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Cyberdog Beta1.0: General FAQ (3/97)

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TOPIC -----

This article provides frequently asked questions about Cyberdog Beta 1.0 software.

DISCUSSION -----

Question: What is Cyberdog?

Answer: Cyberdog is the code name for a set of OpenDoc components that provides one-click access to Internet services. It provides a consistent interface, and brings Macintosh ease-of-use to the Internet. In Cyberdog, Internet address is an object that can be dropped into mail, your notebook, OpenDoc documents, or into the Finder. If you double-click on an Internet address, it opens the object, whether it's a web page, a picture (Cyberdog will do any necessary translation or decompression), or a file. And Cyberdog provides you with powerful mail that's integrated with the other Internet components.

Question: Will Cyberdog be the product name?

Answer: Cyberdog is the code name for the technology. We'll announce the product name when it is released.

Question: How can I get the most current information about Cyberdog?

Answer: Visit the Cyberdog home page at <http://cyberdog.apple.com>.

Question: Why use OpenDoc?

Answer: Together, Cyberdog and OpenDoc bring component software to the Internet. Because it is based on OpenDoc, Cyberdog is built of many small components. This makes it easy for the user to replace or update components as new functionality becomes available. You can choose a component from your favorite vendor, or one that provides the functionality you need, and simply drop it into your system folder to install it. This gives users and developers flexibility to keep up with the rapid addition of new services and data types on the Internet.

Cyberdog brings live Internet connections to OpenDoc documents. You can create links to Internet data, and you can actually embed Cyberdog viewers in a document so when you open the document, the viewer and its data are brought live, right into your document. With this capability, you can customize your access to all of the Internet, and bring the Internet live to documents you create.

Question: Why should I use Cyberdog instead of an all-purpose web browser?

Answer: Cyberdog gives you integrated access to all services on the Internet (including FTP, Gopher, Telnet, World Wide Web, Netnews and E-mail) with the ability to display the full richness of each service. If you try use a browser optimized for the world-wide web, you're forcing other services and data types to be displayed in way that's not optimal for them. Cyberdog avoids this compromise. In addition, with customized Internet documents, Cyberdog allows you to fully integrate the Internet more fully into your daily activities and to share your Internet explorations with friends and colleagues.

Question: What about email?

Answer: Cyberdog provides extremely robust and powerful e-mail capabilities. It supports the full MIME 1.0 standard, so you can use styled text, plus you can drop pictures, Internet links (as links, not just as text addresses), and enclosures right into your message. Cyberdog has mail handlers that filter and sort your incoming or outgoing mail messages. You can create multiple mailboxes for storing your received mail, and search stored messages for any word in any field of the message (full text search).

Question: How does message searching work?

Answer: Cyberdog incorporates Apple's new VTWIN technology developed for the next version of the Macintosh OS, code-named Copland. It indexes full text of all messages 'on the fly', and gives extremely fast relevancy-ranked listing of matches. You can literally search over thousands of messages in seconds.

Question: What about newsgroups?

Answer: Cyberdog makes managing newsgroups easy. With the ability to connect to multiple news servers, search, read messages, and save them in Cyberdog's mail system for archiving (manually or using the News handlers), Cyberdog makes it easy to find the information you want. You can read and post full MIME 1.0-encoded documents, with graphics, styled text, and enclosures (including live links).

Question: What do you mean by live links?

Answer: A live link is any URL (which stands for "uniform resource locator"). It

gives an internet address and can point to an ftp or gopher site, a telnet host, World Wide Web page, an e-mail address, a newsgroup or news server, etc. In Cyberdog, every URL is represented as a labeled icon which indicates what kind of site it is pointing to. These icons, much like Aliases on the desktop, can be dragged to the desktop or other Cyberdog or OpenDoc documents. If you double-click the icon, Cyberdog opens that item, whether it is a file, picture, web page, etc. If they're dragged out of OpenDoc (for example, into your Scrapbook), they become the URL text string. Cyberdog provides icons that represent most of the major Internet data types, so you can tell if the object is a picture, text, file, web, gopher, newsgroup, mail message, or ftp site.

Question: How can I keep track of my favorite places?

Answer: Cyberdog provides a Notebook & a Log to keep track of where you've been.

The Notebook is your place to store Internet references. You can drag into it any web "link" from a web page, any item from the log, or any file saved as a URL from the desktop. Even coolerÉyou can drag any text that has the form of a URL (e.g., <http://cyberdog.apple.com>) into the notebook and it will be accepted as a legal internet address and represented with the appropriate icon. You can have multiple notebooks, so you can easily organize a large volume of links and mail addresses for quick access.

The Log can be displayed alphabetically, chronologically, or hierarchically. Objects can be dragged from the Log into the Notebook, mail, or any OpenDoc document, or to the Finder. Log files can be saved, and the log can be erased.

Question: What about consistency?

Answer: Cyberdog provides a standard browser window for different Internet services (FTP, Gopher, and World Wide Web), with forward and back arrows, display of the URL as both an object (an alias and icon) and a text string (the locator URL), a pop-up History, and a stop button. Inside the browsing window, each data type is displayed by a different Cyberdog component that gives the best display of that kind of data, so FTP and Gopher are displayed as hierarchical lists, with triangles you can use to click open a category and view the items inside it. This window has grow, zoom, and close boxes. Pictures are opened in their own separate windows, sized to the picture. Text is opened into a window with slider bars, and grow and zoom boxes. Movies and sounds are opened into the Cyberdog "player" window.

Question: Can I get directly to an Internet site or address?

Answer: Yes! You can use Cyberdog's "Connect To" menu item to directly access any URL, newsgroup, or mail account.

Question: What Internet services/standards does Cyberdog support?

Answer: Cyberdog supports the popular Internet standards: Telnet (vt100), FTP, Gopher, World Wide Web (http protocol and HTML hypertext language), Newsgroups (NNTP), mail (POP/SMTP), and MIME 1.0. Cyberdog provides viewers for text, GIF, JPEG, PICT, QuickTime, .au sound, .WAV sound, and .AIFF sound. We are working with 3rd parties to encourage them to develop OpenDoc components for chat, sound, and video.

Question: What about secure transactions?

Answer: The final release of Cyberdog will include Netscape's SSL protocol encryptions, and a key icon will appear at the top of the Cyberdog browser window whenever a secure connection is made.

Question: What HTML standards does the world-wide web browser support?

Answer: The Cyberdog web browser supports all of HTML 2.0 and includes tables and background pictures from HTML 3.0.

Question: Can Cyberdog use plug-ins and applets?

Answer: Plug-ins and applets are a way of moving toward the benefits of component architecture. Cyberdog is already built on the OpenDoc component architecture, and therefore it's easy for developers to create new components and viewers for new technologies as they become available. The advantage of using Cyberdog is that any component for displaying a data type (Java, QuickTime VR, or web) can be incorporated into it. Extending this to other OpenDoc containers, you could even have Java applets that work in your OpenDoc-based spreadsheet or word processing document. We're working with 3rd parties to develop ways to either use applets and plug-ins with Cyberdog, or to develop the same technology as an OpenDoc component.

Question: How does Java fit with Cyberdog?

Answer: The beauty of Cyberdog is its ability to integrate data from multiple sources (including the Internet) into desktop applications. Although Cyberdog doesn't currently support Java, Apple and 3rd parties are investigating development of Java components that would integrate with Cyberdog and OpenDoc. In addition to Java support in the HTML browser, the Cyberdog/OpenDoc approach means that Java applets can move out of the browser and be integrated into any OpenDoc container.

Question: Can Cyberdog share preferences with my existing Internet applications?

Answer: Yes. On the Macintosh, Cyberdog uses the de facto standard for storing Internet application preferences, an application called "Internet Config". This allows it to easily co-exist with commonly used Macintosh internet applications, and makes it easy to transition from applications to component software.

Question: How can I connect to the Internet with Cyberdog?

Answer: For network connections, Cyberdog uses standard TCP/IP protocols and so will work on any type of network that supports TCP/IP. This includes Ethernet, LocalTalk, Token-Ring, FDDI, ATM, Frame Relay local and wide area networks, as well as dialup networks based on SLIP, PPP or Apple Remote Access (if an IP Gateway is present). You can use MacPPP or any other Macintosh-based PPP to connect to Internet services through a phone line and modem. (These applications are not supplied with Cyberdog.) If you already have an Internet provider, or an Internet mail account, you can continue to use them with Cyberdog.

Question: Is Cyberdog compatible with my Internet Service Provider?

Answer: As long as access to your Internet provider is offered through standard Internet protocols (SLIP/PPP) Cyberdog will be completely compatible with your provider. Cyberdog will work with any provider that offers servers compatible with today's leading Internet applications like those included in the Apple Internet Connection Kit. Cyberdog will not work to access proprietary protocols, such as those used by the so-called "online" services (like American Online, CompuServe, etc.).

Question: How will Cyberdog be distributed?

Answer: The beta and final versions will be distributed free over the Internet from Apple's web and FTP sites. The final version will be bundled with Apple Macintosh computers and Mac OS releases. There will be a retail version for current Power Macintosh and Mac OS clone owners. We're also investigating 3rd party distribution.

Question: Will Cyberdog replace the Apple Internet Connection Kit?

Answer: Since Cyberdog requires Power Macintosh and OpenDoc, we'll continue to provide the Apple Internet Connection Kit for those Macintosh owners who don't have the required hardware and system configuration.

Question: What's the upgrade path for customers?

Answer: You can download Cyberdog from the Internet, if you have a hardware configuration that supports Cyberdog.

Question: What are Cyberdog's system requirements?

Answer: Cyberdog requires system 7.5.1 or later, OpenDoc 1.0, a Power Macintosh with 8 MB memory with Virtual Memory turned on, or 16 MB of memory with VM off. (This is the requirement for the system, OpenDoc and Cyberdog.)

Question: Will there be a Windows version of Cyberdog?

Answer: Apple's current focus is Cyberdog for Mac OS, since today OpenDoc only runs on the Mac OS. OpenDoc for Windows is expected before the end of 1996. We are in discussion with several vendors who could bring Cyberdog to OpenDoc for Windows.

Question: What does Cyberdog offer developers?

Answer: Cyberdog provides technology that extends OpenDoc that any developer can use to create live links to the Internet in any OpenDoc component. It gives developers a consistent user interface for accessing the Internet, and a public set of APIs to replace, extend, or build new components. Developers can not only create replacement components that provide more functionality than the original Cyberdog components, they can add new services (such as RealAudio), or provide ways to incorporate the Internet into other components such as word processing, charting, or presentations. Visit our Developer Information web page.

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