

Things to Come

by Frank Petrie

**Product: Things 1.2.5
and Things for iPhone**

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**Requirements: Mac 10.4.11 or
later**

**Price: \$49.95 for desktop ver-
sion; \$9.95 for iPhone version;
trial version available**

**Test Rig: MacBook Pro
2.26Ghz/5GB RAM**

I'm constantly reminded of how much more that I have to do and how far that I have fallen behind in my work. The three inch pile of papers on my desk won't let me forget. And now there is a way to detail all the stuff I have to do and place it into an organized, compartmentalized and hopefully (up to me) productive order.

"Task management has never been this easy. Simplicity, however, is not achieved at the expense of powerful features."

"Powerful" doesn't touch on how much you can do with these gems. Let's take a look.

THE JUICE

2009 Apple Design Award winner, Things desktop and iPhone app, is a double threat. The two pieces of software can be used in combination or separately. We'll start with the desktop app.

Things, while not as intertwined with other apps as OmniPlan, is still an extremely powerful tool that exceeds the task that you probably have planned. The GUI is laid out as most Mac software, with your navigation sidebar on the left and your body on the right, so you should feel right at home from the start.

At the top of your sidebar, you'll find your Inbox, the repository for all of your tasks. From here you assign or drag your tasks to whichever heading best reflects their need. Things starts you out with a handful of headings but, naturally, you can create your own to suit your tasks. You'll find your different tasks located in both the sidebar and in the header.

All your tasks can be customized. Every list can easily be filtered and sorted by due date. And you can nest your tasks, as well. You can include notes and links to files, web sites or email messages (email links require Mac OS X 10.5). Setting time to begin or complete a task is quite easily done. But suppose that

your task cannot be started until a certain date? Then you would use the Scheduled list to forget about it and be reminded when the time is right. And just as with iCal, tasks can be set to repeat daily, weekly, monthly, what-have-you. Working on a collaboration? Delegate to-dos to your coworkers and teammates.

What gives this app such extreme powers is not only can every list easily be filtered and sorted by due date, but you can avoid project overload by setting less pressing ones to inactive. But perhaps the most impressive feature is that you can incorporate custom AppleScripts.

And if you're a glutton for punishment, Things' dock icon sports a badge like your Mail app, reminding you how many tasks you have assigned to today.

As for the iPhone app, you can use it either in conjunction with the desktop app or all on its own. If you use it as a standalone app, you will find that it sports the same ease of use as its desktop brethren and has all of the same features that make it so easy to use, and so indispensable.

THE PULP

If you're coming from the world of OmniPlan, it's probably a slice of cake to begin using Things. If you're approaching it from the world of iCal (such as myself) you're going to find yourself slightly dizzy. In my case, not from any learning curve but just from noticing how many tasks I'm behind on. Once the lightheadedness had passed, I went about setting up Things with no hiccups. I also found that syncing both the desktop app and the iPhone app (done via your Wi-Fi network for technical reasons) at the beginning of my day helped me to budget my time more efficiently than when I used iCal.

THE RIND

There is now an accurate way to measure my procrastination to the day.

SUMMARY

What can I say. This app is going to help me get all my projects in order and save my bacon. Particularly, as it forces me to look at all the tasks necessary both realistically and with an eye on priority.

This is one that I truly recommend that you go out and try. But brace yourself for the pain when you realize just how much you have to do to break even!

RATING: 10 of 10

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