Making the Move to Mac OSX

Return to Warren Group story:
A Design Studio Makes
the Move to Mac OS X

As a member of the Apple Consultants Network, Ben Levy is no stranger to the needs of print designers–or to the specific concerns of the Warren Group. “I’ve been consulting for Linda for about ten years now,” he says, “and in that time we’ve reviewed every bit of publishing technology there is. For Linda’s new installation, we decided to start with Mac OS X Server. We wanted to make sure that she had a centralized location for file storage, for collaboration, for automated back-ups, and for other services like e-mail and web serving.”

“That server,” says Linda, “completely changed the workflow in our office, made us a much better running office, a much safer office. It’s made a huge difference in the way I run the business, how comfortable and confident I feel with my clients.” Ironically, the ultramodern server software is running on an older Mac G3 computer–the only hardware that remains from the Warren Group’s previous system setup.

“Our philosophy in looking at the transition was, everything that wasn’t modern was going out the door,” Ben says. “So we brought in G4s and big Cinema Displays for the designers. We brought in iMac systems for the support staff. We kept one of the older computers with Mac OS 9 installed, to be ready in case panic struck. But that machine just gathers dust.

“Linda’s always had a vision of the company where each employee was technologically empowered to do all the different things the company does. With Mac OS X, we were able to build a cohesive solution that gave them all the things they were looking for. We were able to accomplish the transition form Mac OS 9 easily, in 24 hours. And it’s a pleasure to see how the company has flourished.

“With Mac OS X, Linda’s studio is in a good position for growth. By investing wisely, at the right time, they’re uniquely situated right now. Technologically, they’re pretty much at the top.”

“For designers who are considering the move to Mac OS X–well, it’s great. And the latest version 10.2 is remarkable. It’s a simple, clear, direct, logically set-up operating system. Devices that you connect to it just work. If you use a digital camera, if you use a scanner, if you use a tablet, all of it just plugs in and goes to work for you. The operating system takes care of it. Plus, there are applications built into Mac OS X that are available nowhere else, and they’re designed just as well as the operating system is. This system really sells itself.”

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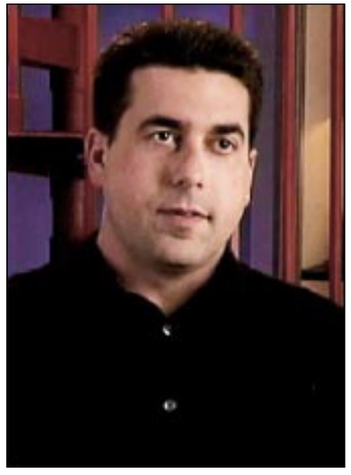

Ben Levy, a member of the Apple Consultants Network.

Visit Ben Levy’s website to learn more about his Mac consulting services.

Apple Consultants Network

A member of the Apple Consultants Network can bring a high level of technical knowledge and expertise in the latest Apple products and services to your company. Certified members can quickly get you started in implementing and using Mac OS X, Learn more about hiring a member of the Apple Consultants Network in this free online seminar.

The Move to Mac OS X
Hear from Linda Warren and Ben Levy on their experience of switching Warren Group’s systems to Mac OS X.

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STUDIO DELUXE

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Warren Group Gets Deluxe with Mac OSX

A Design Studio Makes the Move to Mac OSX

Twenty-first century print designers find themselves in an intriguing position. Their medium is ink on paper—but their days are spent eyeing pixels on screens. Their technique is based on centuries of tradition—but their technology is changing at a rapid pace. Their business often depends on stable client relationships—but their portfolios depend on doing challenging, cutting-edge work. Striking a balance among these demands can sometimes be a high-wire act. But that's exactly what gets a designer's blood flowing.

Leap of faith

"I always wanted people to perceive us as a firm that takes leaps, and does them fearlessly," says Linda Warren, founder and creative director of the Warren Group. After 17 years in a makeshift space in Venice Beach—and despite a loud hiccup in the economy—she'd recently moved her business to an airy, high-ceilinged Culver City studio. To complete that fresh start, she and her long-time tech consultant, Ben Levy, planned a shift to Mac OS X, a new operating system that was filled with promise.

"Sure, I'd heard rumors on the street, people saying 'Oh, I wouldn't jump to Mac OS X' for one reason or another," says Linda. "And of course I was nervous because we were making so many changes at once. But I've been in love with Apple technology since the day I brought a 512K Mac into the office and set it there with my drafting table, my T-square, and my pica pole. From that moment, being on the progressive side of technology—and maintaining that sense of amazement over what these tools can do—has been the key to my design life."

The duality of design

Linda didn't need to hold her breath for long. "The transition happened so quickly and easily," she recalls. "As soon as I started using Mac OS X on a day-to-day basis, I immediately realized that we could work much more efficiently. More flexibly. More productively. Mac OS X thinks the way I think—it's completely aligned with the way I work."

"Something that always struck me about design is that, on one side. it's completely a creative process. But the other side of it is very structured, very organized. Mac OS X seems to instantly appeal to both sides, the left brain and the right brain—so it's very natural for me. It's intuitive. It's logical. And I know everyone in the studio feels the same way."

Linda Warren, founder and creative director of the Warren Group.

The Move to Mac OS X

When Linda Warren recently moved the growing Warren Group to more sophisticated digs in Culver City, she further embraced the change by switching her systems to Mac OS X. Very quickly, the upgrade had a refreshing effect—on her projects, her clients' perceptions, and her studio's bottom line.

Power Mac G4
Creative Benchmark

A new report from Pfeffier Consulting shows Mac OS X and the new dual-processor Power Mac G4 enable productivity improvements that contribute to a significantly shorter payback cycle.

The power of teamwork

"On a creative level, everything we do here depends on collaboration. Collaboration among ourselves, the photographers and illustrators and writers we work with, and collaboration with our clients. The better we collaborate, the better our final product is. And every nuance of Mac OS X lends itself to those collaborations."

Linda points to an Apple Cinema Display filled with photos, illustrations, page layouts, text files. "What strikes me most about the upgrade is how all our tools work much better together. It's a very powerful and stable work environment. Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign, Word—everything that is native to Mac OS X is always at your fingertips and working much faster. The fact that we can reliably open and work among all the software at once, with no crashes—the productivity of being able to do just that is phenomenal."

The Consultant's Input. Ben Levy, a member of the Apple Consultants Network, was instrumental in the Warren Group's move to Mac OS X. Read more about his involvement.

Familiar tools, new freedom

But does that mean retiring QuarkXPress, the de facto standard of page layout programs? "All of our Quark files run in Classic mode," says Linda. Font management was a challenge, but the Warren Group tested several solutions and ultimately moved from Adobe Type Manager to Font Reserve. "Right now we're in the process of working between Quark and InDesign, and it's no problem. But lately I've been feeling that InDesign, in many ways, is simpler to sync with the other Adobe programs we use. Between Photoshop and Illustrator, you have an environment you're accustomed to, key commands you're accustomed to, and it's just more seamless, easier to bring it all together. In a sense, the beauty of the system is that we're not thinking about it. We're thinking more about design."

Taking care of business

Design may be the heart of Linda's business, but business is rarely far from her mind. "A good firm is one where the clients feel comfortable. It's of paramount importance that you're able to support them with estimates, scheduling, tracking, billing and backup if need be—anything they need to get their work out the door. We've been working with MYOB AccountEdge, which is also native to Mac OS X—and it runs the business side just wonderfully. When my clients come by to see the new office, they're not just impressed by the grander space, the new hardware and the amazing flat-screen displays—they're surprised that I'm running my entire business with no PCs."

From risk to reward

The business has been booming lately, with a mix of projects from an increasingly varied clientele. "Universities, corporations, hospitals—I've never particularly focused on one type of work. We've always sought out different types of clients. What I'm looking for in the future is to expand our base and bring different types of projects into our office. We get a charge out of working on new things, not getting stale, challenging ourselves."

"Ultimately, Mac OS X has been such a great move for us, and has been nothing but a success story in our office. It's really important for me to know that we are on top of things, and that we are walking in step with the world. Lately, I've even enjoyed the idea that we're one step ahead.

"Because we're totally poised for it, I feel that projects we don't expect will walk in the door—and I look forward to that. We've changed so much in the last year, I can't even visualize what's to come. But I'm really excited about it."

Warren Group www.studiodeluxe.com