# MACS HELP TRACK OIL SPILL

BY GREGORY QUICK

*Valdez, Alaska*

At the home port of the ill-fated Exxon Valdez oil tanker, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Agency (NOAA), in conjunction with the U.S. Coast Guard, is using Macintosh computers to track the progress of the oil spill and cleanup in Prince William Sound.

"It's a visual information system that tracks the oil spill cleanup effort," said Peter Honebein, an independent developer who put together the program with the Coast Guard, NOAA and Silicon Beach Software Inc. "It takes daily reports from on-site observers and summarizes the information to be presented in a graphical manner."

The program uses maps from digitalized Exxon Corp. photos, and pictures that are scanned into the computer. The images are then converted onto Silicon Beach's SuperCard stacks and colored with the company's SuperPaint.

The federal government has required Exxon to provide the Coast Guard with a schedule for the cleanup. The entire cleanup is divided into units called clydes, which determine the man hours needed for any particular beach. The initial cleanup must be finished before Sept. 15. That date was chosen because it is after this day that the weather in Alaska generally turns bad for the winter.

Coast Guard Admiral Clyde Robins uses the customized Silicon Beach programs to compare Exxon's stated progress with the schedule. The program shows the information in several separate graphical manners, including graphs that show work-in-progress, amount of oil on a given beach, and total estimated time for cleanup, said Lt. Commander Jack Reed, who oversees the data entry for the Coast Guard.

Photo/Tom Gillespie

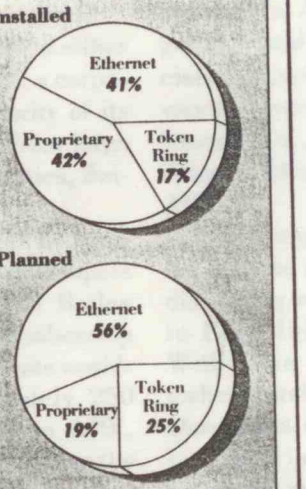
Cleaning up the oil.

The Coast Guard's Hazardous Waste Response Group, which is equipped with Macintosh computers service-wide, will handle the program when

*Continued on page 31*

## MACStats

**PC LANS AT U.S. DEC VAX SITES**




*Distribution by Type*

**By embracing Token Ring technology, Apple can address a larger market at DEC VAX sites**

*Source: Computer Intelligence*

## MAC GOES TO COURT

*The State of Maine, led by judges and lawyers, has become one of the most advanced states in regards to the use of computers by its legal system, according*

# Mac is Mixed Blessing on Wall Street

BY ALISON CALDERBANK

*New York*

Despite the odds stocked against it—high prices and unsatisfactory reseller service and support—the brokerage firm Cantor Fitzgerald is pioneering the use of Macintoshes on Wall Street.

The project of bringing Macs into Cantor Fitzgerald began last March when Steven

Photo/Daniel Jamal

Cantor Fitzgerald's Francesco

have been $40,000, Francesco said. "$30,000 was saved in the first two weeks [of Mac ownership,]" he added. "On a productivity basis,

working with a nearby Businessland. "I'd like to give up all of them," he said. "There's

PCs and compatibles.

The Macintosh is a "powerful processor for trend analysis," Francesco said, but it needs "industry specific software." There is "so much good [general] software, you want to use it all," he said. The lack of a listing of available software, complete with a rating of some sort,

surprised we aren't already a member."

"The customer is always the one who determines your product development, and this is an excellent way to exchange information and points of view with our customers," he explained.

While that message would be typical of most user groups, the members themselves aren't.

"I just don't have the time to belong [to APX] and a user group," said Clare Hart, special projects manager in the Advanced Systems Group for Dow Jones & Co., and also the mid-Atlantic chapter president for APX.

"At user groups you find users that are more interested in discussing what tools they use in PageMaker," Hart said. With more than 200 Macintoshes installed throughout the Dow Jones offices, "I'm more interested in finding out ways of managing my network."

"Instead of us checking every Macintosh product to see how it works, we can talk to other members about their experiences with certain solutions and see how it worked for them," Hart said. "The corporate orientation is very important."

The city of Mountain View, Calif., is also a member of the information is APX's primary goal, and for that reason alone is worth the $100 membership fee charged by APX.

"If some other member has come up against a particular problem, then I don't have to bang my head up against it to solve it," Maloney said. "It customers and what developers can provide.

"I think APX as an association would be more effective asking for something than I would be all by myself yelling my head off," he added.

Most other APX members indicated that they wouldn't mind organization of the marketing department in July, seems somewhat uncertain how to approach APX.

"They've done some very interesting and innovative things for us," said Craig Elliot, Apple's marketing manager for professional associations. ◀

# MACS AID CLEANUP EFFORT

*Continued from page 29*

the final development is finished. "We have 30 field monitors sending in daily reports on how much beach has been cleaned today, which we feed into our Macs," Reed said.

Much of the initial information for the program came from the Hazardous Materials Response Branch of the NOAA, which was on the scene within 24 hours after the Exxon Valdez was on the rocks, bringing along a Macintosh SE to be used as the heart of its operation at the spill site.

"We use the Macintosh for trajectory forecasting, to tell us where [the oil] is going," said Dean Dale, a data manager for NOAA. "We update the maps daily, using information gained from fly-overs by helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft, and then send the information via E-mail to our headquarters in Seattle, where it is then faxed to Washington."

The sheer size of the spill and the vast number of maps needed to cover the entire area has placed a burden on microcomputers, even ones that come equipped with 8M bytes of RAM. To solve that problem, Dean turned to Fox Software Inc.'s FoxBASE +/Mac to store and cross reference the maps.

"This will allow the maps to be stored on our minicomputer in Seattle, and can be called up for updates only," Dale said.

The graphics abilities of the Macintosh are what made the whole cleanup process manageable, said Reed. "We could not do this without the Macintosh." The NOAA center in Alaska now uses three Macintosh SEs, one Macintosh SE/30, and six Macintosh IIcx computers. The IIcxs are equiped with 5M bytes to 8M bytes of RAM, and color monitors.

NOAA has been responding to oil spills for 12 years, and has brought Macintosh computers with them ever since the computer's introduction. The organization has developed a hazardous material program called CAMEO, and has scientific support stations across the nations. These stations use Macintosh computers that exchange information about spills and disasters to its Seattle headquarters.

The Macs used by the Coast Guard are the center of an operation that includes 30 field monitors, who send in daily reports to six Coast Guard staff members. ◀