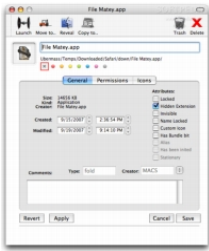


20 September 2007

By: Victor Mihailescu, Apple News Editor

[File Matey, Tries to Get Chummy with Files](#)

But doesn't get too far...



Considering that files make up such a big part of working with computers, it is not surprising that there are so many applications out there dedicated to them. From general file browsers to very obscure or specialized one trick programs, everything you need is usually just a few clicks away. However, finding that best application for the task at hand can be tricky, especially when marketing comes into play. You can always stick to the tried and true programs that already have a solid reputation, but then you will be missing out on all the little gems out there, like File Matey. **What it does** File Matey is described by its developer as being a user friendly file utility for the ordinary Mac user, allowing for full control of ones files. What it actually does is act as an information utility that also has some file management options thrown in for good measure. **Working with it** Working with File Matey can best be described as an exercise in discovery. The lone application that is presented to you looks tempting with its file and wrench motif, and the grungy look hints at an old school approach. After launching it, you stare at the menus and wait to see if anything else happens, and then things get complicated. File Matey's failure to explain what it does in its description can also be seen in the first running of the application itself. There are no windows of any kind, so exploring the menus one at a time is the only option. Here we can find gems such as 'Make Alias' and 'Make Symbolic Link' and '.Ds_Store Remover,' which are about all of the options that you have available to you. At a second glance, one notices the 'Get Info' option that was missed the first time because we're used to it being there in the File menu, and we come to the moment of truth: File Matey is actually a get info utility that also has various other things thrown in for good measure. As an information utility, File Matey fails to impress. It offers pretty much the exact same information as the Finder, but lets you edit it indiscriminately. The only thing it does get right is the Icon tab where it lets you interact with the Icon both at the image and mask level, as well as with its various sizes. This makes it quite useful for extracting an icon complete with its mask to just about any image editing application. The reason why File Matey would never make for a decant get info utility is simply the fact that it is not as on demand as such an utility should be. You can either change to the application and then use the Command I shortcut, or drag files to the dock icon, but neither of these is ideal for repeated use. Working on multiple files from the same source is quite practical however, since you can select them all and drag them onto the dock icon in one fell swoop. On the down side, having multiple windows open in File Matey seems to slow it down in a weird way and changing from one to another is always accompanied by a very noticeable freeze. Furthermore, while the application does attempt to avoid overlapping windows in a way that makes them hard to access, it is a very poor and misguided attempt. Besides offering information on any files, File Matey will also let you perform various common actions on them, right from within it. You can copy, move, open and delete files using the toolbar buttons, but just why you would be tempted to do such a thing this way instead of simply using the Finder is simply beyond me. There is a lot to be said for programs that manage to get the utility of several applications into one single smooth package, but here the options are simply present to fill up the menus. Things like the 'Reveal' function simply make no sense, because I cannot imagine anyone coming upon a file that they wanted to inspect in File Matey and switching to the application and navigating to it through the open interface, instead of just dragging it onto the dock. Similarly, using this program for file management purposes would be like digging holes with teaspoons. The only thing that the developer got right was the option to see the data fork of a file, which can indeed be practical, although there are problems even here. Searching

through the data fork of a 84KB file can actually take several seconds and no search will ever progress beyond the first hit. **The Good** Some of the features such as Desktop Trashcan, .DS Store file deletion, icon handling and data fork viewing can be quite practical. **The Bad** So much about this application looks like it was placed there just to fill up space. Many features are awkward if not futile. **The Truth** A good example of trying to do multiple things and not getting any of them just right. From the description down to the features, File Matey is an application that has no clear direction. Here are some screenshots, click to enlarge: