If parrots were software programs. Windows would be toast

(by Marguerite Floyd)

AFTER WASTING a perfectly good weekend attempting to network my old Macintosh computer with my new Macintosh computer, I finally surrendered to the will of the Great Computer Spirit and gave up. However, while untangling the 47 cables and wires that had taken over my desk, I began to wonder about parrots. More specifically, if a parrot were a computer software program, what kind would it be?

After a lengthy, in-depth five-second discussion of this with my friend Karen, we came to the following conclusions:

African greys are Microsoft Project, a scheduler and project planner. Greys are always planning something, thinking and scheming of how best to accomplish their missions.

Amazons are Quicken, a personal finance program. Amazons are always calculating and keeping track.

Budgies are Microsoft Outlook Express, a lightweight e-mail program. Budgies like to talk, are quick on their feet, and don't take up a lot of space.

Cockatiels are Linux, an independent computer operating system. They are eccentric, with no sense of humor, and frequently suffer from lack of publicity.

Cockatoos are the viruses of the parrot world. They love to destroy things for no reason other than that they can and you can't do a thing about it except try to repair the damage.

Conures would be spammers, infiltrating your household. They're always busy and into everything, sneaking up on you at random times and screeching about the latest whatever.

The eclectus is, of course, a virus scanner. It sits and watches, always prepared to take over when necessary.

The kakapo is Windows, but only because it's flightless and weighs a whopping eight pounds. (If I were to put a kakapo on my hard drive, it would take up lots more space than, say, a disk utility like a lovebird. See below.) Very much unlike Windows, the kakapo is not everywhere you turn (if only it were Windows and not the kakapo that faces extinction). And wouldn't it be nice if Windows had a fruity smell?

Lorikeets are the clipboard. They're messy and "paste" things wherever they want, without regard to organization.

Lovebirds are disk utilities, such as a hard disk defragmentation program. They don't take up much space, but they're tenacious and keep things in order.

Macaws are networks. They transmit information over long distances.

Parrotlets are personal firewalls. They are wary, bitey, protective, and aggressive. Nothing gets past them.

Quakers are databases. They like to build huge, complicated nests of interrelated twigs. Senegals, of course, would be the new Macintosh operating system - thoughtful, enjoying an upside down view of the world, with many new, yet-to-be discovered features.

Once I was able to relate my personal computers to parrots, I felt much better. I finally got those cables untangled and I might even try networking my two Macs again. Then again, I could just spend next weekend playing with my birds.

Marguerite Floyd is a hospital documentation manage, but considers her real job to be slave to three cockatiels, Flash, Nicholas and Sugar Franklin, and a 3 ~ year old brown headed parrot named Charli

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