

Misc

- [AirTable](#)
- [PDF Hell](#)
- [Screen Sharing](#)
- [Ripping](#)

AirTable

Wow wow wow AirTable continues to impress.

Formula Things

[Formula Reference](#)

Formulas in AirTable are Excel / Google Sheets adjacent, but the syntax is a bit different.

Here's a conditional IF to apply contingency to a line item:

```
IF({CONT} = BLANK(), 0, SUM(ESTIMATE*.2))
```

"CONT" is field name

"BLANK" is if the box is checked

Here's a conditional SWITCH to apply different contingency numbers on a line item:

```
SWITCH(
  {CONT},
  "Buffer", SUM(ESTIMATE*.2),
  "Something", SUM(ESTIMATE*.22),
  "None", 0
)
```

Here's a conditional IF

```
IF(
  {Watts/Unit} = 0, 0,
  SUM(( {Watts/Unit} / {Volts/Unit} ) * IF(OR( Calc = "R&D", Spare = 1 ), 0, Qty))
)
```

It's saying if watts are filled out, complete the formula to calculate for Amps, then multiply by quantity to get the calculated Amps unless it is a spare unit or it's used for R&D.

A further change:




```
IF({Watts/Unit} = 0, 0, SUM({Watts/Unit} / SWITCH(
  Volts,
  "110v", 110,
  "208v", 208)
)
* IF(OR({Budget Calc} = "R&D", Spare = 1), 0, Qty)
)
```

Adding this switch makes the Volts column attached to a variable switch. Based on voltage selection, calculate amps. If I add in additional voltage options, I will need to manually create that

switch in the Volts column and then add it to the script.

Here's a formula that will concat two date strings

```
DATE_TIME_FORMAT({Start Day / Time}, 'ddd') & " - " &  
DATE_TIME_FORMAT({Start Day / Time}, 'MMM') & " " &  
DATE_TIME_FORMAT({Start Day / Time}, 'DD') & " From " &  
DATE_TIME_FORMAT({Start Day / Time}, 'hh:mm') & " to " &  
DATE_TIME_FORMAT({End Date / Time}, 'LT')
```

 Name	 Start Day / Time	 End Date / Time
Mon - May 22 From 04:30 to 6:30 PM	5/22/2023 4:30pm	5/22/2023 6:30pm

Extensions

You can install extensions that do a variety of things. Some are paid if by third-party. Can recommend "Page Designer" (buggy, but functional) and "Charts."

Third-Party Tools

[DocsAutomator](#) - Highly recommended tool that takes the concept of AirTable's Page Designer and makes it... good. Really good. This is a paid tool, but the capabilities it adds are great. There's a bit of learning curve.

PDF Hell

Editing a PDF

If you need to edit a PDF, you can manually add text, remove text, or move elements around using the edit tools in Adobe Acrobat. This is useful for filling out forms, adding signatures to documents, etc.

Editing a Locked PDF

These CAD PDFs from the manufacturer won't let me import them into Vectorworks or some document from my employer that I need to fill out won't let me add text to fill it out

If you need to edit a PDF that won't let you because it's locked, if you "print" it via Apple Preview and then **save to PDF**, the document's locks go away. Congratulations, you've just gotten around one of the easiest-to-manipulate document-integrity flaws you can imagine.

Reducing the Size of a PDF

You just exported an awesome deck from Keynote or InDesign [PDF-Optimizer.png](#) or even Google Slides and you want to email it to a client but it's too-damn-big?

If you have a PDF that is huge because of the images within it, you can optimize the PDF with Adobe Acrobat. Do not use the option called "Reduce" because it compresses the images down to low quality and they're all yucky and blocky. The move is to select File→Save As Other→Optimized PDF

The secret sauce here is in tweaking the quality and downsampling PPI. The screenshot is a good formula. 110MB PDF becomes 4MB. Congratulations, Dad!

Screen Sharing

Definitely recommend ConnectWise's **ScreenConnect** most. **TeamViewer** is good, too, as it allows for local use (VNC without www). **Parsec** is good for low latency things like editing or gaming. **JumpDesktop** is even better for editing and "virtual" displays. You can also share a screen via **iMessage** on a mac desktop, this is especially good for Family Tech Support™.

On a local network, you can screen share from Mac to Mac directly via the Screen Sharing utility. It is fantastic. RIP **Back To My Mac**.

ScreenConnect allows you to create a branded client application, send commands to a computer without logging in, and has 'backstage' mode which gives you access to a few select system resources without the host display seeing things.

In Screen Share world, "Host" means the computer you are remotely screen sharing to (what's not in front of you physically), and "Client" means the computer you are remotely screen sharing from (in front of you physically).

ScreenConnect has a max count of screens, but allows for Mosaic (odd resolutions). **Parsec** seems to have a higher max screen count, but does not allow for odd resolutions. In other words, you might need Parsec to set up a multi-display server, but once a Mosaic is set up, you want to use **ScreenConnect**. There's also a bug where certain configs on Hosts do not work on Mac clients.

Parsec Specific Gotchas

Incredibly convoluted setup process.

Once you have an account all set up and you want access from your client:

1. Download and install Parsec on target (host) computer
2. Click "Setup as Team Computer"
3. Input your Team ID (from Parsec [dashboard](#) online, top left)
4. Input your Secret Key (provided when you first setup Parsec, I reco putting this as a note in your Parsec 1Pass)
5. In the Dash, assign the computer to a group (first create a group)
6. Now reload the Parsec App on your receiving machine

Ripping

Ethical Consideration

I know, it's 2023 2025, and ripping continues to be "not a cool thing" to do. That said, sometimes you **need** to rip something from another source program for sampling or auditing purposes or your client is being annoying about giving you exports and you needed the assets yesterday. There are definitely ethical reasons you may need to rip audio and video, so here's my write up and suggestions.

Audio Ripping

I recommend **Audio Hijack**, it allows you to rip audio from a specific application (or system wide), and you can set rules to "start a new file after .5 seconds of silence," for example.

If you can't rip internally for some reason, you can do the old *play from one source, record on another device trick*. Another computer. A Zoom H5. Whatever.

If you want to automatically name audio tracks, use **MusicBrainz**. This application goes through your file and checks it against a massive online library. It will automatically name if it's a clear winner. If there are options, it will give you a choice. It's using the same technology iTunes used when you went to rip a CD into Mp3s in 2002.

Video Ripping

You used to be able to just screen record, but you can't anymore. Workarounds include installing NDi or Spout/Syphon tools that allow you to send from a browser window, then you can just record that NDi or Spout/Syphon stream.

If you can't do that, or the frame rate is trash, you'll need to use a capture card on a secondary device - where you output a computer's video and input it to a capture card on another computer or recording device. Black Magic recorder is a good example.

If you can't do that, get a nice and clean matte screen that is high resolution, set up a tripod, match the frame rate (ish) and match the refresh rate with your shutter speed and shutter angle.

For ripping something like youtube, you can always dig around for gross downloaders, but search no further than **Youtube-DL** which allows you to download (some) Youtube URLs. There is a bit of a learning curve and you have to do it through terminal, but if you are familiar with a tool like FFmpeg, this will feel easy for ya.

Youtube-DL & Cheat Sheet

[Youtube-DL](#) doesn't always work and is sometimes left for periods of time where it's not updated, check out other versions - like [ytdl-org](#)

yt-dlp uses the same syntax as youtube-dl

Installing yt-dlp via homebrew

```
brew install --formula yt-dlp
```

Using ytdl, here's a sample syntax to download the best available MP4

```
yt-dlp -f mp4 'url'
```