Family History Programs for Macintosh

When it comes to family history software, it is easy to get lost in the vast sea of programs that are out there. Although there are lots of programs available, we only hear about ones that work for Windows and not Macintosh. There is good news for Apple users; there are options out there for you! If you already have a family history software for your Mac and want more options, or are new to the world of family history and want to use Mac-compatible software, this article lists several options for you. First let's start out with a list of the leading Apple-compatible family history software!

Reunion by Leister Productions (www.leisterpro.com)   cost: $99.95

Reunion is a powerful family history program designed specifically for Macintosh. It is probably the most popular family history program sold in North America. Reunion's newest version (Reunion 9.0b) was released on October 13, 2009. Reunion performs all the basic functions most family history programs do and more. It lets you enter family information in a visually appealing interface, print a variety of charts and reports including pedigrees, descent charts and family group sheets. It supports multimedia imports like audio, pictures, and movies and provides web formats for easy online sharing. It also provides formats for the iPhone. On the reverse side, Reunion does not currently synchronize with new.familysearch.org. Reunion's powerful features, visually appealing design, and easy-to use interface make it one of the best options out there for Apple users. You can purchase it online at www.apple.com or at your nearest Apple Store.

MacFamilyTree 6 by Synium (http://www.syniumsoftware.com/macfamilytree)   cost: $49

MacFamilyTree 6 the newest release of the MacFamilyTree series by the German based company Synium. MacFamilyTree 6 is the first Mac OSX-based records manager that integrates completely with new.familySearch.org. MacFamilyTree 6 offers a very visually appealing interface that shows clear family linkages and lets you add information and sources with ease. It offers all the basic features that other family history programs do, in addition to an extensive 3-D family tree viewer, and a historical database which allows you to view events of your ancestors with greater historical scope. It also supplies internet features, in addition to integration capabilities with Mobilefamilytree, the iPhone family history app also produced by Synium. On the downside MacFamily Tree 6 does not include sources with its family group sheet like other traditional records management programs do. However, it does let you print off for a single individual's information along with sources. It can be purchased for a 25% discount if you are enrolled in a BYU family history class, the discount code can be obtained from the Rel C 261 Lab TAs. While not the most extensive family history software available, MacFamilyTree 6 is an ever-improving program that offers great features to those who wish to pursue family history on their Macintosh.

 Family Tree Maker for Mac by Ancestry.com (http://store.ancestry.com/)   cost: $56-70

Ancestry.com, the online research giant for genealogy, has made a mac-version of their Family Tree Maker software. While more expensive than the Windows Version, Family Tree Maker for Mac is a powerful

piece of software that includes a personal database manager to manage your family tree, as well as seamless search capabilities through Ancestry.com for individuals who have an Ancestry.com subscription. While not FamilySearch Certified and therefore unable to import from new.familysearch.org, Family Tree maker for Mac is capable of printing out family group sheets and narrative reports, with options to import from GEDCOMs or via Ancestry family tree. All in all a great family history program, Family Tree Maker for Mac will meet all your basic genealogy needs and more.

Gramps 3.2 by Grampsproject.org (http://gramps-project.org/)   cost: FREE

Gramps 3.2 Genealogical Research Software is open-source software designed originally for Linux, but available for use on Windows or Mac OSX. Because it is open-source it is free to use. While not the most powerful genealogy software available (and a bit more on the technical side) Gramps employs the use of several different plug-ins to make this software a good and cost effective personal records manager. Gramps is capable of printing out family group sheets with sources (after installing the Family Sheet plug-in.) It also can print out narrative and individual reports as well. While GEDCOM capable, the import feature is fairly slow for the Mac version of Gramps, although as development continues for the Mac version this process might become quicker. Gramps is not currently FamilySearch Certified, although the developers are currently looking to certify in the near future. Because it's free you might want to try out Gramps. It's an adequate program with lots of potential.

Another option for Mac users is that of running Windows via a cross-over program or virtual machine on your Macintosh. A majority of Macs come with Boot-camp, a crossover program that allows you to install a separate operating system (like windows) onto your Apple computer. From there you can install and run the variety of Windows based family history programs available. Another great virtual machine program is called Vbox, by Sun Microsystems, and is free to download. Note that if you do wish to run Windows on most crossover programs or virtual machines, you will need to purchase a copy of Windows if you do not already own one.

A more technical crossover option is to use the open-source app **Wineskin** on your Mac computer. Wineskin will allow you to run RootsMagic Essentials, which can be downloaded free of charge. While a bit slower to run than traditional crossover programs, the upside to using Wineskin is that it is free. Detailed instructions on how to install Wineskin and RootsMagic Essentials have been put together by a blogger Drew Withers, and can be found at the following URL: http://blog.drewwithers.com/2011/02/rootsmagic-4-on-mac-os-for-free-using.html.

As an Apple user, you have a variety of options available when it comes to which family history programs you can use and how to run them on your Macintosh. Feel confident that there are options out there for you, and always keep an eye out for new programs that will come in the future