Mac Users Get Some Respect

(NAPSA)—Many small-business owners with Macintosh computer systems face the same challenge. They'd like to be able to perform computing tasks as easily as businesses that use PCs, but the cost of swapping all the company's computers would be too great. In addition, a majority of small business users prefer to work on their Macs.

"I probably could make life a little easier on myself if I made the switch," says John O'Brien, vice president and co-founder of Steam Advertising and Design, who has 13 Macs in his shop. "But I just can't bring myself to do it."

To help relieve such workplace woes, Microsoft Corp. has developed Office 2001 for Mac, a suite of programs that are compatible with their Office for Windows counterparts, making it easy to collaborate and share files with PC users. The package includes the 2001 editions of Word, Excel and Powerpoint, as well as Entourage, a new e-mail application and personal information manager (PIM).

"Office 2001 for Mac is designed to fulfill the needs and desires of all Macintosh users, but especially small business owners," says Erik Ryan, product manager for the Macintosh Business Unit at Microsoft. "The Mac-first features and excellent compatibility of Office 2001 help simplify the lives of users and enable them to be more productive."

Besides offering easy interaction with those in the PC environment, Office 2001 allows small businesses and other users to:

• Organize e-mail with separate home, work and personal tabs, and apply color-coded categories to e-mail messages, contacts, appointments and tasks. The PIM in Entourage 2001 also features an integrated calendar and enables synchronization with 3COM Palm organizers and MSN Hotmail, the Web-based e-mail service.

• Assign formatting across all applications using tools in a single location. In addition, the Format-

The Office 2001 productivity suite makes several Microsoft programs available to Mac users.

ting Palette offers only the options that are appropriate for the application the user has selected.

• Easily sort, filter, format, print and summarize lists. Excel 2001 recognizes when a list is being created and automatically offers to convert it to a manageable list format. Excel can also calculate information such as the sum or average of the data in a column.

• Add new slides, edit text and enter notes while creating and navigating a PowerPoint 2001 presentation. Users can also save presentations as QuickTime Movies and share them with anyone who has a QuickTime player.

Tim Cox, head of Z!ng Public Relations, credits Microsoft with making his life as a Mac loyalist much easier. "As a Mac user, I know how it feels to be treated like a second-class citizen," he says. In fact, several software applications he uses have stopped supporting Mac. "With the latest version of Microsoft Office for Mac, Microsoft is demonstrating its commitment to the Macintosh community and, most important, to cross-platform compatibility."

Office 2001 for Mac has an estimated retail price of $499 for the full version and $299 for the upgrade version (reseller prices may vary). To learn more, visit www.microsoft.com/mac.