Tips for MacOS Users

Support for this type of devices is limited.

Purchase of MacOS devices

You get the best price if you purchase your MacOS devices through Surfspot (10% discount). Log in with your ULCN account and proceed to the “partnershops”. If you are purchasing the device via a University of Leiden budget (SAP number), however, contact bestellingen@lorentz.leidenuniv.nl.

Disks

On the Mac you will have administrator access, so you have to work from the insecure network (IP numbers 132.229.212.*), rather than from the secure network (IP numbers 132.229.227.*). The main drawbacks are that you cannot mount disks over NFS.
You can still mount directories on our Linux file server over SSH, using MacFusion after logging into ssh.lorentz.leidenuniv.nl . By storing valuable files on the Linux file server, you make sure that they are backed up and you can access them from outside. (Alternativey, you can rely on Dropbox.) For added protection, I recommend attaching an external disk to your Mac and using Time Machine to back up the files on your Mac. To back up to CD or DVD, for long-term archiving, I recommend Burn.

Printing

See these instructions.

Mail

I keep all my email on the Linux mail server, so that it is backed up and accessible from everywhere using the IMAP protocol. As a cross-platform mail client I recommend Mozilla Thunderbird. Connect to port 993 on mail.lorentz.leidenuniv.nl with SSL/TLS. For outgoing mail, connect to port 465 on mail.lorentz.leidenuniv.nl with SSL/TLS. (Leave the “secure authentication” box unchecked, since the whole transmission is secured; port 587 no longer works with Thunderbird 3.) When you are on the road, all your mail remains available via the webmail interface (connect to https://webmail.lorentz.leidenuniv.nl).

X11

To display programs from the Linux computers on your Mac, make an ssh-tunnel through ssh.lorentz.leidenuniv.nl after opening the X11 application. A convenient shell script to automate the tunnel process is /home/beenakkr/bin/ssh-tunnel. For example, to tunnel to asselijn I call ssh-tunnel “-

Y -l beenakkr" 5901 localhost ssh.lorentz.leidenuniv.nl 5902 localhost asselijn.lorentz.leidenuniv.nl 5903 You might have to set the DISPLAY variable first on your Mac, by putting these lines in your .cshrc file:

```
if( ! $?DISPLAY ) then
setenv DISPLAY :0.0
endif
```

For passwordless login, I use Leopard's built-in ssh-agent.

Keeping home & work in sync

To keep my Macs at home and at work in sync, I rely on my Google account as an intermediary for my iCal calendar database (setup) and for my Thunderbird address book (using the Zindus plugin). Most of my other files are kept in sync via Dropbox.

LaTeX

The TeX distribution can be installed using the MacTeX package. This also includes the TeXShop front-end, which offers a very convenient integration of LaTeX source and PDF output. XeTeX allows you to use the fonts installed on your Mac with TeX.

With LaTeXit (also included in the MacTeX package) you can easily insert LaTeX formulas into plots and slides. I combine LaTeXit with Intaglio for plots and with Keynote for slides.

Here are some tips for Intaglio users. For many helpful hints on LaTeX, Keynote, etc. see here.

For a method to simulate LaTeX commands in email and chat, take a look here.

Office software

We have a campus license for MS Office (Word, Excel, Powerpoint), ask Carlo for the CD (departmental use only, buy an inexpensive license at Surfspot for home use). LibreOffice (or OpenOffice, but that is becoming obsolete) is an open source alternative.

As a plain text editor I use TextWrangler. To annotate+manipulate (for example, merge) pdf files you can use Leopard's Preview as an alternative to Adobe Acrobat Pro. To edit pdf files, Intaglio or Inkscape are inexpensive or free alternatives to Adobe Illustrator.

I have switched to paperless archiving of scientific articles, with the help of Papers (tips).

Licensed software

Most of our network licensed software (mathematica, matlab, idl) can be installed locally on the Mac and then used by connecting to the license server:

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license.physics.leidenuniv.nl
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See flexlm for details about the license server software and its setup.

Compiling Unix software

Since MacOS X is based on Unix, you can compile and install many Unix programs from the source files. To do so, you will have to install first the compiler and associated Xcode tools from the AppStore. For example, I installed sm, tgif, and gv. You can also get precompiled binaries from the fink or macports repositories.

Miscellaneous

I enthusiastically recommend 1Password to keep track of web passwords and automate the sign-in procedure (tips).