ard Evidence

It occurred to me when I first decided to do this column that I was taking on the world, almost literally.   When you consider that we Mac users are outnumbered by a pretty big margin, it becomes scary to defend our poor little Macs.   Especially when we know that just as we end one fight with a PC user, another is most certainly around the proverbial corner.

It is for these occasions that I recommend shutting up and letting some hard evidence do the arguing for you.   Have a PC-using friend who insists that Windows '95 has closed the gap?   That the Mac has lost its edge?   That the flaming gates of everlastingly-fiery Hades are closing forever on the Apple world?   Let me tell you how to grapple these simpletons into a logistic full-nelson from which there is no escape.   All it takes is a toll-free call to Cupertino.

That's right, Apple Computer, Inc. itself will provide you with the tools to combat your unenlightened comrades, in the form of a 25-minute video comparing the two OS's side by side.   You'll see a well-dressed, well-spoken, and maybe even slightly arrogant Apple representative showing all the embarrassing blemishes of the PC and Windows '95.

Scene: A steady and certain hand hooks a power cable and a SCSI cable into the back of an external hard drive, connects it to the Mac, and starts the computer, which in turn shows the icon for the new drive.   The Apple rep smiles triumphantly.   Cut to: PC - a pair of shaking and annoyed hands unscrew the PC lid, fumble around in the innards of the computer, set dip switches, configure for slave setting, and perform twenty or so other hardware related tasks.   Then the user spends another five or six steps to prepare Windows '95 to recognize the new internal drive.   The rep explains that in order to compare the two fairly, it was necessary to install an internal drive in the PC, since the computer did not come with a SCSI interface to allow the connection of an external drive.   Convincing stuff.

There is a treasure trove of comparisons like the one above, that graphically and inarguably show that superiority rests within the Mac OS and its accompanying hardware.   Scenes are interspersed with quotes from PC-intensive (rather than Mac-intensive) magazines claiming the Mac OS to be better, faster, and just plain easier.   I believe Byte   and PC Week   are two of the prominent publications mentioned.   If that   doesn't convince your friends, I don't know what will.

So how good is the tape?   Well, it is a sales tool, and as such, must be as watertight as

possible.   The sound is clear, the editing adequate, and the video excellent, if it does look a little homemade.   But convincing?   Yes, sir.   A friend of mine is a system analyst with a Big 6 accounting firm.   In his job, he basically sets up PC systems all day long.   He visited me recently, and I convinced him to watch the video.   Afterwards, I sat him down in front of Tiberius, my Mac, and let him play.   After ten minutes, he was amazed at how much easier and faster my system was than most PCs.   He left my house a changed man.   He even mentioned looking into buying one.   Understand now, the man works with PCs.   They are his life.   But the combination of the video and the experience were enough to start him on the path to conversion.   I think in time, he will see the light and become one of us.

The kind people at Apple assured me that they weren't positive as to whether or not the video is free.   The best answer I could get was "depends."   I have been told that the video is free in reasonable quantities (probably fewer than five or ten), but if you call and ask for 500, I wouldn't be surprised if they charged you.   However, I could not get confirmation of the price, so you'll have to ask when you call.   Even if they charge a small fee, I highly recommend you pay it, as the video will surely pay for itself in saved arguments and frustration.

In fact, I recommend you obtain two or more copies, and distribute them as much as possible.   Assemble people to view it.   Pass it around at work.   Get the word out there.   Even one convert means money in Apple's pocket, and a faster road to recovery for our favorite company.   The number to call for the video is 1-800-825-2145.   Ask for item number L01760A.

The next time you have a PC user breathing down your neck, take a deep breath, close your eyes, and flick the VCR on.   He'll probably never bother you again.   And you can take that to the front lines.