

PERSONAL GENEALOGY SOFTWARE OBSERVATIONS AND COMMENTS

August, 2013 by Bud Wood, Director, Orem Geneva Heights Family History Center

Ancestral Quest: A fully functional software package, AQ is the easiest-to-use and most natural upgrade program for PAF users. An early version of Ancestral Quest was the foundation for the first Windows version of PAF and thus most AQ features seem natural to the PAF user. Current software is version 14. Compatibility with FamilySearch Family Tree is intuitive and AQ has "TreeShare" certification from FamilySearch. Perhaps its strongest point is its Collaboration feature that greatly facilitates family members working together on their family files. AQ is strong in support of all languages used by FamilySearch Family Tree. A free version (with some limitations) is available to use. The fully featured download version costs \$29.95.

Family Insight: Not really a fully functional personal genealogy program, Family Insight instead typically uses PAF as its database. It then provides the tools to link into FamilySearch Family Tree through its "TreeShare" certification. If you wish to stay with PAF, which has been discontinued by FamilySearch (it is no longer supported), and also wish to link to FamilySearch, this program should work for you although you will have to fore-go some of the functionality found in the other programs. Family Insight directly reads Legacy, Roots Magic, Ancestral Quest and Family Tree Maker files permitting users to use the Family Insight interface into FamilySearch Family Tree if desired. A MAC version of Family Insight directly reads Family Tree Maker MAC files. The download software costs \$25.00, but only comes with a single-year of free upgrades.









Family Tree Maker: Intuitive, easy-to-use, and linked directly to Ancestry.com this program has a single fatal flaw for the LDS genealogist: It does not link into FamilySearch Family Tree. Use of Family Insight in conjunction with Family Tree Maker will somewhat alleviate this obvious oversight. Written by Ancestry.com, its greatest strength is its native link into the Ancestry database. Cost is \$39.95 for the Windows version. FTM also has a MAC version, which is a lower-cost alternative (\$69.95) to Reunion for users of the MAC Leopard, Snow Leopard, or Lion platforms.

Legacy: Long a strong competitor in the field of genealogy software, Legacy is probably used by more non-LDS genealogists than any other program. Legacy handles sourcing better than any other program, having worked closely during development with Elizabeth Shown Mills, the genealogical world's foremost authority in this field. It fell out of favor with LDS genealogists when it initially failed to provide access to new FamilySearch. Recently, the company left LDS Legacy users "out on a limb" for several weeks before it published a version to work on FamilySearch FamilyTree. The program is now "TreeShare" certified. The FamilySearch interface has improved over past versions, but is still somewhat slow and awkward. Current version of Legacy is version 7.5. The Standard Edition is free. The more-fully featured Deluxe Edition is \$29.95 as a download.

Roots Magic: Current version is 6. Roots Magic has a nice user interface and an earlier version was recognized for being the software that is "Easiest to Sync" with FamilySearch Family Tree. The program is "TreeSharePlus" certified by FamilySearch. Fully functional and easy to use, it comes with Roots Magic-To-Go to facilitate taking your data on a flash drive and using the software on any Windows-based computer whether or not it has the software installed. A free version (with some limitations) is available to use while the unlimited download version of the software is \$29.95.

Reunion: Reunion is the best-selling and most fully-featured native-MAC personal genealogy software. Taking advantage of the MAC's graphical capabilities, the program has great graphics and visual presentation. Expensive (\$99.00, although you might get it somewhat cheaper on Amazon), it does not interface with FamilySearch Family Tree. iPhone and iPad versions are available.

PERSONAL GENEALOGY PROGRAMS FAMILYSEARCH COMPATIBILITY CERTIFICATIONS

Software	Certification
Ancestral Quest	✓  
Family Insight	✓  
Family Tree Maker	none
Legacy	✓  
RootsMagic	✓  
Reunion for MAC	none

✓ **FT Certified:** Software features are certified for FamilySearch.org Family Tree



LDS: The product includes features and data helpful to members of the LDS Church.



Tree Access: The product will only read Family Tree data.



Tree Connect: The product references online artifacts such as records, photos, documents, and media that can be attached to persons in the Family Tree.



Tree Share: The product can compare and reconcile all data in both Family Tree and the product.



Tree Share+: The product has the features of Share plus the collaborative features including Discussions, Sources, Watch and Change History.