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## James Bond or Jane Doe will find ShredIt X useful

By Dennis Sellers

Those of us with top-secret documents on our Macs need to shred them, not simply delete them. As for me, I can't have the memo from Steve Jobs with the picture of the new iMac prototype just floating around for anyone to see. And I've got to destroy those incriminating photos of Steve Ballmer – after my check comes in (hey, Apple, when did you say those new 30-inch Cinema Displays would be available?). Folks like me need ShredIt X from Mireth Technology. An "eDocument shredder," it lets you securely and permanently delete files, folders or disk free space.

**More...**
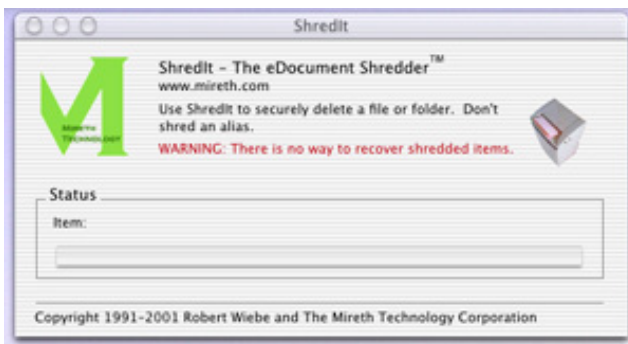


Why not just toss such items in the trash and delete 'em? Because doing so doesn't remove the file contents from the hard disk; it just removes the file name from the directory, leaving the data intact and vulnerable. To securely delete the file contents from the hard disk, the area on the disk where the file contents are stored with other data must be overwritten. That's ShredIt's job. It can also securely delete all copies of such files. When you edit a file, the application program will create and delete working copies each time you save, leaving multiple copies of your file on the hard disk in the disk free space area. In order to securely delete these copies, you need to shred your free space.

ShredIt can shred data on the hard drive, an external hard drive, a floppy disk, a Zip disk, windows formatted media, a RAM disk and just about any disk you can attach to your Mac (except read-only disks and CD ROMs). You can shred items already tossed in the trash. ShredIt X offers optional electronic document shredding standards compliance (US DoD, NSA, Gutmann), a configurable overwrite pattern and number of overwrites.

The application has several "fail-safe" features to prevent you from destroying a file you want to keep. There's a "Safe Place" option that lets you protect data from accidental shredding. You can activate a "Confirm before shred" dialog. These features, like all of ShredIt X, are use to use, thanks to an intuitive interface with "drag and drop" or "select from menu" choices.

Of course, the appeal of the product may be hampered some by the "Secure Empty

### MacMinute Headlines

Trash" feature in Mac OS X. Users who deal with confidential data are concerned primarily with shredding data files and this is the function that the "Secure Empty Trash" feature performs.  However, to shred any data already deleted prior to using this feature, you have to shred free space.  Also, the work files created by your applications are released to free space periodically (this is application dependent). Shredding your free space on a regular basis will eliminate most of these. Shredit X shreds free space; Panther doesn't.

As an aside, the work files most people are concerned about are the ones created when they're on the Internet (i.e. cache files).  If you clear your cache, these files are released to free space. To shred these files without having to shred your free space, you can use NetShred. It will shred the cache files each time you quit from your browser.

Users who are disposing of a computer want to shred the entire contents of their drive.  Prior to Panther, the only way to do this was to erase the hard drive and then shred it. With Panther, users can now erase a hard drive with the option of an "8 Way Random Write Format", effectively shredding the drive.

Although these two new features do reduce the need for a third party data shredder, you may still want ShredIt X (which costs US$19.95) because of additional features and convenience not offered by Panther, namely the ability to shred free space, the "Safe place" that protects data from accidental shredding and standards compliance convenience.

Also, ShredIt is more convenient to use than "Secure Empty Trash." With ShredIt, you drag a file or folder on to the icon, and it's shredded right away.  With Panther, you drag it into the trash and then it's shredded when you empty to trash.

So even if you don't carry eyes-only or executive-blackmailing data on your Mac, ShredIt may still be worth the $19.99 price. Evaluate your shredding/security needs and decide based on that.

ShredIt X is a one-trick pony, but sometimes one good trick is all you need.

Macsimum rating: 7 out of 10

Minimum system requirements: Power Mac G3 (or better) and Mac OS X.

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Yellow security alert. You'd have to be pretty paranoid to buy this thing. You've already got secure delete, and the next version of Safari has that "Don't let anyone know what I do on the web" feature… Fear-based products, for fear-based times. Don't give in to the dark side. Live in your hopes, and ignore the fear hype.

*Posted by: Bob on Jul 12, 04 | 11:53 am*

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Of course, Bob, it's not just about fear, but also about saving yer @%#in' a*** when you're writing bad things about your boss, your co-worker, or the government.

I have no fear, except of course of the fact we already have lost our privacy, and a

few of our basic rights.

Don't give in to the stupid side. Live in reality, ignore the changes in government at your own peril.

*Posted by: Vader on Jul 12, 04 | 9:37 pm*

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