

Structuring the Mac

Written by Doug Hawkins

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Firing up the Macbook Pro for the very first time was really exciting, so exciting I even took photos and later posted them on my own blog. That's almost a sad thing to do, but hey I wasn't the only one that did this sort of thing, in my quest to up skill for the up and coming Mac I noticed some really sadder people videoed their first Mac experience and upload on to YouTube.

After the initial "please put your details in", it booted through and asked to connect into my works wireless network. In goes the password and bang; I'm up on the net to do its first software update.

The desktop layout looked nice and clean, everything seemed to be well placed and organized. All very logical and well thought out.

I wasn't use to the file menu bar changing when focus is given to the app you are using, but it didn't take too long to get use to all these new bells and whistles. And you really got to love how you double click the top of a window and it zips down to your task menu. (Is it actually called the task menu? damn PC terminology!)

Being that another purpose of going Mac was to also replace my work laptop (a old cruddy Compaq Evo) my next step was duplicating my previous working environment.

I loaded on Mac Office 2004; Excel is used daily and word when needed. And I needed a replacement for Outlook 2003.

I had read a few reviews on Entourage so thought I would use that instead of the standard Mac mail program that comes pre-loaded.

To get my PST folder in to entourage was a bit tricky, I googled for how-to's and the only thing I could find that wasn't a work around was a \$10 download. Which of course I didn't want to pay. (I'm not into paying for something I will use only once)

So I did the work around, I love a challenge!

To get my Outlook 2003 PST file into Entourage I did the following:

On my windows laptop I installed Thunderbird 2 and imported my PST file (which took like an hour or more because there is like over 2 yrs worth of email history – I don't delete emails I archive them in a folder)

Once completely imported, I went to the directory where thunderbird held the email and renamed all the imported mail box files to the .mbox extension.

Under outlook I had the following main folders

- Inbox (you got to have on of those), I use my inbox as a too do list. Leaving emails in there until actioned.
- badboys (this is my archive folder which housed thousands of read/actioned emails)
- Sent (there was quite a few in here as well)
- Drafts

So for example, in thunderbird my badboys email folder was simply named to badboys.mbox, inbox to inbox.mbox etc

Using a USB portable notebook drive I transferred the PC thunderbird email .mbox email files

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over to the Mac, opened Entourage and just dragged and dropped the files. Entourage imported my .mbox emails flawlessly. And to clean it all up restructuring to how I had it under outlook 2003 I just moved the emails around to suit.

For contacts and appointments, I used my BlackBerry (previously synced to the Outlook for the last time) to get them into Entourage all I needed to do was get a sync program for the Mac and a BB.

There was a free one on the web called pocket sync. Once installed I plugged in my BlackBerry, and configured it to sync with Entourage.

Easy, Outlook set up duplicated with all my current email, contacts calendar, tasks and notes + my 2 years of email history.

Wow, Entourage seems to be so much better than Outlook.