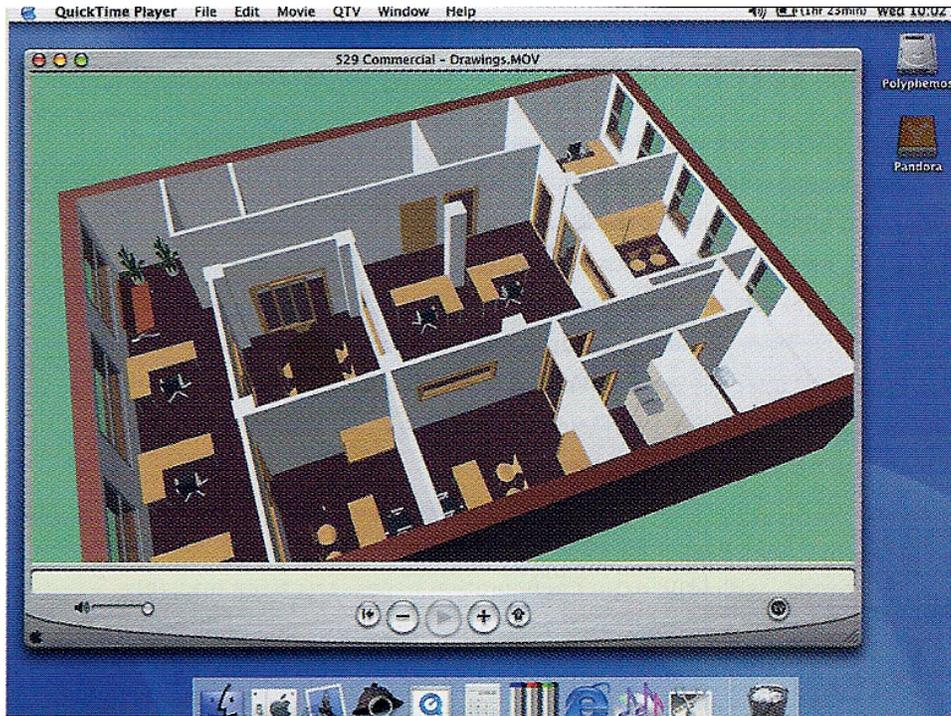


Architectural Record

December, 2001

The Big Apple: How Architects Use the Macintosh in Practice

By Louis B. Smith, AIA



DESIGNERS DIG THE MAC'S ICONIC LOOK, BUT LOWER-PRICED, FASTER PCS HAVE EATEN INTO APPLE'S MARKET SHARE IN RECENT YEARS. IS THERE A PLACE FOR THE MAC IN TODAY'S DESIGN PRACTICE?

(excerpt)

A solution for going solo

Another firm with clarity on its platform strategy is Marc A. Lindsell, Architect, of San Francisco. Lindsell is a solo practitioner who specializes in residential and small commercial work. He switched to the Mac

platform about three years ago and has been very happy with the change.

"Before switching to the Mac, I used to struggle with AutoCAD and the blue screen of death," he says. "Now I use ArchiCAD, and I sometimes find myself sitting there working and

laughing out loud at how easy it is. I don't regret switching at all." He particularly likes ArchiCAD's 2D/3D integration, which gives him the seamless kind of experience in production that he was seeking. "ArchiCAD works the way an architect thinks," he says. "If I place a window in a wall on a plan, and then I decide to adjust its position when I see it in elevation, I want the software to change the plan for me automatically when I change the elevation."

Lindsell also uses his Mac for accounting purposes and is switching from Quickbooks Pro (for which Intuit is no longer providing Macintosh upgrades) to MYOB Account Edge, an accounting package that runs natively on OS X. Like many Mac users interviewed for this article, he uses the Microsoft Office software suite for general office productivity.

Lindsell reports that he will be upgrading to OS X soon, and he also makes extensive use of Apple's iTools, a service package available free with purchase of OS 9 or OS X

when the purchase is registered on Apple's Web site. The package includes hard-drive space on Apple's server, a Web site with a public folder, a free e-mail account, and consumer-oriented services such as electronic greeting cards. These services offer benefits with little investment, particularly for solo practitioners whose resources for marketing and technical support are limited. Lindsell maintains an iTools Web page that allows him, as a Web novice, to post photos, renderings, and plans on his site for his clients to view. He does this himself without having to know HTML or hire outside IT support. "My residential clients often have family in a different part of the country," he explains. "My Web sites allow them to see the progress of a project being designed or built." His clients appreciate seeing virtual-reality tours of his ongoing projects, which he creates using Apple's Quicktime technology (see image above). Using his Mac and iTools, Lindsell feels he has achieved a graphic presence that's on par with that offered by larger firms with more resources.

