

Please e-mail your questions or comments to Bill Henry, Editor (henryw@bellsouth.net)



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MACWORLD 2009 PREVIEW

Macworld announced on Monday that the “early bird” registration for Macworld San Francisco 2009 will be extended until December 8th. The early registration provides a discount on the price of admission. Basic expo floor passes can be had for \$25, while the possibility of Keynote access is restricted to those with tickets of \$250 or more. Macworld Expo takes place from January 5th to 9th, 2009 and represents the likely venue for Apple’s next product announcements.

A number of products are expected to be unveiled at or around Macworld. Long running rumors have suggested that Apple’s iMac and Mac mini are due for imminent updates. Mac Pro suitable Nehalem processors are due in the first quarter and we’ve long heard that the remainder of the Cinema Displays will be updated at MWSF.

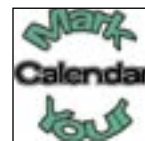
Meanwhile, an unconfirmed tip at MacBlogz even claims that Apple might introduce a 32GB iPhone at Macworld 2009. While these “storage bump” predictions are easy to make, the technology may be poised to become available at the right timeframe.

The reason the largest iPhone (16GB) currently has 1/2 the memory of the largest iPod touch (32GB) is that the iPhone can only house a single NAND Flash chip while the iPod touch can accommodate two. The additional space in the iPhone is taken up by its communication hardware. In August, Toshiba announced that they would begin mass production of higher density 32GB chips in the 4th quarter of

2008. These chips could presumably be used in future iPhone and iPod touch models. Another intriguing announcement came from Intel who has developed Flash chips that could increase this maximum to 64GB by early 2009.

Some Mac related vendors have announced either scaling back their presence or withdrawing entirely. The economy may be one reason, as all companies are looking at ways to save expenses before reducing employees. Of course cutting back on marketing has it’s own repercussions as well.

Adobe announced it would not be exhibiting but that it would have a presence with personnel on hand and participating in training and discussion groups. 🍏



🍏 BAC December Meeting 🍏

The December 13th meeting of the Birmingham Apple Core will be a holiday gathering at the Golden Corral 3117 Lorna Road in Hoover at 10:00 am.

Spouses or significant other are invited for a complimentary breakfast buffet.

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For Sale/Wanted

Do you have computer related items for sale or is there an item that you would like topurchase? We will list the item in this space free of charge to currentBAC members.

Send information by the 25th of each month to the editor at: henryw@bellsouth.net.

Treasurer still needed for Board of Directors

BAC PROGRAMS NEEDED

The BAC is constantly in need of program ideas and speakers. Afew of our planned topics for the coming year are. If you have any ideas or contacts with potential presenters please let the board know.

- Website development with Rapid-Weaver
- Presentations with Keynote
- iPhone development
- Cool stuff with Numbers
- Toast

Apple vs. Psystar Suit

Psystar made headlines earlier this year when they began selling Mac OS X-compatible PCs.

Apple has since filed a lawsuit accusing them of copyright infringement and DMCA violations. Apple also alleges that it believes there are corporations and/or individuals behind Psystar, who may be added as defendants once Apple in discovery finds out who they are.

So, Apple apparently believes that somebody else is behind Psystar, which might help to explain why a major law firm would take on what seems like a fly-by-night's case; also why Psystar has been so bold in continuing to sell its products. I knew this thing felt funny. As Alice in Wonderland might put it, "It gets interestinger and interestinger."

Psystar's bold defense and ongoing sale of their Mac clones seems out of line with the small company's stature. Apple is reserving the right to add additional defendants to the case should their identities be discovered.

FIREFOX UPDATE

Mozilla released Firefox 3.0.4 and Firefox 2.0.18 to address a dozen security flaws, half of which the browser maker ranks as critical. Among the critical is one that could allow an attacker privilege escalation after a session restore. Another could allow arbitrary code to execute with compromised Flash media files.

The updates are pushed automatically to current users and will take effect the next time the browser is restarted. Updates will soon no longer be available for users of Firefox 2; the update is a security update only. Current users of Firefox 2 are encouraged to upgrade by manually downloading Firefox 3 as soon as possible.

iLIFE UPDATE

Apple on Monday released iLife Support 8.3.1 [11.7MB], which provides system software components shared by all iLife '08 applications. The update is recommended for all users for iLife '08, as it improves overall stability and addresses a number of other minor issues.

The patch also addresses three similar security issues where viewing a maliciously crafted TIFF or large JPEG image may lead to an unexpected application termination or arbitrary code execution on systems running Mac OS X Tiger.

Don't forget our new training CDs for Leopard MAC OS X 10.5.

Also we still have the OS X 10.4 "Tiger" training CDs available as well.

Contact Luther Fuller for more information or go to our website.

Hints&Tips

www.mac-hints-tips.com

AntiVirus Software

Just a note on Antivirus software.

Do we need it? I do know that we don't get many viruses. Since 1984, when I got my first Macintosh until now, I have gotten a total of — ready for this — just two. So, you have to answer that for yourself.

It is good insurance and for a small price it probably will give you peace of mind. Antivirus software is not very expensive.

Following are three of the applications on the market:

Norton AntiVirus by Symantec is \$49 for one user and is easy to use.

www.symantec.com/norton/products/overview.jsp?pcid=ma&pvid=nav10mac

VirusBarrier X by Intego, \$60 for one user and does very fast scans and the warnings are very clear.

www.intego.com/virusbarrier

Virex by McAfee. It seems easy to use and configure. Just make sure all other antivirus software is not still installed. Check out its website.

www.mcafee.com/us

Of all the above listed, I like VirusBarrier X the best.

*~ Virginia Chilcote
MouseBytes, Bay Area MUG
St. Petersburg FL*

Causes of Hard Drive Failures

An article in the Proceedings of the 5th USENIX Conference on File and Storage Technologies this month offers perhaps the most in-depth study of hard drive failures to date.

Google uses hundreds of thousands of hard drives to store its data, and a sample of one hundred thousand of Google's drives was studied for five years to determine common causes of failure. Since this very interesting article is a little dense to read in its entirety, I thought you would enjoy reading some highlights.

Going against conventional thought, the study determined that increased temperature and/or activity had little or no correlation to failure rate. By extension, it was found that drives spinning up and spinning down most often had the highest failure rates. This means it's best to uncheck the "Put the hard disk(s) to sleep when possible" box in Energy Saver — at least in terms of hard drive health.

Some SMART (self monitoring and reporting technology)

parameters are excellent indicators of impending mechanical failure.

Among failed drives, a good chunk gave no warning by SMART, even though SMART-monitored parameters were to blame for failure.

For this reason, SMART is most useful as a statistical predictor of failure for a population of drives rather than on individual devices. With that in mind, if your drive reports SMART errors you should at the very least immediately

perform a full backup. About 3% of drives failed in the first three months, 1.8% in the first 6 months, 1.7% in the first year. From there, failure rates jump to approximately 8% in the second year, 9% in the third year, fall to 6% in the fourth year, and jump back to 7% in the fifth year.

The whole article can be read at: http://labs.google.com/papers/disk_failures.pdf

*Matt Klein
Small Dog Electronics*

Change Formats Easily

If you want to change the format of almost any graphic, drop it on the icon of Preview in the Dock.

Pull down Preview's File menu to Save As, and you will see options to change the format to TIFF, JPEG, Photoshop and several others.

Various other options will appear below the Format: item, depending on which format you chose for your image.

Make Everything on Your Screen Bigger

Have you ever wanted to "zoom into" your Mac's screen to get a closer look at text or an image?

If you have Mac OS X, it's very easy. On a Mac with an external mouse, hold down the "Control" key (located under the shift key and marked "ctrl" on many keyboards) and roll forward or backwards with the mouse's scroll wheel.

On a Mac laptop with two-finger scrolling enabled, hold down the Control key and mouse up and down while holding two fingers on the touchpad.

You can enable two-finger scrolling on most Apple laptops running 10.4 or 10.5 in System Preferences > Keyboard & Mouse.

Notice how the screen will stay zoomed in and follow your mouse around until you zoom all the way out. Pretty cool! It also makes a fun late-April Fool's Day joke to play on Mac newbies.

*~ Ed Shepard
Small Dog Electronics*

continued on page 4

Hints & Tips *continued from page 3*

Your Computer with 9 Questions

When people run into problems with their computers, there are some general questions I ask to see if we can figure out what went wrong and when it happened. Write these questions down. The next time you get into a pinch, you might save yourself a tech call and find that there is a simple solution to your problem.

1. When did the problem start?
2. Can you reproduce the problem now?
3. What is the last thing you changed or added to your system?
4. Does the issue disappear if you start up the computer with all third-party internal hardware removed?
5. Does the issue disappear if you start the computer from a known- good system disk or external device?
6. Is the problem isolated to one specific application?
7. Is the problem isolated to one specific document or file?
8. Is your computer producing any noise or odors?
9. Has it ever worked?

The answers to these questions should help you isolate the issue.

Once you get the issue isolated, you can start planning how to fix it. Software issues can frequently be solved by a safe reboot, running disk first aid, or re-installing the OS from your CDs.

If you are uncomfortable tackling these things yourself, bring your computer in to your local service provider and let them know what you've deduced from the questions above. Likewise, hardware issues need to be addressed by an Apple service provider as well, but again, the more information you're able to provide to them, the better!

~ Troy Kingsbury
Small Dog Electronics

Meteorologist

With information provided by weather.com, Meteorologist <www.macupdate.com/info.php?id/9074/meteorologist> is a full featured, free weather program for OS X.

Meteorologist provides the ability to show the weather in the menu bar or in the dock.

More detail is displayed in a pop-up menu, and can be customized from the preferences.

Users have total control over their weather viewing, which includes simultaneously interlaced weather reports from multiple weather servers, multiple weather locations, weather alerts and much more.

QuadStar

Put Your Mac To Sleep — Instantly

I often need to step away from my Mac, and want it to go into Sleep mode. With a MacBook or MacBook Pro, I can simply close the lid and step away. However, when I want to put my iMac to sleep, I need to mouse up to the blue Apple in the upper-left corner of the screen, then select "Sleep."

However, as with most Apple functions, there's also a keyboard shortcut to put your Mac into Sleep mode. Simply hold down the Command/Option/Eject buttons, all at the same time, for about two seconds. The Mac will instantly power down into sleep mode. If you've set up your Mac to require a password to wake from Sleep (which is a good security measure, especially for laptops), then this keyboard shortcut also effectively serves to lock your Mac, until you wake it up and enter your password.

~ Ed Shepard
Small Dog Electronics



SAFARI UPDATE

Apple has updated its Safari Web browser to version 3.2. Versions are available for download both for Mac OS X and Windows. Safari is free to download and use. Separate downloads are available for users of Mac OS X 10.4 "Tiger" and Mac OS X 10.5 "Leopard" operating systems.

Apple recommends the update for all Safari users. The 3.2 release improves protection from fraudulent phishing Web sites and offers better identification of online businesses. It also adds the latest security updates.

According to security information posted by Apple, many of the changes to Safari 3.2 are specific to the Windows version, which runs on Windows XP or Vista. But the Mac version gains some improvements too.

According to Apple, disabling autocomplete on a form field may not prevent data in the field from being stored; this update properly clears the form data. Visiting a maliciously-crafted Web site that is designed to exploit a problem with Safari's handling of JavaScript array indices can lead to an unexpected termination or arbitrary code execution; this update also fixes that problem. Lastly, WebKit's plug-in interface does not block plug-ins from launching local URL's; this update addresses that problem by restricting the types of URLs that can be launched through the plug-in interface.

Ed. Note: Safari 3.2.1 was released within days of the 3.2 release. 🍏



Apple Finally Delivers on In-Ear Headphones

After months of delay, Apple's In-Ear headphones have started arriving to customers. Here are some early first impressions of the \$79 headphones:

Gizmodo - "After a history of offering lackluster earbuds, Apple has come through with a product that sounds really good and is reasonably priced, all things considered. The balanced sound and dual drivers makes all the difference in the quality factor."

Engadget - "Imagine our surprise, then, at the discovery that they not only sound really, really good (warm lows and crisp highs, a distinct lack of that modern, pushy mid-range), but they do work with the iPhone (the 3G we've got here, at least)."

CNet - "They don't quite have the crisp, high frequency detail of the Etymotic HF2 headphones I had at my desk, but they blow away Apple's stock earbuds (not too difficult a feat) with a buttery low end and pleasant mids and highs."

Technical Specifications

Frequency response: 5Hz to 21kHz

Sensitivity (at 100Hz): 109 dB SPL/mW

Drivers: Custom two-way balanced armature (woofer and tweeter in each earpiece)

Length and weight: Cable length: 1065 mm from audio jack to splitter; 330 mm to earpiece; Weight: 0.4 ounce (10.2 grams)

Compatibility Information

The remote and mic are supported only by iPod nano (4th generation), iPod classic (120GB), and iPod touch (2nd generation). Audio is supported by all iPod models.

What's in the box: Apple In-Ear Headphones with Remote and Mic; Carrying case

Three sets of silicone ear tips (small, medium, large)

Two replacement mesh caps

www.apple.com/ipod/inearheadphones/ 🍏



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