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What is a Podcast?

Below is a definition of podcasting pulled from Wikipedia that provides you with information about podcasting, its roots and some of the technical aspects surrounding podcasting. The following is provided free from editing and I take no credit for this wonderful explanation.

Podcasting, created by former MTV VJ Adam Curry, is a term that was devised as a crisp way to describe the technology used to push audio content from websites down to consumers of that content, who typically listen to it on their iPod (hence the “pod”) or other audio player (iTunes) that supports mp3 at their convenience. The term podcasting is meant to rhyme with broadcasting and is a derivative of the iPod platform. While not directly associated with Apples iPod device or iTunes music service, the company did contribute both the desire and the technology for this capability. Podcasting is not unlike time-shifted video software and devices like TiVo, which let you watch what you want when you want by recording and storing video, except that podcasting is used for audio and is currently free of charge. Note, however, that this technology can be used to push any kind of file, including software updates, pictures, and videos.

Podcasting uses an XML-based technology called RSS, or Really Simple Syndication. Content publishers describe new content in an XML RSS file which includes dates, titles, descriptions, and links to MP3 files. This auto-generated file is called an RSS feed. The key to making podcasting work with RSS is enclosures, a feature supported by RSS 2.0.

What makes podcasting special is that it

allows individuals to publish (podcast) radioshowes, that interested listeners can subscribe to. Before podcasting you could of course record a radio show and put it on your website, but now people can automatically receive new shows, without having to go to a specific site and download it from there.

Related Terms: podcast, podcaster, broadcastching, podcatching

Apple has helped to mainstream podcasting by placing podcast sites on it’s Music Store website. To use this feature in iTunes one must have iTunes version 4.9 installed.

Some of the podcasts available include Leo Laporte (formerly of Tech TV) in KFI’s Tech Guy, Al Franken Show on Air America, WGBH Morning Stories,Photoshop Radio with Scott Kelby, and Your Mac Life with Shawn King. Even the Wall Street Journal, Walt Disney and the BBC have adopted podcasts as a way to get their news, message or ads out there. Of course hundreds of individuals have their won podcasts on a variety of subjects.

Did I mention this is FREE for now.



BAC September Meeting

The September meeting will be held on Saturday September 13th, at 10:00am at the Homewood Library room116.

The topic for the meeting was unavailable at press time, possibly Automator the automatic workflow creator feature found in OS 10.4 Tiger.

Come early and enjoy coffee, doughnuts and cookies, plus....

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New BAC Secretary

BAC Secretary Tommie Ellison has graciously relinquished the reigns of BAC secretary to Ted Galloway.

BAC Disk of the Month

The BAC CDOM (Disk of the Month) is available at each BAC meeting. These CDs contain updates, shareware, and freeware.

The cost is \$2 per disk and is available at the BAC meetings from Disk Librarian Jerry Jenkins.

September CDOM

Absolute Backgammon 4.1.7... Shareware Game. This latest version corrects all known problems. Has voice control. Requires OS 8 or higher, including OS 10.4

Gas 2.1.1.wdgt... Freeware
Widget displays lowest gas prices in your area. Requires OS 10.4 or higher.

Graphic Converter 5.7... Shareware
Many, many improvements in this updated version. A good app to change graphics formats and to edit and correct digital photos. Requires Mac OS 10.1.3 or higher.

JunkMatcher 1.5.9... Freeware
Cocktail-styled spam filter for Mail. Requires OS 10.3 or higher.

Luther's Collection 9/05... Freeware
Updated versions.

MacFamily Tree 4.1.5... Shareware
Updated genealogy program. Requires OS 10.2.6 or higher

Piano Tuner 1.2... Shareware
A 12 note chromatic scale strobe tuner. Uses microphone, line in or iSight. Requires OS 10.2 or higher.

SimpleChord 3.1.3... Shareware
Quick, handy reference to chords for musicians. Can aid in learning songs, composing, transcribing, etc. Build progressions to be played back. Requires OS 10.3 or higher.

SolitaireTillDawn X 1.4.4... Share-

ware Many card games. Requires OS X

Tex-Edit-Plus X 4.9.3... Shareware

Scriptable text editor. Fills the bill between SimpleText and a full-featured word processor. Requires OS 10.1 or higher inc. OS 10.4

VueScan 8.1.32... Shareware

Updated, keeps getting better and covers more scanners. In most cases, it replaces and improves the original scanner driver. This version now requires Mac OS 10.2.8 or higher.

Safari Update 2.0.1

About this update: Safari version 2.0.1 for Mac OS X Tiger improves website compatibility, application stability and support for 3rd party web applications. The installer will guide you through the steps necessary to install Safari 2.0.1 🍏

WIFI REPORT

1) The North Shelby County Library now offers free wireless access at it's location on Cahaba Valley Rd. (Rte. 119)

2) Jersey Mike's Sub Shop offers WiFi at it's Hwy. 280 location in the Shops of Inverness. (behind Wendy's)

Let us know if you spot a hot spot in your area, and if it is free or not and where the location is. 🍏

September Door Prizes

The following list of door prizes will be awarded at the BAC September meeting

(1) *Mac OS X Tiger Killer Tips* by Scott Kelby

(2) a copy of the monthly CDOM, and

(3) a one-month rental of any of the instructional CDs that are in our Library. 🍏

MAC OS X DISK UTILITIES

by Ted Landau

One of the great improvements in Mac OS X, as compared to Mac OS and its predecessors, is its superior resistance to disk structure damage. In the “old days,” Mac users typically found it necessary to run repair software every few weeks or so -- or risk the arrival of an assortment of irritating symptoms. With Mac OS X, running repair software on a maintenance preventative basis is almost superfluous. Yes, I have had a few occasions when I benefited from First Aid, the repair component built-in to Mac OS X’s Disk Utility, but they have been rare. Only once have I had a problem that needed more firepower than First Aid provides.

Even so, it pays to be prepared. That’s why I would still recommend having at least one repair utility, beyond First Aid, in your troubleshooting arsenal. Until recently, your choices here centered on a trio of time-tested products: Symantec’s Norton Utilities, Micromat’s TechTool Pro, and AlSoft’s DiskWarrior. But with the release of Tiger, the Mac community bids good-bye to Norton Utilities. Symantec states: “Norton SystemWorks and Norton Utilities will not be updated for compatibility with Mac OS X 10.4.”

As luck (or good timing) would have it, a new repair package recently arrived on the scene, aiming to take Norton’s place: Drive Genius. Although Drive Genius is published by Prosoft Engineering, its origins lie elsewhere. It is based on a trio of utilities from SubRosaSoft: DiskGuardian, VolumeWorks and CopyCat X. SubRosaSoft no longer markets DiskGuardian, shunting interested users to Drive Genius instead. You can still get the other two utilities directly from SubRosaSoft, but Drive Genius is a bargain by comparison, as it incorporates and updates all three (adding new features as well) for less than the combined cost of the two remaining SubRosaSoft products.

In this column, I take a look at what Drive Genius brings to the table. To answer some questions that came up along the way, I went to the source: Marko Kostyrko, the developer of the program.

Drive Genius. Much like Norton Utilities, Drive Genius falls into the Swiss Army Knife category of troubleshooting and repair software. Its major features are:

- Repair drive and repair permissions. This is the main course of any repair utility. Drive Genius begins by more-or-less duplicating what Disk Utility’s First Aid does. But Drive Genius can also rebuild the Catalog B-tree, competing a bit more with what DiskWarrior and TechTool Pro do.
- Optimize. Drive Genius can optimize a drive, consolidating all the volume’s available free space. This is very different from the “optimizing” that is done when installing new software via Mac OS X’s Installer utility. It’s much more similar to what Norton Utilities’ Speed Disk did. The main difference is that Drive Genius cannot

defragment individual files (although, in Mac OS X, doing so would have only a minimal benefit on performance at best).

- Repartition. If you have partitioned, or are thinking about partitioning, a drive -- repartitioning is a great feature to have. You can use Drive Genius to shrink or expand the size of a drive’s existing partitions, create an entirely new partition, or delete an existing one -- all without having to erase the drive!

Drive Genius starts by using the `pdisk` Unix command (built-in to Mac OS X) to accomplish its work. It then goes a bit beyond. For example, it is more efficient in reducing the size of a partition, allowing you to go to a smaller size before it would require erasing existing data.

Personally, I have been gun-shy of repartitioning; I get too nervous that it may destroy the contents of the drive if it fails to work. But Drive Genius has several safeguards to protect against this. In any case, it worked flawlessly when I tested it. Still, I would make sure I have a backup of my drive before repartitioning.

- Duplicate. Drive Genius can create an exact clone of any volume, including a bootable volume. It cannot, however, do any more selective backup or synchronization, such as a subset of files on your volume. But it is a relative speed demon at this one task, primarily because it clones the volume at the device level, rather than making a file by file copy (as most other backup utilities do).

- Integrity Check and Benchtest. Drive Genius can do a SMART check of the functioning of a drive, if the drive supports SMART. Going the extra mile, it can do its own more extensive checks of the read/write integrity of a drive, scan the surface of a drive for defects, and do benchmark speed comparisons to other Mac models. This begins to invade the territory owned by TechTool Pro.

- Initialize and Shred. If you want to start over with an empty volume, you can re-initialize it. It is easy to do -- using Disk Utility’s Erase feature for example. Drive Genius can similarly re-initialize a drive, but with a twist: When initializing a USB drive, Disk Utility formats it as a Windows volume. Drive Genius formats it as a Mac volume. If you have a USB “key” drive that you intend to share with a Windows PC, the Disk Utility approach is better. Otherwise, you’ll probably prefer Drive Genius.

For those concerned about security, however, be aware that a simple initialization does not actually erase the existing data from the volume. It just installs a new Apple driver and partition map. The alternative is a secure erase, which truly makes the data irrecoverable but takes a lot longer to do. Drive Genius’ Shred function provides a secure erase capability. However, unlike the Finder, it cannot Secure Erase selected files. Drive Genius can only “shred” a volume -- either in its entirety or just its “free space” (akin to what Disk Utility can also do).

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Ow! It Burns!

by Luther Fuller

In Mac OS 10.3 Panther, burning a CD or DVD was easy. The blank disk mounted on your desktop; you filled it with the files you wanted to save; then you burned the disk. In Mac OS 10.4 Tiger, blank disks no longer mount on the desktop and you are instructed to use a Burn Folder.

I needed to backup files to a CD-R disk, so naturally, I tried using a Burn Folder. Despite arranging folder windows and icons exactly where I wanted them, the CDs I burned looked awful. In a folder where small icons were arranged in neat columns, I got large overlapping icons whose titles were unreadable. It looked like dog barf! Burn Folders are a good idea, but they are just not ready for prime time.

You can burn disks that retain any changes you have made to their contents and you can do it in three easy steps. Before you start, decide what files you will be copying and whether you will need to use a CD or DVD.

Step 1

- Launch Disk Utility (It's in the /Applications/Utilities/ folder);
- Choose the menu File/New/Blank Disk Image... or click New Image in the toolbar;
- Type a name for the new image (this will later become the name of the burned disk);
- Choose a location for the new image where you have the necessary temporary space;
- Select a size, either 660 MB (CD-ROM 80 min) or 4.7 GB (DVD-R/DVD-RAM);
- You will probably want to select Encryption: none;
- You must select Format: read/write disk image;
- Click Create and wait;
- Quit Disk Utility when finished.

Step 2

The disk image file you have just created will have the name you gave it followed by a .dmg extension. Find this file, then double-click it to mount its image volume on the desktop. Double-click the image volume to open its window. Copy anything you want into the image volume. The image volume has a fixed size and will complain if you try to overfill it. Arrange icons in any way you want. Place folder windows where you want. Add a picture file to the image volume and set it as a background picture, if you want. When finished, eject the image volume.

Step 3

- Again, launch Disk Utility;
- The new disk image file should appear in the left column of the Disk Utility window.

If not, simply drag & drop this file into the left column. Select the new disk image file.

- Choose the menu Images/Burn... or click Burn in the toolbar;

- Insert a blank CD or DVD into your drive;
- You probably want to burn at maximum speed and checking the verify box is a good idea;
- Leave disk appendable should not be checked, but you should wonder what it's for;
- Click the Burn button and wait and wait ...;
- Quit Disk Utility when finished.

The CD or DVD that you have just burned will look exactly like the image volume from which it was created. Now that you are finished with the disk image file, drag it to the Trash.

There are a few more things you should know about disk image (.dmg) files. First, you can burn a copy of any disk image, using step 3, provided it's not too big for the media. Which brings up the question — What if its too small? That's when you want to use the Leave disk appendable check box. If your disk image is small, check the Leave disk appendable box. The unused space on the media will be available the next time you want to save another small file to it.

Second, you can create a disk image from a folder that's just the right size. Simply choose the menu File/New/Disk Image from Folder... It's important to understand that the folder you select becomes the disk image volume and is no longer a folder. You may want to create a new folder with the name of the new disk image volume, then copy a folder into it.

I hope this has soothed your burn. 🍏

iMac G5 Repair Extension Program for Video and Power Issues

iMac G5 Repair Extension Program for Video and Power Issues The iMac G5 Repair Extension Program for Video and Power Issues applies to first generation iMac G5 computers that have video or power-related issues as a result of a specific component failure. If your iMac G5 is exhibiting any of the symptoms listed below and your computer's serial number is within the noted ranges, your computer may be eligible for repair, free of charge. If Apple or an Apple Authorized Service Provider (AASP) determines that your iMac G5 computer is eligible as part of the program, the repair will be covered by Apple for up to two years from the original date of purchase even if your iMac G5 is out of warranty. This is a worldwide Apple program.

Affected systems will exhibit one of the following video- or power-related symptoms:

- * Scrambled or distorted video
- * No video
- * No power

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OS X Disk Utilities *cont'd from page 3*

- Sector Edit. This last feature will remind long-time Norton Utilities users of the Disk Editor hex-editing utility. Symantec dropped this from its more recent versions of Norton Utilities, deeming it too geeky and too dangerous for its target audience. However, for those who still want to be able to view and modify a volume's raw hex data, Drive Genius has granted your wish.

Tip: To go directly to the hex data for a particular file, select the desired file via the Open command in Drive Genius' File menu, rather than clicking the Sector Edit button.

The alternatives. So how does Drive Genius fit in with its repair utility competitors: Disk Utility, DiskWarrior and TechTool Pro?:

Disk Utility has one significant advantage: It's free for all Mac OS X users. It is also the least likely to inadvertently harm your drive while attempting a repair (although Drive Genius is almost the same in this regard). On the downside, Disk Utility is likely to be the first one to give up and say that it cannot repair a drive (advising you to try third party utility instead).

DiskWarrior remains the program of choice for fixing a damaged drive directory. No other utility is as successful as often. On the downside, DiskWarrior is pretty much a one-trick pony. It does disk repair and nothing else. TechTool Pro and Drive Genius are much more versatile.

TechTool Pro, in fact, tries to do just about everything. It's especially great for checking for hardware problems, from memory to displays to peripheral drives. Yet it also includes the major software repair features: volume repair; volume optimization; as well as data protection and recovery. My main criticism of TechTool Pro is that its user interface is clunky to navigate. As a result, I suspect many users still haven't discovered all that this program can do.

Bottom line. Each of these repair utilities have at least one advantage not found in the others. If price were no barrier, it would pay to have all of them. It certainly pays to have at least one -- beyond Disk Utility. The acid test, of course, is how well they actually repair a damaged disk. I was unable to make such direct comparisons for this column. However, after surfing the Web for user comments, I would say that all of them do at least an adequate job. But judging mainly on its range of features and convenience of accessing them, I would give Drive Genius the slight nod as the one to get if you can only get one. 🍏

The program covers affected iMac G5 computers for up to two years from the original date of purchase. Apple will continue to evaluate the repair data and will provide further repair extensions as needed. Program covers affected iMac G5 computers for up to two years from the original date of purchase. 🍏

www.apple.com/support/imac/repairextensionprogram/

iMac G5 Repair *cont'd from page 4*

Note: If your iMac G5 is not experiencing any of these symptoms, you do not have to contact Apple or any Apple Authorized Service Provider.

The program is available for certain iMac G5 models that were sold between approximately September 2004 and June 2005 featuring 17- and 20-inch displays with 1.6GHz and 1.8GHz G5 processors.

The affected iMac G5 computers have serial numbers where the first 5 digits fall into the ranges noted below.

Serial Number ranges:

* W8435xxxxxx - W8522xxxxxx

* QP435xxxxxx - QP522xxxxxx

* CK435xxxxxx - CK522xxxxxx

* YD435xxxxxx - YD522xxxxxx

Where do I find the serial number of my iMac G5?

The 11-digit serial number is located on a label under the foot of the iMac G5. There is a bar code underneath the serial number. To view the label, hold the sides of the iMac and gently lay the computer face down on a soft, clean towel or cloth.

This program applies only to the systems noted.

An Apple technical support representative or an Apple Authorized Service Provider (AASP) will need to physically examine your computer to determine if the component failure identified for the iMac G5 Repair Extension Program affects your computer and, if so, arrange for the repair.

To participate in the program, please bring your iMac G5 to the Mac Genius Bar at your local Apple Retail store or Apple Authorized Service Provider (AASP), or call your local Apple contact center. The U.S. support number is 1-800-275-2273. If you are located outside the U.S., please see Apple's international contact list for your local Apple Technical Support phone number. Apple Retail Store, Apple Authorized Service Provider.

What if my computer exhibits symptoms not caused by the component Apple has identified for the iMac G5 Repair Extension Program?

It is possible that your iMac G5 may exhibit video or power issues that are unrelated to the component failure identified by Apple as part of this program and are not covered under this program. Apple or an AASP can help you troubleshoot these issues. If your iMac G5 is not covered under warranty or an extended service agreement, such as the AppleCare Protection Plan, repairs for other issues will be made at your expense if you request that they be made.

If Apple or an Apple Authorized Service Provider (AASP) determines that your iMac G5 computer is eligible as part of the program, the repair will be covered by Apple even if your iMac G5 is out of warranty.

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