



Real People Reviews by Daniel M. East

Eggplant 1.5 by Redstone Software

MSRP: Node-locked license \$4,590; Floating license \$7,500; 4 licenses on a single machine \$8,600

MIN. SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS: OS 10.2x or later; OSXVNC 10.1x or later (can use variety of VNC software depending on OS used)



Review date: July 16, 2004

PULL QUOTE: “set it and forget it way of staying on top of a multitude of issues”

Eggplant is a fully automated VNC/script based hardware testing application that offers 24/7 remote maintenance features for your Macs or other platform systems.

Although Eggplant is not one of those “for everyone” kind of applications, it may be a very nice option for those who run small networks or for small (and larger) office environments since it makes some very time consuming tasks automatic and seamless.

In functions like a mock-Apple Remote Desktop in that you can interact with another system by communicating with that system and using its own desktop and controls to work on it. Creating automated tasks and testing uses plain-English configurations. After creating a “suite” of testing scenarios, the scripts run smoothly and efficiently. The scripting creation is very simple once you understand that you are using images to actually teach the application to use the keystrokes you need to run these tests.

VNC-based options are fine for those “other” platforms, but we Mac-folk are spoiled. The learning curve is deep for Eggplant, but for good reason. I would like to see some template options and the ability to actually use ARD on the Mac side if/when it is Mac-to-Mac. I did have some issues when connecting to older versions of OS X; however, these issues were easily remedied with a quick visit to Red Stone's community forums online.

Critical systems engineers will love Eggplant since it is a set it and forget it way of staying on top of a multitude of issues. It may take a while to “set it,” but it is well worth the effort in both Mac to Mac and Mac to 'whatever' networks; however, all of this control comes at a steep price.

RATING 3.5 out of 5 stars VERY GOOD

Daniel East is the founder and president of The Mid-Atlantic Macintosh User Groups Team (MaMUGs); co-host of "PC Talk Radio;" a live speaker/presenter and a freelance columnist for several Mac publications.

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