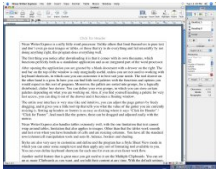


15 November 2005

By: Victor Mihailescu, Apple News Editor



[Nisus Writer Express, A Word Processor that Fits Like A Glove](#)

Customise every aspect of this nifty word processor

Nisus Writer Express Unlike others that limit themselves to pure text and don't even go near images or tables, or those that try to do everything and fail miserably by not doing anything right, this program does everything well. The first thing you notice after downloading it is that it comes with its own thesaurus, which functions perfectly both as a standalone application and as an integrated part of the word processor. After opening the application, you are greeted by a blank document with a drawer on the right. The tool bar on the top of the window is only marginally useful, unless you are not used to working with keyboard shortcuts, in which case you can customize it to best suit your needs. The tool drawer on the other hand is a gem. In here you can find little tool palettes with the functions and options you would expect in this sort of program. Moreover, the pallets are sorted into groups, for a logically distributed, clutter free drawer. You can define your own groups, in which you can store certain palettes depending on what you are working on. Also, if you find yourself needing a palette for very fast access, you can drag it out of the drawer and it becomes a floating window. The entire user interface is very mac-like and intuitive, you can adjust the page gutters by freely dragging, and it gives you a little tool tip that tells you what the value of the gutter you are currently resizing is. Setting up headers or footers is as easy as clicking where it says "Click for Header" / "Click for Footer". And much like the gutters, these can be dragged and adjusted easily with the mouse. Nisus Writer Express also handles tables extremely well, with the one limitation that text cannot wrap around tables, limitation that also applies to images. Other than that, the tables work smooth and fast even when you have hundreds of cells and resizing columns. You have all the standard row/column/cell manipulation tools and auto fit, balance, borders and shading. Styles are also very easy to customize and define and the program has a Style Sheet View mode in which you can enter some sample text and then apply any sort of formatting tool available to you. You can even define keyboard shortcuts for each one for an even faster work flow. Another useful feature that is great once you get used to it is the 'Multiple Clipboards'. You can set up as many Clipboards as you want, and see/edit their content at any time. With the default settings, working with multiple clipboards is a painstaking experience, having to go into the edit menu to change the current clipboard every time. However, in the Preferences, we can find a menu keys tab. Here you can set any key combination you like for any of the program's menu and sub menu items. If you take the time to actually customize, or in this case add, shortcuts for the multiple Clipboards you can have a very nice and smooth work flow. Since we're on the subject of Preferences, here you can also define "languages", which basically means telling the program what fonts, keyboard layouts, spell checker tools and thesaurus toy want the application to automatically use when you switch to that language. Very useful if you need to do any multi-lingual work. Last but not least, the application supports macros and comes with a set of predefined ones of which some are actually quite useful. The scripting language is PERL and if you are privy with it you can edit the scripts on the fly straight from within Nisus Writer Express. **The Good** Very customizable, and once you get used to it and get a feel for it, customize and define shortcuts for the tools and styles you use on a regular basis, this program is bound to increase your work flow. **The Bad** Text does not wrap around images or tables, giving your documents a very sloppy, unprofessional look. **The Truth** This is a very good program if you find yourself working with a lot of text and don't need to embed images or tables. It is very customizable and after you get used to it, you can have a very smooth and fast work flow. Here are some pics of Nisus Writer Express, click to enlarge: