Which One Should I Choose?
Family History Database Programs
Aka Family History Record Management Programs

The Puzzle of Family History

Working on Family History is like a great big puzzle. It can be overwhelming if the data you find is scattered everywhere. There are two tools needed to help organize the data until the picture is clear and the puzzle is ready to be published.

- Family History database management program
In managing a research project, it is critical to have a computer program to enter the information as it is found so that the puzzle can be completed. For years the church has provided PAF (Personal Ancestral File) and it is still available, but...
    - It won't be updated to work with new computer operating systems
    - It doesn't synchronize with the new Family Search programs for temple submission
    - The features are the same as they were in the 1990's
- A good plan for organizing your data
Whether that is:
    - Notebooks
    - File folders
    - On the computer

Three Free Versions of Family History Record Management Programs

The church has worked with many vendors to offer different Family History products. For our purposes, in this discussion, they have made an agreement with several vendors who publish excellent Family History computer programs for managing your records.

For Windows:
- Ø Ancestral Quest $29.95 via download
    - http://www.ancquest.com/FSInfo.htm
- Ø Ancestral Quest Basics $Free
    - http://www.ancquest.com/AQBasicsFS.htm

- Ø Legacy Family Tree Deluxe $29.95 Program download only
    - http://www.legacyfamilytree.com/DownloadLegacy.asp
- Ø Legacy Family Tree Standard $Free
    - http://www.legacyfamilytree.com/DownloadLegacy.asp

- Ø RootsMagic $29.95 via download

- o http://www.rootsmagic.com/FamilySearch/
- Ø RootsMagic Essentials $Free
  - o http://www.rootsmagic.com/FamilySearch/

For Mac:

- MacFamily Tree $59.99
  - o Only program for Mac that synchronizes with the church at this time
  - o No free version listed

Which One Should I Choose?

They are all excellent programs.

If you use Windows, we recommend that you take our class "Needing to replace PAF?" so you can play with the features of each and make your choice. Or download all three free programs and play with each one and decide.

Here are some things that we have found that might help.

- If you really like PAF and you want something that is very similar to PAF, Ancestral Quest was written by the same person that wrote PAF.
- If you want to do serious documentation and use all the rules and regulations, Legacy is perfect for you.
- If you like the look and the feel of new technology and search techniques, RootsMagic will probably be your favorite.

If you have a Mac, you need to decide if you want to synchronize NOW with the church temple submission software. If not, there are a couple of other choices for Family History Record Management Programs.

If you do, you should buy MacFamily Tree.

Several of the Windows vendors have said there next project is to rewrite their program for Mac, so that is probably coming soon.

Family History is the number one hobby in the United States and there is a lot of money in writing computer programs for this field.

The church lists programs for:

Platform	Number of Programs
Web	22 Programs
Windows	15 Programs
Mac	5 Programs

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Mobile	4 Programs

https://familysearch.org/products

And everything is in flux and will keep on changing...