Kicking the Tires

by Frank Petrie

Review

Product: **SuperDuper! v1.0.1 (v55)**
Company: Shirt Pocket <http://www.shirt-pocket.com/>
Price: (US) $19.95
Requirements: Macintosh OS X 10.2.8 or later
Test Rig: iBook G4/933/640 MB RAM
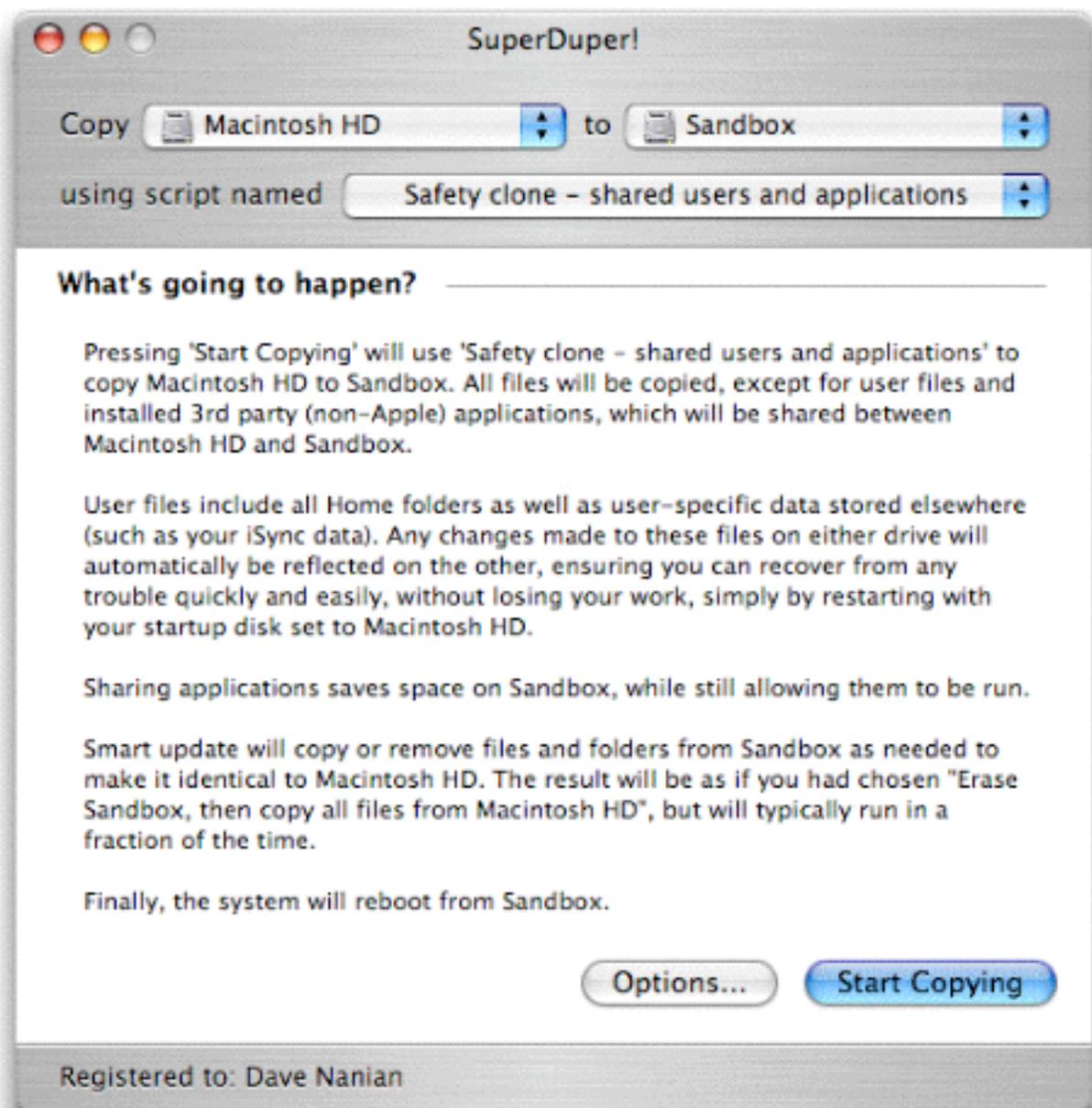Review Date: 27 January 2004

There is one rule that if you haven't learned by now, then pack up your G5 and give it to me! BACK UP YOUR FILES REGULARLY! As easy as it is to do, most of us never think of it until we lose all our files. Too late, Homer.

"SuperDuper can be used as a flexible disk copying utility, but it goes well beyond mere duplication. Its unique "Safety Clone" feature lets you install potentially risky drivers or system updates without fear of creating an unbootable or unworkable system — or losing access to your critical personal data."

OK. Prove it. (Even though the majority of my data doesn't deserve the epithet 'critical').

The Good

Installation is a breeze. Double click the installer package. Very, very straight forward brushed aluminum UI. Very simple to navigate. In fact, it prompts you through the whole process. Like that ... a lot! (Particularly with my memory.)

The preferences are few but exactly what you need. You choose how you would like your data handled, a copy script and compression (none, low, medium or high). And the latest feature that has been popping up in shareware – "Automatically check for updates." Gotta love it. The computer does the work.

But SD! comes with some added toys like "Safety Clone." A Safety Clone is a bootable copy of your system, stored on another hard drive or partition, that shares your personal documents and data with the original. You actually use the Safety Clone as your startup volume!

"You can safely install any system updates, drivers or programs on the Safety Clone, without worrying about what might happen to your system. If anything goes wrong, you can simply start up from the original system. SuperDuper has preserved it in its original, pre–disaster state – but all your new and changed personal documents are totally up to date." But don't count on using this as your regular back up. Still, ALWAYS do a regular Back Up!!!

SD! comes prepackaged with four user scripts to back up general groups of files. But you can of course create your own scripts to satisfy your own specific needs.

I was able to back up my 25 GB of data to an external hard drive, with low compression, in about 55 minutes. Not bad.

The Bad

Nada.

The Ugly

Nada.

The Close

Does exactly what it says it does. A 'one trick pony' of good stock, with an extra trick or two. And twenty bucks is a reasonable price for such a critical tool. Currently, there are a number of BackUp systems available for X out there; some as stand–alones, some as a part of suites. Can't say as I've found a bad one (although I seem to be the only person on the planet that has problems operating Carbon Copy Cloner!).

You can download a test drive of SuperDuper! from the site. As I said, there are many backup apps out there, some free, some not, some barebones, some with extras. But only you will be able to decide which package feels best for you. Go on. Kick the tires.

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Thank you.