

Your License Please!

Product: LicenseKeeper

Outer Level Software, <http://outerlevel.com>

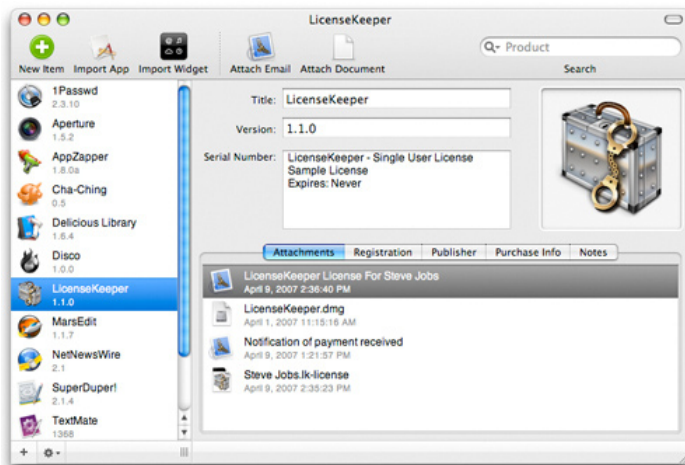
Requirements: Mac OS X

Cost: \$19.99

Rating: ⚪⚪⚪⚪

With about two decades of Mac experience, I am flooded with serial numbers and activation codes for all my software. Losing a serial number can put a serious cramp in your day. You have to e-mail the developer and wait for a reply—assuming the developer even exists anymore. For the last seven or eight years I've dutifully listed my serial numbers in an Excel spreadsheet organized in alphabetical order. But after a couple hundred lines the sheet became unwieldy and difficult to search. What to do?

Enter LicenseKeeper from Outer Level Software. LicenseKeeper is a very simple and well executed program with one goal in mind: to organize all those software serial numbers. But the program adds some very important features as well. At the most basic level you can tell the program to “import App” and point it at an application you have installed. The application is added to the database with its version number. You can then add your serial number and additional information, such as the email address, name and organization you registered your software under. LicenseKeeper attempts to add additional information—website, software developer and any other information it can detect.



If an application is not installed, you can choose to simply “Add Item,” which allows you to input any information. This method also works nicely if you are storing information like website passwords, computer logins or other information.

LicenseKeeper can do some rather amazing things, including importing e-mail messages and scanning them for a serial number within the text, and attaching documents such as registration files that some software requires for activation. You can also drag and drop applications on LicenseKeeper to add them to its database. The program automatically adds any program's icon to the database, but you can drag any image into the picture window. You can launch any application you have added to the database

from within LicenseKeeper. You can also attach the application, zip, dmg or other files—but that could take LicenseKeeper's database above the 2GB limit of Mac OS X.

LicenseKeeper saves all the information in the commonly used User/Username/Library/Application Support directory. At first I worried that this would cause problems backing up all my input data, but LicenseKeeper has an “export to XML” file feature. Everything you have input—including pictures, attachments, and e-mails—is placed in the XML file and can be read by LicenseKeeper at a later date should you need to restore your computer or transfer to another computer.

One feature I'd like to see added is password protection for the database and application. If you store sensitive website or other login information in LicenseKeeper, password protection becomes necessary. The developer has indicated that this feature is a possibility for a future release of the program.

LicenseKeeper is simple yet feature-rich and succeeds in what it set out to do, a refreshing change from the typically bloated programs of today. Of the several serial number organizing applications I've tested, LicenseKeeper is the one I'm keeping. Download the free demo and give it a try!

P.S. – Just as this review was being finished, version 1.1X of LicenseKeeper was released with several enhancements. This new version added the ability to scan and attach e-mail from Microsoft Entourage as well as Powermail. Several new fields were added for each stored license: purchase date, price and order number. You can now also attach widgets, plug-ins and preference panes in the database.

—Rob Golding, sagittae@mac.com, Princeton Macintosh Users Group