DIGITAL YACHT

TECHNICAL NOTES

Article Number -   00013-2010
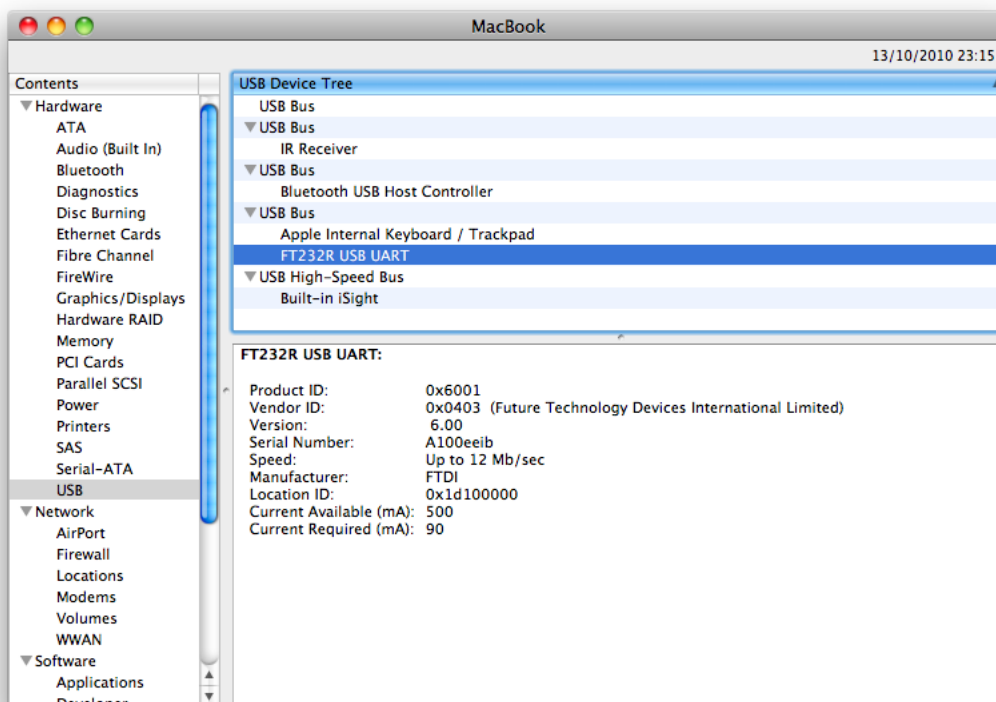
Date -   13st October 2010

Article applies to – AIT2000, all AIS Receivers with USB interface and USB to NMEA Adaptor

ISSUE: How to install the USB to NMEA Interface Mac OsX drivers

Many of the AIS units that Digital Yacht produce feature an NMEA to USB Interface which requires that specific drivers are installed on a Mac, before it can operate correctly. The drivers create a "Virtual COM port" which the NMEA 0183 data is received and transmitted on.

The drivers are included on a disk image (DMG) file that can be found on the Digital Yacht Software and Drivers CD-Rom in the "USB Driver for AIS Units\Mac OS X\" folder. On double clicking this DMG file, you will be presented with two installer packages; one for OsX V10.3 and one for the latest Intel based Macs OsX V10.4/10.5/10.6. Select and double click the relevant file for you Mac.
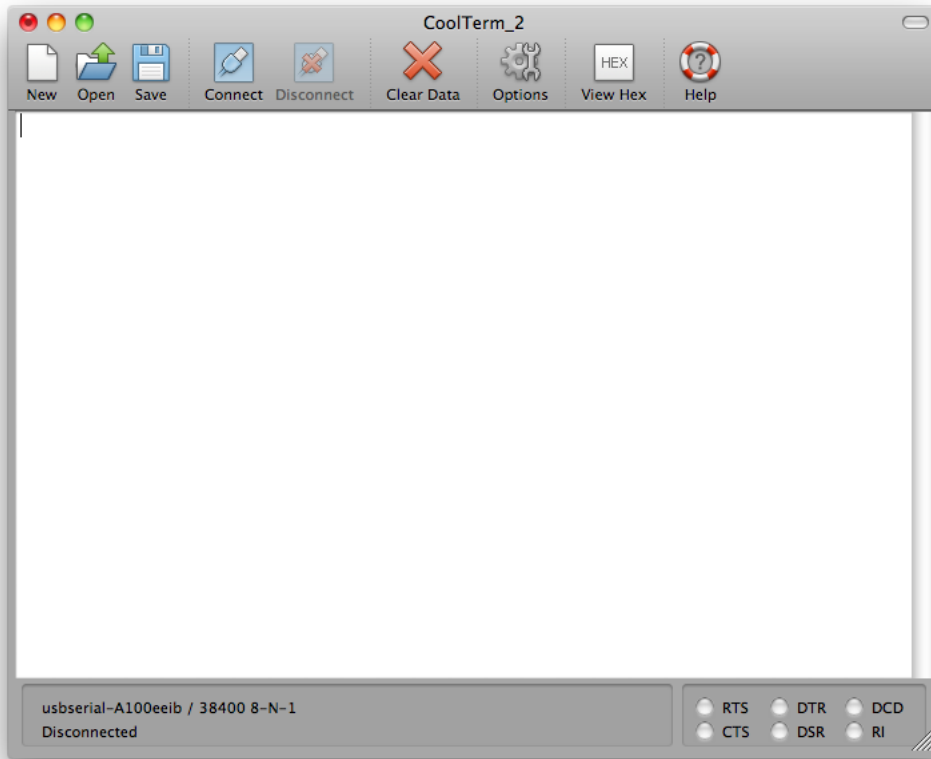
After installation is completed, plug in the USB cable. The Mac does not behave like Windows, in as much as when you plug the new device in, you do not get a notification that the device is found. However, in the Utilities folder, there is a program called System Profiler that is a bit like Device Manager in Windows. If you run this program you should see an entry for the USB section called FT232R USB UART which indicate that our USB interface is properly installed – see below.
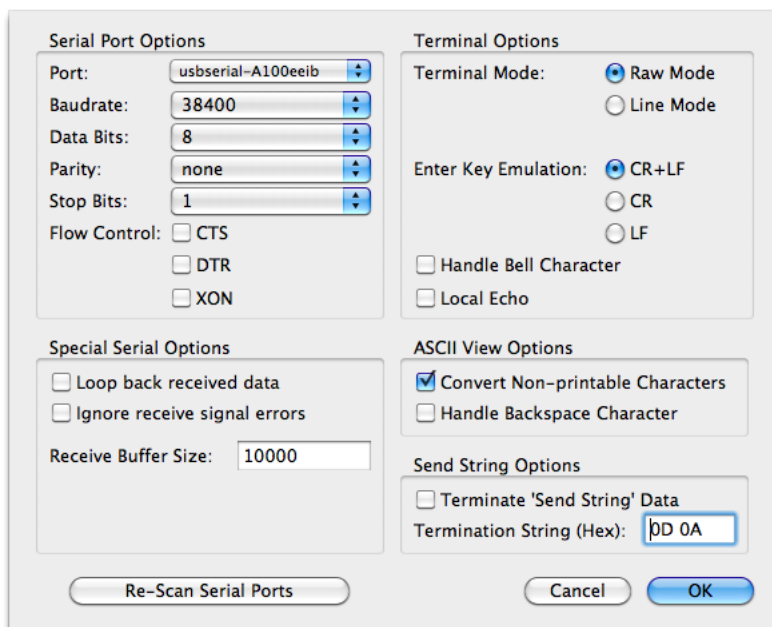
Assuming that you can see the USB interface listed in System Profiler, you can use another useful tool CoolTerm to "View" the NMEA 0183 data that the Mac should be receiving and prove that everything is working correctly. Use the following link to download the latest version of CoolTerm....
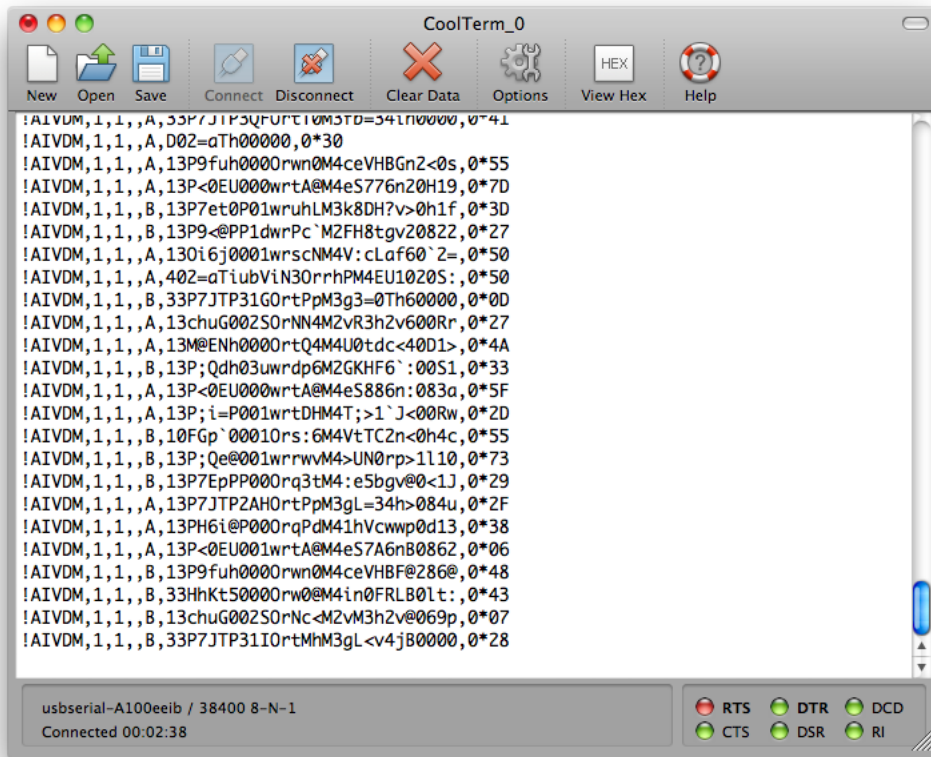
http://www.macupdate.com/info.php/id/31352/coolterm

Once you have installed and run this program, you should see the following screen....

Click the Cog and Spanner Icon which will take you to the setup window shown below. You only need to change one setting, the baud rate from the 9,600 default value to 4,800 for normal NMEA 0183 or 38,400 for the latest High Speed NMEA 0183 as used by AIS units.

If you have more than one interface connected, you will also need to select the relevant Port, but once you have set the required baud rate and port, click OK. Then from the original window, click on the Connect icon and you should now see NMEA 0183 data sentences start to scroll down the page, as shown below. The sentences in this case are from an AIS, but you will see whatever sentences your navigation equipment is transmitting.

If everything is working correctly, you should now be able to setup the navigation software, that you wish to use on you Mac, to receive the NMEA 0183 data through the Digital Yacht USB interface.