Useful Tools in MAX for Making VRML

MAX will export many of its animation and modeling capabilities to VRML so it is full of useful tools. Some are particularly useful:

* The Polygon Counter:
  + Under the "Utilities" command panel, select "Polygon Counter". It will tell you the total polygons in the scene and in you selection. You can set a limit of polygons for your scene which it will keep track of.
* Optimize Modifier:
  + Good for reducing the poly count.
* Normal Modifier:
  + Reversing the normals of objects can create interesting effects in VRML. Try reversing the normals of a sphere and spinning it around in your browser.
* EditMesh Modifier:
  + Used constantly for detailed polygon work. Detaching faces as seperate objects and optimizing them seperately can give you a lot of control of complexity.
* Boolean:
  + Booleans can create massive numbers of polygons in files and should be used very carefully. If you're finding a huge polycount and you've used a Boolean, it's probably the culprit.
* The Track View:
  + Essential for keeping track of objects, grouping and animation just as in MAX.
* Hiding Objects:
  + The VRML exporter gives you the choice to export hidden objects. This is useful if you want to isolate geometry or animations in a larger file and test them out seperately.
* Animation:
  + Generally, VRML has a non-linear narrative. Whereas in MAX you're usually making a scene where one thing happens after the other for output to film or video, a VRML file might have multiple animations happening at once that you link sensors to. They will play in whatever order the user triggers them in in the VRML file. This can get confusing in a MAX scene. The trackview is particularly useful here to see what's going on.
* Wire materials:
  + Applying a "wire" material to an object will make the geometry export as a wireframe. Wireframes render much faster than faces in VRML - less pixels per frame. This can mean much smaller file size for models and animations.