

Rapid Recoveries

Powerful, intuitive, straightforward utility does what it promises: rescues data from hard drives

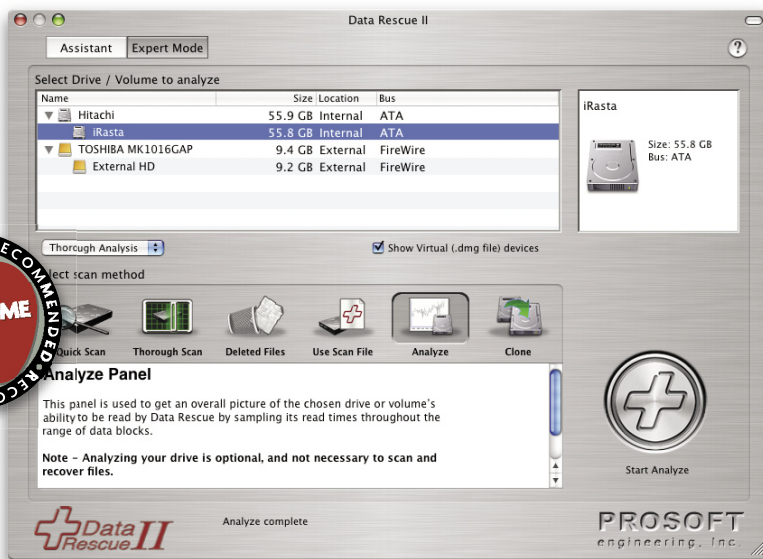
Depending on the number of computers you've owned, odds are you have probably encountered a failed, corrupted or crashed hard drive. Naturally, under these trying circumstances, fixing the problem and recovering your priceless data is foremost in your mind. Prosoft Engineering's Data Rescue II takes a refreshing and useful approach to this frustrating situation.

Data Rescue II operates differently than its competitors, Micromat TechTool Pro 4 (\$98; www.micromat.com) and Alsoft DiskWarrior (\$80; www.alfsoft.com). These programs attempt to repair damaged drives by writing to them and essentially refurbishing their contents. Prosoft contends that scanning the drive for data and saving the recovered files to a separate drive is safer and minimizes interaction with the compromised drive. Decreasing a damaged drive's activity can mean the difference between recovering your data or not.

Installing Data Rescue II is a simple drag and drop procedure. You'll only enter the serial number once after initially launching the program. Data Rescue II is a bootable CD if your Mac's Startup Disk is damaged. Next, Data Rescue II scans your computer for drives and volumes. The straightforward interface is clearly based on the premise that less is more, allowing you to operate in two modes, Assistant and Expert.

The Assistant mode walks you through a simple six-step data recovery process. An information pane accompanies each step, prompting you to make a selection in the pane below. First select the damaged drive or device to scan. Then, choose a "working volume" to store your recovered data to, typically an external FireWire drive. Click the Continue button and choose one of four scan methods: Quick, Thorough, Deleted Files or use the results of a previous scan with the option "Use scan file."

Data Rescue II recognizes a variety of drive formats, including internal, external, Zip, Jaz and CompactFlash. A Quick scan of our 55GB drive took only seconds, whereas a Thorough scan took one and a half hours. This difference relates to the distance or "span" between blocks of scanned



The Expert Mode offers more tools and a more formal interface.

data. Prosoft recommends a Thorough scan when a Quick scan fails to recover all your files. We found the Thorough scan quite a bit more comprehensive and thus useful. The Deleted Files scan inspects a healthy drive's empty space to recover important files you've inadvertently emptied from the Trash.

Once the scan method is chosen, a subsequent step summarizes the disk to be scanned, the selected working volume and the type of scan prior to displaying the Scan Results. These results simply list the number of files and folders scanned.

Data Rescue II then lists the Content Based Results in the Recover Files window. These results essentially interpret the data scanned and categorize it into useful, recognizable folders. For instance you'll likely find Audio, Documents, Office, PDF, Images, Mail, Movies and other folders containing significant files. This is an intuitive process that takes the difficulty out of recovery. Next, select any folders (or associated files) in the hierarchical results to save to your Working Volume.

The Expert Mode provides the same tools as Assistant and includes three more. The Analyze tool samples a drive's read time to help you determine its efficiency; the Clone tool is useful when creating an exact copy of a drive; and the Search tool is particularly useful at locating specific files after a scan.

If you have questions about Data Rescue II, reference the comprehensive Users Guide. Prosoft's technical support was also excellent; they returned our email inquiry in 24 minutes.

Data Rescue II is easy to use and organizes information logically, taking the stress out of recovering your data. —ROSS TIBBITS

Data Rescue II

Prosoft Engineering, Inc.
www.prosofteng.com
877-477-6763

\$99

PROS

Intuitive, powerful data recovery tools, flexible user format, excellent technical support.

CONS

Slightly higher cost than some competition.

REQUIRES

G3 or better

macHOME RECOMMENDS

Learning the Expert Mode

RATING



The straightforward interface is clearly based on the premise that less is more, and an intuitive process takes the difficulty out of recovery