Shareware Industry Conference', now 'Software Industry Conference') and ESWC (formerly 'European Shareware Conference', now 'European Software Conference').

I approached a number of shareware veterans to find out how they felt about the name change. I asked them:

- How do you feel about the ASP name change?
- Do you think the term 'shareware' is still one that small software developers should use?
- The try-before-you-buy model first popularized by shareware is completely standard now. But, unlike early shareware, it is usually limited in some way until you pay. Do you feel the idea of shareware won or lost?

Here are their responses:

"The consumer software industry has changed and I applaud the ASP for adjusting its strategy as well.

I believe we've seen the shareware concept brought forward over the years and the original concept has sustained the test of time. At the end of the day, people like the option of trying something before they buy it."

**Marshall W. Magee**, Founding President of the ASP.

He released Automenu in 1983 and became one of the first shareware authors to make more than \$1 million dollars in sales. Automenu is still for sale.

"Shareware was invented as a means of taking advantage of the underground sharing of software (usually copyrighted commercial software, but sometimes, small utilities and code fragments). In the early days the great majority of this sharing took place on BBS's and user groups and then came shareware distributors who reached a broader and more business-oriented audience.

I suspect that the distribution methods which shareware was supposed to take advantage of are all but gone. Obviously, there are still shareware sites online, but I don't know if they generate significant sales for programmers.

The idea of shareware won if the programmers made more money with it than they did without it. My shareware company, PsL, not only got software out to users all over the world, but we took phone (and later Internet) and

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## President's Corner

by Michael Dulin  
President, ASP

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Since this is the ASP's annual public edition I'd like to point out to the public that we have changed our name. We are now the Association of Software Professionals instead of the Association of Shareware Professionals. We are still the same organization that has been around since 1987 with the same focus. That focus is mostly on independent software developers. Our members also include software vendors, press members, and e-commerce providers. The ASP still is the trade organization known for its own private newsgroups or forums. These are divided into topic areas; the names of a few are marketing, members, and technical. These newsgroups have helped many a member go from a person with nothing more than an idea into six-figure and even larger businesses. In these newsgroups you can find information about anything and I do mean anything. Someone once told me how to rebuild the engine on my Model-T Ford. Maybe I'm exaggerating just a little bit. There is one thing that is not exaggerated though, is that life-long friendships have been started in these newsgroups. We are also a very international group; we have members from all over the world from Mexico to Malaysia, from Texas to Thailand, from China to Canada and California.

How do you find out who will be attending the latest industry event? Ask in the members area. Has anyone tried out this type of marketing and with what results? Ask this one in the marketing newsgroup. Are you thinking of switching to a new programming language for some reason and want to know if it is the right thing to do? Ask in the technical newsgroup. The newsgroups are only for members so you never get spam in them, or the script kiddie pretending to be Mr Know It All. You get real answers and, even better, most of the answers you get are to questions that you haven't even thought of to ask. I've seen posts by people that have guided me into profitable ventures when before I saw the thread I didn't even know the opportunity existed.

This monthly newsletter, *ASPects*, is always full of great articles that do everything from tell you about new trends in marketing to tell you how to get started with the bookkeeping end of your business. *ASPects* also keeps you abreast of industry news and significant legislation.

Some of the ASP members meet up and get together at industry events like the Software Industry Conference (SIC) held in the summer, the European Software Conference (ESWC)



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held in the fall, and the Independent Software Developers Forum conferences (ISDEF) held twice a year with the fall largest one always held in Moscow.

Those are just a few of the reasons that people join our organization.

I'd like to say to all of our current members reading this that it has once again been a privilege and honor to be an officer in the ASP. I would like to thank all of the other officers and volunteers for the help and cooperation they have given me this past year. We have seen a number of changes in the past year and personally I look forward to

being a member of the ASP for many more years.

Hey Old Timer! Yes I'm talking to you the crotchety guy over there. Have you taken a peek at the new look of our public pages? Great look isn't it? The main man behind the new look is Al Harberg, what a great job Al.

So I'll see all of you right here next month. Some of you I'll see at the Software Industry Conference this month where I'll be hanging out at the ASP hospitality suite. Plus I'll be giving a presentation on PAD called "PAD by the ASP - The Good, the Bad, the Ugly." My talk will be on Friday from 3:30pm to 4:30pm; see you there.

## Shareware Is Dead – Long Live Shareware!

– continued from front cover –

mail orders for hundreds of shareware authors, so we had a pretty good idea of how different programmers were doing.

Of course, there were many, many thousands of shareware authors, all of them expecting to make a lot of money from their software. Supply and demand tells you that just can't happen. The people who made little or nothing tended to blame shareware, despite the fact that some authors made a lot of money, and a few made a LOT of money. One of the most successful shareware programs of all times in terms of sales was WinZip, and it was marketed in the purest form of shareware – completely unlimited, nothing sent to the customer but a receipt."

**Nelson Ford**, ASP founder and member since 1987, founder of the Public (software) Library—the largest commercial library of public domain and shareware software

"I've always advocated an evolutionary model for shareware. Our quick adaptability gives us a decisive edge when we compete with "the big boys" who can't make decisions. If our evolution has led us to the point where we should drop the word "shareware," then so be it.

And we really can make a case to drop the "shareware" moniker, given the fact everyone uses the shareware sales model these days. We now distinguish old, non-evolved sales tactics as "oh, that's one you can't try first" software. So why not change our name to keep up with evolution?

Consider the analogy of the telephone's evolution here in the U.S. When wireless handsets first came out, we described them specifically as "cordless phones". When radio phones first came out, we described them specifically as "mobile phones". But the concept of wireless is now so pervasive (except in the U.S. government and military), that

we distinguish the original non-evolved phone as a "land-line".

At some point you gotta admit "Homo Erectus" isn't good enough to describe this evolved species. Let's call it "Homo Sapien". At some point you gotta admit the same thing for shareware. If the membership feels we need to give it a new name, then it's time to give it a new name.

I've always been against crippling because I believe in the "pervasive" theory of software distribution. In particular it explains why antivirus software is so pervasive – John McAfee wanted his name emblazoned on every desktop in the world and he made it so. His non-shareware competitors quickly realized their traditional non-shareware sales channels didn't hold a candle to McAfee's aggressive electronic giveaway scheme.

I think shareware achieved a big win with its "time-limited fully functional" sales pitch. In the early days, shareware authors were constantly looking for better ways to make a sale. We had so many different people trying so many different techniques that we were bound to come across the better ways of doing business. Those who limited the product's functionality were perceived as not trusting their customers; those who committed the user to a decision were perceived as simply making the customer give a definitive answer ("yes I want it" or "no I don't").

We see this philosophy in other "shareware" realms, like auto dealerships. Some people take a dealer's car home with them for 24hrs, then they have got to buy it or return it. I once took a pickup truck home to make sure it fit in my small garage – why wouldn't I want to do the same thing with a piece of software before I invest money in it? That's a big win for shareware in my book.

We won in 1997 when Microsoft released a 120-day fully functional copy of Office."

**Rob Rosenberger**, ASP member since 1988, publisher of the Shareware Compendium

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“I don’t like the new name.”

**Jim Knopf** (Button), one of the earliest and most successful pioneers of the shareware model; his Buttonware company reportedly grew to 35 employees, a broad line-up of shareware products and a \$4.5 million gross annual income before its sale in 1992.

“The Shareware Industry Conference changed its name to the Software Industry Conference in 2007. Twenty plus years ago, when many (most?) PC users were still hackers, the term “Shareware” had wide-spread recognition. Although, even then, there was some confusion between shareware, freeware, crippleware etc. Nowadays, the term is nebulous at best, and very misleading. It’s mainly used to describe “everything one can download from the Internet” (as an aside, a very useful experiment would be to ask 100 teenagers and 100 business people what they think of when they hear the world shareware).

The SIC had been created to bring together “small” developers, all of whom, at the time used to be software authors distributing their products as “shareware.” The industry changed over the years; the term shareware lost its token value and many SIC attendees use a number of

different marketing venues for their wares, so the term “shareware” was no longer describing the conference.

I think as a concept, the shareware distribution model was instrumental in convincing mainstream software vendors that users are more likely to buy a product, if they get to try it first. And, let’s not forget that not all products distributed as shareware were fully functional, even in the old days. That was one of the early requirements for ASP membership, but a lot of us fought for years to use that requirement as a convincing argument to get users to choose ASP member products, and not other “shareware” products which had limited functionality, were time limited, etc.

I think the name change has been a long time coming. The ASP has come a long way since the days when I was a member, and I think changing the name to “Software” will help the association grow, as it will probably attract developers that may have felt there was a perceived stigma associated with “Shareware”. Though I don’t have any hard statistics, I think similar to the SIC, many ASP members distribute their software through many different channels, one of which is shareware, so for the association name to reflect “just that marketing channel” was restrictive.”

**Paris Karahalios**, SIAF co-founder, Software Industry Conference board member and co-founder of Trius Inc

“I’m not sure anyone outside the ASP will notice the change, but I’ve found the word “Shareware” less recognizable over the last few years, so it is time to drop the word from the organization name. Fortunately, the ASP can still use the same acronym. Words come and go from our language and the “Shareware” has had its day. The “try before you buy” model is now the most common way to distribute software. As Rob Rosenberger said a few years ago ‘we won’.”

**Jerry Medlin**, involved in shareware since 1984, founder of Medlin Accounting software

“The ASP name change reflects a long-standing reality. This is the software industry, and ASP members use many different marketing methods. By adopting a broader, more inclusive name, we are not rejecting the past, we are living in the present and welcoming the future. Developers who feel that the term “shareware” is still an important part of their identity can go on using it with pride. But it’s not really necessary. “Try before you buy” is the norm and no longer needs any explanation or special terminology. The focus should be on the product, not on the marketing technique.

Shareware was always about the process of experimentation. From the very early days, developers tested different customer incentives, and over time adjusted their methods to better work with their evolving user base. The core philosophy behind shareware, try before you buy, has never changed. Steve Lee's catalog used to bear the slogan, "Someday all software will be sold this way". It was a bold statement at the time, but he was right. One by one, the biggest companies in the business started doing it our way. It was the small, independent developers who set the standard, and we continue to do so with benefits like niche-marketed products and personalized customer service that most large corporations still can't match."

**Rosemary West** has been involved in shareware since 'the late 1980s'; she has held various board positions in the ASP and ESC.

"Shareware is just a marketing concept and is as subject to change as software is. Just as my first CP/M program won't run under modern Windows computers, shareware, as it was originally conceived, doesn't work the same way now.

Shareware was developed as a way to market software by people or companies that had no other practical way to reach their target audience. With the development of the internet, the major barriers to directly reaching your customers, no matter what your size, have been removed. At the same time most software companies offer free trial versions of their software. So for all practical purposes shareware as a marketing concept no longer exists.

The ASP lost the war to market the term shareware to the general public years ago. It was never much of a war in any case. The ASP never had a budget to practically address that issue in any case. I've said this before and I'll say it again- your customers don't care what term you use to describe your software. Spend your time marketing your software, not arguing about what to call the method you use to sell it."

I think it is about time for the ASP name change. I don't think "shareware" is a term developers should use. The term shareware can have one of three possible connotations in a customer's mind:

1. They have never heard of it so at best it confuses them.
2. They have heard the term and have a negative association with the word.
3. They have heard the term and have a positive association with the word.

Unless you believe that the vast majority of all people fit

into class 3 above, you are better off avoiding the word altogether. If you don't use the word at all you have no negative connotations or confused customers.

The original idea that shareware could not be limited or crippled in any way was an accidental by-product of the first meeting of shareware authors. This group of shareware authors wanted to keep a particular person out of their "club." The rules that prohibited limiting a program to encourage payment were designed to keep someone out of the club. Things would probably have been better if those limits had never been imposed. No one now tells us how to market our software. We do what we feel is best for our businesses and our customers. Shareware is an idea whose time has come and gone."

**Gary Elfring** has been in business since 1979, he has held board positions in the ASP, SIAF and ISCF, he is founder of Elfring Fonts

"I feel that my "way of life" may be changing. As one of the first shareware developers who started before we called it "shareware", I still use the term in all of my software as well as in all of my marketing. And since it is the well-known term for the try-before-you-buy method of marketing, I will continue to use it to let people know that we want them to try our software before they pay a penny. This is why we have 100% satisfied and happy customers—they didn't pay until they were sure our software was what they were looking for. So I guess I will be a member of the Association of Software Developers, but will still sell my software through the shareware method of marketing.

If developers want to use the term "shareware" like I do, then they should be allowed to. And even when they grow through the years as we have in my company, if they want, they should be able to continue to use this well-known term to describe the way they market their software.

Shareware definitely won. If you look on the web, most software companies including Microsoft now have trial downloads just like we do. And a lot of it is not limited at all with the exception that it stops working after a number of days, exactly like we do with our software. We set the trend and now as you see, the rest of the software world is joining us, maybe not as members of the ASP, but as 'shareware distributors'."

**Paul Mayer** wrote a number of Freeware programs in the 1970s for Heathkit computers, full-time shareware author since 1991, President ZPAY Payroll Systems Inc

"The role of the ASP really won't change. What will change is the perception that people and companies might

have had of the organization because of the word “shareware” in the name. The ASP will still be the organization that software developers, vendors and marketing people join to enhance their business.

The ASP’s private targeted forums are unique in many ways. Probably the best thing about them is they are where people and companies who have been in the business for many years will help out the new guy. The monthly newsletter *ASPects* always has articles that inspire you to do things, or make you think in new ways. The members-only website too has great value. At \$100 a year it is a real bargain, especially when you take advantage of offers that member companies only give to other ASP members.

Most importantly though, the ASP will remain a friendly organization dedicated to helping small commercial vendors thrive, whatever you may call them – microISVs, independent developers or shareware authors.”

**Mike Dulin**, current ASP President, CEO of [sharewarejunkies.com](http://sharewarejunkies.com) and [sharewareradio.com](http://sharewareradio.com)

Overall response from ASP members has been very positive. Personally, as an ASP member, I support the name change. I avoid using the word “shareware” on my own product website. Most of my customers don’t know what it

## Failure to Launch

by Russell Thackston  
[microISVResearch.org](http://microISVResearch.org)

I’ve started more than six microISVs over the last decade and, not counting the open source projects, none of them made it to market. Why? Let me tell you. . . .

The internet is littered with the tumbleweeds and debris of startups that failed to launch. The evidence of them is right there in the blogosphere if you know what you’re looking for. It usually goes something like this.

Post #1 - Day 0: *Welcome to microInitech! We’re going to change the world.*

Post #2 - Day 1: *Well, I’ve got everything in place to start coding...*

Post #3 - Day 7: *Got most of the framework built.*

Post #4 - Day 20: *Sorry I haven’t blogged much, I’ve been so busy!*

Post #5 - Day 40: *Here’s a link to a cool random web page I found.*

Post #6 - (3 years later): *My pet died today. I’m sad...*

Now, don’t get me wrong. These are smart people with lots of talent and motivation. They didn’t fail because they were incapable. They didn’t fail because they were unable to produce a good, or perhaps excellent, quality product that would truly make someone’s life easier. They failed for one of the following three reasons.

means, and those that do may view it in a negative light. I believe many of the aspects of early shareware, such as honor-based payments and fully functional trials, were artefacts of the technology limitations of the time. The key concept of shareware was being able to try before you buy. It is easy to forget how radical an idea this was at the time. Before this, software purchasers had to rely just on reading marketing materials from the vendor and magazine reviews of questionable independence. Try before you buy has been instrumental in improving the overall quality of software and providing a better experience for software purchasers. That was a battle that the shareware pioneers well and truly won, and they can be justly proud of this achievement. Does this mean the ASP is obsolete? Not at all. The ASP still has a very important role in helping small, independent software developers to be commercially successful. Have you considered joining the ASP?

**Shareware is dead – long live shareware!**

*Andy Brice runs a business selling seating planner software using the try before you buy model at <http://www.perfecttableplan.com> and writes a blog aimed at small software businesses and provides consulting on marketing and usability to microISVs and other small software businesses. He would like to thank the many ASP members that contributed to this article with quotes or suggestions.*

### **My life goals were not compatible with the business’ needs.**

This is the primary reason I’ve never successfully launched a microISV. Running a business was never compatible with my goals for my life.

It’s taken me more than forty years, but I’ve finally learned to see myself from the outside. Today, I intellectually understand more about what motivates me and my actions than I ever did “growing up.” Looking back on the last decade, I clearly see that my priorities have been: me, my family, my friends, and my faith. I also see how I love helping people and I’m motivated by that “ah, ha!” moment people get when I teach them something. Lastly, I know that I love writing code, seeing it run without crashing, watching *something* spring forth from *nothing*.

I didn’t see anything in there about wanting to run a business. Did you?

Operating a microISV involves wearing a lot of hats. Just ask Bob Walsh. He’s built an entire business model around your to-do list. ([www.47hats.com](http://www.47hats.com))

When I started each of my microISVs-projects (I really shouldn’t call them microISV, since they were never more than an exercise in writing code), I was motivated by one of two things. I either had a really cool idea, or I wanted to

make some side money and I figured it would be easy. These were the wrong reasons and that's why I always failed to launch.

So, what are the right reasons for launching a microISV? Well, that depends on you. First, you need to figure out what your personal goals are and decide if they are compatible with the work that goes into starting a microISV. For example, you may want complete control over your work environment, from hours of operation, to location, to the dress code. This is control you'll never possess working for someone else.

Once you know what your personal goals and motivations are, look carefully at what is involved in running a business. I mean really think about what you're getting into. I didn't, which brings us to the second reason I never launched a successful microISV. . . .

### **I didn't truly understand what goes into running a business.**

My father-in-law owned and operated a small print shop for over thirty years. He learned that running a print shop involved more than putting ink to paper. There were taxes, accounting, suppliers, delivery, advertising, and customers. Boy, were there customers! Ones that didn't pay. Ones that were never satisfied. Ones that needed it now! Ones that needed it better than perfect.

My father-in-law doesn't know a compiler from an icon. But, it's blindingly obvious to him that you'll be doing more than pushing bits when you start your microISV. Let me list some of the issues you'll have to deal with as your microISV goes live: piracy, data security, licensing, SEO, marketing/advertising (yes, they're different), graphic design, copyright, risk management, accounting, taxes, sales, legal, hosting, web site administration, and customer support. Boy, will there be customer support!

Many of you are thinking you're perfectly comfortable learning and doing those things, right? And, that's the great thing about us. We're really good at adopting new skills. Here's the rub. You'll be doing these things more than you'll be coding. Let me say that again, with more emphasis. . . .

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Let that sink in. Think about it for more than a moment. Doing paperwork for your accountant and the tax collector. Constructing marketing materials with just the right fonts and whitespace. Checking with a lawyer on the solidity of your license agreements. Listing and prioritizing risks and mitigation strategies. Sending DMCA takedown notices to copyright violators and software pirates. Answering the same customer support questions over and over and over again.

For me, I never really considered these aspects. Oh, I intellectually knew what I was doing, but I never really thought about doing them. Day after day. Which leads me to my last point.

### **I didn't really want success. I just wanted to create something.**

I love writing software and occasionally I get an "itch" to write something. It runs on a cycle of every two years or so. I see a gap in the market for something I now I can create, so I create it. When I'm working on it, it consumes me. I think about it all the time. I talk about it with my wife. I show it friends and colleagues. I draw up business plans. I design marketing websites. I start writing blog entries.

Then, a funny thing happens. I get close to finishing and the fire dims. The need to create is satisfied. I lose focus and interest. I can only assume this is how artists feel when they sculpt and paint.

My microISV never launches. I add to the litter. Another tumbleweed on the internet.

### **Well, that was depressing!**

My purpose in writing this is not to discourage you. I want to open your eyes. One day, you may find yourself wondering why you can't seem to get your microISV launched. One day, you may wonder why it's launched but no one is buying. Or, you may be there already.

If you are, you need to ask yourself: Am I doing this for the right reasons? Are my personal goals in line with the business? Do I *really* want to succeed? Am I spending my time on the right things? (Hint: if you've already launched, it's probably not time to focus on coding).

Once you know you're launching a microISV for the right reasons, you can focus on doing the right things. There are countless resources available to get you to the chasm and across it. Find those resources. Stretch your limits. Build new skills. Succeed.

Your microISV doesn't have to be another tumbleweed. *Russell Thackston, a veteran IT consultant, has recently departed industry to pursue a PhD. He plans to use his newly formed microISV Research Alliance (<http://microISVResearch.org>) to aid founders of one-person software companies.*

## WordPress 3.0: First Impressions & Menus

by Jerry Stern

Webmaster, [www.startupware.com](http://www.startupware.com)

WordPress 3.0 is out--Theolonious Monk has the honor of having this release named after him. First, all you need to know: The upgrade works, and the interface is recognizable and doesn't seem to hide any old features. Backup your site first, run the update from inside the admin panel, and that's pretty much it.

Now, on to why you should upgrade your self-hosted installations of WordPress. It's still a blog platform that works well without a blog, it's still an easy CMS to install and setup as a product website, and it's still easy to maintain.

What's new is the merge of MU ( $\mu$ ) into WordPress, which allows managing multiple web sites from inside one installation, plus menus, headers, backgrounds, tweaks. . .

Also new, updates of multiple plugins can be done simultaneously. There is a new default theme, Twenty Ten, including support for backgrounds, custom headers, site menus, and more. The menu layout options appear far more flexible, in themes that support it.

While multi-user, or WordPress  $\mu$ , looks interesting for universities and newspapers, it's not really what a software site needs. Maybe it could be useful for building a sub-site

for each product in a lineup, but I prefer to have a nicely-integrated site for each product or family of products, so that's not what I looked at first in the new release. I found the documentation for the WordPress  $\mu$  features to be mostly scattered and thin when I looked in late June, so maybe I'll take another look later on.

### Menus

Menus have been a problem for me in WordPress 2.x. I use the built-in system for page lists, and tweak the widget options to skip pages that should not appear in the navigation menu. or set the pages, by WordPress-assigned page number, to sort into any order I want. But adding a non-page, like a menu entry of a category listing of posts or to another site, isn't practical. Yes, I could use the Blogroll feature to build a navigation menu, but that's entirely manual, and would need updates every time I add a page to a site.

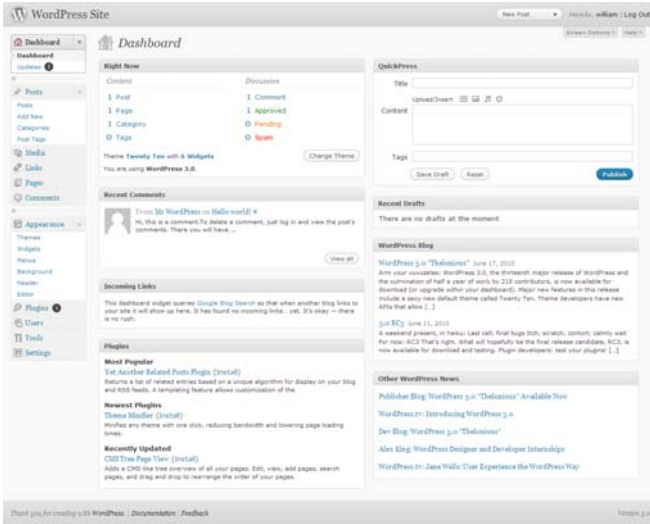
To see what's possible using the new features, I created a test menu for an existing site. First off, had to find it--the 'Menus' entry is in the 'Appearance' section of the WordPress menu. Found a warning, right away: *The current theme does not natively support menus, but you can use the*



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“Custom Menu” widget to add any menus you create here to the theme’s sidebar. Well, that’s reasonable enough—themes created before WordPress 3 wouldn’t already have menu support, but if they have widget support, no problem.

OK, side trip over to Appearance, Widgets, and I dragged a ‘Custom Menu’ widget into the default sidebar, and into the footer. Did I say it’s a test site? I don’t care if I make a mess. All WordPress developers should have an extra installation to play with, with search engine visibility turned off (under Settings, Privacy).

Warning #2 appears in the ‘Custom Menu’ widget. *No menus have been created yet. Create some.* OK, but first, click ‘Save’ and plan to come back to the Widgets later on.

Back in Appearance, Menus: The warning still appears, but I can create a menu. I’ll call it ‘Main Navigation’, for now. There’s a list of pages and posts on the left, so I check off a few items in each, and click ‘Add to Menu’. There’s a Custom Links item, which needs only a URL and label, so I add one. All the entries appear in the menu display, and I

can drag them into any order I want, much like the Widget menu, and dragging a box slightly right places it as a sub-menu—very easy. OK, reverse alphabetical order for now, because I can. (Test site, remember?) And I check the box for ‘Automatically add new top-level pages.’ Click ‘Save Menu’. Check the site—nothing has changed yet, good.

Now back to Widgets. In each ‘Custom Menu’ widget, I choose ‘Main Navigation’, and put in titles of ‘Menu stuff’ and ‘Footer menu stuff’, save, and close.

Checked the site: The main sidebar menu looks good. The footer menu looks the same, stacked up like the sidebar. OK, so the ‘custom menu’ widget is good for sidebars.

Next step, I switched the test site to the new default ‘2010’ theme—the widgets aren’t carried over, so I added the ‘Custom Menu’ to the ‘Primary Widget Area’ and ‘First Footer Widget Area’, save, refreshed: The footer is better, but still too tall. OK, the new menu feature is flexible enough to manage that—multiple menus are possible, and a normal setup wouldn’t use the same menu in both the footer and the sidebar. And the built-in menu (non-widget), appeared in the page header—the 2010 theme supports menus natively.

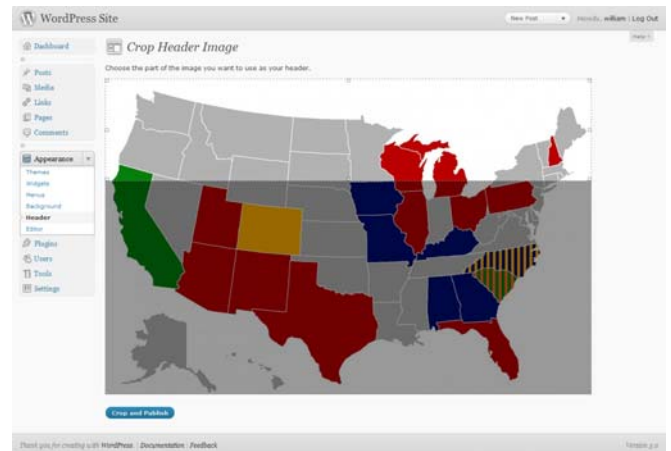
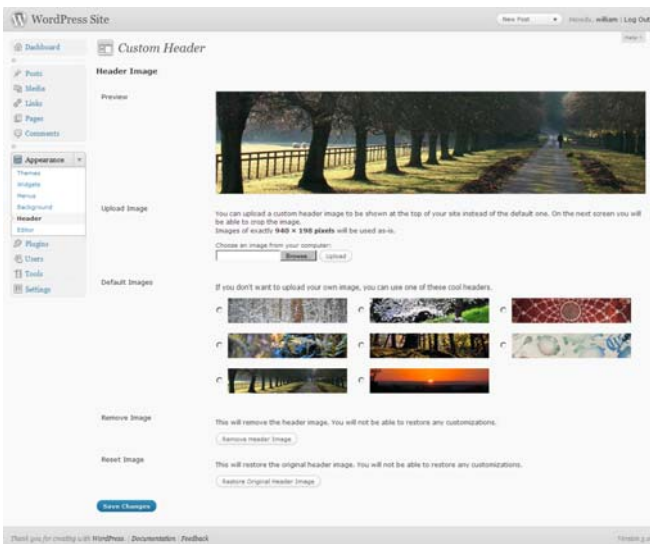
Final test: I added a new top-level page. It appeared at the bottom of the custom menu with no extra steps.

Overall, this will solve just about every menu issue I have with WordPress 2.x, and it’s easy, even if I don’t update themes for built-in menu support.

### Backgrounds

I’ve changed the background images along the outside of the pages in WordPress themes. It’s not terribly difficult; it’s usually a change in the CSS stylesheet for the theme. There’s always some tweaking involved, but it’s easier now—it’s built-in, under Appearance, Background, although it does have to be supported by the theme in use. Just upload the image, choose tiling options for the entire page, or just one edge. There’s a preview box for the tiling effects.

There are some options for a slightly more advanced



layout as well. Choose the 'Attachment' option for 'fixed', and the page contents will scroll while the background image remains fixed.

For sites that just use a solid-color background, there's also a color selection wheel, or you can type in a hex value for the color directly. And if an image is tiled along only an edge, the color option can be used to fill the non-tiled area.

## Headers

As with backgrounds, if you've chosen a theme that supports the new 3.0 feature set, there's a header image option under the Appearance menu. Just upload the file, and WordPress will assist in cropping the image to fit.

## Link Shortening

When publishing a post, there's a new option to 'Get Shortlink'. It will provide a short link of the format 'http://www.sitename.com/?p=876', while leaving the links on the page based on the post title keywords, and search-engine friendly.

# ASP Member News

## Software Publishers Entice Developers to the July Software Industry Conference in Dallas

Attendees of the 20th annual Software Industry Conference (SIC) in Dallas on July 15 - 17, 2010 will be receiving some free developers' tools worth much more than the price of admission to the conference.

Each attendee will receive a copy of software's Red Carpet Subscription, a \$1,499(US) package that includes powerful components for Internet communications, security, and messaging. Conference attendees will also receive the latest version of the TuneUp Utilities from TuneUp Corporation and a two-gigabyte USB-Key for TuneUp Utilities.

The Software Industry Conference is a three-day event that includes dozens of informative, educational breakout sessions covering a wide variety of topics that are critical to the success of Independent Software Developers (ISVs). It culminates with a Networking Gala Dinner that gives software developers and publishers an opportunity to form partnerships and alliances.

The conference includes more than forty educational seminars and presentations that are designed to help developers sell more software. Presentations by industry experts include topics such as profiting from Google Adwords, marketing more effectively, providing in-

## Overall

I expect to spend less time editing the stylesheets with version 3.0 of WordPress. And the new 2010 theme is a good basis for many, many sites without having to do more than change the background, header, and sidebar widget options. As the upgrade is painless, the decision to switch over is easy.

As for new sites, that's easy, too—any site with more than five pages will be quicker to build in WordPress than in an HTML editor. Blog or no blog makes no difference; WordPress will manage static pages just as well as it does for blogs, and the majority of new WordPress sites now include both.

### More online:

WordPress: <http://www.wordpress.org>  
Documentation: [http://codex.wordpress.org/Main\\_Page](http://codex.wordpress.org/Main_Page)  
Version 3 changes:

[http://codex.wordpress.org/Version\\_3.0](http://codex.wordpress.org/Version_3.0)

WordPress mu (Multi-site) documentation:

<http://mu.wordpress.org/forums/>

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come-producing customer support, working with translation and localization services, sending press releases, developing Software as a Service (SaaS) applications, avoiding legal pitfalls, reducing chargebacks, and creating affiliate networks.

There is plenty of time to network with other software developers and software industry service providers. The conveniently-located daily breakfasts in the Hyatt Regency DFW Hotel make it easy for conference attendees to meet and socialize with fellow industry members. You can even attend the annual meetings and luncheons of two industry trade associations, ESC and ASP.

The casual SIC conferences are known for their family-friendly atmosphere. Many software developers turn their trips to SIC into mini-vacations.

As always, the conference will present awards to honor developers in several key software categories. SIC's Exhibit Night features the best software development products and services from leading industry vendors.

Registration at the door costs \$299(US), or costs \$249 if you register online <http://www.sic.org/register.asp> by July 13. Deeply-discounted hotel rooms at the Hyatt Regency DFW are available to all conference attendees.

For more information about SIC 2010, visit <http://www.sic.org/>

### **AutoPlay Media Studio 8 Enables Visual Software Development for Microsoft Windows 7**

Indigo Rose Software announces the immediate availability of AutoPlay Media Studio 8 for Windows. A mainstay in the software development industry for developing user-friendly autorun CD, DVD and USB menus, version 8 takes the product line in a bold new direction.

AutoPlay Media Studio 8 now gives software developers the ability to create full-featured software applications using a visual drag-and-drop development environment. What would normally take days or weeks to build using traditional software development tools (e.g. C, C++, Java) can now be created in record time, and by just about anyone.

Featuring a WYSIWYG (“what you see is what you get”) development environment and a powerful, yet easy-to-use scripting language, even beginners can create professional Windows software, complete with features like web interaction, database connectivity, dialog boxes, data visualization and multimedia audio and video playback.

“We weren’t satisfied with AutoPlay Media Studio just being the industry-standard tool for developing autorun CD/DVD interfaces,” says Indigo Rose Software President Colin Adams. “We recognized that if we extended the product with a number of significant new features, AutoPlay Media Studio 8 would be ideally suited for creating interactive multimedia software applications. We’re really pleased with the results.”

AutoPlay Media Studio 8 includes 21 built-in interface objects such as buttons, images, menu bars, web browsers, QuickTime video, data grids, PDF viewers, checkboxes and more. Developers simply drop the objects onto a page or dialog box, and are able to edit and customize the objects’ properties and events any way they want.  
<http://www.indigorose.com>.

### **Manage Tasks, Projects, Schedules, and Reminders with TaskMerlin 3.0**

Interfathom has released TaskMerlin v. 3.0, an intuitive and easy-to-use Windows application that makes it simple to organize notes, tasks, and schedules, and share them with colleagues. Unlike other task managers that lock you into a fixed format, TaskMerlin offers complete flexibility for naming, structuring, and viewing your tasks. TaskMerlin’s flexibility makes it ideal for project and management teams’ collaboration, as well as for workers who follow David Allen’s Getting Things Done (GTD) workflow methodology.

The major new feature of v. 3.0 is TaskMerlin’s Calendar. Create a new appointment with a single click or keystroke. Quickly add reminders to any task or appointment. To reschedule an appointment, you can drag and drop it, or use your mouse to change its size on the Calendar.

TaskMerlin’s new Calendar is fully integrated with Microsoft Outlook, and provides scheduling, appointment, and reminder functionality with fewer keystrokes and less work.

In the Professional Edition, all users can log into TaskMerlin, and update the fields that they have been authorized to change. Each user has their own password, email settings, popup reminders, filter definitions, and display options.

<http://www.taskmerlin.com/>

### **New Software Allows up to 50 Mouse Cursors to Collaborate on One Desktop**

Bartels Media GmbH has released MultiMouse, a multi-user Windows application that lets up to 50 users use the mouse and keyboard on their PCs to control the desktop of a central computer. MultiMouse lets users work together on the common desktop of the central PC for training, brainstorming, collaboration, or document building.

Each user moves their mouse cursor out of their desktop to make it automatically appear on the common computer. Each mouse cursor has a customizable name tag, making it easy to know who is pointing to what on the shared computer screen.

Educators and trainers can use MultiMouse to work together with groups of students. MultiMouse turns a static classroom into an interactive learning environment, where each student can participate and contribute with classmates on a common SmartBoard. The teacher can use MultiMouse’s control panel to invite or block individual students.

Project teams can hold meetings that encourage two-way information flow. Brainstorming increases the flow of fresh ideas, and problems that take weeks to solve in isolation can be solved interactively by the group in hours.

MultiMouse uses the wireless or Ethernet network connection to transmit each user’s mouse position and text input, with no additional hardware required. MultiMouse’s network communications are configured automatically. There’s no need for a network administrator to assign IP addresses or port numbers.

<http://www.multimouse.com>

## **News & Press Corner**

### **DoJ Joins in Launch of Intellectual Property Enforcement Initiative**

As part of the Obama Administration’s launch of the first-ever Joint Strategic Plan on Intellectual Property Enforcement, Attorney General Eric Holder today emphasized the Department of Justice’s ongoing commitment to protecting U.S. intellectual property as central to America’s economic prosperity and public safety.

“The Department worked closely with Administration officials to develop key aspects of this strategic plan to better protect our nation’s ability to remain at the forefront of technological advancement, business development and job creation,” said Attorney General Holder. “The Department, along with its federal, state and local partners, is confronting this threat with a strong and coordinated response at home and abroad to ensure American entrepreneurs and businesses continue to develop, innovate and create.”

“The integrity of health and safety products and trade secrets must be protected. The FBI is committed to pursuing those groups and individuals who steal, manufacture, distribute or otherwise profit from intellectual property theft,” said Gordon M. Snow, Assistant Director of the FBI’s Cyber Division.

The components of the strategic plan that the Department will assist in implementing include:

- Ensuring efficiency and coordination among enforcement efforts across federal, state and local levels, domestically and overseas, through means such as shared information, streamlined investigatory processes and training efforts;
- Enhancing international enforcement efforts, including combating foreign-based web sites that violate American intellectual property rights by encouraging further cooperation and coordination with our trading partners in overseas markets, including China;
- Securing our supply chain to stop illegal products from coming into the country by providing law enforcement with authorities it needs and by fostering cooperation with the private sector to reduce infringement on the Internet and elsewhere.

The strategic plan is the latest effort in the Department’s ongoing initiative to protect intellectual property. <http://www.softwarekb.com/news/2010/06/22/doj-ip/>

### **ifraudalert.org to Rescue Stolen Data**

New Internet Fraud Alert to Help Rescue Stolen Account Credentials: WASHINGTON, D.C, June 17, 2010: Microsoft Corp. has joined forces with the National Cyber-Forensics and Training Alliance (NCFTA), with the support of Accuity, the American Bankers Association, Anti-Phishing Working Group, Citizens Bank, eBay Inc., Federal Trade Commission, National Consumers League and PayPal, to release a new program that will help mitigate

potential losses due to online fraud and account compromise. Launched today, Internet Fraud Alert will offer a trusted and effective mechanism for participating researchers to report stolen account credentials discovered online—such as username and password login information for online services or compromised credit card numbers—to the appropriate institution responsible for that account. Through a centralized alerting system powered by Microsoft technology developed specifically for this program, Internet Fraud Alert will quickly inform companies about compromised credentials, allowing them to take the appropriate action to help protect their customers.

The program was unveiled today and will go into effect immediately. The first of its kind, Internet Fraud Alert represents an important step forward in fighting online fraud. It will serve the much-needed purpose of enabling security researchers and investigators to more securely and systematically share information with service providers, retailers, financial institutions and government entities about incidents where compromised account credentials have been discovered. To date, when the security community uncovers compromised credentials stemming from phishing attacks, for example, there has been no simple mechanism to warn the service provider or bank about the exposed credentials.

Internet Fraud Alert will bring together a wide assortment of stakeholders, including retailers, financial institutions, service providers, technology companies, academic researchers, consumer advocates and government agencies, in the shared interest of reducing online fraud and protecting consumers. As the technology creator and sponsor, Microsoft is donating the tool to the NCFTA, a nonprofit organization dedicated to facilitating public-private partnerships between industry, law enforcement and academia on cybersecurity issues. Accuity, a leading provider of global payment routing data, has donated a solution to assist NCFTA with the vetting of trusted institutions for participation in the program to help ensure the integrity of the alerting process.

More information about Internet Fraud Alert can be found at <http://ifraudalert.org>. Consumers interested in learning more about staying safe online and limiting the risk of identity theft can visit:

<http://www.microsoft.com/protect>

<http://www.onguardonline.gov>

<http://www.lookstoogoodtobetrue.com>.

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